TESTING 123

Updates for teachers from the MDE Statewide Testing Division

[April 5, 2019]

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Introducing: Testing 1-2-3 Update!

Testing 1, 2, 3 is a new website for teachers still in the development phases from the division of Statewide Testing at MDE. The *Teacher Newsletter* has changed its name to *Testing 1-2-3 Update* to align with the new website and keep teachers better informed.

Important Dates

March 4 – May 3: *Testing window for MTAS all subjects and MCA Reading and Math*

March 4 – May 10: *Testing window for Science MCA*

Preparing Students for Testing

The *Purpose 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 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, and their accompanying teacher guides, are available in every grade and subject for the MCA and MTAS, as well as for applicable accommodations and linguistic supports.

Note: MDE provides the Released Items and Passage Sets as an additional resource that can be used by educators to see how MCA items are aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Released Items and Passage Sets).

Translated Word Lists

As noted on Page 108 of the *Procedures Manual*, using a translated word list is a linguistic support available to English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). This linguistic support is only available for Mathematics and Science MCA. Word lists are not permitted for Reading MCA.

The word lists are available in 12 languages, and districts choosing to use these word lists must print the current-year lists available on the [Translated Word Lists page](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Translated Word Lists). Districts may not translate additional terms, translate their own lists, or translate these lists in languages not available on PearsonAccess Next.

If a student needs a word-to-word support in a different language, districts can consider using a commercial word-to-word dual-language dictionary or online translation program if the student is familiar with using these supports during instruction; these supports are described on Pages 106 and 107 of the *Procedures Manual*.

Directions for Test Administrations

MDE requires that the applicable *Directions for Administrations* (both *Directions for Online Administrations* and *Directions for Paper Administrations*) be used for all test administrations (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Testing > Testing Directions). Based on district feedback last spring, MDE revised the wording and format of the script that is read to students to make it easier for students to understand and easier for Test Monitors to use. In addition, the script was moved to the front of the document. MDE also added a Test Monitor checklist, as well as a section giving more guidance about how to appropriately answer student questions or provide assistance to students.

Answering Questions/Providing Assistance During Testing

Both versions of directions include a new *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section. This section is divided into two parts: Test-Related Scenarios and Student or Classroom Management Scenarios.

The Test-Related Scenarios part provides specific guidance and scripted language for questions related to test content or the test itself. The following are examples:

- A student cannot complete a fill-in-the-blank item.

- A student cannot move forward in the test because of a tool or navigation.

- A student does not think there is a correct answer to an item.

The Student/Classroom Management Scenarios part provides guidance to Test Monitors as to what is appropriate to say and do in general scenarios related to student behavior. The following are examples:

- A student is off task or being disruptive.

- A student is discouraged and not making progress.

- A student is rushing through the test.

See the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of the applicable testing directions for full information and guidance.

Student Directions in Reading

Text-to-speech functionality is not available in 2019 for the student directions in all online Reading MCA for grades 3–8 and 10. (There is no text-to-speech in the rest of the Reading MCA and has only previously been made available for the directions.)

Your district may consider the following alternatives for the student directions in the Reading MCA, as all of the information in the text-to-speech is provided in print on the screen:

- Students may read the student directions text on the screen to themselves.

- Test Monitors may read the student directions aloud, using the Transcript of Student Directions, which can be found on Pages 23–24 of the *Directions for Online Administrations*.

For the Reading MCA only, your district may need to skip or clarify the portion of the script that states, "Put your headphones on and select Test Audio on the Sign In screen to make sure you can hear the audio" since the text-to-speech is not available for the student directions.

MTAS Administration and Resource Reminder

The *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* provides step-by-step instructions for entering Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) and MTAS scores (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > User Guides). Staff can also view the optional training—*Entering MTAS Data in PearsonAccess*

Next—available in the Training Management System (TMS) on the Other Trainings tab, in the District-Assigned Trainings category (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Training).

Preliminary Student-Level Results

For MCA and MTAS, preliminary student-level results are available in PearsonAccess Next within 60 minutes after testing or data entry. These results in PearsonAccess Next are considered preliminary. It is up to the district to determine how preliminary student results will be shared. Talk to your District Assessment Coordinator to see the policy surrounding preliminary results in your district.

MDE Monitoring of Test Administrations

MDE visits schools to monitor test administrations as part of an overall strategy to improve the administration of Minnesota's assessments and to verify that test security requirements are followed.

Starting on Page 229 of the *Procedures Manual*, the *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* outlines the areas the monitors will observe and questions they will ask assessment staff during site visits (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

Upcoming Opportunities

Science Educators Opportunity

The 2019 Minnesota K–12 Science Education Standards are being written, and MDE is seeking a diverse group of K–12 teacher leaders who will use their expertise to develop test specifications. For more information and to apply, see the Test Specifications Committee for Science MCA-IV application. Share this opportunity and link with applicable staff.

Free WIDA e-Learning Courses for Minnesota Educators

MDE has partnered with WIDA in a 2018–19 pilot project that provides free, on-demand access to four e-learning courses through Aug. 31. The self-paced online courses allow any educator in Minnesota with a WIDA e-Learning account to access the content for individual learning. The courses can also be used as part of in-school professional learning communities focused on improving opportunities and outcomes for multilingual learners.

District staff can obtain a WIDA e-Learning account (or can add e-Learning access to an existing WIDA account) by sending a request to their district WIDA e-Learning Coordinator. Check with your district's English Learner or Multilingual Learner Education Coordinator to find out who has this role.

For additional help in finding your district's WIDA e-Learning Coordinator or if your district needs to assign a WIDA e-Learning Coordinator, please contact Mai Yang at (mai.tong.yang@state.mn.us). If your district does not yet have a WIDA e-Learning Coordinator, you can request a WIDA e-Learning account directly by sending an email to mde.el@state.mn.us.

Once you have a WIDA e-Learning account, visit the WIDA e-Learning Center (Log in to the WIDA Secure Portal > [under the heading Professional Learning]). Additional details are outlined on Minnesota's WIDA page under Professional Learning (WIDA > Members/States > Minnesota).

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.

mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION