**mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

# Assessment Update

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# WIDA AMS Test Setup

Districts can now complete tasks in WIDA AMS in preparation for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing. Tasks include viewing students in the system and ensuring they appear in the appropriate test sessions; students who were indicated as EL in MARSS (prior to the December deadline) were automatically placed into generic test sessions based on grade cluster and domain. To view test sessions, log in to WIDA AMS, then click Test Management > Manage Test Sessions.

If EL students are not in WIDA AMS, check the Sent Precode in Test WES (under the File Transfer heading in the left-hand column). If the student is not included in the file, it means they were not indicated as EL in MARSS by the December deadline. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to make sure the student is indicated correctly in

MARSS. These students will also need to be manually added in WIDA AMS, and any paper materials (e.g., writing response booklet) will need to be hand-bubbled.

The *WIDA AMS User Guide* and two-minute videos highlight essential functions in WIDA AMS and are available in the [WIDA Secure Portal](). Contact DRC Customer Support with questions at [WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com]() or 855-787-9615.

## ACCESS for ELLs Writing Domain

While the ACCESS for grades 1–12 is administered primarily online, there are provisions for the writing domain as follows:

- The grades 1–3 writing test is entirely a paper administration. This means students will read prompts and write their responses in a paper test booklet.

- The grades 4–5 writing prompts are presented to students online and students respond in a writing response booklet. If students in grades 4–5 are competent at keyboarding and wish to respond online, districts must move these students into a keyboarding test session.

- The grades 6–12 writing test is entirely online. Writing prompts are presented online and students will keyboard their responses. Students in grades 6–12 who are inexperienced, unfamiliar, or uncomfortable with keyboarding may handwrite their responses in a writing response booklet. This decision must be made on an individual student basis and in conjunction with the student.

**It is imperative that students who will handwrite their Writing responses instead of using a keyboard are placed into a Handwriting Response (HW) test session in WIDA AMS.** Before beginning any grades 4–12 Online ACCESS Writing test sessions, please verify that students are assigned to the test session in WIDA AMS that aligns with their response mode.

Please refer to pages 108–109 in the *[WIDA AMS User Guide]()* for specific instructions on moving students to a HW test session.

## ACCESS for ELLs Online Speaking Domain Webinar

MDE and WIDA will host a new webinar on Jan. 22 from 2–3:30 p.m. on the ACCESS for ELLs Online Speaking test. This webinar is for DACs, EL Coordinators, and EL teachers. WIDA presenters will provide an overview of the Speaking test structure, tier placement process, task design, and how sample Speaking responses differ by score point. The webinar will also help educators gain a better understanding of how student responses are scored and what their students' Speaking scores mean. MDE Statewide Testing staff will also be available for state-specific policy questions.

At the time of the webinar, use the following information:

- [Join the Speaking Domain webinar](#).

- Password: Set to autofill; if needed, enter "WIDA".

- Phone Number: 415-655-0001

- Access Code: 928 436 919

# *Preparing for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS*

## Resources for Test Administrators

Districts should use the *[QuickStart Guide for Preparing to Administer ACCESS](#)* to ensure Test Administrators have access to the resources and information they will need to administer the ACCESS. There is also a *[QuickStart Guide for Preparing to Administer Alternate ACCESS for ELLs](#)*.

In addition to following the steps in the quick guides, the following list of resources are available in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#). Districts should be familiar with these resources and determine what is most helpful for various staff members:

- *Test Administrator Manual*

- *District and School Test Coordinator Manual*

- *Online 4–12 Test Administrator Script*

- *Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement*

- *WIDA AMS Guide* and videos

## Resources for Students

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.

- The **test demo** is available for each grade-level cluster to show students how to navigate different features of the test. WIDA recommends 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 Alternate ACCESS, review sample items with the student.

# Training Requirements for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

The DAC is responsible for ensuring that all individuals who may be associated with any aspect of test administration or test content receive training on test administration and test security policies and procedures **each year** prior to testing. Involvement in test administration is not limited to staff administering tests, but also includes any staff who help organize secure test materials, have keys (and therefore access) to areas where secure test materials are stored, or are in the room during testing, like paraprofessionals. Minimally, all staff involved are required to complete the *Test Security Training* and be aware of district-specific testing procedures, in addition to any other trainings required for their role.

