

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—FEBRUARY 20, 2019

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTAS Administration and Resource Updates • MCA and MTAS Preparation • MDE Monitoring of Test Administrations • Launching TestNav with Applications Running • Initial Shipment Test Materials and Additional Orders • Preparing Students for Testing • ACT District Testing Policy Updates • Advisory Panelists Needed (repeat) • Upcoming Opportunities • Tech Update 	<p><i>Jan. 28–March 22: Testing window for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs</i></p> <p><i>March 4: Testing windows open for MCA and MTAS</i></p>

MTAS Administration and Resource Updates

The [MTAS Data Entry User Guide](#) is now available for districts (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides). Also, on Friday, Feb. 22, there will be a new, optional training—*Entering MTAS Data in PearsonAccess Next*—available in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) on the Other Trainings tab, in the District-Assigned Trainings category (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training).

The following information is **new for 2018–19**:

- The user guide for MTAS is no longer divided by user role and now contains all information for assigning MTAS Score Entry user roles to staff, entering Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data and MTAS scores, and using applicable reports to verify entry.
- As discussed during the DAC Test Administration Trainings, staff no longer need to select the “Save” button before submitting scores when all MTAS scores are entered, which caused confusion last year.
 - However, it is important that staff confirm they entered a score for each task before submitting, as there is no longer a warning message or confirmation that scores for all tasks have been entered.

While tasks may be left blank if they were not able to be administered to students, most tests should have scores entered for all tasks.

- DACs can use On-Demand Reports to confirm expected valid scores; students receive a valid score when scores for all tasks are entered.

How User Roles Affect MTAS Data Entry

Districts can assign MTAS Score Entry users to student tests, as needed in PearsonAccess Next. The user role a person has determines if student tests must be assigned 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 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.

Preparing for Administration

As materials begin arriving in districts and schools, keep in mind that Test Administrators need to have access to MTAS test materials before test administration to prepare for individual student needs (e.g., enlarge material, find manipulatives, etc.). This includes the Task Administration Manual, Presentation Pages, and Response Option Cards. MTAS test materials must be kept secure by the Test Administrators as they prepare for testing.

LCI Data Entry

LCI data must be entered and saved once for each student who will take the MTAS. The LCI data entry window will open in PearsonAccess Next Feb. 25; however, no MTAS tests may be administered and no MTAS scores can be entered prior to the testing window opening on March 4.

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MCA and MTAS Preparation

Test Session Set Up

Districts can now create and add students to test sessions in PearsonAccess Next. After students are added to the test session, districts can prepare the test sessions. “Preparing” refers to an administrative step in PearsonAccess Next that affects the functionality of the session. Step-by-step instructions are available in the [MCA Online Testing User Guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides). Test sessions cannot

be started prior to the first day of the testing window, and it is recommended that test sessions are not started until the actual day of test administration.

Proctor Caching, which is now only recommended for science tests, can be completed in conjunction with technology staff.

Verifying Student Test Eligibility

Before students can be added to test sessions, confirm they are loaded to PearsonAccess Next and eligible for the correct tests. Information is sent to Pearson in nightly precode files for all the students who are enrolled in your district. Precode files will continue to be sent nightly throughout the testing window.

If a student's test eligibility does not appear in PearsonAccess Next, first verify the student's information in Test WES under Precode Student Eligibility. Enter the student's MARSS/SSID number to check on the following possibilities:

- *There is a MARSS issue.* If blank demographic fields appear when you enter the MARSS/SSID number, then there is an issue with submitting the student record in MARSS or the student has not been submitted in MARSS. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to correct any issues and resubmit MARSS.
- *The student is being sent in precode for another district or school.* The first column appearing in the Precode Eligibility table (at the bottom of the screen) is the district/school for which the student is being sent in precode. If the student is dual-enrolled, the student may be sent in precode for the other district/school. Verify who will be testing the student and manually change the school where the student will be testing, as needed, by selecting "Add" on the student's information.
- *The student record has not yet been sent in precode to Pearson.* If a student was recently submitted in MARSS or you recently made a change in Precode Student Eligibility, the record may not have been sent to Pearson yet. When changes are made through a MARSS update, the student information and test eligibility is typically available in PearsonAccess Next two business days after MARSS is submitted.

More information is in the [Test WES Precode User Guide](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Test WES).

Verifying MCA Accommodations and Linguistic Supports in PearsonAccess Next

Districts can continue to make changes in accommodations and linguistic supports in Test WES throughout the testing window. Districts must ensure accommodations/linguistic support codes that affect the online test students take are indicated at least one business day prior to the student testing, including accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and word-to-word pop-up translation (HM, SO, SP) codes for Mathematics and Science MCA.

In addition, staff can only add students to a session if they are eligible for the test assigned:

- Only students with the script for Science MCA (MS) accommodation/linguistic support code will be eligible to add to a session with a Science Script test assigned.

- Only students who have an accommodation or linguistic support code that requires data entry (e.g., 18, BR, HC) will be eligible to add to a session with a Data Entry test assigned.
- All other students, including those students requiring accommodated text-to-speech or word-to-word pop-up translations will be eligible for a regular test session (e.g., Grade 07 Mathematics MCA).

Full details, including how to verify that the applicable codes appear in PearsonAccess Next, are included in the [MCA Online Testing User Guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides).

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MDE 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 grades 1–12 ACCESS test administrations, and it is important that districts keep their posted testing calendar updated.

