December 7, 2018

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Important Dates

- December 14 – Report Card Updates

- January 4 – Next Teacher Newsletter will be distributed

Test Security Training

The Test Security Training is now available in the Training Management System (TMS) (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training). All staff involved in any aspect of testing are required to this complete annual training in test security. See Chapter 3 of the *Procedures Manual* for full training requirements and options for completing (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

Note: In TMS, it indicates that the training is only five minutes, but it will take additional time as it now includes interactive, self-paced slides that users must navigate through to complete the training.

Student Resources

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) requires districts to ensure that all students are familiar with the test they will be taking. Students should be able to successfully navigate, use the applicable tools, and respond to different item types. Each district determines which resources will be used and how they will be used. MDE does not require all students to use all resources; districts must determine the resources to use, which may vary by school, grade, or student.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

The following student resources are available on the bottom of the WIDA AMS home page (wida-ams.us) and are described in more detail in the *Test Administration Manual* ([Log in to the WIDA Secure Portal] > Online Grades 1–12 > Test Administration Manual).

- **Test Demos** are designed to be viewed by students prior to ACCESS administration. The test demos are animated test directions that walk

students through how to take the test. WIDA recommends that students watch the Test Demo before taking the Test Practice items.

- **Test Practice** items can be used to familiarize students with the ACCESS test format. These items are very easy but will help students become familiar with the test environment.

- **Sample Items** can be used to familiarize students with the content and grade-level appropriate language development expectations. These items are representative of the item difficulty a student will experience on the actual test. Sample Items are also available for Alternate ACCESS.

MCA and MTAS

The *Purposes 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).

- 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 Types component has already been updated for 2018–19, and the other components will be available in January.

- 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 are available in every grade and subject for the MCA and MTAS, as well as for applicable accommodations and linguistic supports.

Important Updates on Minnesota Report Card

On Thursday, Dec. 13, at noon, the Minnesota Report Card (MDE website > Data Center > Minnesota Report Card) will be taken offline while updates and improvements are made to the site. The report card will be back online at 8 a.m., Friday, Dec. 14.

Updates include:

- Reorienting the site's navigation around questions a parent might ask about a school. For example, data about test results will be found by selecting the question, "Are students mastering standards?" School staffing data are found by selecting, "Who works here?"

- A new "My School" report features a message to families from the school, providing information about a school that might not be evident by simply looking at data. This report will also include a selection of the most commonly looked up school data, such as academic indicators, graduation rates and school climate information.

Very soon, more information than ever before on the report card will be available in Spanish, Hmong and Somali, in addition to English. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and state statutes require certain information to be available on our state's report card. Reports related to student discipline will become available in the Minnesota Report Card this coming spring, and school financial data will be available in spring 2020.

If you have any questions about the Minnesota Report Card, contact mde.communications@state.mn.us.

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Testing Terminology: Words of the Month

- **Minnesota Report Card –** The Minnesota Report Card provides information about districts and schools. This interactive tool is designed to provide parents, educators, schools, districts and citizens with easy access to district and school information, such as test results, demographic information and more.

- **Item Samplers** – The Item Samplers are used to familiarize students and educators with how the content is presented in the test. Item samplers are available for the online MCA (with and without available accommodations and linguistic supports), MCA paper accommodated test materials, and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS).

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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.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION