Procedures Manual

for the

Minnesota Assessments

2019–20

Published October 2019

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Statewide Assessment Websites

Website Name	Website URL	Description
Minnesota Department of Education	education.mn.gov	The MDE website includes information for parents, educators, and District Assessment Coordinators, including testing calendars, user guides for MDE systems, test specifications, and technical reports.
Data Submissions Page of the MDE Website	education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/datasub	These MDE systems are used by District Assessment Coordinators and other district staff. Access must be granted for each site separately. Assessment Secure Reports: Secured section of the MDE website for obtaining student, school, and district test data. Test WES: MDE system for a variety of activities before statewide testing begins and after it ends, including working with precode files, providing information for Pretest Editing, performing essential edits for Posttest Editing, and submitting Test Security Notifications. GRR System: MDE system for requesting reimbursement for students participating in college entrance exams.
PearsonAccess Next	minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com	PearsonAccess Next is used for the administration of MCA and MTAS. It allows users to sign in to create and manage users, set up test sessions for testing, and access results. Districts are also able to access user guides, trainings, and student resources without securely signing in.
WIDA	wida.wisc.edu	The WIDA website is used to access test administration, technology and reporting resources and training courses for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs; some resources require logging in to the Secure Portal to access.
WIDA AMS	wida-ams.us	The WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) is used for managing student data and test sessions, ordering paper test materials, and accessing score reports for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

MDE Contacts

1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113-4266

Email: mde.testing@state.mn.us

ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

- District Contact: Sequoia Block, (651) 582-8674, mde.testing@state.mn.us

- Pearson: MCA and MTAS

  o 888-817-8659; submit a Pearson help desk request

- WIDA and DRC: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

  o WIDA: 866-276-7735; help@wida.us

  o Data Recognition Corporation (DRC): 855-787-9615; WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Students with IEPs (Policy): Eric Kloos, Special Education, (651) 582-8268, eric.kloos@state.mn.us

- Students with 504 Plans: Carolyn Ellstra, Office of Compliance and Assistance, (651) 582-8689, carolyn.ellstra@state.mn.us

- English Learners with Disabilities: Elizabeth Watkins, Special Education, (651) 582-8678, elizabeth.watkins@state.mn.us

- Accommodations: See District Contact above under Assessment Administration.

ENGLISH LEARNER (EL) EDUCATION PROGRAM

- EL Programs: (651) 582-8579, mde.el@state.mn.us

- Linguistic Supports: See District Contact above under Assessment Administration.

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

- Michael Diedrich, Division of Equity and Opportunity, (651) 582-8332, mde.essa@state.mn.us

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

- Jenny Cain, NAEP Coordinator, (651) 582-8218, jennifer.cain@state.mn.us

MINNESOTA AUTOMATED REPORTING STUDENT SYSTEM (MARSS)

- Marilynn Loehr, MARSS, (651) 582-8456, marss@state.mn.us

Important Dates for 2019–20

Important Dates for 2019–20 Standards-Based Accountability Assessments[1]			
Event	**Dates for Reading and Math MCA**	**Dates for Reading, Math, Science MTAS**	**Dates for Science MCA**
Post district testing calendar to website	Before the first day of school		
Student enrollment data sent in precode files	Oct. 14		
Complete Pretest Editing in Test WES	Dec. 9–April 30		Dec. 9–May 7
Deadline in Test WES for changes affecting initial test materials shipment, ISR delivery confirmation, and test material delivery options	Jan. 17		
Student eligibility data sent in precode files	Jan. 17–April 30		Jan. 17–May 7
Begin creating reporting groups for MCA and MTAS 2020 in PearsonAccess Next	Jan. 27		
Begin assignment of MTAS Score Entry users in PearsonAccess Next, as needed	N/A	Jan. 27	N/A
Begin set up for online testing and data entry in PearsonAccess Next	Feb. 17	N/A	Feb. 17
Receive MCA paper and MTAS test materials	Feb. 18–19 or Feb. 25–26		
Order additional MCA paper and MTAS test materials in PearsonAccess Next	Feb. 18–April 29 (noon)		Feb. 18–May 6 (noon)
Enter LCI data in PearsonAccess Next[2]	N/A	Feb. 24–May 1	N/A
TESTING WINDOW for online testing and data entry (including make-ups)[3,4]	March 2–May 1		March 2–May 8
Deadline to confirm in Test WES that all staff have completed required trainings and all students taking MTAS are eligible	May 1		
Deadline to ship secure MCA paper and MTAS test materials to Pearson	May 11		
Posttest Editing in Test WES	May 18–June 5		
Deadline to confirm in Test WES if the district wants to receive student results labels	May 22		

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[1] Dates for the administration and reporting of statewide assessments are provided by the MDE Statewide Testing Division. Dates related to accountability results and appeals are provided by the MDE Division of Equity and Opportunity.

[2] Data entry opens ONLY to allow for earlier Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data entry. No MTAS tests may be administered prior to the MTAS testing window.

[3] Preliminary results are available in On-Demand Reports in PearsonAccess Next after online testing and data entry for MCA and MTAS.

[4] The accountability window is April 6–17. Students who are reported as enrolled during this window will be considered when determining accountability calculations; districts should attempt to test all students enrolled during the testing window. See Chapter 8.

Important Dates for 2019–20 Standards-Based Accountability Assessments[1]			
Event	Dates for Reading and Math MCA	Dates for Reading, Math, Science MTAS	Dates for Science MCA
Last day to update MARSS data for Posttest Editing[5]		June 4	
Retrieve embargoed final District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files in Secure Reports		June 24	
Retrieve embargoed final school and district summary assessment results in Secure Reports		July 20	
Preliminary embargoed district accountability results available in Secure Reports		Aug. 3	
Appeals window for accountability results		Aug. 3–7	
Embargoed summary accountability results available in Secure Reports		Aug. 18	
Media provided embargoed accountability results		Aug. 19	
Public release of final assessment and accountability results in Data Center		Aug. 20	
Retrieve Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next[6]		Aug. 20	
Student reports arrive in district[7]		Aug. 20[8]	

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[5] This date may be earlier if you use a student information service provider; check with your provider for dates.
[6] While final results are available in PearsonAccess Next, final data is accessed at MDE.
[7] The deadline to request a rescore or late score entry is Oct. 14. District Assessment Coordinators must submit rescore requests to MDE for approval; see Chapter 8 for additional information.
[8] The majority of student reports will be delivered on Aug. 20, but some shipments may arrive Aug. 21.

Important Dates for 2019–20 English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments[9]	
Event	**Dates for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs**
Post district testing calendar to website	Before the first day of school
Indicate the number of online testers for grades 1–12, and order test materials in WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS)[10]	Nov. 25–Dec. 13
Deadline to submit MARSS updates for ELs to be sent in precode for loading students into WIDA AMS and printing student labels[11]	Dec. 17
Complete administration tasks in WIDA AMS	Jan. 6–March 20
Receive paper test materials and student labels	Jan. 17
Order additional paper test materials in WIDA AMS	Jan. 17–March 13
TESTING WINDOW (including make-ups)[12]	Jan. 27–March 20
Deadline to ship paper test materials to DRC[13]	March 27
Retrieve early student-level results in Test WES	May 18–June 22
Posttest Editing in Test WES	May 18–June 5
Last day to update MARSS data for Posttest Editing[14]	June 4
Retrieve embargoed final DSR and SSR files in Secure Reports	June 24
Retrieve embargoed final school and district summary assessment results in Secure Reports	July 20
Preliminary embargoed district accountability results available in Secure Reports	Aug. 3
Appeals window for accountability results	Aug. 3–7

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[9]Dates for the administration and reporting of statewide assessments are provided by the MDE Statewide Testing Division. Dates related to accountability results and appeals are provided by the MDE Division of Equity and Opportunity.

[10]Paper test materials are available to order for eligible students for online testing. Other paper test materials that can be ordered include Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

[11] This date may be earlier if you use a student information service provider; check with your provider for dates. The precode file is sent on Dec. 18 and includes all ELs identified in MARSS.

[12] The accountability window is Feb. 3–14. Students who are reported as enrolled during this window will be considered when determining accountability calculations; districts should attempt to test all students enrolled during the testing window. See Chapter 8.

[13] For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, this date must be followed to ensure that all paper tests can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. If scorable test booklets (Kindergarten ACCESS, ACCESS Writing, or Alternate ACCESS) are not returned by this date, assessment records may not be provided for Posttest Editing, scores may not be available for accountability calculations, and an Individual Student Report (ISR) may not be provided with the shipment of reports.

[14] This date may be earlier if you use a student information service provider; check with your provider for dates.

Important Dates for 2019–20 English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments[9]	
Event	**Dates for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs**
Embargoed summary accountability results available in Secure Reports	Aug. 18
Media provided embargoed accountability results	Aug. 19
Public release of final assessment and accountability results in Data Center	Aug. 20
Retrieve results on WIDA AMS[15]	Aug. 20
Student reports arrive in district[16]	Aug. 20

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[15] While final results are available in WIDA AMS, final data is accessed at MDE.

[16] The deadline to request a score appeal for ACCESS Speaking or Writing is Sept. 4. District Assessment Coordinators must submit score appeal requests to MDE for approval; see Chapter 8 for additional information.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 — Introduction

Purpose of This Manual

This *Procedures Manual* has been prepared for District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), administrators, and others with a role in administering Minnesota Assessments. It provides the Minnesota policies and procedures for implementing statewide assessments and using the results in your district or charter school. (Throughout this manual, the term "district" is used to denote both districts and charter schools.)

There are several ways to use this manual:

- Keep an electronic copy on your computer and make frequent use of the Find function (Ctrl+F, Command+F) or use the indexing and search features in Pearson's Avocet tool to find information (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

- Print some of the lists to use as checklists.

- Use the *MDE Contacts* page in the front of the manual to find someone who can help you.

- Use the *Important Dates* in the front of the manual to schedule testing in your district and make sure you do not miss an important task.

- Provide specific chapters to district and school staff (e.g., special education staff or English learner staff).

We have tried to make this manual as definitive as possible, and procedures in this manual should be followed. However, we realize that with any legislative changes or other policy and procedure changes, as well as suggestions we receive from those who use this manual, revised editions will be required annually.

Communication

Clarifications and updates between publications of this *Procedures Manual*, as well as important reminders, will be published in the weekly *Assessment Update*. DACs and District Technology Coordinators indicated in MDE-ORG and superintendents/directors automatically receive the weekly *Assessment Update*. Other interested district staff may email their name and email address to mde.testing@state.mn.us to receive the update.

The Statewide Testing Division also distributes a monthly *Testing 1, 2, 3 Newsletter* to educators during the school year. The *Testing 1, 2, 3 Newsletter* includes articles from *Assessment Updates* that are relevant to educators, such as training opportunities, new resources available, and upcoming educator committees, along with information on current research in assessment and data literacy. Since DACs are the assessment experts in their own districts, educators are referred to their DAC if questions are sent to MDE. Sign up for the *Testing 1, 2, 3 Newsletter*.

Both the *Assessment Update* and *Testing 1, 2, 3 Newsletter* are posted on PearsonAccess Next under the MDE Updates tab.

