QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
• MCA/MTAS/Alt MCA Reminders • Student Data Privacy when Communicating with MDE (repeat) • Updates to WIDA Training Courses for 2025–26 • Class of 2024 Graduation Release • Invitation for Science Item Writers 2025	**March 3–May 2 (May 9 Science MCA only):** *MCA/MTAS/Alt MCA testing window* **April 29 (noon):** *Deadline to order additional MTAS/Alt MCA (all subjects), and Mathematics and Reading MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next* **May 6 (noon):** *Deadline to order additional Science MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next*

MCA/MTAS/Alt MCA Reminders

Irregularities

Many irregularities that occur during statewide testing can be resolved by the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) working directly with Pearson. DACs should refer to the *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* document on the Policies and Procedures page of the PearsonAccess Next website to confirm if their situation is one that can be resolved by contacting the Pearson Helpdesk at 888-817-8659 or submitting a Pearson help desk request online. DACs should contact mde.testing@state.mn.us if their situation is not addressed by the *Irregularities* document or if indicated by instructions in a particular scenario.

Ordering Additional Materials in PearsonAccess Next

Districts making updates to student test assignments or assigning paper accommodations in Test WES after the Jan. 17 deadline will need to order paper testing materials. District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Assessment Administrators (AAs) can order MTAS, Alt MCA, and paper MCA materials in the secure PearsonAccess Next site by selecting Setup > Orders & Shipment Tracking. The deadline to order additional paper materials is noon on April 29 for MTAS/Alt MCA and Mathematics and Reading MCAs, and noon on May 6 for Science MCA. Refer to the *Ordering Additional Test Materials* resource on the User Guides page of the PearsonAccess Next website for more information.

Test Security Reminder

Students may not use or access cell phones, wearable technology (such as smartwatches or Bluetooth earbuds), or any other devices at any time during a testing session, including during breaks, even if the student has exited or submitted the test. Cell phones or other devices must not be used in the testing room.

Districts must implement policies and procedures restricting student access to cell phones and other devices during test administration in order to maintain test security and prevent disruptions for other students. Examples of district procedures include collecting student phones and wearable technology, verifying phones are turned off, or requiring students to store phones and other devices so they are inaccessible during test administration.

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

Districts must enter all student responses from Reading and Mathematics MCA paper test books and the Science Alt MCA in TestNav and all LCI data for MTAS/Alt MCA and MTAS scores in PearsonAccess Next by 7 p.m. on May 2. The deadline to enter student responses from Science MCA test books is 7 p.m. on May 9. Pearson does not scan any test books for student responses or scores. As the testing windows progress, ensure staff know the district or school procedure for data entry.

Districts must enter accommodations or change test assignments from MCA to MTAS/Alt MCA in Test WES at least one business day before attempting data entry. The last day to enter accommodations or change test assignment for Reading and Mathematics MCA and all subjects MTAS/Alt MCA is Thursday, May 1. The last day to enter these changes for Science MCA is Thursday, May 6. If these changes are not made in Test WES, the student's test assignment will not be updated in PearsonAccess Next on the final day of testing. Refer to the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* posted on the Test WES page of the MDE website, and the *MCA Data Entry User Guide* and the *MTAS/Alt MCA Data Entry and Online Testing User Guide* posted on the User Guides page of the PearsonAccess Next website for more information.

Note: While MCA test books are required to be returned to Pearson as they are secure materials, MTAS/Alt MCA Data Collection and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) forms are not sent back to Pearson. Districts must keep them on file after entering scores online in case there are any questions about the scores or data entered. The retention duration is one year after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

Science Alt MCA Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI)

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) information is required to be submitted for all students taking an MTAS/Alt MCA assessment. For the new Science Alt MCA, PearsonAccess Next does not have functionality in place to require users to complete the LCI before the student starts testing. Please confirm all students who have completed a Science Alt MCA, especially High School Science Alt MCA, have a completed LCI in PearsonAccess Next before the close of the MTAS/Alt MCA test administration window on Friday, May 2.

Indicating Test Codes in PearsonAccess Next

It is strongly encouraged to document certain test codes for students who had their test scores invalidated or will not participate in MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA directly in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. This can be more efficient than entering individual test codes during Posttest Editing. Instructions for indicating test codes are available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide* and the *MTAS/Alt MCA Data Entry and Online Testing User Guide*, which are posted on the User Guides page in PearsonAccess Next. It is important to ensure that test codes adhere to the following criteria when entered:

- Refusal (REF-P and REF-S) and Medical Excuse (ME) test codes can only be indicated for students who have not completed any test items.

- Invalidation (INV-D, INV-O, and INV-S) test codes can only be indicated for students who have completed at least one test item.

Test codes indicated in PearsonAccess Next that do not adhere to these criteria are automatically removed by Pearson. Pearson will contact districts weekly who enter incorrect test codes during the administration to make districts aware the test code was removed.

Notes:

- In order to enter a refusal or medical excuse code for **any high school science assessment** (MCA or Alt MCA), districts **must** indicate the test codes in PearsonAccess Next; blank assessments (where test codes are added when no test record exists) cannot be added for high school science in Posttest Editing.

