

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING—APRIL 10, 2019

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
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## District Feedback

### Spring 2019 District Assessment Coordinator Feedback Survey

On April 15, MDE will send an email to DACs with a link to this spring’s *District Assessment Coordinator Feedback Survey*. This year’s survey is very short and should only take about 10 minutes to complete. In addition to the email, the April 17 *Assessment Update* will include the DAC feedback survey link. The survey will be open April 15–May 3. Please take a few minutes to provide your feedback.

### In-Person Sessions: Save the Date

MDE and Pearson are hosting district feedback meetings for DACs at three locations in May. MDE and Pearson will facilitate feedback on this year’s test administration, policies and procedures, and Pearson systems. There will be both large group and small group discussions during these meetings. These sessions are scheduled for the following dates and locations. More information and a link for registration will be included in the April 17 *Assessment Update*.

- **Mankato:** Tuesday, May 14
- **St. Cloud:** Wednesday, May 15

- **Metro:** Thursday, May 16

These feedback sessions are intended for DACs and other district-level staff who work with test administration. If you cannot attend any of the in-person feedback meetings, you can send MDE feedback at any time through [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).

## **Additional Feedback from Grade 3 Teachers**

This spring, MDE is gathering information on the effectiveness of student resources to inform the process of any redesign efforts. To do this, MDE will request that DACs provide grade 3 teachers a link to a short survey on student resources. Please encourage all grade 3 teachers to complete the survey so that MDE has the most complete data to make decisions that best benefit students.

An email with the link and introductory text will be sent to DACs within the next two weeks. Teachers will have until the end of May to respond to the survey. You can find a description of the student resources on the [Student Resources page](#) (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing > Student Resources).

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## ***April Q&A Webinar for New DACs***

The April Q&A webinar will be held on Tuesday, April 23, from 2–3 p.m. Similar to the March webinar, the April New DAC Q&A has no prerequisite readings or trainings to review. The focus will be on any questions you may have as we enter the last few weeks of the testing windows.

- [Register for the New DAC Q&A here.](#)
  - Phone Number: 206-596-0378
  - Access Code: 809 659 565
- [Submit questions via this link.](#)

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## ***Testing Situations or Misadministrations***

MDE provides districts a resource called [Testing Situations or Misadministrations – MCA/MTAS](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures), which outlines some situations and misadministrations that may occur during testing and require additional action. In most cases, the DAC will contact the Pearson help desk and provide detailed information about the issue. While not an exhaustive list, this document describes many situations that arise during testing and may help the district know the proper action to take.

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## ***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 in a public forum or through any media before or after test administration.
- Using any portions of the test (or student responses on a test) for use in instructional planning, classroom instruction, or for any other purpose.
- Making a copy of a test.
- Knowingly allowing a student to capture secure test content, share answers with other students, or share test content through text messaging, email, or other social media.
- Allowing a parent, community member, or member of the media to see the contents of secure test materials or be allowed in a testing room.

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## ***High School Science MCA/MTAS Participation***

High school students should participate in the high school Science MCA when they have received instruction on all Strand 4 and Strand 1 standards related to life science/biology during the school year. If students are not completing their life science/biology coursework this year, they should not take the Science MCA. Students who are re-taking their life science/biology coursework (or a required portion of it) must take the Science MCA again, regardless of their previous achievement level on the assessment.

For students eligible to take the Science MTAS, the IEP team determines the most appropriate year for a high school student to take the Science MTAS based on their coursework. While some students with significant cognitive disabilities may not be enrolled in a course called Life Science or Biology, they should have access to the general education curriculum, which includes instruction in life science.

Since the high school Science MCA and Science MTAS are not associated with a specific grade, the default setting is for precode to include *all* high school students who have not previously taken the assessment. Only students who will be taking the test this year need to be added to a test session (for MCA) or have scores entered (for MTAS).

For a student who is re-taking life science or biology, you can change the Science Send Indicator in Test WES so that the student is sent in precode. See pages 21–23 of the [Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide](#) (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Test WES) for detailed steps.