Information for District Assessment Coordinators

In addition to this *Procedures Manual*, there are many resources available on the MDE website and on the service providers' websites for DACs.

- In particular, new DACs should review the *New District Assessment Coordinators: Getting Access* document. This document describes the steps that must be completed in order to be listed as the DAC contact for your district in MDE-ORG and how to get login information for service provider systems and MDE secure systems.

- The *Resource Overview for District Assessment Coordinators* is available to help DACs keep track of available resources and trainings. In this document, resources in bold are required for all DACs to be considered trained for the school year. New DACs should review all resources.

- The following infographics are meant to be used as 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 resources available for DACs.

  - *Getting Started in Your District Assessment Coordinator Role* provides a quick reference for new DACs on getting started in the DAC role.

  - *Statewide Testing Tasks: A Year At-a-Glance* provides an overview on the tasks for statewide testing.

  - *Statewide Testing Systems Overview* provides an outline of the various systems used for testing and the tasks completed or information accessed in them.

All of these resources are available on the District Resources page (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources).

Service Providers

Pearson

Pearson is the service provider for the standards-based accountability assessments: Reading, Mathematics, and Science Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and Reading, Mathematics, and Science Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS).

Pearson also provides other assessment resources, such as Perspective described in Chapter 10 and WriteToLearn (PearsonAccess Next > WriteToLearn (under Quick Links)). WriteToLearn is an optional literacy tool for students in grades 8 and 10.

For questions regarding online testing and TestNav, PearsonAccess Next, Perspective, or WriteToLearn, contact the Pearson help desk:

- Submit a Pearson help desk request. Pearson uses an online form to collect questions. Use the link to submit a support ticket; the link is also available on the PearsonAccess Next under Support.

- Phone: 888-817-8659

- Hours of operation: Monday–Friday, 6 a.m.–7:30 p.m.

- Website: The [PearsonAccess Next](#) website (minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com) is used to access test administration activities and preliminary test results. Districts are also able to download user guides and resources, access trainings, and access student resources without signing in.

WIDA and DRC

Minnesota is a member of the WIDA Consortium. As a member, Minnesota districts administer the ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS) and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Alternate ACCESS) assessments to all English learners in grades K–12. WIDA is the service provider for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. WIDA has subcontracted with Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) to support administration of the assessments. Please contact the applicable Help Desk with questions:

- WIDA: Contact WIDA for questions on training, interpreting score reports, access to the WIDA Secure Portal, policies and procedures, and WIDA resources.
  - Email: help@wida.us
  - Phone: 866-276-7735
  - Hours of operation:
    - November–March: Monday–Thursday, 7 a.m.–7 p.m.; Friday, 7 a.m.–5 p.m.
    - April–October: Monday–Friday, 7 a.m.–5 p.m.
  - Website: The [WIDA website](#) (wida.wisc.edu) is used to access training courses for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS and test administration, technology, and reporting resources; for some resources, users must log in to the WIDA Secure Portal.

- DRC: Contact DRC for questions on WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) functionality, WIDA AMS accounts, ordering paper test materials, technology support for online test software, and reports:
  - Email: WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com
  - Phone: 855-787-9615
  - Hours of operation: Monday–Friday, 6 a.m.–8 p.m.
  - Website: [WIDA AMS](#) (wida-ams.us) is used for managing student data and test sessions, ordering paper test materials, and accessing score reports for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

Comments and Suggestions

Comments, suggestions, and feedback for improvement are valuable to the growth and effectiveness of the testing program. MDE and our service providers continually work to improve testing procedures for future administrations. To send feedback to MDE, email mde.testing@state.mn.us.

New for 2019–20

The ☀ ("new") symbol indicates changes or additions to policies and procedures in the 2019–20 edition of this manual. This section also summarizes these changes, but it is important to read them in the context of the other information in the manual to understand the changes; chapter references have been added to aid in this review.

The ⓘ ("i") symbol is used to indicate clarifications of existing policies and procedures throughout the manual; however, clarifications are not summarized in this chapter as they must be read within the chapters to fully illustrate what has changed. Many of these clarifications were provided in the *Assessment Update* in the past school year after the *Procedures Manual* was published or have been provided in other resources (e.g., resources for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS). For this year specifically, many sections were clarified based on emphasis of the following: 1) adding more information about the purpose and appropriate use of the Minnesota Assessments within the context of other information; 2) adding more explanations for why policies and procedures exist; and 3) continuing to ensure ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are reflected in applicable policies and procedures.

Assessments

- Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 still require off-grade items to be included in the grades 3–8 Reading and Mathematics MCA but the number of off-grade items has been reduced (Chapters 2 and 8).

- If a student has not or will likely not pass their life science/biology course prior to testing, the district may determine whether to administer the high school Science MCA or wait until the course is retaken the following year (Chapter 2).

- For college entrance exam reimbursement (Chapter 2):

  o Districts are only reimbursed for students who tested when enrolled in grade 11 or 12. Students who test in an earlier grade will no longer be reimbursed for past tests.

  o In order to be eligible for reimbursement for the current fiscal year, students must have tested prior to July 1.

Test Security

- The district test security procedure has been updated to include: 1) the plan for students who have finished testing on a previous day; 2) how information about the use and sharing of results while embargoed will be provided to staff; and 3) how Individual Student Reports (ISRs) will be distributed to families, with considerations of student data privacy (Chapter 3 and Appendix B).

- While some language in the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* was revised or edited for clarity (including the language related to actively discouraging student participation in testing), the content of the expectations for ethical behavior did not change (Chapter 3 and Appendix A).

- If a violation reported to MDE also affects student data privacy, MDE may provide information to MDE Data Practices staff for follow up. MDE may also request that a *Test Security Notification* (TSN) be submitted for tracking data violations, such as a data privacy issue related to testing (e.g., leaving

student results unsecured) or not abiding by the embargo for preliminary or final assessment results (Chapters 3 and 10).

- The *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* (formerly known as the *Test Monitor Test Materials Security Checklist*) has been updated, making it easier to track any secure materials provided to Test Monitors or Test Administrators (Chapter 3).

Training

- If the district documents the completion of a group training for the *Test Security Training* in the Training Management System (TMS), paper copies documenting the group training (e.g., sign-in sheets) and the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* that staff signed must be kept on file in case of a security violation; an electronic file (e.g., scanned documents) is acceptable (Chapter 3).

- If the paper *Test Security Training Checklist* is completed, the paper copies must be kept on file, even if documented in TMS as a group training. An electronic file (e.g., scanned documents) is acceptable (Chapter 3).

- Training requirements for paper administrations of the grades 1–12 ACCESS have been updated to be more consistent with online administrations (Chapter 3).

- For MCA Test Monitors, the online and paper administrations courses have been combined; the *Administering the MCA* module includes three options, and Test Monitors must select one option that best fits their role in order to complete the module: administering online assessments only, administering paper assessments only, or administering both paper and online assessments (Chapter 3).

- If the district hires a new DAC (or another person working closely with testing in a similar position) over the summer when MDE online modules have been removed for updating, MDE recommends using the *Test Security Training Checklist* to provide training and basic information about test security before the updated training is available for the current year (Chapter 3).

Monitoring and Audits

- MDE will request and review copies of training documentation from a sampling of the schools that are selected for an ACCESS or MCA monitoring visit (Chapter 3 and Appendix C).

- The *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* has been updated as follows (Chapter 3 and Appendix C):

  o The interview questions have been reworded to clarify what District/School Assessment Coordinators will be asked to describe or show the monitor;

  o The District/School Assessment Coordinator will be asked to show an example of the method for tracking which students tested with which Test Monitor and any other adults present in the testing room;

  o The monitor will verify that required materials on walls or desks have been covered or removed for ACCESS in addition to MCA;

  o Only students who are testing or who finish testing during the current test sessions are present in the testing room will be verified; and

- o The monitor will verify that students work on appropriate materials once they are finished for testing for ACCESS in addition to MCA.

General Supports, Accommodations, and Linguistic Supports

- An ACCESS Test Administrator or MCA Test Monitor administering a braille test may now access the corresponding test materials up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled administration. This period has been extended from 48 hours (Chapters 3 and 5).

- Sign language interpreters administering an ACCESS *Test Administrator's Script* or Mathematics or Science MCA script may now access the script up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled test administration. Similarly, a sign language interpreter for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS (if not the Test Administrator) may now have access to the test materials up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled test administration. This period has been extended from 48 hours (Chapters 3 and 5).

- For ELs who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, manually coded English supports, such as cued speech or finger spelling (Rochester Method), are allowed for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS (Chapter 5).

- For MCA, separate codes have been added to Pretest Editing for contracted (BC) and uncontracted (BU) braille test books. Each year, the code will default to the BC code; districts must change the code to BU if a student requires uncontracted materials (Chapter 5).

- For word-to-word translations using online translation programs for Mathematics and Science MCA, a student may use audio support for terms, if the online translation program includes it (Chapter 6).

Technology

- For ACCESS online testing and the WIDA screener, the Testing Site Manager (TSM) has been replaced with the Central Office Services-Service Device (COS-SD) (Chapter 8).

- Bluetooth headphones are not allowed as they have the ability to connect to and receive information from a device other than the testing device, which cannot be verified by the Test Monitor or Test Administrator during testing (Chapter 8).

Administration

- If the incorrect test is administered as a result of a misadministration (e.g., the student was supposed to take MTAS but the Test Monitor administered the MCA), and it is not discovered until after the testing window, contact MDE for next steps (Chapter 8).

- Sample test administration calendars have been provided in Appendix B as examples of the specificity required.

- For grades 1–12 ACCESS, each domain is to be given in one sitting and cannot be scheduled across multiple days or times during a single day. Additional details are included in Chapter 8 for when a student is unable to finish within the sitting or has an accommodation for extended time.

- If a student does not finish the grades 1–12 ACCESS domain within the same day (except for cases of illness, emergency, or technology-related issues), districts must contact MDE for additional guidance.

District and School Assessment Coordinators are no longer required to automatically submit the incomplete domain if a student does not finish a domain within a day without first contacting MDE (Chapter 8).

- For grades 1–12 ACCESS, the testing times have been updated for Writing Tier A to reflect the additional embedded field test prompt (Chapter 8).

- Districts may administer paper and online MCAs in the same room if they choose, but districts must consider what is in the best interest of students, any accommodations or supports specified in the IEP or 504 plan, and differences in administration (Chapter 8).

- For online MCAs, the estimated test administration time tables have been updated based on data from the 2019 MCA administrations and include different information based on the revisions to the scheduling considerations described in Chapter 8.

- For paper MCAs, testing can be scheduled by segment or by time. Separate estimated test administration time tables are provided to help with scheduling.

- The graphing calculator in the online MCA has been updated to the CE (color edition) version of the TI-84 Plus. While the appearance is slightly different, the calculator functions the same (Chapter 8).

- The name of the MCA *Testing Directions* (formerly *Directions for Administrations*) have been updated to more clearly define their purpose and use (Chapter 8).