Training resources are available online in the service provider systems:

- The Training Management System (TMS) is accessed from PearsonAccess Next and contains the ACCESS training courses for staff involved; these training courses include the *Test Security Training* (and *Active Monitoring for Statewide Tests* training, if required). Users access the TMS by entering their email address and selecting their district and, if applicable, their school.

- The My Account and Secure Portal section of the WIDA Secure Portal contains the required Training Courses and quizzes and other resources for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. DACs, or another designated staff person, must provide Test Administrators with logins and passwords for the WIDA Secure Portal to complete trainings.

The full training requirements start on page 58 of the *Procedures Manual*, including a table of trainings specific to ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

# MCA Testing Directions

Test Monitors are required to use testing directions to ensure that the administration of the tests is standardized across the state as much as possible. For this reason, it is imperative that Test Monitors are familiar with and use the applicable directions during testing. There are two versions of the *MCA Testing Directions* depending on how the test is being administered—*Testing Directions: Online* and *Testing Directions: Paper*.

There are two sections of the *Testing Directions* that must be provided and used for every test administration: *Script to Read to Students* and *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance*. These sections must be provided in their entirety and cannot be modified (e.g., portions of the script removed). However, districts may work with

Test Monitors prior to testing to determine what will be said for the fields that districts fill in (e.g., how testing is scheduled). Districts decide which other sections they will provide.

Districts may also determine if they will allow Test Monitors to access the directions electronically during test sessions rather than using a printed copy. If accessed on an electronic device, Test Monitors must follow MDE and district polices regarding device use (e.g., not checking email or using the device for other work).

## Changes for 2020

Based on feedback from DACs, the following changes were made to the *Testing Directions*:

- Paper copies of the *Testing Directions: Online* will be available for districts to order during the additional orders window. If districts order paper copies, they should order no more than one copy per 30 students.

- For the versions posted online, the directions now include optional fillable fields. Districts can fill in the appropriate information before printing the directions, or continue to print them with blank lines and communicate the information to Test Monitors (e.g., during training).

- Added scripted language specific to *Test Directions: Paper* for Test Monitors to remind students to make sure they answered all items. However, while Test Monitors can remind students about making sure all items were answered, they cannot instruct students to check or complete a specific item.

- The Option A and Option B portions of the scripted language related to scheduling have been removed, and the information is more generic for both paper and online.

- Clarified that Test Monitors may verify how far students have progressed within the test based on scheduling (e.g., instructed to finish a certain number of items).

  o Added guidance in the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section if students go beyond the number of items scheduled or cannot complete the number of items that were scheduled.

  o Added scripted language to explicitly say "exit/stop now" when applicable.

  o Note: While Test Monitors can give more guidance, they still cannot look at test content.

- Clarified the guidance on what to do if a student is stuck on an item and unable to move forward. Test Monitors may verbally describe the functionality of the item type, but they cannot demonstrate or show how to answer the specific test item.

# *Growth Reporting Changes*

In an effort to improve reporting and to prepare for MCA-IV, there will be changes to growth reporting in the coming years. 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. Note: While MDE will overview changes to growth reporting in the DAC Test Administration Trainings next week,

these sessions will allow for more questions and discussions. Registration links will be available in next week's *Assessment Update*.

- Thursday, Jan. 23: 10–11 a.m. (face to face)

- Tuesday, Jan. 28: noon–1 p.m. (webinar)

- Monday, Feb. 10: 11 a.m.–noon (webinar)

- Monday, Feb. 10: 2:30–3:30 p.m. (webinar; focused on charter schools)

- Thursday, Feb. 13: 10–11 a.m. (webinar)

- Thursday, Feb. 13: 12:30–1:30 p.m. (webinar)

# PearsonAccess Next DAC and AA Admin Access in TMS

As users with District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and Assessment Administrator (AA) user roles track staff training or enter group trainings for tracking, they will need access to the Admin features in the Training Management System (TMS). With the testing windows approaching, Pearson will provide new users Admin access more frequently than during the rest of the year. The Admin option will now be available to new DAC or AA users on the Friday following the week their PearsonAccess Next account is created or enabled (e.g., if a user is given the AA user role on Thursday, Jan. 16, they should see the Admin option on Friday, Jan. 24).

