

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — MARCH 19, 2025

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Testing Window Closing • MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities • Updated Guidelines for Using Assistive Technology (AT) Online Forms • Assessment Security Record and Test Administration Report • Verify District Testing Calendar (repeat) • Upcoming Opportunities 	<p>March 3–May 2 (May 9 Science MCA only): <i>MCA/MTAS/Alt MCA testing window</i></p> <p>March 21: <i>End of ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing window; last day to complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS</i></p> <p>March 28: <i>Deadline to ship paper ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS test materials to DRC</i></p>

ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Testing Window Closing

This Friday is the last day of the ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing window. All domains of the test must be completed by the end of the school day.

The deadline for shipping all ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS secure test materials back to DRC is March 28. This deadline must be followed to ensure all paper tests can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. If you do not have a regular UPS pickup, contact UPS at 866-857-1501 at least one day before you want a pickup scheduled. Scheduling pickup for the same day will result in UPS asking the school to pay an additional charge. For more instructions on returning materials, refer to the Returning Test Materials section of the *ACCESS for ELLs District and School Test Coordinator Manual*, which can be found under Resources in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#).

Checking Booklets for Additional Markings

For all paper test materials, confirm there are no additional markings or bubbled information inside the test booklets or on the back cover. Inadvertent markings and/or incorrect bubbling by students can affect how the test booklet is scanned and scored (for example, if the wrong grade is bubbled or if a Do Not Score code is bubbled in, the student’s test may not be scored correctly).

Returning Writing Test Materials

Before you return a *Writing Response Booklet* or a paper test booklet, please ensure that any hand-bubbled demographic information is accurate and matches the student's enrollment data exactly. If there are errors in the student's hand-bubbled information, it may result in split ACCESS records with no composite score available. Confirm there are no additional markings or bubbled information (such as Do Not Score codes) on the test booklet that may affect how the test booklet is scanned or scored. If demographic information needs to be hand-bubbled, use the list of student demographic information fields found under Verifying and Correcting Student Information for Testing in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

WIDA Alternate ACCESS Scoring

When scoring the WIDA Alternate ACCESS, remember that the test administrator should fill in only one response per task. If multiple responses are bubbled in, the student will not receive a score for that task. Before returning test booklets to DRC, ensure that only one response has been marked for each task for all four domains.

Implications of Returning Materials Late

Any test materials for domains taken on paper (for example, writing test booklets for students in grades 1–5) returned to DRC after March 28 will be processed as a late return. Late returns are not scored before test results are provided to MDE, and the following will be incomplete or unavailable:

- Early student-level results (used by EL staff to make spring decisions about reclassification and exit)
- Assessment records for Posttest Editing in Test WES (which includes the opportunity to correct split records and receive composite scores required for reclassification and exit)
- Embargoed and final release of data
- All accountability calculations
- Score appeal, transcription request, or test booklet search
- Individual Student Reports (ISRs)—delayed until straggler file is sent in late fall

Non-Secure Materials

To reduce shipping costs, the following materials can be securely destroyed: *District and School Test Coordinator Manuals*, *Test Administrator Manuals*, *Grades 4–12 Online Test Administrator Scripts*, and school box range sheets.

Note: Preprinted student labels contain student information and must be securely disposed within two business days after the close of the testing window.

Please contact DRC at WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com or 855-787-9615 with any questions or concerns about returning test materials. To track the return of secure test materials, districts can use the Return Materials Receipt Report in [WIDA AMS](#) (Log in to WIDA AMS > My Applications > Materials > Return Materials Receipt Report).

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MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities

The *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* resource outlines some situations and misadministrations that may occur during testing and require additional action. This resource is posted on the [Policies and Procedures](#) page of PearsonAccess Next. 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 will help the district know the proper action to take.

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Updated Guidelines for Using Assistive Technology (AT) Online Forms

The [Guidelines for Using Assistive Technology \(AT\) Online Forms](#) user guide has been updated to reflect a user role permission issue in Pearson's Training Center. District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) users are currently unable to directly add the correct AT accommodations to sample students created in the Training Center.

