

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—FEBRUARY 12, 2020

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New DAC Q&A Webinar Registration • ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Testing Reminders • Returning ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Materials • Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials • Translated Materials Available on PearsonAccess Next • Monitoring Test Administrations • Cell Phone and Device Policy Reminder • Who to Contact—MDE, DRC, or WIDA? • College Entrance Exams • MCA-IV Draft Test Specifications for Science: Public Review • Review Committees Invitation • MDE Systems and Reports Unavailable • Upcoming Opportunities • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 27–March 20: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window</p> <p>Feb. 17: Begin set up for MCA online testing and data entry in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p>Feb. 18: Additional orders window opens in PearsonAccess Next for MCA and MTAS</p> <p>Feb. 18–19 or Feb. 25–26: Districts receive MCA and MTAS test materials based on District Options selections in Test WES</p> <p>Feb. 24: Begin entering LCI data in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p>March 2: MCA and MTAS testing window opens</p>

New DAC Q&A Webinar Registration

The next New DAC Q&A webinar is Tuesday, Feb. 25, from 2–3 p.m. The prerequisites are to review Chapter 7 of the [Procedures Manual](#) and watch the *Understanding Student Precode* module in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#), on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the New DAC Modules category. [Submit your questions for the February webinar.](#)

[Register for the New DAC Q&A Webinar.](#) At the time of the webinar, use the following information.

- Phone number: 415-655-0003
- Access code: 966 718 025

- Password for webinar: newDACsrock!

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ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Testing Reminders

Common Misadministrations

MDE has noticed two common misadministrations across the state. Consider reminding your Test Administrators to be diligent in order to prevent these situations.

- Students are logging in with the wrong test ticket. Be sure Test Administrators distribute the correct test tickets to students and that each student verifies they are logging in with the correct information. This check is part of the *Testing Administrator's Script* that is required to be read before students begin testing.
- Students in grade 4–12 being placed in the wrong session (i.e. keyboarding or handwriting) for their Writing domain. Before beginning any grades 4–12 online ACCESS Writing sessions, please verify that students are assigned to the session in WIDA AMS that aligns with their response mode.
 - The grades 4–5 Writing domains are typically completed in handwriting (HW) sessions in which the writing prompts are presented online, and students respond in a writing response booklet. If students in grades 4–5 are competent at typing and wish to respond online, districts must remove the students from the handwriting (HW) session and then move them into a keyboarding test session.
 - The grades 6–12 Writing domains are typically completed in keyboarding sessions. Writing prompts are presented online, and students will type their responses. Students in grades 6–12 who are inexperienced, unfamiliar, or uncomfortable with typing 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. In these cases, districts must remove the students from the keyboarding session and then move them to a handwriting (HW) session.

Paper Administrations and Alternate ACCESS

Paper administrations of the entire ACCESS test are considered accommodations for English learners with an IEP or 504 plan or who have been enrolled in Minnesota schools for less than a year and have an English proficiency level of 2.9 or below on the ACCESS or a 2.0 on the WIDA screener. English learners must be first enrolled within 12 months of the first day of the ACCESS testing window to be eligible for paper administrations. Before ordering a paper test for a student who meets these two criteria, please consider the following:

- Other than the provisions for the writing test, it is not possible to combine administration modes. Students cannot take some domains on paper and some online.
- Students should be included in the decision-making process before selecting a paper administration.

For English learners with significant cognitive disabilities, it is recommended that the IEP team collaborates with EL staff and uses the [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Criteria Decision Tree](#) to determine if the Alternate ACCESS is the most appropriate English language proficiency accountability assessment in place of the ACCESS.

Note: The decision regarding which test or accommodations to administer must be made before a student takes any assessment for the year, and in conjunction with EL staff (for newcomers) and the IEP or 504 team. The decision cannot be changed after the student starts testing.

Special Education Deferred (SPD) and Alternate ACCESS

If the EL staff and the IEP team determine that the Special Education Deferred (SPD) code for ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS is appropriate for more than two domains, districts must contact MDE (mde.testing@state.mn.us) for guidance. It would be a rare instance in which a student could not access three or more domains. MDE will work with districts to determine whether general supports or accommodations are available to help the student access one or more of the domains.

Test Administrator Script

Test Administrators must use the exact wording from the *Test Administrator's Script* when administering the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS. The [Test Administrator Manual](#) provides additional guidance of how to support students including a *Test Items Dos and Don'ts* table on page 118.

Active Monitoring

Test Administrators must actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration and ensure that all students are working independently and making progress in their tests. They cannot complete other tasks, including lesson planning, grading papers, or talking casually with other staff.

