

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—JANUARY 22, 2020

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## ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Testing Window

The testing window for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will open on Monday, Jan. 27 and will be open until March 20. Below are a few reminders for testing.

- Districts must make sure they are prepared to administer the online grades 1–12 ACCESS using the available [technology resources](#), and Technology Coordinators should confirm they have downloaded the COS-SD to replace the retired TSM as the online content caching solution. See the [COS-SD Technology Readiness Checklist for WIDA Online Assessments](#) for more information [Log in required].
- Districts will need to manually add any newly enrolled or newly identified English learners directly into WIDA AMS. When adding students, ensure all student information entered matches MARSS; though not

required in WIDA AMS, be sure to enter the date of birth and gender information to decrease discrepancies in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

- Paper test materials were recently delivered to districts, and the additional orders window is now open. WIDA requests that districts use all district/school coverage before requesting additional orders, and if there is a need to order additional materials, districts should combine all additional material needs from individual buildings as one district order, if possible. DRC provides MDE a weekly additional orders report, and MDE will follow up with districts as needed.

For any questions about technology preparation, manually adding students in WIDA AMS, or ordering additional test materials, contact the DRC help desk at [WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com) or 855-787-9615.

## **DRC System Status Webpage**

The [DRC System Status webpage](#) provides real-time updates on operations of WIDA AMS and INSIGHT. DACs, Technology Coordinators, and other district staff can subscribe (by selecting the button in the upper right corner of the webpage) to receive email updates when the status of any system changes. Because some states in the WIDA consortium began testing in December and some states will end testing in May, email updates will be sent to subscribers even outside of the Minnesota ACCESS testing window.

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## ***ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Testing Considerations***

MDE realizes that in some districts, an EL Coordinator or other EL staff coordinates ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing. In these cases, it is important that the DAC is aware of how the process is being implemented to ensure the district's security procedures are being followed, all required trainings are completed, and that all secure materials are accounted for and returned to DRC by the deadline in late March.

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## ***WIDA Webinar: Technology Troubleshooting***

On Feb. 6, WIDA will provide a webinar for DACs and Test Administrators to provide information on student status reports and online testing statistics. [Join the WIDA webinar: Monitoring Completion for Test Monitors on Feb. 6 at 11 a.m.](#)

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## ***Student Resources***

MDE requires districts to ensure that all students are familiar with the test they will be taking. Students should be able to successfully navigate the test, use the applicable tools, and respond to different item types. Each

district determines which resources will be used and how they will be used. MDE does not require all students to use all resources; districts must determine the resources to use, which may vary by school, grade, or student.

## ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

As districts consider what resources to use with students for ACCESS, they should become familiar with the resources below, which are available on the [Preparing Students for ACCESS for ELLs page](#). Districts can start by downloading the [QuickStart Guide for Preparing Students for ACCESS Online](#) for more information about the purpose of each resource.

- For students who are new to taking the ACCESS, the test demo and practice test are recommended.
  - The test demo is available for each grade-level cluster to show students how to navigate different features of the test. It is recommended that students watch the test demo before taking the practice test.
  - The practice test can be used to familiarize students with the ACCESS test format. These items are very easy but will help students become familiar with the test environment.
- For students who have experience taking the ACCESS, the sample items are recommended. These items can be used to familiarize students with the content and grade-level appropriate language development expectations, and they are representative of the item difficulty a student will experience on the actual test. WIDA also advises using the previous year's ACCESS score report to focus on domains where students may need additional support.

For paper administrations of the ACCESS, districts should refer to the [QuickStart Guide for Preparing Students for ACCESS Paper](#); the sample items are recommended for reviewing with students.

For Alternate ACCESS, review sample items with the student.

## MCA and MTAS

The [Purposes of Student Resources](#) document helps clarify the purposes of the resources available for MCA and MTAS.

- The student tutorial is used to familiarize students and educators with the general functionality of the online test. There are three components of the tutorial—Navigation, Tools, and Item Types—each accompanied by a teacher guide. All three components have been updated for 2019–20 and are available on the [Student Tutorial page](#).
- The [item samplers](#) are used to familiarize students and educators with how the content is presented in the test. Item samplers are available in every grade and subject for the MCA and MTAS, as well as for applicable accommodations and linguistic supports.

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# Online Preparation for the MCA and MTAS Administrations

As districts prepare for testing, the following tasks will be completed in PearsonAccess Next. See below for the dates of when these will become available; they will remain available throughout the testing windows. Details on all of these tasks will be available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, or the *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* (all of which are expected to be available this Friday, Jan. 24, on the [User Guides page](#)).

Note: The *MTAS Test Administration Manual* is designed to support those completing the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) and administering the MTAS and is already available on the [User Guides page](#).

