

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—MARCH 18, 2020

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Update • Returning ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Materials: UPS Update • Additional Orders: Pearson Delaying Shipments • ACT Update 	<p>March 27: <i>Deadline to ship ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS paper test materials to DRC</i></p>

COVID-19 Update

As the Division of Statewide Testing communicated to DACs on Monday, March 16, it is important to remember that during this unprecedented time, MDE’s primary concern and priority is the health and well-being of students, as well as their education. The following are answers to common questions MDE has received from districts this week:

- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS testing window will not be extended. MDE realizes that means some English learners will not be able to start or complete their ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS tests. MDE will provide further guidance related to these situations as it is determined.
- All ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS secure test materials should be returned to DRC no later than Friday, March 27. MDE strongly recommends returning materials as soon as possible. See the following article (*Returning ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Materials: UPS Update*) for more information about common challenges districts have faced this week when working with UPS to schedule pickups.
- At this time, MCA and MTAS materials must be kept secure and remain available for use when/if students return to the school building. The MCA and MTAS testing windows will not be extended.
- MDE does not have the authority to cancel/exempt districts from providing the MCA/MTAS. We are closely monitoring federal guidance and conversations to determine whether or not there will be any national decisions that shift testing expectations.
- Both ACT and College Board (SAT) are working on developing plans for testing delays and cancellations. While some information and links are provided below, contact the applicable service provider directly for specific guidance.

- For district-scheduled testing for college entrance exams, due to the governor’s directive to have schools closed through March 27, it is not appropriate or permitted to administer college entrance exams during that window.
- For more information about national test dates for ACT, districts should refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions section of the ACT website](#). Refer to the [ACT Update](#) article below for additional information.
- For information about national test dates for SAT, refer to the [Newsroom section of College Board’s website](#).
- MDE is working to determine what impact the testing disruptions will have on districts’ legislative requirements to provide a college entrance exam and will provide guidance to districts as more information is available. The money allocated for school year 2019–20 reimbursement of a college entrance exam will carry forward and will be available to be used for 2020–21 reimbursement.

Since this is a fluid situation with rapidly occurring updates and changes, please refer to the [COVID-19 Updates page](#) for additional documents and information from MDE. The *School Closure Guidance for Minnesota Public School Districts and Charter School* document (posted on the COVID-19 Updates page) will be updated regularly; see the *Assessment* section of the guidance document for information related to Statewide Testing. The Statewide Testing team provided some additional details for the “03-18-20” version of the guidance document, which was posted just minutes ago shortly after 4 p.m. today.

The updates to the guidance document are also reflected above. As more information becomes available, Statewide Testing will provide updates through the *Assessment Update*, direct emails, and/or webinars, as appropriate.

[Back to Top](#)

Returning ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Materials: UPS Update

Many districts have experienced challenges and issues with UPS this week when trying to schedule a pickup for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS materials. UPS network issues caused the UPS number for scheduling a pickup (866-857-1501) to be unavailable at times. UPS has also incorrectly charged some districts a pickup fee, and DRC is working with UPS to try to correct any misinformation.

If UPS states there will be a charge, DRC recommends that districts proceed with the pickup. The fee will be charged to DRC’s account if you provide the DRC’s account number: 90E0Y6. The city, state, and zip code associated to this account is Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, 55428. You can also drop the package off at a UPS store if that is a feasible option.

Note: Dropping off ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS materials at a UPS store is not ideal; however, due to the extraordinary circumstances we are all going through, districts may drop off materials as needed as long as the boxes have been sealed shut.

When you call the UPS 866-857-1501 number, UPS should be asking you the following questions. If they are not asking these questions, alert the UPS agent that you are calling in with pre-paid labels. UPS should ask:

- What is the phone number you are calling from? (This gives UPS your location.)
- What is a Tracking Number from one of the packages?
- How many packages will there be?
- What time will the shipment be ready?
- What is closing time?
- Do you have any special instructions?

If you ask, UPS will give you a pickup request number that can be tracked. Contact DRC Customer Support with any questions at WIDA@DataRecognitionCorp.com or call 855-787-9615. MDE is actively working with DRC and WIDA to determine what the underlying return issues are, and in the meantime, districts should continue to take steps to return ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS materials while keeping them as secure as possible.

[Back to Top](#)

Additional Orders: Pearson Delaying Shipments

Due to Minnesota school closures, Pearson will hold all shipments of additional orders to public and non-public schools until at least March 27. DACs and AAs may still place additional orders in [PearsonAccess Next](#), but Pearson will not approve or ship these orders until schools resume operations.

If a DAC or AA decides to complete an additional order at this time, use the *Ordering Additional Test Materials* document available on the [User Guides page](#). If you need additional help with additional orders, contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

[Back to Top](#)

ACT Update

Due to the governor's directive to have schools closed through March 27, it is not appropriate or permitted for districts to administer the ACT on March 24. ACT recently sent information that may have been confusing for Minnesota districts since some schools nationally are not closed. Despite the fact that ACT is currently still planning to support the March 24 initial test date, this does not apply to Minnesota districts. It is unknown at this time whether or not the April 7 make-up date (or any dates for online testing in late April) will be available to Minnesota districts.

If the district and/or a school is unable to complete testing due to closure, districts should return their test booklets as soon as possible, following the guidance in [ACT's Test Coordinator Manual](#). Any materials that will not be returned at this time must remain secure.

ACT will communicate with designated school and district testing coordinators in the near future, regarding whether or not an additional test date will be available in the late spring. In the meantime, you are welcome to visit the [ACT District Testing web page](#) to check for any general updates regarding this situation, or contact ACT at actdistricttesting@act.org or 800-553-6244 Ext. 2800 with additional ACT-related questions.

[Back to Top](#)

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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