Materials on Walls or Student Desks

Any materials used for a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) should be covered or removed during test administration. If testing is taking place in the EL classroom, all materials on walls or student desks that pertain to language instruction should be covered or removed. Although content is referenced in the test items, a student's content knowledge is not part of the language proficiency scoring. Because of this, standards-based materials on the walls or on a student's desk can stay as determined by the district. If there are questions about whether the materials are considered content or for language instruction, then cover or remove them.

Test Security Reminders

DACs should remind their staff that it is not acceptable to copy, reproduce, retain, or use any portion of test items or test materials in a manner inconsistent with test security policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Capturing and/or sharing any secure test content.
- Making a copy of a test.

- Allowing untrained staff to take any part in the testing process, including handling test tickets or having access to securely stored test materials.

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Returning ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Materials

As districts complete the writing domain for grades 1–3, WIDA requests they return the writing test booklets as early as possible. Also, it is not necessary to wait until the end of the test window to return other paper materials (e.g., Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS). For more information about returning paper materials, use the *State-Specific Directions* document posted to [WIDA's Minnesota page](#).

If districts are unable to return materials early, it is critical that districts return paper materials no later than the final ship-by date (March 27) to ensure that all paper tests can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. If the deadline is missed, assessment records may not be provided for Posttest Editing, scores may not be available for accountability calculations, and an Individual Student Report (ISR) may not be provided with the shipment of reports.

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Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials

The initial quantities of paper test materials for MCA and MTAS are based on information that was entered in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17. The shipment of these test materials will arrive at the district office or schools on either Feb. 18–19 or Feb. 25–26, depending on the shipping location and dates selected in Test WES. If no changes were indicated in Test WES, the default options were ship to district and a delivery window of Feb. 18–19.

Districts can track the status of the shipment in PearsonAccess Next 2–3 days prior to the arrival date. For more information, refer to [Viewing Test Material Reports and Tracking Information](#).

Receiving and Inventorying Test Materials

MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials will be boxed separately and have different packing lists and security checklists. Use these materials to inventory all materials received; electronic copies of each school's security checklists are also available on PearsonAccess Next. For more information, refer to the [Receiving Secure Test Materials guide](#). A copy is also included in the test materials shipment.

The security of the test materials must be maintained when inventorying and organizing, and all secure test materials must be kept in a secure, locked location until testing. The *Handling Secure Paper Test Materials* is an optional module for staff who will handle paper test materials for any statewide assessments, and it provides information about keeping materials secure and maintaining the chain of custody. It is available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the Other Trainings tab in the District-Assigned Trainings category.

Note: Some districts have a simplified delivery process set up with the delivery carrier for other shipments (where the carrier can drop off materials without a signature). MDE's policy is that a signature is required, which is communicated to UPS by Pearson. However, if this is a process set up in your district, ensure staff are aware when test materials will be delivered so that they are secured.

Placing Additional Orders in PearsonAccess Next

The window for placing additional orders in PearsonAccess Next for MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials opens on Feb. 18. Additional test materials can be ordered until noon on the Wednesday before the last day of the testing windows. Additional orders may be placed for any of the following reasons:

- Students have newly enrolled or there are changes in accommodations/linguistic supports or test assignments after Jan. 17.
- The district decided not to receive MTAS test materials in the initial test materials shipment (a decision made during Pretest Editing).
- Students require the MTAS Presentation Pages and Response Option Cards for reading in a symbol format.

For step-by-step instructions on placing an additional order, refer to [Ordering Additional Test Materials](#). For any questions about placing additional orders, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

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Translated Materials Available on PearsonAccess Next

In response to feedback from DACs, the [Test Security Checklist](#) and [Testing Directions](#) are now available in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The translated [Test Security Checklist](#) may be provided to staff who need the checklist available in another language. The [Testing Directions](#) are used by Test Monitors to provide translated directions to students who need this linguistic support; only the portions read aloud to students are translated.

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Monitoring Test Administrations

MDE visits schools to monitor test administrations as part of an overall strategy to improve the administration of Minnesota's assessments and to verify that test security requirements are followed. MDE conducts monitoring visits for both the ACCESS and MCA test administrations. It is important that districts keep their posted testing calendars updated, which includes a requirement to specify the days each grade will be taking the various domains/subjects.

Starting on page 259 of the [Procedures Manual](#), the *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* outlines the areas the monitors will observe and questions they will ask assessment staff during ACCESS and MCA site visits.

