

TESTING 123

Updates for teachers from the MDE Statewide Testing Division

December 14, 2021

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COMPASS Webinar Recordings, Resources and Updates

MDE's COMPASS team hosted a Data and Assessment Literacy webinar on Nov. 30 and Dec. 9. During these webinars, an overview of the data and assessment literacy subcomponents in the MnMTSS framework were provided, including future topics and resources about how to use meaningful evidence of student learning to guide instruction and improve practices for future COMPASS sessions specific to literacy, math, and school climate and mental health.

The COMPASS Data and Assessment Literacy Plan outlined in the webinar is posted for public review on the [Testing 1, 2, 3 site](#) along with session materials and recordings.

Additionally, district leadership teams can now learn more about **COMPASS Pathways** that will offer a variety of resources, evidence-based practices and facilitated guidance in formats that work best for schools. Types of pathways will vary by the topic, but may include on-demand learning, cohort learning groups or a hybrid of on-demand resources and cohort learning groups. Learn more about the options on the [COMPASS Pathways: MnMTSS webpage](#).

Additional resources available now on the [COMPASS webpage](#).

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Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards in Social Studies Update

Per [Minnesota Statutes 2021, section 120B.021, subdivision 4](#), every 10 years Minnesota’s K–12 Academic Standards in each content area must be reviewed and revised. The rulemaking Public Comment Period for Proposed K–12 Academic Standards in Social Studies is open for 60 days. Additional Public Comment Period for Social Studies Benchmarks is open for 30 days. [Read the full update](#).

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2020–21 Combined World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Summary and Achievement and Integration (A&I) Progress Report Due December 15, 2021

It is essential to note that Minnesota law requires all school districts and charter schools to submit an annual WBWF Summary Report. We encourage districts and charters who would like to draft their responses to the questions in the report before submission to [download a copy of the WBWF and A&I progress report template](#) on our WBWF webpage. A copy of the template can also be obtained on our [WBWF webpage](#).

If you need assistance troubleshooting issues relevant to your annual report's submission, we ask that you contact our WBWF Specialist [Calvin Lewis](#).

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MDE Employment Opportunities

Training Visual Graphics Assessment Specialist – Posting Extended

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking a training visual graphics assessment specialist to join the Program Management team.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Dec. 16**. The Job ID is 50603.

Ethnic Studies Specialist

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking an Ethnic Studies Specialist who will have a pivotal role in leading collaborative statewide initiatives to strengthen the capacity of Minnesota's schools to provide high quality Ethnic Studies education to ensure that all students achieve state academic standards and are prepared with knowledge and skills for postsecondary and career success. This position will work in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Specialist position listed below.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Dec. 27**. The Job ID is 50339.

Indigenous Education Specialist

The Office of American Indian Education is currently seeking an Indigenous Education Specialist who will work in collaboration with the Ethnic Studies Specialist position listed above. They will lead collaborative statewide initiatives to strengthen the capacity of Minnesota's schools so that they can provide high quality Indigenous education. The Indigenous Education Specialist will help districts to fully implement the standards through aligned instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development.

If you are interested (or know someone who may be interested) in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the complete revised position description and application instructions on the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website and **apply by Dec. 27**. The Job ID is 50940.

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Statewide Testing Participation

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, require that all public school students be assessed annually in reading, mathematics, and science. Similarly, ESSA and Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.59, require that all public school English learners be assessed in English language proficiency. Districts should attempt to test all students who are enrolled at any time during the applicable testing window.

There are no participation exemptions from statewide assessment based on first date of enrollment or disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

- A recently arrived English learner (RAEL) is defined as a student who is designated as EL in MARSS and who first enrolled in a school in one of the 50 states in the United States or District of Columbia on or after April 15, 2021. Students identified as RAEL are required to participate in all subjects of the standards-based accountability assessments during their first year of enrollment, including reading; their results are included in test results summary information. These students are also required to participate in the English language proficiency accountability assessments during their first year of enrollment. Contact mde.el@state.mn.us for assistance with questions on RAEL identification, and contact mde.essa@state.mn.us for accountability questions for RAEL.
- Students with disabilities may participate in statewide assessments with or without accommodations, or by taking an alternate assessment for which they are eligible. More information on general supports, linguistic supports, and accommodations is available in Chapter 4 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

Ensure that relevant EL and Special Education staff are aware of the policies and available resources when making decisions about student participation and accommodations.

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Important Ideas and Research

Bringing What Worked During Remote Learning into the Classroom

In the Edutopia article, John McCarthy says there are three classroom practices from our time in remote instruction teachers might consider continuing in their in-person classrooms:

- A virtual learning platform – Schoology, Canvas, Google Classroom, and more give students and families access to lessons, assignments, deadlines, and other resources. Students can also have explanations (video, audio, or text), and scaffolds at their fingertips, including when they're physically back in the classroom.
- An instructional video library – “Most people do not learn concepts the first time they are introduced,” says McCarthy. “Sometimes what made sense during the live instruction does not seem as clear later that night or the following day.” Teachers might consider making videos and allow students access for when they need them.
- Leveraging collaboration – McCarthy suggests “three-dimensional learning experiences” inside and outside the classroom, with small groups of students using a variety of resources to enrich collaboration. Teachers can also connect with colleagues within their school or around the world via Zoom calls and breakout rooms.

[“Bringing What Worked During Virtual Learning Into the Classroom”](#) by John McCarthy in Edutopia, November 30, 2021

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Make Sense of the Research: A Primer for Educational Leaders

In this Educational Leadership article, Thomas Guskey summarizes a big idea in the research on attribution theory and locus of control: “the degree to which people believe they can affect and are responsible for different aspects of their lives.” He argues a teacher’s sense of efficacy is shaped by four variables: internal, external, fixed, and alterable:

- Internal and fixed – I do not have the ability to teach these concepts very well.
- Internal and alterable – I did not spend enough time planning lessons for this unit.
- External and fixed – The state test was too hard for my students.
- External and alterable – It was just my luck that students had a bad day.

Teachers are most successful when they focus on internal factors within their control, versus blaming external factors over which they have no control. Studies have shown that a strong sense of efficacy was closely associated with K–12 student achievement and successful school programs. Carol Dweck’s work on fixed and growth mindsets confirmed and extended the idea of internal locus of control and personal agency.

What is the best way to boost a teacher’s sense of efficacy? Guskey says its mastery experiences – seeing actual improvement in students’ learning because of specific classroom practices. He describes a study showing that teachers who had the biggest gains in efficacy were those who gave frequent formative assessments, immediately followed up with students below mastery (80%), and saw positive results. “Change in teacher efficacy was primarily a result – rather than a cause – of measurable increases in student learning,” says Guskey.

He concludes by saying: “Instead of trying to change teachers’ attitudes and beliefs directly, we must change the experiences that shape those attitudes and beliefs. Specifically, we must provide teachers with mastery experiences” by focusing professional development on evidence-based curriculum and classroom practices and establishing procedures by which teachers get regular and specific feedback on how their actions are affecting

students. “Teachers must see explicit evidence from their students in their classrooms that the changes make a difference,” concludes Guskey. “That evidence must come quickly, and it must be evidence that teachers trust.”

[“The Past and Future of Teacher Efficacy”](#) by Thomas Guskey in Educational Leadership, November 2021 (Vol. 79, #3, pp. 20-25).

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Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment



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