- Jan. 27: Begin creating reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next (see the [Reporting Groups in PearsonAccess Next article](#) below for more detailed information).
- Jan. 27: Begin assigning MTAS Score Entry users to student tests, as needed; see below for additional information.
- Feb. 17: Begin test setup for MCA including:
  - Creating test sessions for online testing and data entry.
  - Adding students to test sessions.
  - Preparing test sessions.
  - Printing testing tickets and rosters.
  - Proctor caching test content, in conjunction with technology staff (only recommended for Science and Science Script tests, as needed).
- Feb. 24: Begin entering Learner Characteristics Data (LCI) data for MTAS
- March 2: Testing windows open:
  - Start MCA test sessions and monitor online testing and data entry progress.
  - Enter MTAS score data.

## How User Roles Affect MTAS Data Entry

The PearsonAccess Next user role that a person has determines if student tests must be assigned to the user before entering MTAS data:

- MTAS Score Entry user roles: These users must have student tests assigned to them before they can enter MTAS score data. Users with the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) or Assessment Administrator (AA) user roles assign student tests to MTAS Score Entry users.
- DAC and AA user roles: If these users are completing the data entry, student tests do not need to be assigned to them.

Notes: The MTAS Score Entry user role should **not** be added to users with the DAC or AA user role; adding additional user roles to either the DAC or AA role may limit the permissions of the DAC or AA. To enter LCI data only, student tests do not need to be assigned, regardless of user role.

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## ***Reporting Groups in PearsonAccess Next***

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Assessment Administrators (AAs) can begin creating reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next on Jan. 27. Teachers (users with the Test Monitor/Data Entry or MTAS Score Entry roles) must be assigned to the reporting group(s) by the DAC or AA in order to access student results in On-Demand Reports and Historical Student Data.

There are two options for creating reporting groups—manually or by importing/exporting a file. For more information, refer to the [Reporting Groups User Guide](#). A short video training on creating reporting groups will be posted on the Data and Reporting tab (Pearson Data and Reporting Trainings category) of the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on Friday, Jan. 31. Pearson will also provide details on reporting groups during the PearsonAccess Next: New DACs webinar in mid-February.

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## ***Trainings Available in TMS***

### **MCA Test Monitor Training Course**

All modules within the MCA Test Monitor Course (on the Test Monitor tab) are now available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#). The *Administering the MCA* module was updated for 2019–20 and provides information on administering the MCA. There are no longer separate courses for online and paper administrations, since the *Administering the MCA* module now contains options for Test Monitors to select based on what is applicable to them—administering online, administering paper, or administering both. All Test Monitors administering an online and/or paper MCA are required to complete this training annually.

### **New Trainings for 2019–20**

*Understanding MCA Linguistic Supports and Accommodations* provides general information on what linguistic supports and accommodations are available for the MCA, who can receive them, and how they are administered and scored. This training is designed for staff who have a role in selecting and administering MCA accommodations and linguistic supports to students. This module is on the Other Trainings tab, under the District-Assigned Trainings category. This is an optional module for DACs or other staff.

*Understanding Student Precode Files* provides detailed information on student precode files, including what precode files are, what they are used for, how districts provide student data to MDE, and how to check or change student data in Test WES. This training is on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the New DAC Modules category. This module will be one of the prerequisites for February's New DAC Q&A webinar.

## MTAS Participation Documentation

As previewed in the [Dec. 18 Assessment Update](#), all districts are required to complete an Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) response and submit it to MDE by March 18 via an online survey. To complete this task, districts should use the *Alternate Assessment (MTAS) Participation District Report*, which is available in [Assessment Secure Reports](#), and the *Alternate Assessment Participation and Assurance, Rationale and Context (ARC) User Guide*, which is available on the [MTAS Participation page](#).

The ARC survey is broken into five sections in which the district will provide information, assurances, and where appropriate, narratives regarding alternate assessment participation rates. The questions in the survey can be found in the *Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) Response Survey Questions* section of *ARC User Guide* to guide district staff conversations ahead of the final submission of the ARC response to MDE. Special Education Directors, District Assessment Coordinators, Special Education case managers, and other key district staff, should be included in conversations about the district reports and completion of the ARC response. Once the district has prepared to answer the questions, complete the [online ARC survey](#) by March 18.

For more information about the federal requirements and the work Minnesota has done pertaining to the alternate assessment participation, refer to the [Nov. 27 Assessment Update](#).

### Alternate Assessment Participation Q&A Webinars

Next week, there will be two Q&A webinar sessions providing technical assistance to districts for the ARC response. See the following table for registration links and further details.

