

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — DEC. 11, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline this Friday: ACCESS Materials Ordering Closes • Deadline Tomorrow: ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Precode File • Staff Training Requirements • Applications Open for Science MCA-IV and Alt MCA Standard Setting • Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) • Upcoming Opportunities 	<p>Nov. 25–Dec. 13: <i>Indicate the number of ACCESS Online testers for grades 1–12 and order test materials during Materials Ordering in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS)</i></p> <p>Nov. 25–May 1: <i>Complete Pretest Editing in Test WES</i></p> <p>Dec. 12: <i>Deadline for updating student enrollment data for EL students</i></p>

Deadline this Friday: ACCESS Materials Ordering Closes

It is very important that districts complete materials ordering in WIDA AMS by Friday, Dec. 13. Districts must indicate the following by school:

- The number of Kindergarten ACCESS testers.
- The number of WIDA Alternate ACCESS testers by grade cluster.
- The number of large print and braille test booklets by grade cluster and tier or format.
- The number of ACCESS Paper testers by grade cluster and tier. Note: ACCESS Paper can be ordered either as accommodations for students with IEPs or 504 plans or for students enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year. Refer to *Test Administration Considerations for ACCESS* in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for additional information.
- The number of ACCESS Online testers for each grade cluster.
 - Even though the majority of ACCESS tests are administered online, paper test materials are needed for the grade-level clusters 1, 2–3 and 4–5 Writing tests. Paper test materials will be sent automatically for the indicated number of ACCESS Online testers in these grade-level clusters.

- Note: While a keyboarding option exists for the grade cluster 4–5 Writing test, the default response mode in Minnesota for the grade cluster 4–5 Writing test is handwriting.

More information on Materials Ordering for the ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS can be found in Chapter 7 of the [Procedures Manual](#). Detailed instructions on using WIDA AMS are available in the *WIDA AMS User Guide*. The *WIDA AMS User Guide* can be accessed from the link within the Get Help section of the [WIDA AMS landing page](#) or by logging into WIDA AMS and selecting My Applications > General Information > Documents. Additionally, both the *Online ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* and the *Paper ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* assessment training courses include modules on planning and logistics that cover materials ordering. Access WIDA assessment trainings on the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) (login required).

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Deadline Tomorrow: ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Precode File

In December, MDE will send the student precode file for ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS to DRC. This file is used to load student information into WIDA AMS for ACCESS Online testing and to create student labels for all paper test materials (Kindergarten ACCESS, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, certain accommodations, and applicable paper test materials for the Writing domain).

It is important to ensure that all English learners are accurately indicated as EL in your student enrollment (MARSS/Ed-Fi) data, as MDE uses this data to create the precode file. **Districts must confirm that accurate enrollment information has been submitted to MDE by tomorrow, Dec. 12.**

Note: This date may be earlier if your district uses a student information service provider for submitting enrollment data. If this is the case, check with your provider for their timeline in order for information to be submitted to MDE by Dec. 12.

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Staff Training Requirements

The District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) is responsible for ensuring that all staff who have a role in testing or have access to secure materials are appropriately trained. This includes MDE's *Test Security Training*, training on the district's policies and procedures for statewide assessments, and any required trainings based on the staff member's role in testing. It is considered a security violation if untrained staff are involved in testing in any way.

If untrained staff are involved in the administration of statewide assessments or have access to secure materials, then DACs will need to submit a security violation through Assessment Security Records (ASR) in Test WES.

Training Requirements for Test Monitors and Test Administrators

In addition to *Test Security Training* and training on the district's policies and procedures for statewide assessments, staff members who are involved in the administration of statewide assessments have additional

required trainings that must be completed annually. These requirements are outlined by test (ACCESS, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS/Alt MCA) beginning on page 199 in the [Procedures Manual](#).