District Monitoring of Test Administration

MDE requires District and School Assessment Coordinators (or any of their designated, trained staff) to conduct random, unannounced observations of testing rooms to confirm adherence to state and district policies and procedures by Test Administrators, Test Monitors, and other staff. This requirement applies to both ACCESS and MCA administrations. Districts can develop their own monitoring list or use the *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* on page 259 of the [Procedures Manual](#), as needed. It is up to the district to determine how many schools and testing rooms to observe.

Monitoring of individual administrations (Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS) is not required, but districts may include them in applicable portions of their monitoring, if desired.

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Cell Phone and Device Policy Reminder

For all statewide testing administrations (MCA/MTAS and ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS), students may **not** use or access cell phones, wearable technology, or any other devices at any time during testing, including during breaks or when testing is completed. District and School Assessment Coordinators must develop and train staff on school-specific policies and procedures prior to test administration. The full policy is included in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#), starting on page 170; the following are a few reminders from this section:

- If a student has a cell phone or device out at any point while testing, the student's test has been compromised and needs to be invalidated, even if the student did not use the cell phone or device.
- Students also may not wear or access "wearable" technology (e.g., smart watches, fitness trackers) during testing if the device can electronically send or receive information. If one of these devices is worn during testing, the student's test must be invalidated because the device is visible and accessible, regardless of whether it is used or not.
- Even if the student has completed testing, cell phones or other devices cannot be used in the testing room.

Note: A cell phone is allowed if it is used as a medical monitor, as long as the use is officially documented by a medical professional. The Test Monitor must ensure the device is not accessed for other purposes.

The test code for invalidations due to cell phone or device access is INV-D. The invalidation of a student's test must be documented on the *Test Administration Report (TAR)*, which is kept on file at the district. Only if there was a security violation (e.g., student uses the cell phone to take a picture of the test) does a *Test Security Notification (TSN)* also need to be submitted in Test WES. Following their policies and procedures for accessing student devices, the district may need to verify whether or not test security has been compromised and may refer to the *Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide* in Appendix B of the *Procedures Manual* for guidance.

Cell Phone Policy for Test Monitors

To allow Test Administrators/Monitors to continue active monitoring with the least disruption, districts may choose to allow Test Administrators/Monitors to use their cell phones to alert other staff of issues. They may use cell phones or other electronic devices **only** to alert others that assistance is needed. Test content can never be photographed or communicated, including when the Test Administrator/Monitor needs to alert others of an issue. They cannot check email or work on their cell phones, and cell phones should be silenced to reduce disruptions.

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Who to Contact—MDE, DRC, or WIDA?

MDE

For questions about the following related to ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS administrations, contact Sequoia Block at mde.testing@state.mn.us or 651-582-8674:

- MDE policy
- Training requirements
- Misadministrations
- Regeneration requests
- Accommodations
- Alternate ACCESS decisions
- Allowing students to complete a domain across multiple days
- Ordering additional district/school labels
- Creation of a DAC account for WIDA and WIDA AMS

DRC

For questions about test session management, additional orders, student management in WIDA AMS, and technology issues, contact DRC Customer Service at WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com or 855-787-9615.

WIDA

For questions about test administration manuals, staff training/quizzes, and preparing students for testing, contact WIDA Client Services Center at help@wida.us or 866-276-7735.

Student Data Privacy Reminder

If your question is about a specific student's test or situation, please only use the MARSS number when sending emails to MDE or a service provider. For student privacy, **do not send student names in an email**, including screenshots or attachments.

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College Entrance Exams

As part of legislation focused on career and college readiness, districts are required to offer students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to participate in a college entrance exam (ACT or SAT) on a school day. Districts are expected to contract and pay for the administration of the college entrance exam and can request reimbursement from MDE for eligible students—those who are eligible for a free/reduced-price meal (FRP) or who are unable to pay. More information about this requirement starts on page 31 of the *Procedures Manual*.

Requesting Reimbursement

After districts have ACT or SAT results from the college entrance exam administered in the district, they can request reimbursement in the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\) system](#). Future *Assessment Updates* will announce when the GRR user guide and training has been updated for 2019–20 and when reports are available to confirm reimbursement requests.

When requesting reimbursements, districts will use FRP eligibility information (i.e., the FRP flag). However, district staff requesting reimbursements do not need detailed information or forms related a student's FRP information.

Note: The FRP eligibility information is available in the *District and School Student Results (DSR & SSR)* in Assessment Secure Reports.

Fee Waiver

ACT provides an opportunity for students who are eligible for FRP to apply for a fee waiver. FRP students taking the ACT for the first time typically would not need to complete the fee waiver because their district may receive reimbursement for the cost of their assessment.

