

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—JANUARY 30, 2019

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Testing Window • Directions for Test Administrations • Update to Scheduling for Science MCA • Monitoring of Test Administrations • Review of Test Security Procedures • Vendors Receiving Preliminary Data • Advisory Panelists Needed • Upcoming Opportunities • Odds and Ends • Tech Update 	<p>Jan. 28–March 22: Testing window for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs</p> <p>Feb. 18: Begin set up for online testing and data entry in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p>Feb. 19: Additional orders window opens for MCA and MTAS materials</p>

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Testing Window

The testing window for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is now open. Below are a few reminders for testing.

- Districts must make sure they are prepared to administer the grades 1–12 ACCESS online using the available [technology resources](#) (wida.wisc.edu > Assess > Technology).
- Districts will need to manually add any newly enrolled or newly identified English learners directly into WIDA AMS.
- Paper test materials were recently delivered to districts. The additional orders window is now open.
 - To ensure sites have all the materials they need for test administration, each district (that had more than ten items in the initial shipment) was scheduled to receive a 15% overage of paper materials (half to district and half to school sites).
 - WIDA requests that districts use both the district overage and school overage before requesting additional orders. Districts should combine all additional material needs from individual buildings as one district order, if possible.

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 or 855-787-9615.

DRC System Status Webpage

The [DRC System Status webpage](#) provides real-time updates on operations of WIDA AMS, INSIGHT, the Testing Site Manager, and Educator Scoring. 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 states in the WIDA consortium begin testing in December and some end testing in May, email updates will be sent to subscribers even outside of the Minnesota ACCESS testing window.

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Directions for Test Administrations

The testing directions (both [Directions for Online Administrations](#) and [Directions for Paper Administrations](#)) have been revised for 2018–19. Based on district feedback last spring, MDE revised the wording and format of the script that is read to students to make it easier for students to understand and easier for Test Monitors to use. In addition, the script was moved to the front of the document. MDE also added a Test Monitor checklist, as well as a section giving more guidance about how to appropriately answer student questions or provide assistance to students. MDE requires that the applicable *Directions for Administrations* be used for all test administrations.

During the DAC Test Administration Trainings in January, the following considerations were discussed at different sites and are being shared so that all DACs are provided the same information.

- Although the color scheme has been revised, the document will print clearly in black and white; printing in color is not required.
- Districts may choose to provide the full document electronically prior to testing and/or address in training, and only print the sections most applicable to the actual test sessions. Note: The Test Monitors should be familiar with the entire document, not just select pages, but they are only required to use the scripted portions (pages 2–7) during testing.
- Districts may also consider allowing Test Monitors to access the directions electronically during the test sessions, if they choose. Note: Test Monitors who use an electronic version must follow MDE and district policy regarding using devices (e.g., not checking email or using the device for other work).

MDE will continue to discuss other feedback shared during the trainings, and any additional feedback gathered this spring, for consideration next year.

Note: See the next article for information about an important change to part of the scripted directions for the online Science MCA. If you have already printed the *Directions for Online Administrations*, you may need to reprint a revised page.

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Update to Scheduling for Science MCA

In Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#), MDE included the following information for districts to consider when scheduling testing (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

- MDE recommends using the estimated test administration times to schedule test sessions based on time because students may exit the test at any point.
- If the district wishes to schedule testing so that most students complete testing in the same number of days, the number of items may be used as the guideline.

However, for Science MCA, the item numbers start over in each section and vary by grade and form, so if you plan to divide the administration evenly over two days, scheduling by item number will not work. Because Science MCA is a linear test (not adaptive), each of the two sections are roughly equal. Therefore, MDE recommends having students exit after completing the first section of the test if dividing the test over two days. Even though section numbers are not included in their tests, students will know when they have completed the section when they see a review screen and go to the next section.

Based on this change of how the Science MCA can be scheduled, the script for the first day of testing on page 2 of the [Directions for Online Administrations](#) has been updated; the change is shown below for reference (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Testing > Testing Directions). In addition, the note about scheduling by section has been updated on page 10 of the Detailed Information section to clarify that it is specific to reading and mathematics.

Situation B: Use if testing is scheduled based on students completing a certain number of items (or for science, the first section).

SAY: We have scheduled about ____ minutes for testing.

You will stop testing after you have answered ____ questions **[or for science: the first section]** or when our testing time is over. It is important that you do your best. The test is not timed so you can have more time later if you need it.

When you are done, raise your hand. If other students are still testing, then you will _____ [e.g., read a book.]

We apologize for the additional work this late change may cause.

Note that scheduling by time, where students exit at different places, will still work for Science MCA, and no changes to the scripted directions are needed if you are scheduling by time. Similarly, the changes do not affect scheduling for Reading and Mathematics MCA.

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Monitoring of 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. Monitoring visits will now include ACCESS test administrations.

The *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List*, starting on page 229 of the [Procedures Manual](#) outlines the areas the monitors will observe or request during site visits for either assessment (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). This list has been updated as follows:

- ACCESS information is now included.
- Some of the questions for the District or School Assessment Coordinator are new and were added in order to ask about processes that are often not observed (e.g., handling unexpected situations).
- An additional observation that student questions are addressed using the applicable directions.