In order to add an AT accommodation, DACs must first contact Pearson at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#) to have Pearson create a sample student(s) in the Training Center. If using the help desk request, the following information must be provided:

- Organization: School name
- Grade: 05, 08, 09, 10, 11, or 12
- Test:
 - For MCA, Grade 05 Science MCA, Grade 08 Science MCA, or High School Science MCA
 - For Alt MCA, Grade 05 Science Alternate MCA, Grade 08 Science Alternate MCA, or High School Science Alternate MCA
- Number of Students
- AT Accommodation: AT-S or AT-N

Pearson will create the sample student(s) within 1–2 business days. Once created, Pearson will follow up with the DAC through the help desk. After the sample student has been created, follow steps outlined in Appendix A of the *Guidelines for Using Assistive Technology (AT) Online Forms* user guide for creating test sessions, providing a testing ticket to log in to TestNav, and confirming the AT device(s) the student will use during testing is compatible with TestNav.

Assessment Security Record and Test Administration Report

For all statewide testing administrations (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA and ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS), Assessment Security Records (ASRs) and Test Administration Reports (TARs) are methods for documenting certain occurrences during testing. Detailed information starts on page 143 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

Assessment Security Record

The Assessment Security Record (ASR) is used for reporting test security violations related to statewide assessments, and they must be submitted in [Test WES](#) by the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC). Test security violations involve actions that jeopardize the integrity of test results and/or give an unfair advantage to a student or group of students, including, but not limited to, leaving test materials unsecured, discussing secure test items with staff or students, distributing secure test content via email or social media, and reviewing or changing student responses.

When a potential security violation occurs, DACs must contact MDE at 651-582-8674 or mde.testing@state.mn.us no later than 24 hours after the violation occurs. MDE will advise on whether an ASR must be submitted. More information about how to submit an ASR is available in the [Assessment Security Records in Test WES User Guide](#).

Test Administration Report

The Test Administration Report (TAR) is used to record the occurrence of a special circumstance (for example, the district uses a sign language interpreter or translator for test directions), misadministrations (for example, a student is administered the incorrect test or accommodation), and reasons for invalidations. In addition, the information documented on TARs can assist with questions from district staff and parents regarding special circumstances or misadministrations when student results are available.

A copy of the TAR is available in Appendix A of the [Procedures Manual](#), but districts may use their own template for collecting the information required on a TAR (such as electronically). TARs are kept on file at the district and not submitted to MDE unless specifically requested, such as during a statewide testing audit.

Verify District Testing Calendar (repeat)

Districts are required to post a comprehensive testing calendar on the district website by Oct. 1. MDE recommends that District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) verify that specific testing schedules by grade and subject are indicated on the calendars by Jan. 1. Minor changes may continue to be made to ensure calendars

are accurate, but keep in mind that some districts and schools may not be able to immediately publish updated calendars due to internal policies and procedures.

MDE reviews testing calendars and will communicate directly with the DAC if MDE determines a district's calendar is not available or is incomplete. Detailed information on the core requirements for district testing calendars can be found in the [Procedures Manual](#) starting on page 158.

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Upcoming Opportunities

March Q&A Session: Closing ACCESS Administration and General MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administration (repeat)

MDE will host a virtual Q&A session for District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) on March 25, from 2–3 p.m. that will focus on the ACCESS/WIDA Alt ACCESS window closure and general MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA test administration. New and experienced DACs are welcome to attend. [Pre-register for the March Q&A Session](#). Details for joining will be provided once registration is approved.

The prerequisites for the March Q&A session include Chapter 10 (After Test Administration) of the [Procedures Manual](#), focusing on ACCESS; Chapter 8 (General Test Administration); and Chapter 9 (Student Participation).

MDE collects questions from DACs prior to the event to help find and prepare relevant resources to share. After reading the chapters, [submit questions for the March Q&A Session](#). Q&A Sessions will not be recorded nor will CEUs be provided as these are considered additional supports rather than training events.

Please note: The registration process for all virtual events, including Q&A sessions and trainings, has changed and will require advanced registration. All participants must register for the event using their email addresses associated with their school, district, or educational agency. MDE will manually approve all registrations one business day prior to the event. Once registrations are approved, participants will receive a confirmation email with the link to the event.

Note: Registrations with non-work emails (for example, a Gmail or Yahoo account) will not be approved.

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Minnesota Department of Education

education.mn.gov > District, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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