

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — FEB. 14, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Upcoming Key Dates for Results Release</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Common ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Misadministrations</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">PearsonAccess Next Setup and Preparation</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Monitoring Course Completion in LMS</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">After Hours Testing</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">2023–24 College Entrance Exam FRP Reimbursement (repeat)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Odds &amp; Ends</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Tech Update</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Jan. 8–March 22:</b> Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS</p> <p><b>Jan. 22–March 15:</b> Order additional paper test materials in WIDA AMS</p> <p><b>Jan. 29–March 22:</b> ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing window</p> <p><b>Feb. 19:</b> Start completing administration tasks in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p><b>Feb. 20–22 or Feb. 27–29:</b> Receive MCA paper and MTAS materials</p> <p><b>Feb. 20–April 30 (noon)</b> Order additional Reading and Mathematics MCA paper and all subjects MTAS test materials in PearsonAccess Next</p> <p><b>Feb. 20–May 7 (noon):</b> Order additional Science MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next</p>

## Upcoming Key Dates for Results Release

The following are the upcoming key dates for the release of embargoed assessment results for 2024 ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS. These dates are being provided to districts for planning and decision making related to using statewide assessment data as one part in their balanced and comprehensive assessment systems.

Full reporting dates for 2023–24 have not yet been confirmed for release. In addition, the first operational administration of the updated WIDA Alternate ACCESS will take place this year. Because the standard setting process takes place after the first administration of a new assessment, there will be a delay in results release for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS; additional details will be provided at a later date.

EVENT	DATES
Access embargoed final student results in District and School Student Results (DSR/SSR) files in Secure Reports (ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS only)	June 28
Access embargoed final school, district, and state summary results in Test Results Summary in Secure Reports (ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS only)	July 26

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## ***Common ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Misadministrations***

The following misadministrations are common across the state. Consider reminding your Test Administrators to be diligent in order to prevent these situations:

- Students are logging in with the wrong test ticket. Ensure Test Administrators distribute the correct test tickets to students and that all students verify they are logging in with the correct information. A check of test tickets is part of the *Test Administrator’s Script* that is required to be read before students begin testing.
- Students are taking the wrong test (such as ACCESS instead of WIDA Alternate ACCESS) or the wrong mode of the test (such as ACCESS Online instead of ACCESS Paper), or are taking the test with either missing required accommodations or inappropriate accommodations not indicated in a student’s IEP/504 plan. Ensure that Test Administrators know which supports and/or accommodations are required for each student and any related specific test administration procedures prior to each testing session.

As a reminder, the *ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Irregularities* document is a helpful resource that outlines common misadministration scenarios and includes likely steps that districts will need to take to resolve the issue, as well as possible outcomes. This document is available on [Minnesota’s WIDA page](#) under the Manuals, Guides and Test Materials expandable header.

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## ***Initial Shipment of MCA and MTAS Test Materials***

The initial quantities of paper test materials for MCA and MTAS are based on information that was entered in Pretest Editing by the Jan. 19 deadline. The test materials shipment will arrive at the district office or schools on either Feb. 20–22 or Feb. 27–29, depending on the shipping location and dates selected in Test WES. If no

changes were indicated in Test WES, the default option was “ship to district” with a delivery window of Feb. 20–22.

Districts must have staff available to receive the materials. District and School Assessment Coordinators must ensure there is a plan for receiving the shipments and keeping the test materials secure upon delivery following the district’s procedure.

Districts can track the status of the shipment in PearsonAccess Next 2–3 days prior to the arrival date. For more information, refer to *Viewing Test Material Reports and Tracking Information* guide posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

## Receiving and Inventorying Test Materials

MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials will be boxed separately and have different packing lists and security checklists. Use these materials to inventory all materials received; electronic copies of each school’s security checklists are also available on PearsonAccess Next. For more information, refer to the *Receiving Secure Test Materials* guide posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website. A copy is also included in the test materials shipment.

Test materials security must be maintained when inventorying and organizing, and all secure test materials must be kept in a secure, locked location until testing. The *Handling Secure Paper Test Materials* training is an optional training for staff who will handle paper test materials for any statewide assessments, and it provides information about keeping materials secure and maintaining the chain of custody. This training is available as an optional training in most learning paths within the Test Administration catalog in the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS). Refer to the *LMS Test Administration Learning Paths, Courses, and Posting Dates* document on the [Training page](#) of PearsonAccess Next for more details.

