Teacher Newsletter

mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

September 7, 2018

Important Dates

- September 14 – Presentation at Minnesota Assessment Group (MAG)

- September 26 – Presentation at Winona Middle School

- October 4 – Presentation at MAEOP

- October 5 – Next Teacher Newsletter will be distributed

MDE Science Update

The MDE Science Update provides monthly information for science teachers, content specialists and district-level administrators. It provides the reader with updates and news along with teacher, school, and student programs. The Update is sent directly to Minnesota Science Teacher Association members and indirectly via district science contacts. It is also posted on the [MnSTA page](#) (MnSTA > Resources > Minn. Dept. of Education). If you are not receiving it, contact your district curriculum coordinator to forward it or encourage them to join the list via [John Olson](#), science education specialist, Minnesota Department of Education.

Released MCA Items and Passages

MDE releases MCA items and passages for educators to have a sampling of how the Minnesota Academic Standards are assessed on the MCA and to have a model for how to write classroom test items aligned to the standards. These items and passages are statistically valid and reliable and have been previously used on the MCA. For more information, access the Released Item and Data Table User Guide, available on the [Released Items and Passage Sets page](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Released Items and Passage Sets).

New WIDA Website

[WIDA has a new website and URL](#) (wida.wisc.edu), which contains general information about the WIDA suite of assessments, the WIDA Standards, and professional learning. There is a login to access the WIDA Secure Portal, which will remain largely the same. For more information, view the [new WIDA website overview video](#) or plan to attend WIDA's webinar in September. See details of the event in the link below.

Link: New WIDA Website Walkthrough

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 19

Time: 11 a.m.–noon

The contact information for the WIDA Client Services Center has not changed; contact WIDA at help@wida.us or 866-276-7735 with any questions.

ISRs and Benchmark Reports

Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and rosters were made available for MCA/MTAS in PearsonAccess Next on Aug. 30.

Helpful resources are available on the ISRs Resources page (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources).

The 2018 Benchmark Reports will be available in PearsonAccess Next on Sept. 17.

Use these reports to help identify relative benchmark performance compared to expected performance based on overall scores. Note: Benchmark reports are not produced when student counts at the school or district level fall below 20.

Minnesota Assessment Life Cycle Training Course

The Minnesota Assessment Life Cycle Course has been updated and reposted to the Training Management System (TMS) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training). These trainings are designed for educators to increase understanding about Minnesota Assessments; teacher CEUs are available. The course includes the following trainings:

- Minnesota Assessments Overview

- MCA Achievement Level Descriptor (ALD) & Standard Setting Process

- Test Development

- Test Construction

- Scoring and Reporting

- Test Specifications

Important Email Change

Moving forward, Holly Pope (Brunson) has a new email: holly.pope@state.mn.us. Please ensure you make this email change on any saved preferences.

Testing Terminology: Words of the Month

- **WIDA AMS (WIDA Assessment Management System)** – WIDA AMS is used for setting up and administering online tests, ordering paper and accommodated test materials, and managing student data for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs and the WIDA Screener.

- **EL (English Learner)** – Programmatic and research term used to identify students learning English as an additional language. May also appear as ELL – English Language Learner or LEP – Limited English Proficient.

Statewide Testing's Mission

To design, develop, and implement a system of assessment so Minnesota students, parents, teachers, administrators, legislators and taxpayers will have access to valid and reliable data to support and improve education in Minnesota.

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