Assessment Update

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
• Updates for Pretest Editing in Test WES for MCA/MTAS • Resources for DACs • Training Opportunities for DACs • Benchmark ALDs Introduction and Training Module • Reporting Student Gender • Required Tasks in WIDA AMS (repeat) • Upcoming Opportunities	*Nov. 23–Dec. 11:* In WIDA AMS, districts indicate the number of online testers taking ACCESS in grades 1–12, and order paper test materials *Nov. 30:* Pretest Editing opens in Test WES *Dec. 16:* Deadline to submit MARSS updates for ELs to be sent in precode for loading students into WIDA AMS and printing student labels

Updates for Pretest Editing in Test WES for MCA/MTAS

The Pretest Editing window is now open in Test WES. DACs may start working on Pretest Editing tasks to ensure students are loaded for their appropriate assessment (MCA or MTAS), and that any paper test materials will be shipped to the district or schools. DACs must also enter important information under the District Options and District Confirmations screens in Test WES, such as verifying ISRs from 2020 have been delivered and indicating information about the shipment of test materials. Note: Even if you had no ISRs for 2019–20 due to COVID-19, you should still select the confirmation.

Update for High School Science EXC-N and EXC-A Records

MDE has identified an issue for students whose high school Science MCA or MTAS record had (extenuating circumstances – not attempted) or EXC-A (extenuating circumstance – attempted) indicated last year; these students currently are not defaulted to "N" (no) for the Send Indicator and are appearing in Pretest Editing as "Y" (yes). MDE has identified a solution that will be implemented tonight.

In order for the updates to be reflected in Pretest Editing, the district must resubmit the entire district's MARSS data. No changes need to be made but MARSS data must be resubmitted to MDE for the entire district in order for the programming to re-run. Once MARSS data is submitted, the changes will be reflected in Test WES the following business day. Note: If MARSS data was submitted today, the programming will re-run tonight and be reflected tomorrow.

Do NOT submit partial MARSS data (i.e., for only one school or group of students). Doing so affects all work done in Test WES and also any other systems that rely on current MARSS data.

Update Related to MTAS Test Assignment Defaults

With the unique nature of last year's testing window, MDE had not identified at the time of recording the training and updating the user guide that there is a change to the number of students who would default to MTAS. Since the vast majority of students did not take a test, and the extenuating circumstances (EXC-N) test code for students that had not started their test defaulted to MCA, the test assignment for the majority of students will default to MCA this year even if they took the MTAS in the past. Districts will need to change the test assignment manually this year for students taking MTAS. Directions for this are on page 13 of the *Pretest Editing User Guide*.

Paper Test Materials

In Pretest Editing, indicating MTAS and indicating some MCA accommodations automatically generates paper test materials for initial orders if completed by Jan. 22. As districts continue to plan for the logistics of in-person administrations of MTAS and MCA paper accommodations, consider the following options in terms of what may work best in the district for receiving test materials.

- For MTAS, there is an option under District Options in Test WES NOT to receive MTAS materials automatically in initial orders. This means that districts can indicate the MTAS test assignments now but no test materials will be sent in the initial shipment. Choosing that option could give districts more flexibility in the number of materials they will need. However, it also means that districts may have more test materials to order during additional orders in PearsonAccess Next (which opens Feb. 23) as MDE is recommending having separate materials for each students this year.

- For MCA paper accommodations, indications made now (e.g., for regular print, large print, and braille test books and scripts) will automatically order the test materials; there is not a similar District Option available. MDE recommends continuing to make these indications now, as they are determined within the district. However, if districts do not wish to receive materials automatically in the initial test materials shipment, then they would need to wait to indicate any accommodations that generate test materials until after Jan. 22.

Resources

A *Pretest Editing User Guide* is available on the Test WES webpage, and provides information on how to complete tasks for Pretest Editing for typical spring test administrations. A recorded training is available in the Training Management System (TMS) on the District Assessment Coordinator tab, under the MDE Recorded Webinars category. MDE recommends downloading the user guide first to help you follow along while watching the training.

Resources for DACs

The *Resource Overview for District Assessment Coordinators* includes resources that MDE requires all DACs to understand and use in order to be considered fully trained. Other resources for DACs are available on MDE's website on the [District Resources page](#), under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable tab. The infographics are meant to be used as a way to present information at a higher level and be a quick reference for various components of the DAC role or tasks. Detailed information on these topics is available in other documents.

