

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — JAN. 15, 2025

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretest Editing Deadline • ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Additional Materials ordering • Preparing for Statewide Assessments: Selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors • Statewide testing Participation for Students with IEPs or 504 Plans • MTAS and Science Alt MCA Material Kits/Online Forms • DAC Test Administration Training in the Learning Management System • Update on the Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment from the Division of Early Education • Odds and Ends 	<p>Nov. 25–May 1: Complete Pretest Editing in Test WES</p> <p>Jan. 6–March 21: Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS</p> <p>Jan. 17: Test WES deadline to make changes affecting initial MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA test materials shipment, confirm ISR delivery, indicate test material delivery options</p> <p>Jan. 27–March 21: ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing window</p>

Pretest Editing Deadline

DACs must complete the following Pretest Editing tasks in [Test WES](#) by this Friday, Jan. 17:

- On the District Confirmations page, confirm that your district provided all 2024 individual student reports (ISRs) to families no later than Dec. 1. When results are delayed due to standard setting (as they were for WIDA Alternate ACCESS this year), efforts should be made to provide the results to parents/guardians as close to Dec. 1 as possible, but there is flexibility for this requirement for those assessments. If these efforts have been made this year for WIDA Alternate ACCESS, districts should check the confirmation box.
- On the District Options page, select the appropriate options for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA test materials delivery:

- Request materials be shipped to the district (default) or individual schools.
- Request materials be delivered on either Feb. 18–20 (default) or Feb. 25–27.
- Receive MTAS/Alt MCA test materials automatically (default), or, if your district has historically received more MTAS materials than needed, you can choose to order MTAS/Alt MCA materials during the additional orders window.
- In Precode Search and Edit, the following changes and indications can be made throughout the testing window; however, in order to automatically receive paper test materials in the initial February shipment, these actions must be done by Jan. 17:
 - Enter accommodation and universal support codes to receive MCA paper test materials.
 - Change test assignments from MCA to MTAS/Alt MCA to receive MTAS/Alt MCA test materials.

For detailed instructions, refer to the *Pretest Editing User Guide*, which is posted on the [Test WES](#) page of the MDE website and includes step-by-step instructions and screenshots. In addition, there is also a recorded training, *Pretest Editing in Test WES*, which is posted to the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS) (DAC Catalog > MDE Systems tag).

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ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS Additional Materials Ordering

Initial materials ordered for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS from WIDA/DRC are scheduled to arrive in districts on Jan. 17 or 21. After you receive and inventory your initial test materials, you may need to place an order for additional materials. This often occurs when a district has recently enrolled numerous new students with English learner status or when an IEP team has updated a student’s test accommodations, and the student now requires specific materials. Here are some important tips to keep in mind regarding additional materials ordering:

- Check your district and/or school’s overage first. Most districts receive an overage with their initial order and an additional materials order may not be necessary.
- Attempt to consolidate the additional materials requests from all schools in your district into a single district order. To the extent practicable, please avoid placing more than one additional materials order during the ordering window.
- Order only what you need. Do not order extra materials “just in case,” as this increases waste and costs.

Find more information on additional materials ordering in the *District and School Test Coordinator Manual*, located in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#), under Resources.

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Preparing for Statewide Assessments: Selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors

All students must be assigned to a Test Administrator or Test Monitor who will administer the test, actively monitor the students, and maintain test security throughout test administration; refer to Chapter 3 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for Test Administrator/Test Monitor roles and responsibilities. Test Administrators and Test Monitors must complete all required trainings for their role, as specified in Chapter 7.

Only trained staff involved in testing are allowed in the room during testing. It is considered a security violation if untrained staff are monitoring statewide assessments. More information on selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors is available in the *Procedures Manual*, starting on page 195.

Note: A parent/guardian or relative cannot be involved with their student's test administration or be in the same room during testing at any time. Relatives are defined as children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, spouses, and persons under guardianship.

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Statewide Testing Participation for Students with IEPs or 504 Plans

Please share with your IEP, 504 plan, and EL teams as they plan for the participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments.

The current reauthorization of both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires students with disabilities to participate in the statewide assessments that are designed to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of all students. IEP teams or 504 plan teams determine the appropriate manner for students with disabilities to participate in statewide assessments.

Students with disabilities may participate in statewide assessments in these ways:

- With or without accommodations: IEP and 504 plan teams determine which accommodations, if any, and universal supports are appropriate for students with disabilities. Accommodations should be documented in the IEP or 504 plan and must be provided based on individual need, as long as they do not invalidate the assessment. The use of a universal support may replace the need for an accommodation, depending on the student's needs; universal supports may also be provided along with accommodations.
 - English language proficiency accountability assessments: For ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the primary source of information about available universal supports and accommodations is the [Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#). In addition, information about state-specific guidance about universal supports and accommodations is included in the [Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments](#).