## Preparing for the MTAS

To allow sufficient time to prepare for test administration, District and School Assessment Coordinators should distribute MTAS test materials to Test Administrators upon delivery. These materials must be kept in a secure location until testing begins. However, once test materials are delivered, Test Administrators may review and prepare all MTAS materials that may be used during test administration including:

- Reviewing all scripted tasks and passages in the Task Administration Manual, Presentation Pages, Passages and/or Phenomena Book, and Response Option Cards. The separate Passages and/or Phenomena Book is a spiral-bound book by grade and contains the reading passages and science phenomena for the field test tasks. This material is used in conjunction with the Presentation Pages so the student can view both the reading passage or science phenomenon and associated item together.
- Preparing and making adaptations (such as enlarging materials or incorporating texture) to Presentation Pages, Passages and/or Phenomena Book, and Response Option Cards to individual student needs.

- Determining any objects or manipulatives that may be needed for the presentation of the task to the student. Refer to the printed Task Administration Manuals for optional mathematics and science object lists.

## Placing Additional Orders in PearsonAccess Next

The window for placing additional orders in PearsonAccess Next for MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials opens on Feb. 20. Additional test materials can be ordered until noon on the Tuesday before the last day of the testing windows to ensure there is enough time for districts to receive the requested materials. Additional orders may be placed the following reasons:

- Students have newly enrolled or there were changes in accommodations/universal supports or test assignments after Jan. 19.
- The district decided not to receive MTAS test materials in the initial test materials shipment (a decision made during Pretest Editing).

For step-by-step instructions on placing an additional order, refer to *Ordering Additional Test Materials* guide, posted on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website. For any questions about placing additional orders, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#).

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## PearsonAccess Next Setup and Preparation

Starting Feb. 19, districts will be able to set up MCA test sessions, assign MTAS Entry users, enter Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data, and create reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next. Various user guides, including the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*, *MCA Data Entry User Guide*, and *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*, are now available on the [User Guides](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website.

## Setting up MCA Test Sessions

Step-by-step instructions for setting up test sessions are available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide*. Test sessions cannot be started prior to the first day of the testing window, and it is recommended that test sessions are not started until the actual day of test administration.

The *MCA Data Entry User Guide* provide information and instructions for test preparation and guidance for data entry for students taking a paper MCA.

## Assign MTAS Entry Users

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) and Assessment Administrators (AAs) user roles must assign students with MTAS test assignments to staff with the MTAS Entry user role in PearsonAccess Next before those users can

enter MTAS data in PearsonAccess Next. For step-by-step instructions on assigning MTAS Entry users in PearsonAccess Next, refer to *MTAS Data Entry User Guide*.

## Additional Training

The following trainings are available in the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS). These are optional trainings posted within their applicable learning paths within the Test Administration catalog.

- *Managing MCA Test Sessions in PearsonAccess Next* is a training for staff who manage MCA test sessions in PearsonAccess Next; it provides information about using the system before and during testing (Test Administration catalog > DAC/MCA Test Monitor learning paths).
- *Entering MTAS Data in PearsonAccess Next* is a training for staff who enter the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data and MTAS scores/responses in PearsonAccess Next (Test Administration catalog > DAC/New MTAS Test Administrator – 1–2 years/Experienced MTAS Test Administrator – 3 or more years learning paths).

## Reporting Groups

DACs and AAs can create reporting groups in PearsonAccess Next for staff to access student results, including On-Demand Reports and Historical Student Data. There are three options for creating reporting groups—manually, importing a file, or creating a reporting group from a test session. For more information, refer to the *Reporting Groups User Guide*, posted on the [Additional Reporting Resources](#) page of the PearsonAccess Next website or the *Reporting Groups in PearsonAccess Next* short video training in the LMS (DAC catalog > PearsonAccess Next tag). Note: This training was created for the 2021–22 test administration but still contains accurate information for the 2023–24 test administration.