Training Opportunities for DACs

Various teams provide training for administering Statewide Assessments including MDE, Pearson, and WIDA. See below for more information about trainings and webinars from each team:

- MDE revised our training schedule, as outlined in the *Nov. 18 Assessment Update*. Use the *MDE District Assessment Coordinator Webinars and Trainings* document on the [District Resources webpage](#) for updated information.

- Pearson has revised their original training schedule, as outlined in the *Nov. 25 Assessment Update*. The updated *[Upcoming Pearson Trainings](#)* document will be available by this Friday, Dec. 4.

- WIDA has not made changes or revisions to their schedule. Use the *2020-21 ACCESS and Screener Webinar Calendar* document available on the [ACCESS Webinars page](#) for a list of WIDA webinars.

Benchmark ALDs Introduction and Training Module

As previously announced, the Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors (Benchmark ALDs) are a new resource designed to aid educators in understanding and using the ALDs in their schools and classrooms. A Benchmark ALD training module is now available on the [Success Criteria page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website](#) (under the Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors expandable heading).

The Benchmark ALDs describe some of the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of students who scored in each of the four achievement levels on the MCA-III for Mathematics and Reading in grades 3–8 and high school. The purpose of the Benchmark ALDs are to:

- Promote equity for all students across the state by clarifying the expected learning outcomes for instruction and classroom assessment, which are aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards in Reading and Mathematics.

- Support teacher analysis of the depth of their curriculum, instruction, and classroom assessments.

Contact testing123@state.mn.us for any questions about the Benchmark ALDs.

Note: If the above link does not work for you, try a different web browser. Some districts have reported issues when trying to access Testing 1, 2, 3 using Google Chrome.

Reporting Student Gender

For the past year and a half, MDE has been exploring the possibility of expanding the way in which student gender is collected and reported in MARSS. This would include an option to designate a gender other than male or female. In August, the Executive Team at MDE determined to move ahead with the decision to revise the data collection systems, giving schools greater flexibility in reporting student gender identity. This is a multi-year process, and the first public reporting of this information is scheduled to be available in early 2023.

View the *Gender Identity Data Collection and Reporting* document on the Safe and Supportive webpage to learn more about this decision. The public is invited to comment on the implementation process now through Dec. 13.

Required Tasks in WIDA AMS (repeat)

It is very important that districts complete tasks in WIDA AMS by Dec. 11. As communicated in recent weeks, districts will be administering the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS in person; therefore, MDE recommends completing this information during this initial window, rather than waiting to order test materials during additional orders. All grades 1–5 writing test materials are based on these indications, and entering the information now ensures you receive all the materials needed.

The grades 1–12 ACCESS is administered online; Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are paper-based administrations.

- Indicate the number of online testers for each grade band.
- Indicate the number of kindergarten testers. Note: During additional orders, consider ordering an extra kit or two, knowing that the kindergarten materials are shared, and having a few extras may help with health and safety logistics. However, be mindful in the number of additional kits you are ordering.
- Indicate the quantities of large print, braille, or paper test booklets needed.
- Indicate the quantities of Alternate ACCESS test booklets needed.

For more information, please refer to the *WIDA AMS User Guide* [Log in is required > under Key Resources] or the *Ordering Materials* tutorial [Log in is required].

Upcoming Opportunities

Upcoming WIDA Webinars: Managing Test Sessions

WIDA will host the *Managing Test Sessions* webinar on Tuesday, Dec. 8, from 1–2 p.m. Join the *Managing Test Sessions* webinar on Dec. 8. This webinar is designed for DACs and will include information on the following:

- Creating test sessions

- Printing test tickets

- Managing test sessions

The *2020-21 ACCESS and Screener Webinar Calendar* document is a list of WIDA's webinars (with registration links) and is available on the ACCESS Webinars page. WIDA also posts recordings of their webinars on the ACCESS Webinars page for those who are unable to attend the live events.

Upcoming DAC Q&A Webinar

The second New DAC Q&A webinar in December will be on Tuesday, Dec. 15, from 2–3 p.m. Register for the New DAC Q&A Webinar.

- Submit your questions for the Dec. 15 New DAC Q&A.

- Prerequisites are the following chapters from the *Procedures Manual*:

    o Chapter 6 (Overview of Test Administration)

    o Chapter 7 (Before Test Administration)

    o Chapter 8 (Test Administration)

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