

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT—AUGUST 18, 2021

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Final Assessments Results Release</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Toolkit for Families</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Final Reports Delivery</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Entering Reimbursement Requests in GRR</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">District Testing Calendar</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Updating DAC Assignments in MDE-ORG</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Odds and Ends</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Upcoming Opportunities</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Aug. 25:</b> Access embargoed assessment downloadable data files including state, all districts, and all schools in Secure Reports</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Retrieve Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and other reports in WIDA AMS</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Retrieve Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and roster PDFs under Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and other reports arrive in districts (unless district requested not to receive paper copies for MCA/MTAS)</p> <p><b>Aug. 26:</b> Media receives access to embargoed assessment downloadable data files including state, all districts, and all schools</p> <p><b>Aug. 27:</b> Public release of final assessment results in Data Center</p>

## Final Assessments Results Release

### Embargoed Data Files

On Wednesday, Aug. 25, districts will have access to the following embargoed materials in Assessment Secure Reports under Test Results Summary to help districts respond to media inquiries. They will be accessed via links at the top of the Test Results Summary page. To access the Test Results Summary page, select Test Results Summary, located under Assessment Secure Reports on the [Secure Reports](#) page.

- A copy of the press release that will be provided to the media and released with the public release of results

- The second phase of the *2021 Statewide Assessment Reporting Guidance* document with data added
- The *Toolkit for School Leaders and Educators: Communicating Statewide Assessment Results*; refer to the *Educator Toolkit* section of this article below for additional information
- The district-use media files for all statewide assessments in Excel; refer to the *Public Release of Results* section of this article below for more information about these files

These same press release and files will be released to the media on Thursday, Aug. 26, in preparation for the public release of results. If you receive press inquiries after results have been released to the media, you may comment on your results before the embargo is lifted; however, the media cannot publish that story until the embargo is lifted on Friday, Aug. 27, at 12:01 a.m.

## Public Release of Results

The public release of final 2021 assessment results will be Friday, Aug. 27, by 8 a.m.

Once results are released publicly, the information is available in two places on the MDE website for families, educators, and community stakeholders to access:

- The [Minnesota Report Card](#) allows users to create graphs and tables to view results for various groups of students across the state and within districts and schools.
- Downloadable data files are under [Assessment Files](#) (MDE website > Data Center > Data Reports and Analytics), which provide summary assessment data for the state, county, districts, and schools that can be used to perform analyses. These are the same files that will be provided to districts and the media ahead of the public release.

## Educator and School Leader Toolkit

As mentioned in the *May 26 Assessment Update*, the *Toolkit for School Leaders and Educators: Communicating Statewide Assessment Results* will be shared with districts to help support school leaders and educators in communicating results with their staff, families, and the community. The educator and school leader toolkit will contain links to existing materials for interpreting and understanding results and new customizable materials, such as a PowerPoint presentation and template letter, that can be modified as needed and shared with school staff and families. Use of these resources are optional but are being provided to support districts in communicating assessment results from spring 2021.

The educator toolkit will be accessed through a link at the top of the Test Results Summary page beginning Aug. 25. To access the Test Results Summary page, select Test Results Summary, located under Assessment Secure Reports on the [Secure Reports](#) page. While other links on the page will be removed following the public release of results, this link will remain in Test Results Summary for districts to access. It will not be posted on the MDE website as the resources are intended to be accessed and modified by district staff before being shared.

Refer to the *Toolkit for Families* below for information on the toolkit for families.

## Additional Resources

The following resources are, or will soon be, available to support districts with using and understanding the public release of results:

- The [Revised 2020–21 Important Dates](#) provides an updated timeline for the release of results.
- Chapter 11 of the [Procedures Manual](#) provides guidelines for abiding by the embargo and using assessment data.
- The *2021 Statewide Assessment Reporting Guidance* provides guidance for districts with information on using 2021 results appropriately and in context. The second phase of this document, with data included, will be posted in Test Results Summary on Aug. 25 and on the [District Resources](#) page (under the Test Score Interpretation Resources expandable heading) on Aug. 27.
- A [Minnesota Report Card User Guide](#) (select Using the Report Card menu choice) provides information on interpreting and using the data on the Report Card.
- The [Assessment Files User Guide](#) (linked at the end of the overview paragraph located at the top of the Assessment Files page) provides information about the content of the files, and an updated version will be posted by Aug. 25; information is available on the first tab of the files.
- The [Statewide Assessments: Using Public Results](#), located under the Test Score Interpretation Resources expandable heading, is a one-page resource that provides information for district staff about using these summary results for statewide assessments, including specific contexts to consider for this year.
- [Interpretive Guide for Minnesota Reports](#): This comprehensive guide will be posted by Aug. 23. It contains detailed information on how to read the ISRs and use the results, including important context to consider for this year's extenuating circumstances.
- [MCA and MTAS ISR Quick Guides](#): The quick guides will be posted by Aug. 23. They provide a high-level overview of how to read the ISRs and may be useful for educators to use when reviewing student results with parents/guardians.
- [Understanding the MCA and MTAS ISR Videos](#): These short videos will be posted by Aug. 23. They provide a high-level overview of the information presented on the ISRs.
- [MCA Sample Individual Student Reports](#) will be posted by Aug. 23.
- The recording of the *New DAC Reporting Training 2: Test Results Summary Reports and Public Reporting* training is available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under MDE Recorded Webinars.
- Educator resources are available on the [Testing 1, 2, 3 website](#) to provide information on assessment and data resources on one central site, including test details organized by subject and grade, explanations of Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) data and appropriate uses in the classroom, and helpful resources for data literacy.