The fee waiver process would be most appropriate for a student who is taking the ACT for the second time, because districts may only be reimbursed for one assessment per student. If district or school staff are assisting students with fee waiver requests, be sure that laws regarding a student's Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and FRP status are followed.

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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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Review Committees Invitation

MDE needs qualified teachers for the MCA Review Committees to provide feedback on MCA questions. Participation is beneficial both personally and professionally as participants will be able to:

- See how Minnesota Academic Standards are assessed
- Learn about developing strong test questions
- Receive an honorarium or have MDE cover the cost of substitute coverage
- Receive reimbursement for travel expenses

Please share the *Educator MCA Review Committees* and *Community MCA Review Committees* flyers with interested staff (available under the *How do I sign up?* section of the [Register for MCA Review Committees page](#)).

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MDE Systems and Reports Unavailable

Some of MDE systems and reports will be unavailable from Thursday, Feb. 13, 5 p.m. through the morning of Tuesday, Feb. 18. If districts need to make changes or look up information that is related to MCA or MTAS, they will need to wait until Feb. 18. PearsonAccess Next will still be available during this time, so districts can start the set-up process for online testing and data entry in PearsonAccess Next on Feb. 17.

Note: This does not affect ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS testing in any way since everything is maintained in WIDA AMS throughout the testing window.

Upcoming Opportunities

New DAC Trainings: Pearson's Systems

Tomorrow, Feb. 13, Pearson will provide the following webinar training for new DACs and educators; experienced DACs are welcome to attend as well. No registration or password is required.

- Call-in phone number: 877-554-0877
- Conference code: 571 468 0293

The recording and PowerPoint from yesterday's *PearsonAccess Next: New DACs (1–2 years)* webinar will be available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) this Friday, Feb. 14. The *TestNav and Item Samplers: For New DACs and Educators (1–2 years)* webinar will be available in the TMS on Friday, Feb. 21. Both webinars will be posted on the District Assessment Coordinator tab in the Pearson Recorded Webinars category.

Note: Depending on your WebEx and computer configurations, you may need to call in to the webinar to hear audio.

DATE	TRAINING AND TOPIC	MEETING LINK
Thursday, Feb. 13 10–11 a.m.	<i>TestNav and Item Samplers: For New DACs and Educators (1–2 years)</i> Overview of TestNav general functionality and online and accessibility tools, signing in to TestNav, checking audio, verifying student name, and the differences between Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs. How to access item samplers will also be addressed.	Join the TestNav and Item Samplers webinar on Feb. 13.

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 is providing webinars to discuss 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 remaining webinars 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).

DATE	TIME/NOTES	REGISTRATION LINK/ADDRESS
Thursday, Feb. 13	10–11 a.m.	Register for Feb. 13 (morning) Growth Training webinar.
Thursday, Feb. 13	12:30–1:30 p.m.	Register for Feb. 13 (afternoon) Growth Training webinar.

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Tech Update

Action Required: Chrome 80 Operating System (OS) Issue for Chromebooks and Chromeboxes

During review of the upcoming release of Chrome 80 OS, DRC discovered an issue that blocks users from accessing ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA Screener through the INSIGHT Secure Browser on Chromebooks and Chromeboxes. Until a resolution has been implemented, DRC advises sites to immediately disable automatic operating system updates on Chromebooks and Chromeboxes, in order to prevent these devices from updating to Version 80 of Chrome OS. If these devices update to Chrome 80 OS before a resolution has been implemented, you will not be able to use the devices for DRC INSIGHT Secure Browser-based testing.

To clarify, the Chrome Browser and Chrome Operating System are different:

- **Chrome Browser:** Google released the Chrome Browser Version 80 update for Windows, Mac, and Linux earlier this week. This is used to access web pages. This browser update does not affect the function of the DRC INSIGHT Secure Browser.
- **Chrome Operating System:** The Chrome Operating System is installed on Chromebooks and Chromeboxes as the base operating system. Updating the Chrome OS to Version 80 on your Chromebooks and Chromeboxes will affect the function of the DRC INSIGHT Secure Browser. Google has not released this update yet, but WIDA and DRC expect it to occur soon.

A Technical Bulletin with instructions for disabling the automatic operating system updates has been posted in WIDA AMS under All Applications > General Information > Documents. Please contact DRC at WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com or call 855-787-9615 if you need assistance disabling the automatic operating system updates.

WIDA and DRC will provide more information about the expected resolution of this issue and any additional actions required as soon as possible.

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STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Education

education.mn.gov > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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