- Standards-based accountability assessments: IEP and 504 plan teams use the universal supports and accommodation information in the [Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments](#) when considering the needs of each student for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA.
- By taking an alternate assessment for which they are eligible: Only students with IEPs are eligible for alternate assessments. The IEP team documents the decision to administer an alternate assessment in the student's IEP.
 - English language proficiency accountability assessments: For English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the IEP team, in conjunction with EL staff and using the [WIDA Alternate ACCESS Participation Decision Tree](#), determine if the WIDA Alternate ACCESS is the most appropriate English language proficiency accountability assessment to use in place of the ACCESS.
 - Standards-based accountability assessments: For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the [Eligibility Requirements for Minnesota Alternate Assessments](#), the IEP team may determine that MTAS/Alt MCA is the most appropriate measure of academic skills in one or more subject areas in place of the MCA.

Please ensure that relevant EL and Special Education staff are aware of the available resources and either know how to access them or are provided them for reference when making decisions about student participation and accommodations.

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MTAS and Science Alt MCA Material Kits/Online Forms

With the addition of the Science Alternate MCA, paper test materials will be organized into separate kits for each test: Reading and Mathematics MTAS materials will be provided in one kit (as applicable by grade) and Science Alt MCA materials will be provided in a separate kit. MTAS and Alt MCA test materials will have different covers to distinguish the two types of materials. Refer to the table on pages 16–17 of the *MTAS/Alt MCA Task Administration Manual* posted to the [User Guide](#) page of PearsonAccess Next for the materials included in each kit. The following information provides additional details specific to Alt MCA:

- District or School Assessment Coordinators must provide Test Administrators with a testing ticket to administer the Science Alt MCA in an online or hybrid mode. Test Administrators will also need a testing ticket to complete data entry for the Science Alt MCA in TestNav.
- In addition to the main online Science Alt MCA test form, there are two additional versions of the online form — one for screen readers and one for non-screen readers — that allow assistive technology (AT) devices to interact directly with the test in order to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with disabilities. Note: Braille materials can be used with either of the AT forms.
 - The AT online form for screen reader is used with screen readers and braille devices.

- The non-screen reader AT online form is used for all other AT devices that are compatible with TestNav.
- The Science Alt MCA also has optional supplemental materials that can be ordered during additional orders to provide support for students who use these supports in their instruction:
 - Response Option Cards provide additional support for students who use this format to communicate responses in their daily instruction.
 - Braille materials and Visual Descriptions provide additional support for students with vision impairments who use these supports during classroom instruction.
 - Braille versions of the Science Alt MCA Presentation Pages, Phenomena Book, and Response Option Cards are available in uncontracted UEB Math/Science format to any student who is blind or partially sighted and is competent in the braille system, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team. Tactile graphics are also provided as part of the braille materials.
 - Visual Descriptions provide alternate text for images that are read to students by the Test Administrator.

The following table summarizes the available materials for Alt MCA and MTAS:

Alt MCA Online Mode	Alt MCA Paper Mode	Alt MCA Hybrid Mode	MTAS Paper Mode
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Task Administration Manual (TAM) ● Student Testing Ticket (from PearsonAccess Next) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Task Administration Manual (TAM) ● Student Testing Ticket for data entry (from PearsonAccess Next) ● Phenomena Book ● Presentation Pages ● Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Response Option Cards ○ Visual Descriptions ○ Braille Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Task Administration Manual (TAM) ● Student Testing Ticket (from PearsonAccess Next) ● Phenomena Book ● Presentation Pages ● Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Response Option Cards ○ Visual Descriptions ○ Braille Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Task Administration Manual (TAM) ● Passages and Scenarios Book ● Presentation Pages ● Response Option Cards

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DAC Test Administration Training in the Learning Management System

The *DAC Test Administration Training (2024–25)* is available in the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) and is a required course in the District Assessment Coordinators learning path. For District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and other staff who attended the live virtual training in December, Pearson has enrolled them in the DAC learning path and marked the training as complete. LMS Learners can download and review their Learning Transcript to confirm the training has been marked complete. If Learners attended the live virtual training and do not see the training appear as complete on their transcript, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us. DACs who did not attend the live virtual training must complete the course in the LMS.

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Update on the Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment from the Division of Early Education

The Minnesota legislature tasked MDE with developing a [Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment \(MnKFA\)](#) to create a statewide snapshot of what kindergarteners know and are able to do at the start of the school year. Earlier this year, MDE contracted with The Improve Group to gather community perspectives on the development of the MnKFA. This effort resulted in two reports under the Additional MnKFA Information expandable heading on the [MnKFA website](#): a concise two-page summary highlighting key findings and a more comprehensive report providing a detailed analysis of the feedback received from families, educators, administrators, and others with expertise working with young children. These reports offer valuable insights into community perspectives and priorities for the design and implementation of the MnKFA. Please direct questions to KFA.MDE@state.mn.us.

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Odds and Ends

MDE Closed for MLK Day

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, MDE offices will be closed on Monday, Jan. 20. Responses to emails and phone calls will be delayed to Tuesday, Jan. 21.

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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.