If a DAC or AA user account becomes disabled or inactive in PearsonAccess Next, the user will no longer have the Admin features in TMS. Once a user has been enabled or restored in PearsonAccess Next, the user's account will be considered "new," and they will have to wait 1–2 weeks to be able to review reports. To avoid this, users should log in to PearsonAccess Next and ensure their account is active.

# User Account Management in PearsonAccess Next

DACs should annually review users to ensure accounts in PearsonAccess Next are accurate. DAC and AA users can create, edit, delete, and enable other user accounts, as well as reset passwords, in PearsonAccess Next. User accounts can be created and maintained either manually or through a file export/import.

The following are important facts and tips about PearsonAccess Next user accounts:

- All DAC accounts are created by Pearson.

  - Confirm the correct DAC information is listed in MDE-ORG. The district's Site Verification Coordinator (SVC) can make updates in the District and School Site Verification system.

  - MDE sends nightly files to Pearson, and Pearson creates new DAC accounts within 2 to 3 business days of when the update occurs in MDE's systems.

- For security purposes, passwords automatically expire every 180 days.

    o Users should follow the instructions in the auto-generated emails to reset their password or select [Forgot Password](#) on the sign-in page.

    o DACs and AAs can reset other user passwords.

- User accounts are disabled after 240 days of inactivity.

    o If staff have not logged in to their account since the testing window, their accounts are likely already disabled.

    o Disabled accounts can be enabled manually or through a file export/import. Once enabled, users must reset their password and log in to activate their account.

- User accounts are deleted after 390 days of inactivity.

    o Deleted accounts can only be restored manually in PearsonAccess Next.

    o Once restored, most deleted accounts need to be enabled as well.

    o Once restored and enabled, users must reset their password and log in to activate their account.

Note: A high-level overview of these tasks is available in the *[User Account Management in PearsonAccess Next](#)* infographic. Additionally, a short video training, *User Management in PearsonAccess Next*, is available in the [Training Management System (TMS)](#), on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the Pearson Video Trainings category. This video training describes the process of creating, editing, deleting, enabling, and restoring accounts, both manually and through a file upload. Detailed information is available in the *[PearsonAccess Next User Accounts Guide (2019–20)](#)*.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

# *Odds and Ends*

- **Table Updated in the *Procedures Manual***: On page 145 of the *[Procedures Manual](#)*, the *Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Reading MCA* table has been updated to reflect the accurate number of items for grades 3–8 of the Reading MCA. This updated table aligns with the recently published *Testing Directions: Online*. If you have a printed copy of the *Procedures Manual*, consider replacing page 145, or manually updating the table with the correct numbers.

- **New Infographic Available**: DACs can use the new *Statewide Testing: 6 Reasons Why* infographic as a resource to share with teachers and other staff to explain statewide testing policies and procedures. This infographic is posted on the [District Resources page](#) with the other DAC resources.

- **TestNav Unavailable**: In preparation for MCA testing, Pearson will be updating TestNav on Thursday, Jan. 9, between 8 a.m.–2 p.m. The online item samplers on PearsonAccess Next and the infrastructure trial

forms in the Training Center for technology preparation will be unavailable during the outage. This update will automatically be applied to the app and does not require any action in the field.

- **High School Science Participation Calculations**: Though the implementation was delayed from the anticipated date, the calculation for high school participation has now been updated. This update removed students from the calculation if there are years in which they repeat grade 12, which means these are more accurate calculations. More information is in the Dec. 11 *Assessment Update*.

# *Upcoming Opportunities*

## Pearson New DAC Q&A

Pearson will host a New DAC Q&A tomorrow, Jan. 9, from 2–3:30 to review and discuss DAC questions related to user management in PearsonAccess Next and the Training Management System (TMS). Pearson will also provide an overview of the topics that will be covered at the upcoming *Test Administration Training* (described below) to provide context and background information for New DACs.

Prerequisites for the Pearson New DAC Q&A are to watch the following trainings in the Training Management System (TMS) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab under Pearson video trainings:

- *User Management in PearsonAccess Next*

- *Training Management System*

No registration or password is required. At the time of the webinar, use the following information:

- Join the Pearson New DAC Q&A webinar.