- The *What Help Can Test Monitors Give to Students* section has been updated to align with the changes made to the *Testing Directions* (Chapter 8), and includes the following updates:

  o Test Monitors may write information specific to test administration on the board or in the room (i.e., information about scheduling and what students may do when they are done testing).

  o If a student has gone beyond the number of items or science section planned for that day's testing, the Test Monitor may use scripted instructions to remind students where to stop. Similarly, if a student is not able to complete the number of items or science section planned for the testing session, the Test Monitor may use scripted instructions to direct the student to stop testing.

  o For paper administrations, if the Test Monitor believes a student missed any item(s), they may remind the student to make sure they have answered all items using only scripted instructions from the *Testing Directions*.

- The *MCA/MTAS Irregularities* document (formerly *Testing Situations and Misadministrations*) has been renamed to better reflect its purpose.

- If the EL staff and the IEP team determine that the Special Education Deferred (SPD) code for ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS is appropriate for more than two domains, districts must contact MDE for guidance (Chapters 5 and 8).

- For the Medical Excuse (ME) test code, a medical emergency has been defined and clarified from a medical condition. Additional guidance, including criteria that must be met to use the ME code, have been included for districts to determine when to appropriately use the ME code (Chapters 7 and 8).

- If the student was not full-time PSEO for the entire school year (e.g., enrolled in a course at the school in the fall) but is full-time PSEO in the spring during testing, a second enrollment record should be created

at the time the student becomes full-time PSEO; this ensures that the student is still considered full-time PSEO for testing purposes, and therefore not required to test if not present (Chapter 7).

Reporting

- Revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 removed progress-score reporting for grades 3–8 Reading and Mathematics MCA, which were calculated using off-grade items (Chapters 2 and 10).

- A section has been added to Chapter 10 to provide further information about what it means to abide by the embargo for preliminary and final results. In addition, a resource that can be provided to staff has been added to Appendix B.

- Beginning with 2019 data, MCA and MTAS data are combined in the Assessment and Growth files (under "All Academic Accountability Tests") to give the full picture of results for a grade, subject, and student groups to be consistent with how results are reported on the Minnesota Report Card (Chapter 10).

- MCA Benchmark Reports were redesigned beginning with the spring 2019 administration, and benchmark reports and resources for previous years were removed (Chapter 10).

- Based on revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, growth z-scores are no longer required to be publicly reported, and MDE is evaluating whether growth z-scores will continue to be reported (Chapter 10).

MDE Systems

- The Testing 1, 2, 3 website for educators is now live and contains a number of resources for data literacy that can be shared with district and school staff working with results from the Minnesota Assessments (Chapter 10).

- MDE is transitioning to a new security system for managing user access and authorization for MDE secure systems (referred to as Education Identity and Access Management or EDIAM) (Chapter 9).

- For the Student Assessment History Report, the ability to look up testing history for multiple students is planned to be available (Chapter 10).

- The School Improvement Assessment Report was removed from Secure Reports, and some of the features were incorporated into Test Results Summary (Chapter 10).

Communication

- *Statewide Testing Systems Overview* has been created for the MDE website to outline the various systems used for testing and the tasks completed or information accessed in them.

- Appendix D has been added to provide key terms for DACs.

Chapter 2 — Overview of Statewide Assessments

Overview

This chapter focuses on the assessments administered as part of statewide testing in Minnesota, the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments and other required assessments (i.e., college entrance exams for career and college readiness and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)).

The process of building an assessment in Minnesota, with a focus on the standards-based accountability assessments, is described in Appendix B. Local testing time limitations are described at the conclusion of this chapter.

Minnesota Assessments

ⓘ This section has been revised to clarify the purpose and design of the Minnesota Assessments.

The Minnesota Assessments are designed to measure achievement towards meeting the Minnesota Academic Standards (for the standards-based accountability assessments) and to measure progress towards meeting the WIDA English Language Development Standards (for English language proficiency accountability assessments).

- For the standards-based accountability assessments, refer to the Academic Standards page and the *Frequently Asked Questions about Minnesota's K–12 Academic Standards* for more information about the Minnesota Academic Standards (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Academic Standards (K-12)). In addition, the test specifications indicate which strands, sub-strands, standards, and benchmarks will be assessed on the test and in what proportions (MDE website > District, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Test Specifications).[17]

- For the English language proficiency accountability assessments, refer to the English Language Development (ELD) Standards page for information about how to connect language development and academic content (WIDA website > Teach > Teaching with Standards > English Language Development Standards).

The Minnesota Assessments are criterion-referenced assessments, which means they measure performance against a fixed set of criteria: the Minnesota Academic Standards or the WIDA English Language Development Standards. Criterion-referenced assessments are used to determine mastery of concepts and skills and to measure progress toward goals and objectives. While criterion-referenced tests may provide information about how well students have mastered certain concepts, they alone do not illustrate the whole picture of what a student has learned. These assessments provide one data point that should be considered in the context of additional evidence of student learning like student projects and district and classroom assessments.

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[17] Test specifications provide information on how the academic standards are addressed on a test. They are **not** meant to be used as the basis for curriculum and instruction. Instead, test specifications guide test developers on what must be included in each test. Some concepts in the academic standards can only be assessed in the classroom and not on a standardized statewide assessment.

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, require that public school students be assessed annually in reading, mathematics, and science.

- Students enrolled in grades 3–8 and 10 take a reading test.

- Students enrolled in grades 3–8 and 11 take a mathematics test.

- Students enrolled in grades 5 and 8 take a science test. High school students also take a science test when they complete their life science instruction (usually a biology course). See the *Science MCA* section below for additional guidance.

Most students take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA), but students who receive special education services and meet the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) eligibility requirements may take the MTAS. Students take one test in each subject.

The primary purpose of the standards-based accountability assessments is to measure achievement on the Minnesota Academic Standards, and both the MCA and MTAS are aligned to these standards. As academic standards are revised, a new series of assessments is developed to align with the updated standards. In MDE's official documents and test data, the series number is added—at least in the initial reference—to indicate the academic content standards that are being measured (e.g., MCA-III to designate the mathematics academic standards adopted in 2007). Table 1 shows the academic standards to which the current assessments are aligned. The *Building a Test* procedure in Appendix B contains the schedule for the revision of academic standards.

Table 1. 2019–20 Standards-Based Accountability Assessments Overview

Test	Subject	Administered in Grades	Academic Standards Alignment
MCA-III	Reading MCA	3–8, 10	2010 Standards
	Mathematics MCA	3–8, 11	2007 Standards
	Science MCA	5, 8, High School*	2009 Standards
MTAS-III	Reading MTAS	3–8, 10	2010 Standards
	Mathematics MTAS	3–8, 11	2007 Standards
	Science MTAS	5, 8, High School*	2009 Standards

* Students in grades 9–12 take the Science MCA or Science MTAS once in high school.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) Overview

The Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs are administered online. Paper test materials are only available for eligible students, and district staff must enter the student responses online during the testing window. Students take the applicable assessments for their grade, and the scores are used for final reports and accountability.

Revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 removed progress score reporting for grades 3–8 Reading and Mathematics MCA, which were calculated using off-grade items. Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 still require off-grade items to be included in the grades 3–8 Reading and Mathematics MCA; however, the number of off-grade items has been reduced. As in previous administrations, only on-grade items are used to determine scale scores and achievement levels, and any off-grade items will be no more than two grade levels above or below a student's grade. For grade 3, students may see on-grade items or above grade items; there are no below-grade items. For grade 8, students may see on-grade items or below-grade items; there are no above grade items.

Released items and passage sets for reading and mathematics are available on the MDE website (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Released Items and Passage Sets) for educators to better understand how the MCAs are aligned to the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards. These items reflect the rigor and complexity of these standards, and are comparable to items students will encounter on the actual MCAs.

Comparing Adaptive and Fixed-Form Assessments

This section has been added to provide further details about the format of the online MCAs by subject.

The Reading and Mathematics MCAs are **adaptive** assessments, which means that each item (for mathematics) or passage(s) with associated items (for reading) is selected based on student performance on items taken earlier in the test. This results in an individualized assessment that best measures each student's proficiency, while also including items that meet the test specifications. The test specifications define what content from the Minnesota Academic Standards is assessed and in what proportions, so even though the test will adapt to each student's performance, the material presented will correspond to the overall test specifications. While students do not take the same items, scores are comparable because each test measures the same content and same standards.

The Science MCA is a **fixed-form** assessment, which means that items are pre-selected. While students take the same items that count for their score, there are multiple forms and the placement of these items varies. These items are selected to meet the content requirements specified in the test specifications.

Additional details by subject are included in the sections that follow. Further information about adaptive and fixed-form assessments are included in the *Technical Manual for Minnesota's MCA and MTAS Assessments* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing > Technical Reports).

Reading MCA

- ⓘ The Reading MCA is an adaptive assessment that adjusts to each student's performance at the "testlet" level. A testlet is a group of one or more passages and their corresponding items grouped together. In other words, a student's responses on a set of items associated with a passage or passages determine the next passage(s) and associated items the student receives. A student may review items in each testlet before moving to the next one. Because the next testlet is based on responses to all the items within the current testlet and any previous testlets, any changes made to items during review will affect the next testlet the student receives.

- Items are associated with a reading passage. Each item appears on its own page with the passage repeated next to it, so students always have access to the passage. Title pages appear at the beginning of each passage, and students will know when they have completed a passage when they see the title page for the next passage or see a review screen at the end of a group of items. If there are two passage titles on the title page, the next set of items is associated with a text set (paired passages), which means there will be one set of items associated with two passages. There are 7–9 passages in the Reading MCA; because the Reading MCA is adaptive, the number and length of passages each student receives will vary.

- ⓘ The Reading MCA is divided into groups of testlets. These groups limit the number of items a student may review, which is important for both test security and the construction of the adaptive testlets. Chapter 8 includes the specific item number where each group ends, as this also corresponds to the end of a reading passage, which is an important consideration when scheduling the Reading MCA over multiple days. Note: When students sign in to the Reading MCA, the first screen will indicate that there are two sections in the test, even though section numbers do not appear once students start the test. Because the test is adaptive, the first "section" refers to the student directions and the second "section" is the actual test, which is broken up into multiple groups of items and passages.

- The Reading MCA contains multiple-choice items and technology-enhanced items where students manipulate reading content, such as demonstrating a sequence of actions or events, making connections between a cause and its effect, and choosing supporting details of a main idea.

Mathematics MCA

- The Mathematics MCA is an adaptive assessment that adjusts to each student's performance at an item level. This means that every time a student answers a question, that response, and any previous responses, determines the next question the student receives. Items are arranged in a series of groups within the test. As students review and change answers to items within a group, the items a student receives next will adjust based on any changes the student makes (e.g., changing a response to item 1 after answering through item 5 may affect what a student receives for item 6). When moving to a new group of items, the first item selected in the next group is determined by all previous responses.

