

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING – FEBRUARY 21, 2018

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
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## Tasks to Complete in PearsonAccess Next

Districts can now begin setting up test sessions, as well as complete proctor caching. For more information about completing these tasks, see the following resources and notes:

- **Create, Add Students to, and Prepare Test Sessions:** Step-by-step instructions for setting up test sessions, adding students to test sessions, and preparing test sessions are available in the [MCA Online Testing User Guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides). “Preparing” refers to an administrative step in PearsonAccess Next that affects the functionality of the session.
- **Proctor Cache:** Work with technology staff to ensure tests have been proctor cached prior to testing. For more information, access the Proctor Caching resources on the [Technology Resources page](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Technology Resources).

NOTE: 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 test administration begins.

## Verifying Student Test Eligibility

Before students can be added to test sessions, you will need to make sure they are loaded to PearsonAccess Next and eligible for the correct tests. All students who are enrolled in your district have been sent in precode files to Pearson for the applicable grades and subjects. Precode files will continue to be sent nightly throughout the testing windows.

Any changes made in Test WES will be sent in the next precode file to PearsonAccess Next and will typically be available the next business day.

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. By entering the student's MARSS/SSID number, you will be able to verify if one of the following may be occurring:

- 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. 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 in Precode Student Eligibility.
- 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. The majority of students should be available in PearsonAccess Next two business days after any MARSS enrollment updates have been submitted.

For further information, access 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, students are only available to add to a test 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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## ***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 student resources will be used and how they will be used. MDE requires districts to ensure that all students are familiar with the test they will be taking and are able to successfully navigate through the test, use the online and accessibility tools, and respond to different item types.

The three components of the student tutorial, as well as the item samplers, are key resources to consider. To assist with each district's decision-making process regarding appropriate student resources, MDE developed the *Purposes of Student Resources*, which is available on both the [Student Tutorial](#) and [Item Samplers](#) pages (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Testing). Districts may print and distribute this document as a resource to share with administrators and educators during district training.

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## ***MTAS Test Administration***

Test Administrators need to have access to MTAS test materials upon delivery 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 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. 26; however, no MTAS tests may be administered and no MTAS scores can be entered prior to the testing window opening on March 5. **New for 2017–18:** LCI data *must* be entered prior to entering any MTAS scores for a student.

For more information access the applicable [MTAS score entry user guide](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides):

- *MTAS Score Entry User Guide District Assessment Coordinators and Assessment Administrators*
- *MTAS Score Entry User Guide for Test Administrators*

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## ***Alternate Assessment Waiver Process Discontinued***

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), there is no longer a local 1 percent cap for MTAS. As a result, districts will no longer be asked to submit a waiver if they anticipate more than 1 percent of their tested students will take the MTAS. The waiver process has been removed from Test WES.

ESSA does maintain a 1 percent cap at the statewide level, so MDE will be analyzing MTAS administration data after testing is completed and following up individually with districts where MTAS participation exceeds 1 percent for reasons that cannot be explained by the district's small size or special programs the district operates that attract students likely to take the MTAS.

Please contact Michael Diedrich at [Michael.diedrich@state.mn.us](mailto:Michael.diedrich@state.mn.us) with questions.

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## ***Pearson Reporting Focus Group and Usability Study***

Pearson is currently working on a redesign of the PearsonAccess administrative portal, including the online reporting system.

Pearson is looking for Minnesota teachers, principals, and administrators who regularly use and interact with assessment data to provide feedback on the reporting components. Knowledge of Pearson's current reporting system in PearsonAccess Next is not required; we are simply looking for participants who regularly use and interact with student assessment data.

There are two opportunities to get involved:

- **Virtual Usability Study:** Participate in a virtual one-on-one usability session to review the prototype and discuss how you use student assessment data in your district, school(s), and/or classroom(s). The session should take no more than one hour and can be scheduled at your convenience by contacting the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).
- **In-Person Focus Group:** Join us for an in-person Focus Group on Wednesday, March 14 from 1–4 p.m. at the Minnesota Department of Education in Roseville. Pearson will be convening a group of Minnesota district assessment staff and educators to review the prototype, discuss findings from the usability studies, and discuss how Minnesota educators and district staff use assessment data in their classrooms, schools, and across their districts. [Register for the in-person focus group](#). Space is limited; the deadline to sign up is March 2.

Please share these opportunities with educators in your district who use assessment data. Pearson appreciates the feedback to improve their products and better serve district needs.

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## ***Advisory Panelists Needed***

MDE needs qualified teachers and community members to serve on MCA advisory panels. Each advisory panel plays an important role in developing Minnesota assessments. Please forward this opportunity 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).