- Phone number: 877-554-0877

- Conference code: 571 468 0293

## WIDA Webinar: Managing Paper Materials

On Jan. 9, WIDA will provide a webinar for DACs regarding paper materials that are initially sent, additional materials, and keeping materials secure. Join the WIDA webinar: *Managing Test Materials* on Jan. 9 at 1 p.m.

Note: While some of the information will not be relevant to Minnesota (since some states in the WIDA Consortium administer all ACCESS testing using paper materials), much of the information still applies to states who administer the grades 1–12 ACCESS online.

## WIDA Webinar: Technology Troubleshooting

On Jan. 15, WIDA will provide a webinar for DACs, Test Administrators, and Technology Coordinators with an overview of various error messages and common troubleshooting solutions. Join the WIDA webinar: *Technology Troubleshooting* on Jan. 15 at 11 a.m.

# DAC Test Administration Training

Starting next week, MDE and Pearson will conduct DAC Test Administration Trainings at three different locations. The Test Administration Training is required for all DACs in order to prepare for spring testing; all DACs must attend the MDE webinar, attend an in-person session, or listen to the MDE recording.

- MDE will focus on changes to policies and procedures for the 2019–20 school year.

- Pearson will present changes and updates to PearsonAccess Next, TestNav, Training Management System, and reporting.

- During the last part of the day, MDE will present information on changes to growth reporting and use of results.

Each in-person training will be from 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. with check-in beginning at 8:30 a.m. Morning refreshments and lunch will be provided. For those unable to attend one of the trainings, MDE will provide a webinar option as an alternative for their portions; Pearson will post a recording of their portion of the training in TMS. Registration and information is in the table below.

The training PowerPoint and handouts will be available for printing or downloading by the end of day tomorrow, Jan. 9, in the following locations; if you have registered for either the webinar or one of the in-person trainings, you will also be emailed this information.

- For the webinar, you must first register for the training and use the link in the registration email to join the webinar; on this page, the handouts will be available under "Course material." The PowerPoint and handouts will also be available at the start of the webinar.

- For the in-person sessions, the PowerPoints and handouts for both MDE and Pearson will be posted to a new DAC training page.

| DATE | TRAINING AND REGISTRATION | LOCATION |
|------|---------------------------|----------|
| Monday, Jan. 13 | Register for the webinar option of MDE's portion of the Test Administration Training. | Webinar for MDE portion 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. |
| Tuesday, Jan. 14 | Register for the Mankato Test Administration Training. | Courtyard by Marriott: Mankato 901 Raintree Rd. Gallery A & B Mankato, MN 56001 |
| Wednesday, Jan. 15 | Register for the St. Cloud Test Administration Training. | St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center 10 4th Ave. South Herberger Suite St. Cloud, MN 56301 |

| Date | Training and Registration | Location |
|------|---------------------------|----------|
| Thursday, Jan. 16 | Register for the Metro Test Administration Training. | Delta Hotels by Marriott: Minneapolis NE 1330 Industrial Blvd NE Minneapolis Ballroom Minneapolis, MN 55413 |

# *Tech Update*

## ACCESS for ELLs Technology Preparation

The ACCESS for ELLs testing window is Jan. 27–March 20. 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].

Technology Coordinators should also work with their District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) to discuss technology needs, confirm the communication plan for sharing information during testing, and ensure all training requirements have been completed prior to testing, including the *Test Security Training*.

Preparation may include downloading software to testing machines, checking that all devices have minimum system requirements and are configured to support testing, and verifying that firewalls and filters are configured properly. More information on preparing for ACCESS for ELLs test window is found on the WIDA's Technology page.

## Key Technology Information for ACCESS

- **Testing Window**: Jan. 27–March 20

- **Service Provider and Website**: Data Recognition Corporation (DRC); wida-ams.us

- **System Requirements**: Technology Requirements for WIDA assessments

- **Customer Support**: 855-787-9615 or WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com

- **Key Technology Resources**: *WIDA AMS User Guide*, *COS-SD Technology Readiness Checklist for WIDA Online Assessment*, and other related resources are available in WIDA AMS. In order to access technical resources, log in to WIDA AMS > All Applications > General Information > Documents > [leave all filters at All to see the resources].

- **Training Opportunities**: Live and recorded webinars are included in the *2019–20 Q&A Webinar Schedule for Technology Coordinators* document, which is included in the list of technology resources in WIDA AMS, referenced in the previous bullet.

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