- ⓘ The Mathematics MCA items are divided into groups to limit the number of items a student may review, which is important for both test security and test construction (e.g., to separate calculator and non-calculator items for grades 3–8 mathematics). However, for Mathematics MCA, these groups should not be used to schedule testing as students may stop anywhere within a group of items and resume

testing on another day; test security is maintained as students cannot go back to previously completed items after exiting for 20 minutes. Chapter 8 includes additional information on scheduling. Note: When students sign in to the Mathematics MCA, the first screen will indicate that there are two sections in the test, even though section numbers do not appear once students start the test. Because the test is adaptive, the first "section" refer to the student directions and the second "section" is the actual test, which is broken up into multiple groups of items.

- The Mathematics MCA contains multiple-choice items and technology-enhanced items where students drag and drop a graphic or text from one location to another, select responses from a list of words and phrases or from within a graphic, enter numbers for an answer, or manipulate a graph. Students have access to an online calculator when allowed and, in grades 5–8 and 11, can use online formula sheets that are available on every item. All mathematics items are designed to be accessible to English learners.

Science MCA

- The Science MCA is a fixed-form test, which means all students take the same operational items (i.e., the items that count for their score). Items are grouped into two sections that are roughly equal in length. Since all items are pre-selected, any changes to item responses during review will have no effect on subsequent items a student will receive.

- In the Science MCA, items are associated with a scenario, and each scenario is made up of multiple parts. For each item, the relevant part of the scenario will appear on the left side of the page. Title pages appear at the beginning of each scenario, and students will know they have completed a scenario when they see the title page for the next scenario or see a review screen at the end of a section. There are approximately 12–15 scenarios in the Science MCA each year. The number varies each year based on the number of items per scenario as the tests are constructed.

- When students sign in to the Science MCA, the first screen will indicate that there are three sections in the test: the directions, followed by two sections of the test. Because the test is a fixed form, the sections may be used as a way to help schedule testing; refer to Chapter 8 for additional information.

- The Science MCA contains multiple-choice items and technology-enhanced items where students drag and drop a graphic or text from one location to another, select responses from a list of words and phrases or from within a graphic, enter numbers for an answer, or manipulate a graph. Students have access to an online calculator when an item requires it. The Science MCA also includes simulations as part of the test. Simulations are scenarios that have one or more scenes that require students to manipulate variables and then use the results to answer items.

Students in grades 9–12 take the Science MCA once in high school.

- The high school Science MCA covers the grades 9–12 Minnesota Academic Standards in Life Science (Strand 4) and the Nature of Science and Engineering (Strand 1) in the context of life science.

- These standards for high school science are typically addressed in one year of life science/biology instruction. Each district determines which coursework covers Strand 1 and Strand 4, and the high school Science MCA is administered during the year that coursework is completed.

- Since the test is administered to students in the school year when the applicable coursework is completed, whether the student is required to test is based on receiving the instruction:
  - Students who transfer into a new district and have already completed their life science/biology coursework in the previous district will not take the high school assessment in the new district, even if the student did not take the Science MCA previously, because the new district is not providing this instruction.
  - However, students who are retaking their life science/biology coursework must take the Science MCA again, even if they took it previously (this includes students who are in a credit recovery or other similar type of program). Retaking the test in a year when they are successfully completing or have completed the coursework can provide the district with information about the course effectiveness and instruction.
  - If a student has not or will likely not pass the course prior to testing, the district may determine whether to administer the test that year or wait until the course is retaken the following year.

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) Overview

The MTAS is a performance-based assessment in reading, mathematics, and science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and it is available in every grade in which the MCA is available. The MTAS is an alternate assessment based on extended standards of the Minnesota Academic Standards that have been reduced in breadth, depth, and complexity. MTAS test materials include Task Administration Manuals, Presentation Pages, and Response Option Cards that incorporate the use of pictures and symbols. The Reading MTAS includes brief passages that may be read aloud to students, while the Mathematics and Science MTAS include object lists that provide guidance on the use of objects or manipulatives for students who need this type of support. Test Administrators score each task using a rubric embedded in the task script.

Participation on the MTAS is limited to students whose IEP team determines that the student meets the *Eligibility Requirements for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Minnesota Tests). The same considerations as the Science MCA apply when determining which high school students will take the Science MTAS. While some students with significant cognitive disabilities may not be enrolled in a course called life science or biology, they should have access to the general education curriculum, which includes life science instruction. The IEP team determines the most appropriate year for a high school student to take the Science MTAS.

District staff must enter the MTAS scores online during the testing window for each subject. This entry of student MTAS scores is how student responses are scored.

The Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) must be completed and entered online before MTAS scores for a student may be entered. The National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) developed the LCI as a research tool to better understand the learning characteristics of students participating in alternate assessments based on extended standards. Using the LCI helps MDE ensure that the test is designed appropriately for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and that the intended population is participating in the test. The LCI form is available in Appendix A of this manual.

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

ESEA and Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.59, require that all English learners be assessed in grades K–12 in English language proficiency. ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS) and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Alternate ACCESS) developed by the multi-state WIDA Consortium are used to meet this federal requirement.

ACCESS for ELLs

The ACCESS is an English language proficiency accountability assessment based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards. There are four language domains assessed by the ACCESS: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The test is available in six grade-level clusters: K, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12. While the Kindergarten ACCESS remains paper-based, the ACCESS is primarily administered online, with paper test materials available only for eligible students.

For online grades 1–12, the Listening and Reading tests are adaptive; students must answer each item to continue and may not go back to review previous responses. For the Speaking test, once students record a response, they cannot go back. For Writing, students must enter a keystroke to continue but can go back to previous questions during the administration.

Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

The Alternate ACCESS is an individually administered English language proficiency accountability assessment developed specifically for English learners who have significant cognitive disabilities. The Alternate ACCESS is based on WIDA's Alternate Model Performance Indicators (AMPIs), which provide expectations of what English learners with significant cognitive disabilities should be able to process and produce at a given alternate English language proficiency level. Participation is limited to students who are eligible based on the *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Criteria Decision Tree* (WIDA website > Assess > Alternate ACCESS for ELLs).

There are four language domains assessed by the Alternate ACCESS: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The test is available in four grade-level clusters: 1–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 and remains a paper-based assessment. The Alternate ACCESS is not available for kindergarten. Kindergarten students who meet the participation criteria for the alternate assessment are given the Kindergarten ACCESS, which is individually administered.

Table 2. 2019–20 English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments Overview

Test	Language Domains	Grade-Level Clusters	Format	Description
ACCESS for ELLs	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing	K	Paper	The domains of listening, reading, speaking, and writing are assessed within the context of two stories. The test is individually administered, and materials include manipulatives and an activity board. The test is scored by the Test Administrator.
		1 2–3	Online (L, R, S) Paper (W; both prompt and response)	The Listening and Reading tests are adaptive tests that contain multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. The Speaking Test consists of speaking prompts delivered online; students respond by speaking into the microphone of their headsets and their responses are recorded and sent for scoring by DRC. The Writing Test contains a set of tasks to which students respond.
		4–5	Online (L, R, S; W; prompt viewed online) Paper (W; student responds in booklet)	
		6–8 9–12	Online (L, R, S, W)	
Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing	1–2 3–5 6–8 9–12	Paper	The Listening and Reading tests contain selected response items and the Speaking and Writing tests contain constructed response items. The tests are individually administered and all sections are scored by the Test Administrator.

Career and College Readiness

This section outlines career and college readiness requirements. Minnesota expects its high school graduates to demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary for success beyond high school. Based on Minnesota Statutes, sections 120B.30 and 120B.125, districts have a number of requirements to fulfill for student career and college planning; however, students are not required to achieve a specific score on an assessment in order to graduate or meet graduation assessment requirements.

Overview

Districts must assist students with career and college readiness, including the following:

- Offering students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized college entrance exam on a school day.

- Monitoring student's development and growth in career and college readiness.

- Assisting students no later than grade 9 in exploration and planning activities for career interests or postsecondary education.

MDE does not track graduation requirements. Districts must ensure they are assisting students with each of the areas outlined in the bullets above, and it is up to the district to determine how these areas are met.

Students who turn 21 while enrolled and do not meet or exceed the Minnesota Academic Standards, as measured by the MCA administered in high school, are to be informed that admission to a public school is free and available to any resident under 21 years of age until at least one of the following occurs: 1) the first Sept. 1 after the student's 21st birthday; 2) the student's completion of academic and course credits for graduation requirements; 3) the student's withdrawal with no subsequent enrollment within 21 calendar days; or 4) the end of the school year. Districts determine how this notification will be provided.

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, requires a school or district to record student progress toward career and college readiness on the high school transcripts of students.

- The statute states a student is college and career ready if the student is able to successfully complete credit-bearing coursework at a two- or four-year college or university or other credit-bearing postsecondary program without need for intervention.

- Schools, districts, and charter schools are best positioned to make individual determinations about a student's progress toward career and college readiness. The statute does not prescribe a specific tool or method for measuring progress toward career and college readiness.

Offer Opportunity for College Entrance Exam

Districts must provide students the opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized college entrance exam on a school day, but individual students are not required to take part. (Note: only the ACT and SAT are considered nationally recognized college entrance exams). MDE strongly encourages districts to administer the versions of the exams with the writing component included (ACT with Writing or SAT with Essay) to provide students the most comprehensive information. While a district may offer other assessment options to students

at their discretion (e.g., ASVAB or ACCUPLACER), a college entrance exam must still be offered. Even though only some students are eligible for reimbursement based on Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, subdivision 1e, (see below for details), all grades 11 and 12 students must still be offered the opportunity to participate.

Districts annually determine which assessment(s) will be offered and enter into a contract with the service provider(s), ACT and College Board. Districts work directly with the service provider(s) to determine administration mode, test materials needed, test dates, and any administration policies and procedures.

The following provides additional clarification about student participation.

- The district determines which assessment to offer or may choose to offer both (i.e., ACT and SAT).

- The district must offer students a college entrance exam each year on a school day. Even if the district already offers one of the assessments on a national test date, the assessment must be offered to all students on a school day.

- The college entrance exam must be offered in both grade 11 and grade 12; eligible students will decide if they will participate and in which grade they will do so. It must be offered in both grades 11 and 12 as a student may choose not to participate in grade 11, for example, but may choose to participate in grade 12. Eligible students will only have one college entrance exam reimbursed by the state.

- Each district will determine how the assessment opportunity will be communicated to students and families (e.g., letters to students/families, notification on the district/school website).

- Students can choose to take the college entrance exam on a national test date, and the district can request reimbursements for eligible students who do so.

- The opportunity to participate should be available to all students. However, students with significant cognitive disabilities may be the exception due to the possibility that a college entrance exam may not be the most appropriate measure of their career and college readiness. IEP teams for those students may consider discussing the best measures of each student's knowledge, skills, mindset, and experiences in the academic, workplace, and personal/social domains to successfully navigate toward and adapt to an economically viable career.

Districts are expected to contract and pay for the administration of the college entrance exam and can request reimbursement from MDE.

- MDE reimburses districts for students who are eligible for a free/reduced-price meal (FRP). To be eligible, the student must have been identified in MARSS as eligible for FRP at some point during the school year the exam is administered.