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## Monitoring Course Completion in LMS

District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) are responsible for ensuring all individuals who may be associated with any aspect of test administration or test content receive training on test administration and test security policies and procedures each school year prior to testing. It is considered a security violation if untrained staff are involved in testing in any way. Additional information is available beginning on page 181 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

Required and optional trainings are posted in the Test Administration catalog of the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS). Individual learners can monitor their course/learning path completions by viewing badges, downloading a record of completions, or downloading a PDF report for individual or multiple courses/learning paths. A learning transcript can be downloaded by selecting the user icon in the top right of the page. Under “Profile Setting,” select the “Download my Learning Transcript (XLS).” The report will process and appear under the bell notification icon.

District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and Assessment Administrator (AA) users in PearsonAccess Next are automatically assigned the Manager role in the LMS. After changing to the Manager role, the Dashboards page is the default view. The LMS Learning Summary dashboard allows Managers to quickly see an overview of how learners are progressing through their courses/learning path. Tip: Confirm the date range filter is set correctly and adjust, as needed. Managers can select any of the three dashboard graphs to be taken to the Learning Summary page which contains detailed information by learner or course/learning path.

Managers can also track completions by running the Learner Transcripts report (Reports > Dashboard Reports). Managers enter required information including date range, learners to include in the report, course/learning path catalog, and course/learning path enrollment status. Tip: Enter “All Learners” in the Users field to ensure all learners are included in the report. As needed, Managers can select specific columns under Advanced Options. Note: These selections are saved for use in future reports. The *Managing Learners in the LMS* course (LMS Training catalog) contains job aides to help Managers adjust the fields in this report to be specific to Minnesota Managers.

If Learner(s) are not appearing as expected on the district report, it may be because they incorrectly self-registered and didn't select the district or selected the incorrect district or school. In these instances, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request online](#) to review the Learner's account. When contacting Pearson to review a Learner's account, please provide the Learner's email address. Pearson will “reset” the Learner's registration so the next time they log into the LMS they be prompted to re-select their district and school(s).

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## ***After Hours Testing***

To provide districts and schools the most flexibility for scheduling (for students who are homebound or attending an online program), District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) may request testing times outside of regular school hours or on weekends. As noted in Chapter 8 of the [Procedures Manual](#), the DAC must email [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us) at least two business days in advance and provide the following:

- The district and school name
- Grade and subject/domain
- Name of test session(s)
- Planned dates and times to begin and end testing
- Rationale for after-hours testing or data entry need

Note: Service provider help desks have set customer service hours and may not be available during after-hours testing sessions.

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## ***2023–24 College Entrance Exam FRP Reimbursement (repeat)***

Districts are required to offer a nationally recognized college entrance exam (ACT or SAT) to grades 11 and 12 students during a 2023–24 school day. To do so, districts must enter into a contract directly with the test vendor. While a district may offer other assessment options to students at their discretion (for example, ASVAB or ACCUPLACER), a college entrance exam must still be offered. The requirements for offering a college entrance exam have not changed and are detailed in Chapter 2 of the [Procedures Manual](#).

MDE reimburses districts for students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRP) (in addition to students who are determined to be unable to pay). To be eligible for reimbursement under FRP, the student must have been identified in student enrollment data as eligible for FRP at some point during the school year the exam is administered. The reimbursement criteria has not changed with the passing of the Free School Meals for Kids Program. Refer to the [Free School Meals for Kids Program](#) for more information, including an FAQ that includes information about collecting Applications for Educational Benefits.

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## ***Odds & Ends***

MDE will be closed on Feb. 19 in observance of Presidents Day.

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## ***Tech Update***

### **New Pearson Technology Office Hours Link**

Pearson's Field Engineering [Technology Office Hours](#) has an updated link and look. Technology Office Hours are still available to provide additional support to districts with a 1-on-1 opportunity to speak with a Pearson Technology Support Field Engineering member. Meetings are scheduled for 30 minutes at the district's preferred date and time. Register for a meeting by entering your contact information (first/last name, email, phone number), district or school name, customer (Minnesota) and purpose of the meeting. The meeting is scheduled for both parties and a confirmation email with conferencing information is sent to the email provided. For more information refer to the [Support](#) page of PearsonAccess Next.

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**ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT**

Minnesota Department of Education

[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > District, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing

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