- For ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators must complete trainings in both the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) (for specific administration information) and the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) (for MDE test security information).
 - The *Online ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* and *Paper ACCESS for ELLs: Administration* courses include modules that explain tasks that are typically completed by District or School Assessment Coordinators. Only the content in Module 1: *Introduction*, all content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks* page, and passing the certification quiz are required by MDE for Test Administrators.
 - For the *Speaking for Grades 1–5: Scoring Paper ACCESS and WIDA Screener* course, *Speaking for Grades 6–12: Scoring Paper ACCESS and WIDA Screener* course, *Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs: Administration and Scoring* course, and *Alternate ACCESS: Administration and Scoring* course, all modules (including recommended practice) are required, and the certification quiz must be passed.
- For a complete list of learning paths, required courses, and optional courses in the LMS, refer to [LMS Test Administration Learning Paths, Courses, and Posting Dates \(2024-25\)](#).

District Policies and Procedures

In addition to MDE's *Test Security Training*, each district is required to provide training to staff on their own district policies and procedures for statewide assessments. Because these are district-specific policies, it is the DAC's responsibility to identify these policies and procedures in the district test security procedure. Refer to *Required District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments* beginning on page 140 of the [Procedures Manual](#) for further information on the types of policies and procedures that need to be developed and shared within the district.

Each district determines how this information will be communicated to staff as appropriate for their role; for example, this may be through a district or school training, or in writing (as an email, handout, etc.), and it must be provided to staff before test administration begins. Documentation of how staff are receiving this training is commonly missed or not clearly documented by many districts and is a common finding in MDE's training documentation audits.

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Applications Open for Science MCA-IV and Alt MCA Standard Setting

After the first administration for a new series of assessments aligned to revised academic standards, a committee of educators and community members define the performance levels on the new assessment. The

Standard Setting Committee will use the Science MCA-IV and Alt MCA Performance Level Descriptors to determine what it means for students to demonstrate proficiency on the Academic Standards in Science.

We are looking for a diverse group of classroom educators representing science education throughout the state. This committee will balance grade-level and content-area knowledge of the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards, geographic distribution, and the diversity of our student population. Participants will contribute their instructional expertise and knowledge of the 2019 Science standards and collaborate with peers from across Minnesota while earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and an honorarium.

Please encourage science, special education, and multilingual learner educators in your district to apply to be part of one of these in-person committees next summer:

- [Application](#) for Science MCA-IV Standard Setting on July 8–10.
- [Application](#) for Science Alternate MCA Standard Setting on July 14–16.

Applications will be open until Jan. 10. Committee members will be chosen based on grade-level and content-area needs, as well as experience with the 2019 Minnesota Science Standards.

Another way to be involved in MCA and Alt MCA development is to [register to participate in Educator Review Committees](#). Educator and community member input is vital in the development of questions assessing the Academic Standards in Science. This opportunity is open to science, math, language arts, EL, and special education teachers. Please contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for more information.

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Student Readiness Tools (SRTs)

Various MCA and Alt MCA Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) are now available for the 2024–25 school year to help prepare students for the online or paper MCA or Alt MCA they will be taking. You may need to refresh the page and/or clear your browser’s cache to see the updated resources on PearsonAccess Next.

The SRTs are reviewed and updated regularly based on feedback from educators and students, and the following sections describe additional features available in the December release. Refer to the [Sept. 25 Assessment Update](#) for details on updates included in the initial release this fall.

Online MCA SRTs

No login information is needed for the online SRTs. Students select their grade level to review videos and practice activities to learn how to navigate within the test, use the tools and test supports, and answer different question types. The following are now available in the Online SRTs section on [PearsonAccess Next](#):

- **Exhibits SRTs** – Mathematics tables (multiplication table and hundreds table) are now available in the Exhibits SRT lessons.
 - Grades 3–4 Exhibits will consist of mathematics tables only