- MDE may reimburse districts on a prorated basis for students that are unable to pay for the exam, as the legislation does not provide for a specific reimbursement to districts for students unable to pay.

    o A district may not charge a fee to a student who is unable to pay for the college entrance exam.

    o No criterion was provided to determine ability to pay so districts must determine who is in the unable-to-pay category.

    o MDE does not know if there will be funds available until reimbursements are made for students qualifying for FRP are made.

- While a school district may require a student who is not eligible for FRP to pay the cost of taking a nationally recognized college entrance exam, these charges create barriers to student participation. MDE encourages that, whenever possible, fees should be avoided.

- MDE will reimburse only one college entrance exam per eligible student. Districts can use the Student Assessment History Report under Assessment Secure Reports on the MDE website to determine if reimbursement has been previously provided for a student.

Districts must use the Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) system to request reimbursement once results are received from the service provider. Student results must first be received to ensure that the students whose districts are requesting reimbursement actually completed testing; MDE will request student results during a reimbursement audit. Refer to Chapter 9 for additional information on the GRR system.

- As available funding is based on legislation, districts should enter all requests for reimbursement in the year the assessment was taken.

- Districts are only reimbursed for students who tested when enrolled in grade 11 or 12. Students who test in an earlier grade will no longer be reimbursed for past tests (e.g., a student who tested in grade 10 will no longer be reimbursed for that test the following year when they are in grade 11). These students would be eligible for reimbursement if they tested again in grade 11 or 12, however.

- In order to be eligible for reimbursement for the current fiscal year, students must have tested prior to July 1.

- The deadline for entering reimbursement requests is annually in early September; detailed information is provided in the *Assessment Update*.

- Nonpublic schools cannot request reimbursement but are able to use nonpublic pupil textbook aid to pay for this testing. Districts can decide to allow home-schooled, shared-time, or nonpublic school students to participate on the district testing day; however, they **cannot** request reimbursement for these students.

Monitor Student Development in Career and College Readiness

Districts must monitor student development and growth in career and college readiness. They must also regularly identify needed curricular and instructional adjustments, as well as individual student's academic strengths and needs for targeted interventions or remediation.

To support districts in this monitoring, student career and college readiness (CCR) scores for grades 10 and 11 are provided for reading and mathematics on Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files. Goal scores have been established for student CCR scores to compare whether students are on track to pass a college entrance exam by the end of grade 11. Revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, removed the requirement to report student progress scores for grades 3–8. Refer to Chapter 10 for additional information.

Assist Students in Exploration and Planning Activities

Districts must also assist students no later than grade 9 in exploration and planning activities for career interests or postsecondary education.

This plan must be reviewed and revised annually at a minimum by the student, the student's parent/guardian, and the school or district. The plan also requires providing an interest inventory to the student. MDE does not endorse a particular product for the career interest survey; the district itself must determine how to best meet the requirement.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative assessment of what our nation's students know and are able to do in various subjects for grades 4, 8, and 12. First administered in 1969, the purpose of NAEP is to provide a fair and accurate measure of student achievement over time and across the nation. Through *The Nation's Report Card*, NAEP provides results on subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for all students as well as student demographic groups. NAEP results are used by policymakers, media, and state education departments to compare and understand student achievement within the nation and states.

NAEP currently administers assessments in ten subjects: the arts, civics, economics, geography, mathematics, reading, science, technology and engineering literacy, U.S. history, and writing. NAEP uses subject-specific frameworks to measure student achievement in these subjects. The NAEP frameworks are designed to provide a rich and rigorous set of standards that define what students should know and be able to do in a particular subject and are independent from any state standards. The NAEP frameworks and items are developed and reviewed by subject matter experts, practitioners, and members of the general public—including researchers, educators, business leaders, policymakers, and parents. The NAEP assessments include multiple-choice items, constructed-response items, hands-on tasks, and scenario-based tasks.

Schools and students are randomly selected to participate in NAEP. Federal law specifies that NAEP is voluntary for every student, school, or school district. However, ESSA federal law requires all states and school districts that receive Title I funds to participate in the NAEP mathematics and reading assessments in grades 4 and 8, if selected. While participation is required as per the assurances for accepting Title I funds, no sanctions or awards are given for performance on NAEP.

NAEP is designed to cause minimal disruption of classroom activities. Including transition time, directions, and the completion of a survey questionnaire, it takes approximately 120 minutes for students to complete digitally based assessments and approximately 90 minutes for students to complete paper-and-pencil assessments. Each student will be assessed in one format and one subject only. Districts, schools, and teachers do not need to prepare their students to take the assessment but should encourage them to do their best. Within a school, just some of the student population participates, and the student responses are combined with those from other participating students to produce the results. Student responses on NAEP are confidential, and the privacy of each participating school and student is essential. NAEP is not designed to collect or report results for individual students, classrooms, or schools.

NAEP Schedule of Assessments

The NAEP schedule of assessments specifies the NAEP operational program for each year. The schedule is tentative and includes the subjects and grades to be assessed and the level of results to be released (i.e., State or National). The schedule for the next few years is listed in Table 3. In addition, pilot assessments, studies, and special administrations may occur as well.

The NAEP 2020 program will include the Long-term Trend (LTT) assessments in mathematics and reading. LTT results can be linked to the NAEP assessments first administered in the early 1970s, creating a trend of educational progress over a span of nearly 50 years. LTT is administered on paper and pencil to specific ages instead of grades and has three distinct assessment windows. Assessments will be administered to 13-year old students from October 14 to December 20; 9-year old students from January 6 to March 13; and 17-year old students from March 16 to May 22.

Table 3. NAEP Schedule of Operational Assessments

Year	National Results	State Results
2020	Long-term Trend (ages 9, 13, 17)	
2021	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4, 8) Civics (8) U.S. History (8)	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4, 8)
2022		
2023	Reading (4, 8, 12) Mathematics (4, 8, 12) Science (8) Technology and Engineering Literacy (8)	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4, 8)

NAEP Resources

- The Minnesota Snapshot Reports (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) > Nation's Report Card) provide NAEP results for Minnesota.

- See the NAEP website (nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard) for further information.

- See the Nation's Report Card (www.nationsreportcard.gov) for NAEP results.

- NAEP Frameworks (NAEP website > Assessments > Assessment Framework) are blueprints that guide the development of the assessments and determine the subject-specific content and skills to be assessed.

- The NAEP Questions Tool (NAEP website > Resources > NAEP Questions Tool) contains released items from NAEP assessments with student responses, item statistics, and scoring guides.

Local Testing Time Limitations

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, places local testing-time limitations on districts. For students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. Schools and districts determine what constitutes a schoolwide or districtwide assessment.

The following assessments or types of assessments are not included in the limitations:

- Statewide assessments like the MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, and Alternate ACCESS

- International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement exams

- Nationally recognized college entrance exams

- Career interest inventories

- NAEP

- Identification for services, such as special education or English learner programs

Districts should use published estimated testing times to determine the time for each test. It is not necessary to track actual times by student. Achieve provides a free Student Assessment Inventory (achieve.org > Our Initiatives > Assessments > Student Assessment Inventory > About Student Assessment Inventory).

If a district or school plans to exceed the maximum number of hours testing, it should be specified in the World's Best Work Force (WBWF) Plan. The explanation or justification for these assessments should be developed in consultation with the exclusive representative of the district's or school's teachers. Contact MDE.WorldsBestWorkForce@state.mn.us for additional information about WBWF Plan.

Chapter 3 — Responsible and Ethical Practices to Maintain Test Security and Test Score Integrity

Overview

This chapter discusses the responsible and ethical practices needed when administering and interpreting the Minnesota Assessments in order to maintain test security and test score integrity. These practices apply to any individuals involved with assessment, including District and School Assessment Coordinators, teachers, Test Monitors and Test Administrators, school counselors, principals, school psychologists, superintendents and directors, other district staff, MDE staff, and educational research and policy professionals.

Much of the following information is adapted from general principles of test use set forth in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (developed jointly by the American Educational Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association [APA], and the National Council on Measurement in Education [NCME] [2014]) and in the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement* by the National Council on Measurement in Education (1995). MDE also develops many policies from Peer Review, as required by the United States Department of Education (USDE).

A primary goal of the Minnesota Assessments is to be able to make valid inferences about student achievement. The principles discussed in this chapter provide guidance for determining whether a practice related to the administration of Minnesota Assessments or use of Minnesota Assessment results supports this goal.

- **Part I** provides the general principles of responsible assessment practice. The guidelines are the professional standards to which all those involved in the assessment process should refer when determining what practices are appropriate and what practices are unprofessional, unethical, and/or inappropriate.

- **Part II** has specific examples of ethical and unethical practices in the administration of Minnesota Assessments.

- **Part III** provides examples of appropriate and inappropriate uses and interpretation of Minnesota Assessment results.

- **Part IV** concerns test security for Minnesota Assessments. Although test security is addressed throughout this manual, this section concentrates on the importance of test security, the process for reporting security violations, and security documentation required.

- **Part V** addresses training requirements for staff involved in test administration.

- **Part VI** addresses monitoring and auditing processes required and used by MDE.

In addition to this *Procedures Manual*, policies and procedures related to responsible and ethical test administration are specified in the *Test Security Training* and other resources and guides provided for test administration.

Part I: General Principles of Professionally Responsible Practice

When considering administration of the Minnesota Assessments and interpretation or use of assessment results, each district shall use, but not be limited to, the following standards for determining which practices are appropriate and which practices are unprofessional, unethical, or inappropriate.

Because of the complex nature of standardized assessments, any practice not specifically permitted in this manual should be presumed inappropriate until and unless specifically authorized by MDE. Districts should submit questions to mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Districts and schools must:

- Thoroughly review this *Procedures Manual* as well as any other applicable resources and guides prior to testing, and understand the procedures needed to administer the assessments and maintain test security and test score integrity.

- Maintain security of the test materials and test content before, during, and after the administration of the assessment.

- Avoid any conditions in the preparation, administration, submission, and return of a test or test materials that might invalidate the results.

- Ensure that all students enrolled in a grade in which assessments are given are tested.

- Identify the need for, provide, and document the use of general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations for each eligible student.

- Prepare students for testing and provide reasonable opportunities for students to ask questions about assessment procedures or directions prior to the administration of the assessment.

- Protect the rights of all students to privacy and due process.

- Avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individual students or groups of students to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of achievement.

Those who interpret, use, and communicate results must:

- Avoid making (and actively discourage others from making) inaccurate reports, unsubstantiated claims, inappropriate interpretations, or other false or misleading statements that can lead to false or misleading conclusions about assessment results.

- Avoid any practice that provides an interpretation or suggests uses of assessment results without due consideration of the purpose(s) of the assessment, limitations of the assessment, student characteristics, irregularities in administering the assessment, or other factors affecting the results.

- Communicate assessment results in an understandable manner to the appropriate stakeholders, including proper interpretations and likely misinterpretations.

- Avoid any practice that supports or leads others to interpret or use assessment results in unethical or inappropriate ways.

- Avoid any practice that permits staff without the necessary knowledge and training to interpret results of the assessment.

- Report any apparent misuse of assessment results to those responsible for the assessment process in the school, district, and state.