- Not Enrolled (NE) and Absent (ABS) test codes can only be indicated in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

Student Data Privacy When Communicating with MDE (repeat)

When emailing MDE with a question about a specific student's test or situation, only use the MARSS/SSID number. For student privacy, do not send student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) such as names or dates of birth in the email, including in screenshots or attachments.

Updates to WIDA Training Courses for 2025–26

WIDA is making important updates to several training courses to reflect changes in assessments and scoring for the 2025–26 school year. Please review the details below so you can plan ahead for your training and certification needs.

Redesigned Kindergarten ACCESS Training Course

Now that the Kindergarten ACCESS Field Test is complete, WIDA is redesigning the *Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs: Administration and Scoring* training course to match the new assessment: WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten.

To support this transition:

- The current training course will be unavailable from April 30 through Sept. 28, 2025.

- While the course is offline, educators will still be able to access any certificates they have already earned.

- The new, redesigned training course will launch on Sept. 29, 2025.

The slight delay in the release of this course—compared to other ACCESS courses—is intentional to allow WIDA to update the training with sample responses.

Speaking Scoring Training Courses

With the introduction of the revised WIDA ACCESS, which incorporates the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, there will be a new Speaking Scoring Rubric. However, WIDA Screener and ACCESS Braille will continue to use the existing Speaking Scoring Scale. Because Speaking scoring practices will vary across assessments, WIDA is updating and separating the training courses accordingly. These changes are designed to ensure that scoring practices remain accurate and aligned with each assessment's structure and purpose.

Speaking Scoring Courses Available July 1, 2025

- *Speaking for Grades 1–5: Scoring WIDA Screener and ACCESS Braille*

- *Speaking for Grades 6–12: Scoring WIDA Screener and ACCESS Braille*

Speaking Scoring Courses Available September 1, 2025

- *Speaking for Grades 1–5: Scoring ACCESS Paper*

- *Speaking for Grades 6–12: Scoring ACCESS Paper*

Important Note: Anyone who will administer more than one type of assessment (for example, both WIDA ACCESS Paper and WIDA Screener), may need to complete multiple certification courses during the 2025–26 school year.

Class of 2024 Graduation Release

Graduation data for the 2023–24 school year will be released to the public on May 7.

Secure rosters with student-level and local summary data will be made available on the [Graduation Rate Roster](#) (MDE Home Page > Data Center > Secure Reports > Graduation Rate Roster) on April 29; the data in the rosters will be embargoed until May 7. To access these rosters, users must have permissions in Accountability Secure Reports.

A webinar for district and charter school data and communications staff will be held twice to share information about the graduation rate calculation and initial thoughts on communication. Please click the appropriate link below on the relevant date and time to join:

- [April 30, 8:30–9 a.m.](#)

- [May 2, 3:30–4 p.m.](#)

Media will receive embargoed access to data on May 6 and may reach out prior to the public release. However, media cannot run any stories until the embargo lifts on May 7.

Please contact Michael Diedrich (michael.diedrich@state.mn.us, 651-582-8332) with any questions.

Invitation for Science Item Writers 2025

MDE is inviting science educators to apply to be part of the Science MCA-IV Item Writer Training in Summer 2025. The training will be 4.5 days total, with approximately 15–20 additional hours independently needed to complete the writing assignments. The 2025 item writer training will be focused on writing engaging grade-level phenomena and questions tied to the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards, with the goal to generate creative thinking and to engage unique teaching approaches to build a repository of phenomena and questions for the Science MCA-IV.

Schedule and Process Details:

- Attend required training/work days:
    - June 27 (half-day, virtual)
    - July 16–17 (in person)
    - Aug. 5–6 (in person)
- Work independently to complete two phenomenon-based scenarios with 7–8 questions for each phenomenon by Aug. 11.

Benefits for Educators:

- Build a robust understanding of and diverse perspectives on the 2019 Science standards.

- Offer insights to the creation of quality assessments that impact 60,000 students per grade.

- Expand creative thinking while developing engaging grade-level phenomena and item ideas.

- Learn skills and practices that support strong classroom assessment.

- Collaborate with Science colleagues from across Minnesota.

- Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

- Get paid for your work as an item writer.

If you are interested in being part of this Science MCA-IV Item Writer Training, please enter your information into the interest survey by April 25. Selected writers will be contacted the week of April 28–May 2. Writers will be chosen based on grade-level and content-area writing needs, as well as experience in developing assessments.

MDE encourages any teachers and educators interested in becoming a science item writer to apply. MDE seeks to increase the impact teachers have on our Science MCA-IV assessment and looks forward to engaging with more teachers around the state. If you have colleagues who might be interested in participating, please send them this information.

Another way to be involved in Science MCA development is to register to participate in MCA Educator Review Committees. Your input is vital in the development of items to the new science standards. We are always looking for more educators to become involved in the review process. This opportunity is open to science, math, language arts, EL, and special education teachers. Please contact Science Assessment Specialists Jim Wood at jim.wood@state.mn.us and/or Judi Iverson at judi.iverson@state.mn.us for more information.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

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

If you have any questions or want to unsubscribe, please send an email to mde.testing@state.mn.us.