## ***Toolkit for Families***

As mentioned in the *May 26 Assessment Update*, the [Toolkit for Families: Understanding Statewide Assessment Results](#) is now available to provide information for families in one place about interpreting and understanding results. The direct link may be provided to families and the toolkit is also available on the [Students and Families Statewide Testing](#) page. It includes links to existing materials, including Individual Student Report (ISR) resources, and to the new *What Families Need to Know about Using MCA and MTAS Results* and *What Families Need to Know about Using ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Results* resources.

## ***Final Reports Delivery***

Final reports, including Individual Student Reports (ISRs), for both MCA/MTAS and ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS are scheduled to arrive in districts on Thursday, Aug. 26.

- ISRs for ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS will be provided for all students who participated in ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS.
- ISRs for MCA/MTAS will be provided only for students with a valid score in at least one subject.

Since ISRs contain private student data, **it is important for districts to ensure someone is available to receive the reports and secure them until distribution.** The final reports shipment will be sent to districts, and each school will have its own box labeled with the school name. For nonpublic schools, final reports will be packaged and shipped directly to each school.

Refer to the [Aug. 11, 2021 Assessment Update](#) for detailed information on the content of each shipment and available resources.

## ***Entering Reimbursement Requests in GRR***

Districts that have received assessment results for the college entrance exam they administered (ACT or SAT) should enter requests for reimbursements in the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\)](#) system for eligible students. If a district has not previously received reimbursement for a grade 11 or grade 12 student, the following criteria applies to reimbursement requests:

- Districts will be reimbursed for students eligible for a free/reduced-priced meal (FRP) who are entered into GRR.
- Districts may also be reimbursed (on a prorated basis if necessary) for students who are unable to pay for the exam. Districts must determine the criteria for unable to pay and enter those requests in GRR.

Districts must submit eligible reimbursement requests no later than Sept. 17. With the reduction in funding from the 2021 legislative session for the next biennium, we encourage districts to make sure all students who have taken a college entrance exam and are eligible for reimbursement from this and past administrations have a reimbursement request made.

## Resources

More information is in the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\) User Guide](#) and in the *MDE Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) Training*, which is posted in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under the MDE Recorded Webinars category.

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## District Testing Calendar

Districts are required to post a comprehensive testing calendar on the district website before the first day of the school year; this information may also be posted on school-level websites if the district chooses. Districts may choose how to display the information (e.g., in a chart, a calendar format), but it should be presented in a way that is as easy to access as possible. Core requirements for the district testing calendar have not changed and are detailed in the [2020–21 Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 121.

The posting of a district testing calendar is a requirement of both state legislation and ESSA, and is required to be posted for the 2021–22 school year. If a district has not yet established specific dates when students will be testing, MDE recommends using last year’s planned dates as a starting place and then updating them as schedules are known or changed.

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## Updating DAC Assignments in MDE-ORG

Please ensure that the DAC contact information is current in the [Minnesota Department of Education-Organization Reference Glossary \(MDE-ORG\)](#). All contact information in MDE-ORG is updated and maintained by the district’s Site Verification Coordinator (SVC). You can look up the SVC for your district in MDE-ORG. If the SVC has any questions about the process, they can contact [mde.school-verify@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.school-verify@state.mn.us).

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## Odds and Ends

- **Minnesota Report Card Planned Outage:** The Minnesota Report Card will be unavailable from Thursday, Aug. 26, at noon through Friday, Aug. 27, at 8 a.m. for updates related to the public release of results. A message will appear when a user tries to access the site letting them know when the site will be available.

- WIDA Secure Portal downtime: The WIDA Secure Portal will be down for a planned upgrade beginning Tuesday, Aug. 31, at 3 p.m. until Wednesday, Sept. 1, at 7 a.m.

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## *Upcoming Opportunities*

### **Preparation for Public Release of Statewide Results Webinar**

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), as well as district and school staff involved in communicating assessment results, are invited to attend a *Preparation for Public Release of Statewide Assessment Results Webinar* on Wednesday, Aug. 25, from 2–3 p.m.

Staff from the MDE Communications and Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment divisions will share information in preparation for the public release of assessment results. This webinar will also include a discussion about the press release information and terminology MDE uses when talking about results and next steps.

District and school staff who attend can expect to discuss the templates for communicating with staff and local communities about assessment results (including template letters and PowerPoint decks). These resources will be available the morning of Wednesday, Aug. 25. **These resources will be embargoed until the public release on Aug. 27.**

Registration form: [Preparation for Public Release of Statewide Assessment Results Webinar](#). Information on how to access the webinar will be shared with registered participants one day prior to the webinar.

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ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

If you have any questions or want to unsubscribe, please send an email to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).