- Avoid any practice that puts personally identifiable or other private information at risk or violates confidentiality.

- Share student data on as limited a basis as possible to serve the needs of the students while also protecting their rights and privacy.

- Abide by the embargo requirements when accessing or sharing preliminary or final assessment results before results are released publicly.

- Use multiple data points about individuals or programs whenever possible when making educational decisions.

Part II: Practices in Preparation and Administration of Minnesota Assessments

The examples of ethical and unethical practices below illustrate the standards and principles of professionally responsible practices in the administration of Minnesota Assessments. An unethical assessment practice is anything that would knowingly and deliberately jeopardize test score integrity or student learning, such as teaching only the content presumed to be on the test.

Ethical Behavior and Practice for Minnesota Assessments

Preparation

- Prepare students to take the Minnesota Assessments by aligning curriculum and instruction to the Minnesota Academic Standards and the WIDA English Language Development Standards. Since the assessments are aligned to these standards, the best preparation is providing instruction aligned to the depth and breadth of the standards, and implementing multiple formative checks of student understanding.

- Make changes in instruction that enhance student skills, learning, and achievement.

- Determine which student resources, if any, will be used to prepare students for testing. This decision may vary by school, grade, or student, and, based on students' familiarity and experience with testing, the district may determine that no student resources are required.

- Encourage parents and teachers to motivate students to do their best on the assessment.

- Ensure students understand their role in maintaining security of test content and the expectations that they will act with honesty and integrity during test administration, as outlined by the code of conduct viewed by students prior to testing.

- Set a testing calendar within the state-designated testing window that provides sufficient time for students to complete the assessments, including planning for make-up days.

Administration

- Everyone involved with administering tests in the district should:

    o Complete MDE required trainings, and any district-required trainings, based on their role in test administration.

    o Be knowledgeable about state and district-specific policies and procedures for test administration.

    o Promptly report any violations of the prescribed administration conditions, including test security violations, to the appropriate administrator at the school or to the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC).

    o Follow the district-determined testing calendar, provided it does not conflict with state testing windows.

    o Administer all tests in strict accordance with the instructions contained in this *Procedures Manual,* as well as the other resources and guides.

    o Follow security policies and procedures for distribution and return of secure test materials, accounting for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing.

- DACs should:

    o Provide adequate and appropriate staffing of testing rooms, ensuring all staff present in testing rooms have completed required trainings annually.

    o Ensure every student enrolled in a grade in which assessments are given participates in the appropriate assessment, or verify documentation is completed for students who are not testing (i.e., test codes).

    o Confirm which students should be provided general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations, in conjunction with School Assessment Coordinators and Special Education and English learner staff.

    o Account for all secure test materials, and store them in a locked, secure location throughout the testing process when not being used for administration.

    o Return all used and unused secure test materials to the service provider as specified in the applicable instructions, and report any missing test materials to the service provider.

    o Promptly report any test security violations to MDE.

- ACCESS Test Administrators and MCA Test Monitors should:

    o Provide students the opportunity to demonstrate what they know independently, without any support, guidance, or unauthorized interference during test administration.

    o Verify that the correct test and general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations are provided to students.

    o Make sure all procedures related to allowable and prohibited materials are followed during test administration.

- o Follow all requirements outlined in the applicable directions:

  - ▪ For ACCESS, follow the *Test Administrator's Scripts,* and use only the scripted directions and guidance in those documents to assist students during test administration.

  - ▪ For the MCA, follow the applicable *Testing Directions,* and use only the scripted directions and guidance in those documents to assist students during test administration.

- o Actively monitor students during all test sessions:

  - ▪ Circulate repeatedly around the entire room to ensure students are following directions and making progress in the test.

  - ▪ Make sure students are focused only on their tests.

  - ▪ Watch for any unusual behavior or signs of cheating.

  - ▪ Ensure that students who have finished their tests are engaged in allowable activities that do not distract students still testing.

- • Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS Test Administrators should:

  - o Administer the tasks as scripted, reading aloud applicable portions as specified in the *Test Administrator's Script* (for Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS) or Task Administration Manual (for MTAS).

  - o Be familiar with the test materials prior to test administration.

  - o Refocus and repeat information as needed.

  - o For Alternate ACCESS and MTAS:

    - ▪ Adapt the student-facing materials as needed to meet student needs. This may include enlarging materials, incorporating texture, or providing braille versions of text and graphics.

    - ▪ Use instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives as appropriate for a given student unless prohibited in the task script.

    - ▪ Allow the use of assistive technology devices to meet student needs.

- • Scribes must record student responses exactly as provided into the online test or paper test materials. See Chapter 5 for additional information about the scribe accommodation.

- • Test Administrators for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS must score tasks solely based on student performance during the administration of the task.

- • Staff entering student responses from MCA paper test books must enter student responses exactly as written.

- • Staff entering MTAS scores must enter scores exactly as recorded during test administration.

Unethical Behavior and Practice for Minnesota Assessments

Educators and any staff involved in any aspect of test administration should not engage in any of the following behaviors or practices in this section. If MDE is made aware of educators or staff engaging in unethical behavior or practices, MDE may provide information to applicable state agencies, such as the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) or the Board of School Administrators (BOSA), or federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education, for follow up.

Unethical Preparation and Administration

- Limit curricula and instruction based on the test specifications, rather than developing instructional objectives based on the Minnesota Academic Standards or WIDA English Language Development Standards.

  o While test specifications for the standards-based accountability assessments provide information on how the academic standards are addressed on the test, they do not indicate what should be taught. Instead, test specifications guide test developers on the information that must be included in each test.

  o Some concepts in the Minnesota Academic Standards can only be assessed in the classroom and not on a standardized statewide assessment. That does not mean that these skills should not be taught or assessed in the classroom. Teachers need to instruct and assess their students on all of the Minnesota Academic Standards.

- Limit instruction on mathematics or science terminology based on the translated word lists. These lists are provided as a linguistic support that may be used by eligible students during testing. While using these lists during instruction is encouraged to familiarize students with their use, the lists are not meant to be used as the basis for curriculum or instruction.

- Encourage IEP teams to base assessment decisions on anything other than student need. This includes assessing a student with Alternate ACCESS or MTAS even though the student does not meet the participation guidelines or eligibility requirements.

- Exclude students from the assessments by actively encouraging parents or students to refuse testing.

- Restrict or deny access to general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations allowed on the assessments that a student uses during instruction or that are indicated in an IEP or 504 plan.

- Fail to provide proper training to all individuals who have any involvement in testing.

- Allow any test materials to be unsecured at any time at the district or schools, including but not limited to:

  o Leaving secure test materials in an unlocked location.

  o Failing to account for, return, or dispose of secure test materials as instructed.

  o Removing secure test materials from school grounds unless explicitly allowed for specific circumstances (e.g., administering a test to a homebound student).

- Copy, reproduce, retain, or use any portion of any secure test materials in any manner inconsistent with test security policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

  o Capturing and/or sharing any secure test content in a public forum or through any media before or after test administration.

  o Reproducing or distributing any portions of reading passages, test items, writing prompts, or student responses from an actual assessment, either verbatim or by paraphrasing, for use in instructional planning, classroom instruction or assessment, or for any other purpose.

  o Making a copy of a test, giving students access to test content, making answer keys, or preparing a student study guide based on the items in a particular test.

  o Knowingly allowing a student to violate test security, including retaining secure test materials, making a copy of or capturing secure test content, sharing answers with other students, or sharing test content with adults and/or students through text messaging, email, or social media.

  o Allowing a parent, community member, or member of the media to see the contents of secure test materials and/or receive a copy of secure test content.

- Deviate from the prescribed administration procedures specified in this manual, as well as the other resources and guides, in order to assist student performance.

- Leave academic or instructional posters and graphics, including strategy techniques and methods, on testing room walls or student desks. See *Materials Not Allowed during Testing* in Chapter 8.

- Assign testing personnel to a room where a relative is being tested. See *Selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors* in Chapter 8.

- Allow students to use materials or devices that are not allowed during test administration as noted in this manual and/or in the applicable *Testing Directions*.

- Allow students to have access to cell phones, wearable technology, or other devices at any time during test administration unless explicitly allowed as an accommodation or another approved exception.

- "Look over the shoulder" to read test items when monitoring students taking a test.

- View test items for any reason except as allowed for administering an accommodation or linguistic support or when required for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS.

- Read aloud the passages, questions, and/or answer options of a reading assessment for any student with the exception of students taking the Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS.

- Offer an opinion to a student, class, or other staff member that a question is "bad" or does not have a correct answer. Any concerns regarding test content should be sent to MDE using the process outlined in Chapter 8.

- Review or change student responses in any manner during test administration or when entering student responses, including but not limited to:
    - o Reviewing a student's assessment for correct responses.
    - o Suggesting that a student reconsider an answer already given.
    - o Coaching students during testing or influencing, altering, or interfering with student responses in any way, including telling students the correct responses or allowing them to discuss answers among themselves.
    - o Scoring student responses in MCA paper test books before entering student responses online.
    - o Transcribing or entering the essence of a student's response rather than the exact student response when scribing or entering student responses from MCA paper test books.
    - o Changing student responses in an online assessment or intentionally changing student responses from MCA paper test books or student scores for MTAS when entering them online.
- Refuse to cooperate with MDE at any point during test administration or MDE audits, monitoring, or investigations.
- Participate in, direct, aid, counsel, assist, encourage, or fail to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.
- Engage in any of the following as an ACCESS Test Administrator or MCA Test Monitor instead of actively monitoring students:
    - o Failing to provide proper directions to students, as specified in the applicable directions for the assessment.
    - o Leaving the room unattended or under the supervision of untrained staff at any time.
    - o Allowing students to leave the room unattended during test administration without a plan to monitor students if more than one student leaves and/or multiple testing rooms are being used.
    - o Standing or sitting in one place for more than a few minutes if unable to observe all students who are testing.
    - o Grading papers, checking email, performing other work, or reading material unrelated to administering the test.
    - o Engaging in behavior that is potentially distracting to test-takers.
    - o Using cell phones or other prohibited devices for purposes other than alerting others if assistance is needed.
    - o Engaging in any other tasks unrelated to test administration and monitoring.

- Engage in any of the following activities during a Kindergarten or Alternate ACCESS administration:

  o Changing the content of a task.

  o Administering the test in a language other than English

  o For Kindergarten ACCESS, repeating Listening tasks or repeating Speaking tasks more than once.

  o Leading a student to the correct answer (using voice inflection, unless underlined in the script for emphasis, placement of cards, providing explanations or incentives, etc.).

  o Providing feedback to a student that a response is correct or incorrect.

  o Using instructional supports or naming answer options when those actions are prohibited in the script.

  o Accepting a response as correct when a student's intent is in doubt. When the Test Administrator is uncertain about a student's intent, the instructions in the script must be followed.