- Grades 5–8 and 11 Exhibits will consist of formula sheets and mathematics tables
- **Ruler SRT** – For students taking the grade 3 mathematics MCA, the ruler SRT tutorial is now available in the grade 3 SRT.
- **English Glossary SRT for online Science MCA** – The English glossary is a feature that allows the student to see and hear the definitions of certain words, and it is available to any student who typically receives classroom support with academic vocabulary development. The English glossary tutorials provide information on the purpose and functionality of the English glossary feature. You can access the English glossary tutorials in the Test Supports and Accommodations section of the online SRTs.
- **Script/Human Reader (HR) SRT for online Science MCA** – The script/human reader tutorial provides educators and students the opportunity to practice administering and taking the online assessment in conjunction with a script, an accommodation for Science MCA only that is available to students with an IEP or 504 plan.
 - Students access the online SRT that is aligned with the script in the Test Supports and Accommodations section of the online SRTs.
 - The accompanying script used by the Test Monitor for the Script/Human Reader (HR) SRT is a single script used for both online and paper SRTs. It will be available on PearsonAccess Next on Dec. 20.
- **TestNav Extensions for online Science MCA** – The TestNav extension tutorials provide educators and students with information on the purpose and functionality of two extension tools in TestNav, Co:Writer Universal and Read&Write, that are available to all students. You can access information about extension setup and the Read&Write tutorial in the Test Supports and Accommodations section of the online SRTs. The Co:Writer Universal tutorial will be available on Dec. 20.

Paper MCA SRTs

The paper SRTs are available for students taking a paper MCA test. The paper SRTs give students the opportunity to practice handling the paper test books and indicating answers to different types of questions. The following paper SRT resources are available under the Paper SRTs section on [PearsonAccess Next](#):

- All regular and large print versions of the reading, mathematics, and science paper MCA SRTs
- Mathematics MCA SRT scripts for grades 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, and 11

Note: The All Grades Science MCA SRT Script will be available on Dec. 20. This script accompanies the All Grades Science MCA Paper SRT Phenomena Book and Test Book and the Script/Human Reader (HR) online science SRT. Braille SRTs will be available to order beginning late January and will be announced in an upcoming *Assessment Update*.

Alt MCA SRTs

For 2024–25, Science Alternate MCA SRTs are available for students taking online, paper, or hybrid (any combination of online and paper) administrations of the Science Alt MCAs. Both paper and online Alt MCA SRTs are available on [PearsonAccess Next](#). Educators can use the SRTs to familiarize themselves with the Alt MCA test environment and then simulate the test for students using the online and paper practice questions.

No login information is needed for the online Alt MCA SRTs. Students and educators select the player to review the video and select the Online Form button to practice navigating within the test, using the tools and test supports, and answering different question types.

Additional materials available include:

- Paper Science Alt MCA SRTs
 - Science Alt MCA SRT Phenomena Book
 - Science Alt MCA SRT Presentation Pages
 - Science Alt MCA SRT Visual Descriptions
 - Science Alt MCA SRT Response Option Cards
- Science Alt MCA SRT Task Administration Manual
- Science Alt MCA SRT Supplemental Information
- Sample Science Alt MCA Data Collection Form

SRT Educator Guides and Supplemental Guides

On Dec. 20, all online and paper SRT guides for educators and supplemental information guides will be available on PearsonAccess Next. The *Overview of the Student Readiness Tools* and educator guides provide overview information for the paper and online MCA SRTs. The MCA SRT and Alt MCA SRT supplemental guides explain in further detail the functionality of the online forms.

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Upcoming Opportunities

December Q&A Session: Test Administration Training (Repeat)

Our December Q&A Session will be on Tuesday, Dec. 17, from 2–3 p.m. and will focus on test administration and answering questions from the *Test Administration Training*. [Register for the December Q&A Session](#). Details for joining are provided once participants register. Please note that automatic registration will close 24 hours prior to the start of this training.

The prerequisite for the December Q&A session is completion of the *Test Administration Training*, either attended virtually or completed in the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS). If you were unable to attend one of the virtual trainings, a pre-recorded training will be posted to the LMS on Dec. 13 (Test Administration catalog > District Assessment Coordinators learning path). MDE collects questions from DACs prior to the event to help prepare and find relevant resources to share. [Please use this link to submit questions for the December Q&A Session](#). Q&A Sessions will not be recorded nor will CEUs be provided as these are an additional support rather than a training event.

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Minnesota Department of Education

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

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