

AN UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT — APRIL 24, 2024

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Security Reminder • Data Entry for MCA and MTAS • Indicating Test Codes in PearsonAccess Next • Statewide Testing Report Redesign Survey is Open • Student Data Privacy When Communicating with MDE (repeat) • MDE Employment Opportunities (repeat) 	<p>April 30 (noon): <i>Deadline to order additional MTAS (all subjects), and Mathematics and Reading MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next</i></p> <p>May 3: <i>End of the MTAS (all subjects) and Mathematics and Reading MCA testing window</i></p> <p>May 7 (noon): <i>Deadline to order additional Science MCA paper test materials in PearsonAccess Next</i></p> <p>May 10: <i>End of the Science MCA testing window</i></p>

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.

[Back to Top](#)

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS

Districts must enter all student responses from Reading and Mathematics MCA paper test books and all MTAS data in PearsonAccess Next by 7 p.m. on May 3. The deadline to enter student responses from Science MCA test books is 7 p.m. on May 10. 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.

Only students with accommodations that require data entry will be eligible to be added to a MCA Data Entry test session. Only students assigned to MTAS will be available for MTAS Data Entry. Districts must enter accommodations or change test assignments from MCA to MTAS in Test WES at least one business day before attempting data entry. 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 Data Entry 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 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.

[Back to Top](#)

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 directly in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window as the indication process can be more efficient than entering individually during Posttest Editing. Instructions for indicating test codes are available in the *MCA Online Testing User Guide* and the *MTAS Data Entry 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 MTAS), districts **must** indicate the test codes in PearsonAccess Next; blank assessments (where test codes are added to) cannot be added for high school science in Posttest Editing.
- New for 2023–24: Blank assessments will be able to be added as MTAS records in Posttest Editing for all grades for reading and mathematics, and grades 5 and 8 for science, which means test codes can be added for MTAS records.
- The Not Enrolled (NE) and Absent (ABS) codes can only be indicated in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

[Back to Top](#)

Statewide Testing Report Redesign Survey is Open

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is excited to launch the [Statewide Testing Redesign Survey](#). Your voice and the perspectives of your community are important to this effort as new academic standards are adopted in science, reading, and math, along with new assessments. The survey asks about how you receive, interpret, and use statewide assessment results. Your feedback will help MDE ensure the results from the new assessments students take beginning in Spring 2025 are as clear and useful as possible.

The survey is now open for submissions until May 19. It should take no longer than 15 minutes and responses will be completely anonymous.

MDE is hoping individuals in these groups will share their perspective:

- Students in grades 8–12
- Families of students in grades K–12
- Classroom educators
- School-level leadership staff
- District-level leadership staff
- Assessment coordinators
- Community group members and leaders
- State agency staff

Please share the link with your staff and families. Your expertise is critical to this process and we know your time is valuable. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please contact mde.testing@state.mn.us.

[Back to Top](#)

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 names initials, birthdates, or other personally identifying information in the email, including screenshots or attachments.

[Back to Top](#)

MDE Employment Opportunities (repeat)

District Communications Specialist in Statewide Assessments

The Academic Standards, Instruction, and Assessment division is currently seeking a communications specialist to work on the Communication Program Management team. Emma Balow, the current District Communications Specialist for statewide assessments, will be transitioning into the Cross Program Communications Specialist position, formerly held by Jenn Burton.

This position is responsible for creating communications materials and guides related to the administration of statewide assessments, will manage the mde.testing@state.mn.us mailbox, and will be the main contact for District Assessment Coordinators (DACs). If you or someone you know may be interested in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the position description and application instructions on the State of Minnesota Careers website. The Job ID is 75744, and the posting is open until May 6. Visit the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website for more information and to apply.

Academic Standards Team Supervisor

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division is currently seeking candidates for an Academic Standards Team Supervisor to support the division in providing high quality standards, instruction, and assessment. This position exists to ensure the high-quality revision of academic standards and support schools' and districts' standards-based instruction. This position is ultimately responsible for managing the standards revision process processes including scheduling, coordination with outside parties, and participating in rulemaking. If you or someone you know may be interested in a new and challenging opportunity, consult the position description and application instructions on the State of Minnesota Careers website. The Job ID is 75750, and the posting is open until May 2. Visit the [State of Minnesota Careers](#) website for more information and to apply.

[Back to Top](#)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Minnesota Department of Education

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

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