- Engage in any of the following activities during an MTAS administration:

  o Changing the content of an MTAS task.

  o Starting an MTAS task with the script for score 2.

  o Re-administering a task for a score of 3 after presenting a score 2 script.

  o Leading a student to the correct answer (using voice inflection, placement of response option cards, providing explanations or incentives, etc.).

  o Providing feedback to a student that a response is correct or incorrect.

  o Using objects/manipulatives or naming answer options when those actions are prohibited in the script.

  o Accepting a response as correct when a student's intent is in doubt. When the Test Administrator is uncertain about a student's intent, the instructions in the script must be followed.

Although MDE does not have a policy against monetary incentives for student participation or performance in statewide assessments, MDE does not encourage the practice. The statewide assessment is a measure of what the students have learned through instruction in a curriculum aligned to the applicable standards. Providing monetary incentives is not consistent with encouraging students to do their best academically for the sake of valuing education. Other incentives may be provided at the discretion of the district. If districts are providing incentives only to a select group of students (e.g., only to high performers), the district must be able to explain to other students and parents the rationale and must not divulge student performance as this is a data privacy issue. MDE will refer any calls received on the district's policy to the DAC.

Part III: Practices in the Use and Interpretation of Minnesota Assessments Results

Examples of ethical and unethical assessment practices are provided to illustrate the standards and principles of professionally responsible practices needed when using and interpreting Minnesota Assessment results.

Ethical Behavior and Practice

- Use the results of Minnesota Assessments as only one part of a body of evidence when making educational decisions about individuals.

  o Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, subdivision 1a(h) allows schools and districts to use student performance on a statewide assessment as one of multiple criteria to determine grade promotion or retention.

  o In addition, schools or districts may use a high school student's performance on a statewide assessment as a percentage of the student's final grade in a course. The score of the high school assessment may also be placed on the student's transcript. *(i)* Note that the statute specifically provides these provisions for high school; it is up to the district to determine if a student's score will be used for determining a final grade for students not in high school.

  o However, final assessment results are not available before final grades would be determined, and preliminary test results should be used with caution as the score may change.

- Identify strengths and gaps in the curriculum in order to improve future instruction.

- Provide teachers and counselors with the information they need to correctly interpret the results of Minnesota Assessments as one resource within an array of information and data about student learning.

- Communicate the assessment results to appropriate audiences in an honest, clear, and understandable manner, which includes providing a correct interpretation of results and explanations of common misinterpretations.

Unethical Behavior and Practice

- Assign students to assessments in order to maximize success on accountability measures, rather than optimize appropriateness of the assessment for the student.

- Base decisions, such as retention, promotion, or placement into certain programs (i.e., enrichment or remediation) solely on the results of Minnesota Assessments.

- Knowingly use results of Minnesota Assessments to provide a misleading picture of the district's/school's educational programs, instruction, or student population.

- Fail to report apparent misuses of assessment results to those responsible for the assessment process in the school, district, or state.

- Deliberately hide information or provide false/misleading interpretations that imply an erroneously positive (or negative) and inaccurate picture of any individual, school, or district.

- Reveal the test scores of one student to another student or to others not directly involved with the education of that student.

- Share embargoed preliminary or final assessment results in a public forum or with individuals who should not have access to the information prior to public release.

- Use results of Minnesota Assessments in a manner that runs counter to the purposes of the assessment.

Part IV: Test Security

Minnesota Assessments require the highest level of test security. Based on the United States Department of Education's (USDE) emphasis on test security and recommendations by Minnesota's National Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), MDE continues to evaluate and implement policies and procedures to maintain a fair and valid assessment system. MDE's policies around test security are applicable to all statewide assessments and, generally speaking, are best practice.

Test security refers to policies and procedures designed to protect test content and ensure the integrity of test scores. Keeping test content secure and following test security procedures is how the integrity of student test scores is ensured. The *Frequently Asked Questions: Why Statewide Test Results Matter* document explains the purpose for statewide testing and why it is important to ensure the integrity of test scores (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing).

Developing and maintaining a secure system of statewide test administration serves to:

- Preserve the security of the test content.

- Protect the significant financial investment necessary to develop a comprehensive system of assessments.

- Enhance the opportunity for fairness among all districts.

- Maintain the integrity of the assessment results.

A security violation is any action that jeopardizes the security of test content and/or gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students. A violation may be committed by various individuals and/or precipitated by a number of events. The unethical behavior and practice section in Part II of this chapter provides some examples of security violations. In addition, the *MDE Test Security Procedures* can be found in Appendix B, which describes MDE's responsibility and the applicable steps to investigate and resolve all alleged security violations on a statewide basis. In the past, MDE has used the term "test security breaches," which refers specifically to the release of test content. Since this phrase does not encompass the various test security issues that must be reported to MDE, the term "test security violations" will be used going forward.

If a violation reported to MDE also affects student data privacy, MDE may provide information to MDE Data Practices staff for follow up.

Required District Test Security Procedure

Each school district must have a written district test security procedure that addresses how test security policies and procedures will be implemented. This procedure must be reviewed and updated annually, as needed, before training or resources on district-specific policies and procedures is provided.

Appendix B contains a list of the specific topics that must be minimally addressed in the district test security procedure, including a comprehensive list of the policies and procedures that each district must determine. **NEW!** Additions to the list include: 1) the plan for students who have finished testing on a previous day; 2) how information about the use and sharing of results while embargoed will be provided to staff; and 3) how Individual Student Reports (ISRs) will be distributed to families, with considerations of student data privacy. Districts can use the sample district test security procedure template available on PearsonAccess Next or create their own procedure.

- All statewide assessments administered in the district (MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, and Alternate ACCESS) must be reflected in the procedure. If procedures vary by assessment, this must be noted as applicable.

- Districts must specify policies by school, if they vary, and can include additional documentation as needed for their district. DACs may also have School Assessment Coordinators or other school staff complete the procedure for their school and return it to the DAC for documentation.

- Roles (e.g., DAC, principal) or individual staff member names should be included to specify who is responsible for the given tasks.

Annually, MDE will request and review copies of district test security procedures from a sampling of districts. See *Monitoring and Audits* later in this chapter.

Defining Staff Involved in Test Administration

The staff who are considered "involved" in test administration fall under a wide and comprehensive umbrella. Staff involved includes, but is not limited to, all ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators, MCA Test Monitors, MTAS Test Administrators, School Assessment Coordinators, translators, scribes, paraprofessionals, staff receiving and organizing test materials, and technology staff, including any individuals contracted at the district for technology support. It also includes individuals in leadership roles (principals, superintendents), and custodial and support staff who may have keys, and therefore access, to secure test materials.

Defining Secure Test Content and Secure Test Materials

Security of test content and test materials must be maintained before, during, and after the test administration.

- All content in a test is considered secure, and includes, but is not limited to, reading passages and titles; science scenarios and titles; all components of test items in online assessments, paper test books, scripts, and any other paper test materials; and student responses.

- Student testing tickets used to sign in to online tests are secure because they provide access to online tests and contain private student data. If printed from service provider systems, session rosters must also be kept secure if they contain information on accessing online tests and/or student information.

- Student scratch paper (including materials that may be used as scratch paper, like hard copy mathematics formula sheets and translated word lists) is secure once used because students may write test items on it.

Maintaining Security of Test Content and Test Materials

Follow the guidelines in this manual as well as the other resources and guides for the distribution, administration, collection, return, and/or disposal of all secure test materials to preserve the confidentiality and security of the test content.

Assessment staff must have access to a locked storage space to maintain the security of all test materials in their possession. When possible, storage areas should be accessible by a limited number of staff (i.e., not stored in a locked room or cabinet many staff have access to). While paper test materials should be inventoried upon arrival and can be organized prior to testing, security of the test materials must be maintained at all times.

- District and School Assessment Coordinators should keep a list of all staff who have access to secure areas, inventory materials, and complete the security checklists.

- Test Administrators, Test Monitors, and other school staff may not have access to secure test materials until the day tests are administered to students. There are some exceptions to this rule in the following bullets; however, for any of these exceptions, all test materials must be kept secure, and Test Administrators and Test Monitors must ensure that students do not have access to the test materials prior to or after administration:

  o Under the supervision of the District or School Assessment Coordinator, an ACCESS Test Administrator or MCA Test Monitor administering a braille test may access the corresponding test materials up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled administration. This period has been extended from 48 hours to allow additional time for Test Administrators and Test Monitors to prepare for administration. Materials must be kept secure as they prepare for testing.

  o Under the supervision of the District or School Assessment Coordinator, a sign language interpreter administering an ACCESS *Test Administrator's Script* or Mathematics or Science MCA script may access the script up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled test administration. Similarly, a sign language interpreter for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS (if not the Test Administrator) would have access to the test materials up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled test administration. This period has been extended from 48 hours to allow additional time for interpreters to prepare for administration. Materials must be kept secure by interpreters as they prepare for testing.

  o For Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators need to have access to test materials beforehand (including the *Test Administrator's Script*) to prepare for test administration. For Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators also need to prepare for any individual student needs (enlarging material, finding instructional supports, etc.). Materials must be kept secure by Test Administrators as they prepare for testing.

  o For MTAS, Test Administrators need to have access to all test materials upon delivery to prepare for the administration and any individual student needs (enlarging material, finding

objects/manipulatives, etc.). MTAS materials must be kept secure by Test Administrators as they prepare for testing.

- During test administration, Test Administrators and Test Monitors are not allowed to read, review, discuss, or copy any reading passages, test questions, answer options, writing prompts, or student responses for later use in instructional planning, classroom instruction or assessments, or other purposes.

- Students are not allowed to disclose or discuss test items or answer options after test administration.

  o Each district determines their policy on whether staff can discuss the test administration experience with students. If the test administration experience is discussed, district staff should not ask students about specific items.

  o If students ask about a specific item following testing, remind them that items are secure and not to be discussed. Refer to *What Help Can Test Monitors Give to Students* in Chapter 8 for further guidance.

- No one may reproduce or copy any part of any test or script, whether written or in audio, paper, or electronic format without proper authorization. Reproduction of secure test materials is a security violation and a Federal Copyright Act violation. (Note that materials for Alternate ACCESS and MTAS are an exception as they may be reproduced or copied as needed to meet individual student needs.)

- No one may alter student responses during or after test administration.

All secure test materials must be returned to the service provider by the dates specified in the *Important Dates* or securely disposed of following testing (no more than 48 hours after the close of the testing window) as instructed in Chapter 8 of this manual and other resources and guides.

Local newspapers or television stations occasionally run stories on statewide testing. However, media representatives cannot be allowed to photograph test books, related test materials, and computer/device screens displaying test content. Item samplers are available on service provider websites, which the media can photograph or televise to show what testing looks like.

Test Security Information for Students

MDE expects that all students will follow all state and district policies for test administration. As part of a culture of academic integrity, districts are responsible for reminding students of the importance of test security and the expectations that students will keep test content secure and act with honesty and integrity during test administration. These expectations can be communicated through routes determined by the district (e.g., student handbooks, district and school websites, newsletters).

In addition, students view code of conduct information at the beginning of the online test and in the paper test books:

On this test, do your own best work to show what you know and can do.

- Do not accept help finding answers to test questions.

- Do not give answers to other students.

- Do not tell others what is on the test.

- There may be consequences if you do not follow directions or if you behave dishonestly.