Starting on page 229 of the [Procedures Manual](#), the *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* outlines the areas the monitors will observe and questions they will ask assessment staff during site visits for MCA or ACCESS (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

MTAS Field Audits

Each year, MDE employs Field Auditors to observe MTAS administrations in selected schools. The primary purpose of MTAS field audits is to gather evidence to evaluate the validity and reliability of the assessment. Since Test Administrators score the assessment, it is critical they are properly trained in MTAS administration and scoring. Likewise, it is critical for test score integrity that all Test Administrators across the state are applying this training consistently.

Unlike monitoring visits for MCA or ACCESS, which are unannounced, the Field Auditors work with the District Assessment Coordinator and the school to schedule the visit. MDE recently sent an email to districts to communicate the schools that have been selected. These notifications were sent to DACs, Superintendents, and Special Education Directors.

Information about how MTAS field audits are scheduled is on page 57 of the [Procedures Manual](#), and the *MTAS Field Audit Checklist*, which outlines the areas the Field Auditors will observe and questions they will ask, starts on page 232 (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

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Launching TestNav with Applications Running

In the past, if a student had certain applications running on their computer or device at the time they launched TestNav, the application would be allowed to run in the background even while they were taking the MCA. If a

student tried to access an application after TestNav was already running, TestNav would close, but this was not necessarily the case for programs that were running before TestNav was launched.

For MCA 2019, Pearson has blacklisted the applications in the list below due to security concerns, which will prevent TestNav from opening if any of the applications are running on the testing computer or device. If one or more of these applications are running when a student launches TestNav, the student will receive an error message that states they cannot test with an application running in the background. The student should exit TestNav, close any open applications, and log back in to TestNav to start testing.

Note: For districts that use desktop virtualization/thin client, blacklisted applications that are open on any thin client devices may prevent TestNav from opening. If your district uses desktop virtualization/thin client, it is imperative that you contact Pearson prior to testing. Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

Blacklisted Applications:

- Youtube
- iTunes/Pandora
- Facebook/Quicktime
- Google Chrome/Firefox/Internet Explorer/Edge/Safari
- Skype/Webex/Lync
- Jing/Screen-o-Matic
- Outlook Mail

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Initial Shipment Test Materials and Additional Orders

The initial quantities of paper test materials for MCA and MTAS are based on information entered in Pretest Editing by Jan. 18. The shipment of these test materials either arrived this week or will arrive next Tuesday or Wednesday, Feb. 26–27. If your materials will arrive next week, refer to [Viewing Test Material Reports and Tracking Information](#) for information on tracking the materials (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides > [Shipping Information]).

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. For more information, refer to the [Receiving Secure Test Materials guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides > [Shipping Information]).

Placing Additional Orders in PearsonAccess Next

The window for placing additional orders in PearsonAccess Next opened yesterday. Examples of when a district would place an additional order are as follows:

- Students have newly enrolled or there are changes in accommodations/linguistic supports or test assignments after Jan. 18.
- The district decided not to receive MTAS test materials in the initial test materials shipment.

For step-by-step instructions on placing an additional order, refer to the [Ordering Additional Test Materials guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides > [Shipping Information]). 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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Preparing Students for Testing

Rather than requiring specific resources be provided to all students to prepare for testing, MDE requires each district to determine which resources their students need in order to be familiar with the test and ready for test administration.

The [Purpose of Student Resources document](#) is designed to help clarify the purposes of the resources available for MCA and MTAS (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Student Resources). Districts can use this document when making decisions about what resources their students need.

- The [student tutorial](#) is used to familiarize students and educators with the general functionality of the online test (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Test > Student Tutorial). There are three components of the tutorial—Navigation, Tools, and Item Types—each accompanied by a teacher guide.
- The [item samplers](#) are used to familiarize students and educators with how the content is presented in the test (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Test > Item Samplers). Item samplers, and their accompanying teacher guides, 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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ACT District Testing Policy Updates

In previous years, ACT billed districts based on the number of scored answer documents. This spring, ACT will invoice based on the final student enrollment count in PearsonAccess Next, as provided in the Student Data Upload (SDU) file. Enrollment counts are considered final as of midnight on the final day of the makeup accommodations testing window.

- For February testing, the deadline is March 18th.
- For April testing, the deadline is April 30th.

If districts have uploaded the entire grade 11 class roster, consider copying the student roster sheet from each testing room, so there is a list of those students who actually test. Another option is having a sign-in sheet in each testing room.

[View a video with directions for managing ACT enrollment](#), or reference page 17 of [ACT's PearsonAccess Next User Guide](#). Also, see the [Tips for Accurate Enrollment Count](#) for additional information.

For additional information about results, see the [student and educator resources for understanding ACT score reports](#) in Section 7 of ACT's District Testing website.

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Advisory Panelists Needed (repeat)

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

February New DAC Q&A Webinar

The February Q&A webinar for New DACs will be Feb. 26 from 2–3 p.m. The prerequisites are to review the following information to help prepare you for situations that may arise during testing:

- Chapter 7 of the [Procedures Manual](#), which addresses student participation and students in special circumstances (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures)
- *Understanding Student Precode* module in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#), which provides information about checking student eligibility and figuring out why students may not be loaded for testing (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training), located on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, in the New DAC Modules category

After reviewing these resources, [submit questions for the New DAC Q&A](#). MDE will answer these questions during the webinar.

[Register for the New DAC Q&A.](#)

- Phone number: 206-596-0378
- Access code: 285 762 542

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Tech Update

Recommendation for Blacklisted Applications

Pearson has updated the list of applications they blacklist for student tests. See the *Launching TestNav with Applications Running* article above for more details. For districts that use desktop virtualization/thin client, blacklisted applications that are open on any thin client devices may prevent TestNav from opening. **If your district uses desktop virtualization/thin client, it is imperative that you contact Pearson prior to testing.** Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

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STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Education

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