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## ***Manually Adding Students in Test WES***

If students are not appearing in PearsonAccess Next for online testing or data entry, first verify the student's information in Test WES under Precode Student Eligibility. Enter the student's MARSS/SSID number to check for the following:

- If blank demographic fields appear after entering a student's MARSS/SSID number, there is an issue with the student's MARSS record. Work with your MARSS Coordinator to correct any issues and resubmit MARSS or enter the student's information for a manual add.
- Review the message in blue that appears above the table with the test eligibility information:
  - If the message states that the student record is being sent for another district but the student should be testing in your district, you can manually add the student to your district if needed.
  - If the message states that the student is no longer enrolled based on the MARSS Status End Date, work with your MARSS Coordinator to ensure the enrollment is correct in MARSS. You can manually add the student to your district if needed.
  - If the message states that the student record has NOT yet been sent to Pearson or you recently made a change on the Precode Search and Edit page, the record will be sent to Pearson in the next precode file and will typically be available the next business day. There is no need to manually add the student in these cases.

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

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## ***College Entrance Exam Reimbursement Requests***

If you administered the college entrance exam (ACT or SAT) and have received student results, you may begin entering requests for reimbursements in the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\) system](#) for eligible students (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Graduation Requirements (GRR)).

### **Eligibility for Reimbursement**

If a district has not previously received reimbursement for a student, the following criteria applies to reimbursement requests for 2018–19.

- Districts will be reimbursed for students eligible for a free/reduced-priced meal (FRP) who are entered into GRR.
- Districts may also be reimbursed on a prorated basis (if necessary) for students that are unable to pay for the exam. Legislation did not provide criteria for unable to pay, so districts must determine the criteria for unable to pay and enter those requests into GRR.

## Entering Reimbursement Requests

To ensure that reimbursements are only provided for students that completed testing, districts must wait to request reimbursement until after they receive results from ACT or College Board. All reimbursement requests for school year 2018–19 must be entered no later than Sept. 13 with a tested date prior to Sept. 1.

- For students identified as FRP in MARSS: reimbursement requests can be entered manually or via a file upload.
- For students determined by the district as unable to pay: reimbursement requests can **only** be entered manually. A manual entry ensures only students who have been determined as eligible are entered and a district is not overpaid if they upload all tested students.

More information is in the [Graduation Requirements Records \(GRR\) User Guide](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Graduation Requirements (GRR)).

**New for 2018–19:** There is a recorded training that was recently posted to the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#)—*MDE Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) Training*—on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the MDE Recorded Webinars category (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training).

## Reimbursement Reports

After districts enter reimbursement requests in GRR, districts should confirm expected reimbursements using the reimbursement reports, which are refreshed early each morning to reflect the current state of entries in GRR. **New for 2018–19:** The reimbursement reports are available now and throughout the reimbursement window.

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## TMS Schedule for Uploading Users

District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and Assessment Administrator (AA) roles need access to the Admin features in the Training Management System (TMS) to track staff training or enter group trainings. Pearson uploaded DAC and AA users from PearsonAccess Next into the TMS weekly during the past two months, which is the peak time for new PearsonAccess Next users. For the remainder of 2019, new users who have a DAC or AA role in PearsonAccess Next will be uploaded into the TMS every two weeks, resuming the normal schedule.

If you have had an active PearsonAccess Next DAC or AA account for more than two weeks and do not see the “Admin” option, or you need access to a report while waiting to receive admin access, please [submit a Pearson help desk request](#) or call 888-817-8659.

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## ***Update on Release of 2018 Graduation Rates***

In early March, MDE informed districts that 2018 graduation rates would be released later than what is typical. This is due to applying additional data privacy rules to protect personally identifiable information in reported data—as MDE values both transparent reporting and data privacy. While working to finalize the new additional data privacy rules, it was decided to move forward with releasing 2018 graduation data with the privacy rules used in the past. Graduation data will be publically released at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, April 23. The data will not be provided to news media at an earlier date; however, MDE will provide superintendents and charter directors with a link to download an embargoed data file on Thursday, April 18, to prepare for the release. Contact Michael Diedrich at [michael.diedrich@state.mn.us](mailto:michael.diedrich@state.mn.us) with questions about this process.

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STATEWIDE TESTING: MEASURING EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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