During site visits, a trained monitor will have an identification badge and a letter stating their purpose, and will request to see the District/School Assessment Coordinator. The monitor will stay on site until at least one testing session has been completed and the assessment coordinator has been interviewed. Depending on the test administration schedule, he or she may stay on site for the full day of testing. The monitor is there only to observe, not to participate in the administration of the test or clarify MDE policies or procedures.

Testing Calendars

Federal and state statute require districts to include a testing calendar on their website, and the requirements are summarized starting on page 125 of the [Procedures Manual](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

In order to set schedules for monitoring schools during test administrations, testing calendars for each grade and subject must be posted and kept current throughout the school year. MDE may follow up with the DAC to confirm that testing calendars are up to date. Districts are required to include the dates when most students will be testing for each grade and subject/domain, including the following details:

- The dates that tests will actually be administered by grade and subject/domain must be posted, not just the dates of the state-designated testing window. This does not include MTAS, Alternate ACCESS, or Kindergarten ACCESS, since they are individual administrations.
- If changes have been identified throughout the year, updates to the calendar must be made as soon as possible. Note: If your district's ACCESS schedule changed based on school closures due to weather this week, calendars need to be updated as soon as possible.

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Review of Test Security Procedures

MDE annually reviews test security procedures of randomly selected districts and charter schools. See below for the key findings from this year's reviews:

- More districts are using the [District Test Security Procedure Template](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).
- While its use is not required, districts that use the *District Test Security Procedure Template* had fewer issues that needed to be corrected in their procedure.
- The most common issues identified are not having the following requirements:
 - An assessment calendar online that aligns with all the needed criteria
 - A procedure for handling security cameras in test rooms (when applicable)
 - The specific location at each site where secure materials are stored
 - The individuals who have access to the location of secure materials

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Vendors Receiving Preliminary Data

For districts that have a Student Information System (SIS) or Data Warehouse vendor receiving weekly preliminary On-Demand Report extracts from PearsonAccess Next, DACs will need to indicate which vendor should receive data extracts for each school in PearsonAccess Next. SIS/Data Warehouse vendors will send instructions on how to complete this process in PearsonAccess Next directly to the applicable districts. Contact your vendor for more information.

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Advisory Panelists Needed

MDE needs qualified teachers and community members to serve on MCA advisory panels. Each advisory panel member plays an important role in developing quality tests for Minnesota's students. Please forward this information to staff in the district or to community members who may be interested in advisory panel meetings.

For more information about advisory panels and to submit or update your information to the Advisory Panel Registry, view the [Advisory Panels webpage](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Register for Advisory Panels). While teachers comprise the bulk of the advisory panel participants, bias review panels need a wide variety of community members.

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Upcoming Opportunities

Upcoming DAC Trainings from Pearson

Pearson will provide a variety of training options for DACs and any other interested staff in the district. The table below contains the training topics, high-level agendas, dates, and links to join each session on the day of the training. No registration is required. Note: Depending on your WebEx configurations, the start time of the trainings below might appear in Eastern time, but times in the table below are accurate for Central time.

DATE	TRAINING AND TOPIC	MEETING LINK
Tuesday, Feb. 12 1–3 p.m.	<i>PearsonAccess Next and Reporting: For New DACs</i> Comprehensive overview of PearsonAccess Next and Reporting for the MCA and MTAS 2019.	Join the PearsonAccess Next and Reporting webinar on Feb. 12.
Thursday, Feb. 14 10–11 a.m.	<i>TestNav and Item Samplers: For New DACs and Educators</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 MCA. How to access item samplers will also be addressed.	Join the TestNav and Item Samplers webinar on Feb. 14.

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Odds and Ends

- **Reporting Groups:** District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Assessment Administrators (AAs) can now create reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next so that teachers can access student results in On-Demand Reports and Historical Student Data. There are enhanced features for creating reporting groups this year. For more information, refer to the [Reporting Groups User Guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Additional Reporting Resources).

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Tech Update

Recommendations for Proctor Cache Reminder

Pearson has updated Proctor Cache recommendations for the 2018–19 school year and beyond. Because of the increased bandwidth now available in schools throughout Minnesota and nationwide, proctor caching is no

longer required for adaptive testing. In addition, Pearson has made significant updates and improvements to TestNav, which reduces the overall bandwidth required to test successfully.

- Pearson is still recommending Proctor Cache for the Science MCA and Science Script MCA tests since they are not adaptive and are large in size due to simulations and animations.
- Proctor Cache is no longer recommended for Reading or Mathematics MCA tests, which due to their adaptive nature, require continual communication with Pearson servers. Most school districts have ample network capacity to support adaptive testing without the need for local content caching.
- Proctor Cache is no longer recommended for any Data Entry Tests.

Note: When creating test sessions in PearsonAccess Next for tests that do not require Proctor Cache, users will still need to select a Precaching Computer. Pearson recommends Technology Staff create a placeholder computer name for users to select when creating test sessions for non-proctor cached tests.

Updated instructions for configuring TestNav for Proctor Caching are outlined in Step 8 of the updated [Infrastructure Readiness Checklist](#) available on PearsonAccess Next (PearsonAccess Next > Technology).

If you have additional questions on Proctor Cache, please see the [ProctorCache System Requirements](#) (PearsonAccess Next > TestNav 8 Online Support (under Quick Links) > ProctorCache System Requirements) or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

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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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