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## ***Graduation Rate Release Update***

Graduation rates will be released to the public on Tuesday, Feb. 27. Superintendents will be emailed an embargoed copy of the statewide graduation file, including school and district rates, on Friday, Feb. 23. The release of graduation rates, including changes to the graduation rate calculation, will be discussed in greater detail during the next Commissioner's Dialogue with Superintendents conference call on Feb. 21.

As part of the transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Minnesota is using a new graduation rate calculation. This new calculation uses seven racial and ethnic groups instead of the previous five, and includes several smaller changes as well. An FAQ summarizing these changes is available on the [Implementing ESSA page](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) > Implementing ESSA).

As a result of these changes, this year's graduation rate release will include data going back to 2012 using the new calculation. Doing so allows discussion of changes over time between 2012 and 2017 using the new calculation; graduation rates using the old calculation cannot be accurately combined with the new calculation when discussing changes over time. **When the new graduation rates are posted, the rates using the old calculation will be retired; if you would like to retain a record of those for your school or district, please download them by Monday, Feb. 26.**

Details for a related webinar are included in the Upcoming Training Opportunities article below. Questions about graduation rates can be directed to Michael Diedrich at 651-582-8332.

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## ***Alternate English Language Learning Assessment Project (repeat)***

Minnesota is participating in the Alternate English Language Learning Assessment Project (ALTELLA) which is developing an evidence-centered design approach for an English language proficiency assessment of students with significant cognitive disabilities. ALTELLA is directed by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research and

includes five partner states (Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, South Carolina, and West Virginia). You can learn more about the project at [altella.wceruw.org](http://altella.wceruw.org).

Educators in partner states are asked to participate in the pilot testing of an Individual Characteristics Questionnaire (ICQ) by responding to the online version of the questionnaire for each of their students who are English learners with significant cognitive disabilities. In Minnesota, these students may take the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Complete the [Individual Characteristics Questionnaire here](#).

The questionnaire does not request student names or identification numbers, nor will it collect or report any identifiable information about you, your school or your district. The ICQ takes 15–20 minutes to complete. Please complete one survey for each student who is an English learner with significant cognitive disabilities. Special educators, English language learner specialists, and other educators are encouraged to work as a team in order to learn from one another and gather high-quality data to support your students.

Please contact James Mitchell at [mitchell27@wisc.edu](mailto:mitchell27@wisc.edu) or 608-262-5725 with questions about the ICQ. If you have questions the ALTELLA project, you may contact Laurene Christensen at [laurene.christensen@wisc.edu](mailto:laurene.christensen@wisc.edu) or 612-616-7627, or the University of Wisconsin's Anonymous Human Research Protection Hotline at 608-890-1273.

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## ***Upcoming Training Opportunities***

### **February New DAC Q&A Webinar Registration**

The February Q&A webinar for New DACs will be on Feb. 27 from 2–3 p.m.

- [Register for the New DAC Q&A here](#).
  - Phone Number: 206-596-0378
  - Access Code: 806 254 668
- The prerequisites are to review the following:
  - Chapter 7 of the [Procedures Manual](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures)
  - *Understanding Student Precode* mini module in the [Training Management System](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training) under the District Assessment Coordinator role, New DAC Modules category
- After reviewing the prerequisites, please [submit questions here](#); these questions will be used to guide the Q&A webinar.

### **DAC Opportunities**

Below are dates for upcoming Q&A webinars, training, and feedback sessions for DACs this spring.

- New DAC Q&A webinars:
  - March 20, 2–3 p.m.

- April 17, 2–3 p.m.
- May 22, 1–2 p.m. NOTE: The date and time have changed from the one originally scheduled due to the Posttest Editing Training.
- Posttest Editing Training: May 22, 2–4 p.m.
- DAC Feedback Sessions: These are tentatively planned for the week of May 14 with multiple regional locations; further details will be included in a future *Assessment Update*.

## Changes to Minnesota Graduation Rates Webinar

Details of the webinar to discuss the release of graduation rates are below. Additional questions about graduation rates can be directed to Michael Diedrich at 651-582-8332.

- Date: Monday, Feb. 26
- Time: 8–9 a.m.
- [Register for the Changes to Minnesota Graduation Rates webinar.](#)
- Phone Number: 844-302-0362
- Meeting Number: 809 626 663

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## Odds and Ends

- **Closed-Captioning for Science Videos:** The science item samplers have been updated so that the animation videos now include closed-captioning in English. Students that will use the closed-captioning during the Science MCA administration can use the item samplers to practice this functionality.
- **Additional Orders Window Now Open:** The window for placing additional orders in PearsonAccess Next for MCA and MTAS test materials is now open. For more information, refer to [Viewing Shipment Information and Ordering Additional Materials](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides > Shipping Information). Contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#) with any questions.

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STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.state.mn.us](http://education.state.mn.us) > Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing

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