DATE/TIME	REGISTRATION LINK	INFORMATION IF CALLING IN
Wednesday Jan. 29 1–2 p.m.	<a href="#">Register for the Jan. 29 Alternate Assessment Participation Q&amp;A.</a>	As needed, use the following at the time of the webinar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call-in phone number: 415-655-0003</li><li>• Access Code: 963 993 938</li><li>• Password: MTAS1%</li></ul>
Friday Jan. 31 9–10 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for the Jan. 31 Alternate Assessment Participation Q&amp;A.</a>	As needed, use the following at the time of the webinar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call-in phone number: 415-655-0003</li><li>• Access Code: 963 494 357</li><li>• Password: MTAS1%</li></ul>

## ***MCA-IV Draft Test Specifications for Science: Public Review***

As a result of the 2019 revisions to the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in Science, the Science Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment–Series IV (Science MCA-IV) will begin assessing these standards in the spring of 2024. In collaboration with a committee of Minnesota educators, MDE has drafted the Science MCA-IV test specifications to assist with the development of the new assessments.

Members of the public are encouraged to review the proposed *MCA-IV Draft Test Specifications for Science* and provide feedback through the [Science MCA-IV Test Specifications Feedback Survey](#). The survey will be open until Feb. 17. Your feedback is important in creating the best assessment possible for all Minnesota students. A copy of the survey questions is available to review and discuss with colleagues before entering your individual or group survey responses. See the [Test Specifications page](#) for more information and links to the various resources.

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### ***Testing Tip: 3-Button Mice***

#### **ACCESS**

If a 3-button mouse is used for ACCESS testing, the test delivery system may not recognize the mouse or create an error. This occurs on all device platforms for ACCESS. In order to prevent this issue, MDE recommends providing a standard two-button mouse for all ACCESS testing.

#### **MCA**

If a 3-button mouse is used with a Chromebook for MCA testing, students may be exited from TestNav (since TestNav interprets the side buttons as “external hotkeys” which are not allowed during testing). In some instances, a student may see a white screen that requires the Chromebook to be restarted and the test resumed in order to continue testing. For this reason, MDE recommends providing a standard two-button mouse while testing on Chromebooks.

Note: Using the three-button mouse on a Mac or Windows device has not caused any issues thus far.

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### ***Upcoming Opportunities***

#### **Growth Reporting Changes: Registration**

As a result of legislative changes, there will be changes to growth reporting in the coming years to increase appropriate uses of data and prepare for MCA-IV. To ensure that timely, clear, and comprehensive information is made available to schools and districts, MDE will provide webinars and a face-to-face discussion of the changes. The overview will include background of the different reporting requirements, design of the

assessments, and rationale for the changes. See registration links for the webinars and in-person discussion in the table below, or read more in the *Growth Reporting Changes* document, posted on the [District Resources page](#) (under the Test Score Interpretation heading).

Note: There were some issues reported with registration link sent last week for the in-person discussion. The link below has been updated. We apologize for any confusion or inconvenience.

DATE	TIME/NOTES	REGISTRATION LINK/ADDRESS
Thursday, Jan. 23	10–11 a.m. ( <b>limit of 50 attendees</b> )	<a href="#">Register for the Jan. 23 in-person discussion.</a> MDE Conference Center A: Room CC-13 1500 Hwy 36 West Roseville, MN 55113
Tuesday, Jan. 28	Noon–1 p.m.	<a href="#">Register for Jan. 28 Growth Training webinar.</a>
Monday, Feb. 10	11 a.m.–noon ( <b>focused on charter schools</b> )	<a href="#">Register for Feb. 10 (morning) Growth Training webinar.</a>
Monday, Feb. 10	2:30–3:30 p.m.	<a href="#">Register for Feb. 10 (afternoon) Growth Training webinar.</a>
Thursday, Feb. 13	10–11 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for Feb. 13 (morning) Growth Training webinar.</a>
Thursday, Feb. 13	12:30–1:30 p.m.	<a href="#">Register for Feb. 13 (afternoon) Growth Training webinar.</a>

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## Tech Update

### Central Office Services for ACCESS Testing

Districts should be sure they download the Central Office Services-Service Device (COS-SD) to replace the retired Testing Site Manager (TSM) as the online content caching solution for online ACCESS testing. A key difference between the legacy TSM the COS-SD is that the COS-SD does not automatically download content for new administrations. Testing sites must request and verify that test content is downloaded and updated for the most current administrations. Use the Content Management tab within Central Office Services to verify that each active COS Configuration has the *EWD804 - WIDA ACCESS for ELLs* administration for the 2019–2020 school year checked and downloaded.

For detailed information regarding COS, including how to configure, install, manage, and troubleshoot the COS-Service Device, please review the *COS-SD Technology User Guide* located in [WIDA AMS](#) under All Applications > General Information > Documents.

Contact DRC Customer Service for additional assistance at [wida@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:wida@datarecognitioncorp.com) or 855-787-9615.

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STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

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