Districts should also provide information to students and families about the online Test Security Tip Line on the MDE website; any suspected incidents of cheating or other improper or unethical behavior on statewide assessments can be reported to MDE using the Tip Line (see *Test Security Tip Line* later in this chapter).

Test Security Forms Used for Minnesota Assessments

This section describes documentation that districts are required to keep for test security purposes. The duration for retention is two years so districts can respond to investigations of possible test security violations for the previous and current school year (e.g., a security violation discovered later needs to be reported for a prior school year, an investigation for a security violation takes more than one year to be fully resolved). Refer to the *Document Retention Policy for Districts* in Appendix B for a list of documentation required to be kept by districts.

Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure

Any district or school staff involved in any aspect of test administration must complete an *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*. The assurance is completed as part of the online *Test Security Training* (or the paper checklist option), as described later in the *Training* section later in this chapter.

The *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* outlines the responsibility to keep test content secure and to ensure the integrity of test results. By completing this assurance annually, staff affirm that they understand

these responsibilities and commit to fulfilling them as required by their role in test administration. While some language in the assurance was revised or edited for clarity (including the language related to actively discouraging student participation in testing), the content of the expectations for ethical behavior did not change.

Documentation of completed assurances is kept along with the training documentation at the district for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place, and it must be available upon request for MDE audits or monitoring. While a stand-alone version of the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* is available in Appendix A of this manual for reference, all staff required to complete the assurance must also complete the *Test Security Training*.

Test Administration Report

DACs need to develop a process for how misadministrations, special circumstances, and reasons for invalidations will be communicated and documented in the district. The *Test Administration Report* (TAR), located in Appendix A, is used to record this information. Districts may create their own version of this form to more efficiently collect information from staff or schools (e.g., collect information electronically). Documentation on this report may help answer questions from district staff, parents, and the media about what occurred during testing when student results are available.

The following are examples of situations that should be documented:

- A student is administered the incorrect assessment or accommodation/linguistic support.

- There is a misadministration during testing, which refers to any actions that vary from the policies and procedures specified in guides and resources (e.g., Student A signs into Student B's test).

- A student's test is invalidated for any reason (e.g., student action that affects the validity of the test, prohibited device access or use).

- The district uses a translator to translate scripted *Testing Directions* to an English learner.

- The district uses a sign language interpreter to sign scripted *Testing Directions* or a script to a student as part of an accommodation.

Districts may also choose to document any students who refuse testing or who experience technical issues during online testing that affect their testing experience.

Completed TARs must be kept at the district for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. If completed by the School Assessment Coordinator, a copy of the report (or access to the information collected at the school) should be forwarded to the DAC. Districts do not return TARs to MDE or service providers, unless requested for audits or monitoring conducted by MDE.

Test Security Notification

DACs are required to develop a process for how security violations will be communicated and documented in the district. It must include a way for staff to report information confidentially, in case they feel the need to maintain privacy. Security violations involve actions that jeopardize the integrity of test results and/or give an unfair advantage to a student or group of students.

The *Test Security Notification* (TSN) is submitted online in Test WES by the DAC to report security violations to MDE. **NEW!** MDE may also request that a TSN be submitted for tracking data violations, such as a data privacy issue related to testing (e.g., leaving student results unsecured) or not abiding by the embargo for preliminary or final assessment results.

The timeline for reporting security violations is as follows:

- When a potential security violation occurs, the DAC should **immediately** (or no later than 24 hours after the security violation occurs) contact the MDE District Contact, who will advise whether the report should be submitted.

- If a TSN is necessary, it should be submitted within 48 hours of the security violation, even if investigation into the incident is still taking place (additional documentation can be submitted at a later time).

  o The DAC is responsible for coordinating the collection of required documentation and uploading it in Test WES. ⓘ Note that each TSN must include all documentation specific to the incident, even if similar information was provided as part of a different TSN for the district.

  o Refer to the *Submitting Test Security Notifications in Test WES* help document in Test WES for detailed information on the documentation required and instructions for submitting TSNs.

MDE recommends each DAC check with the appropriate district personnel to find out current investigation protocol. The DAC needs to be aware of local school district rules that apply during an investigation. If an investigation requires that students be interviewed, staff should follow district guidelines regarding parent/guardian notification. In addition, if district administrators are implicated or if other circumstances so warrant, external investigators may be hired to conduct an independent investigation. Additional guidance from MDE is included in the *Test Security Investigation Guide* in Appendix B.

Documentation related to a security violation must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. Because completed TSNs are available in Test WES, districts can determine whether to keep the paper versions of documentation.

When MDE receives a completed TSN, agency staff review the incident and the provided documentation.

- For the majority of cases, an email will be sent to the DAC from MDE summarizing the issue, stating what documentation was included with the submission and what still needs to be provided, and any additional steps that are required.

- If MDE determines the incident merits a formal investigation, then MDE Compliance and Assistance staff conducts an investigation to gather more information about the alleged test security violation. See *MDE Test Security Procedures* in Appendix B for more information.

When the review is complete, the DAC receives a confirmation email from MDE. It is the district's responsibility to communicate any security findings to others in their organization.

Note that while all security violations must be reported to MDE, there may be some violations beyond the control of a DAC. Often, security violations are the result of a miscommunication or misunderstanding and not a deliberate act to affect the validity of the results; similarly, an action by a single student or staff member cannot be prevented in all instances, even with safeguards and training in place. However, a TSN is still required in these instances.

Security Checklists

To maintain security of test materials, districts track them from receipt until return using the security checklists provided. If there are any discrepancies between the security checklists and secure test materials received, notify the service provider using the contact information and instructions included in the shipment.

- **Security Checklists** provided in the test materials shipment include all secure test materials, including the security numbers assigned to each secure material. It can be used to inventory test materials and record the name of the Test Administrator or Test Monitor who received and returned the test materials.

- The **Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist** is provided by MDE in Appendix A of this manual and is used to document the names of students and the security number for their assigned paper test materials. It can also be used to document secure materials that may be used for multiple students (i.e., a mathematics or science script). The checklist, (formerly known as the *Test Monitor Test Materials Security Checklist*), has been updated, making it easier to track any secure materials provided to Test Administrators or Test Monitors. The school makes a copy for its files and sends the original to the DAC once testing is completed. For MCA and MTAS, districts may also create their own checklist from the files provided in PearsonAccess Next; see *Tracking Secure Test Materials Provided to Students* in Chapter 8.

Security checklists must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. Do not return to service providers or MDE, unless requested.

Refer to *Missing Secure Test Materials* in Chapter 8 for information on actions required if secure test materials are missing at any point while in the possession of the district or school (whether identified at the district/school or by the service provider after materials are returned).

Test Security Tip Line

Educators, parents, students, and others can report suspected incidents of cheating or other improper or unethical behavior on statewide assessments to MDE using an online Test Security Tip Line, sending an email, or calling MDE. If the report is submitted anonymously, MDE will not respond in writing to the submitter. Depending upon the nature of each report and the amount of information provided, MDE will follow up with the district to investigate alleged irregularities. Most information submitted to MDE via the Tip Line is generally considered public information but there is an option for the submitter to remain anonymous.

Links to the Test Security Tip Line are available on the Statewide Testing sections of the MDE website:

- [View the Statewide Testing page for districts, schools, and educators](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing).

- [View the Statewide Testing page for students and families](#) (MDE website > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

To submit a report, email mde.testing@state.mn.us or call 651-582-8674.

MDE takes test security practices and policies very seriously and encourages any individual with firsthand knowledge of a test security concern to contact MDE.

Before contacting MDE, individuals are encouraged to first raise their concerns about test security with their DAC or the district's administration or legal counsel. However, districts should inform staff about the MDE Test Security Tip Line and other contact information so that staff are aware of their options to report security

concerns. The district will determine how information on reporting security concerns or incidents is provided (e.g., staff handbook, district training, staff websites, newsletters).

Part V: Training

This section provides detailed information about training requirements for staff involved in statewide testing.

The DAC is responsible for ensuring that 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 year** prior to testing. It is considered a security violation if untrained staff are involved in testing in any way.

As described under *Defining Staff Involved in Test Administration* earlier in this chapter, involvement in test administration is not limited to staff administering tests, but also includes any staff who help organize secure test materials, have keys (and therefore access) to areas where secure test materials are stored, or are in the room during testing, like paraprofessionals. While all staff may not need the same level of training, any staff involved in test administration need to be aware of test security and what is allowed and not allowed.

Each district determines the timelines for when training must be completed in each school. While staff, like Test Monitors, must be trained before they administer or monitor tests, consider other test administration tasks that may occur earlier, like handling secure materials. In addition, some students may be testing earlier (e.g., for ACCESS, earlier scheduled testing for a given grade) so training may be needed earlier than when all staff may actually be administering tests.

What is required for annual training will differ, and requirements by role are described below. However, as roles vary within each district, requirements may also vary. Districts may also require additional trainings that are above and beyond those required by MDE.

Accessing Trainings

The majority of the training resources described in the following sections are available online in service provider systems.

- The Training Management System (TMS) is accessed from PearsonAccess Next and contains training modules and recordings of training webinars provided by MDE and Pearson. Users access the TMS by entering their email address and selecting their district and school (if applicable). Trainings for test administration are organized by role.

- The My Account and Secure Portal section of the WIDA Secure Portal contains the required Training Courses and quizzes and other resources for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. DACs (or the designated staff person) must provide Test Administrators with logins and passwords for the WIDA Secure Portal to complete trainings.

Completion of trainings is tracked annually through the service provider's systems.

- In TMS, DACs and users with the Assessment Administrator user role in PearsonAccess Next can track completion of trainings. TMS also includes the ability to document the completion of a group training.

- In the WIDA Secure Portal, only district-level users have access to track completion of trainings; note that only the percent correct and the number of attempts for quizzes are shown, not the completion of the training itself.

Training Documentation

Each district determines how completion of required trainings will be documented (e.g., records of completion from service provider systems, electronic documents, sign-in sheets, signed documents). To facilitate tracking of training documentation and to ensure staff have completed all required trainings for their role, districts may consider developing a list of staff that identifies their role and the training required. Training documentation includes not only proof of completion for required online trainings based on role, but also proof that staff received information or training on district-specific policies and procedures.

Documentation of training completion for each staff member must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

- It must be provided as part of the TSN submission for each staff member who is involved.

- It is verified as part of an ACCESS or MCA monitoring site visit for the staff observed.

- DACs need to certify (during Pretest Editing) that all staff have completed required trainings.

- Annually, MDE will request and review training documentation from a sampling of schools. See *Monitoring and Audits* later in this chapter.

Test Security Training

The online *Test Security Training* is required annually for all staff, as stated earlier. This training provides details on test security policies and procedures and addresses the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*, which staff are also required to complete annually.

- For Test Monitors and Test Administrators, this training is embedded in their required training course as outlined in the next section. It is also available as a stand-alone training for staff who are not required to complete other trainings in the TMS.

- Districts may have staff complete the training individually in the TMS, present the training to a group, or have staff review and sign the *Test Security Training Checklist*, a paper checklist that includes the content from the training. Any variety of these methods may be used in the district as long as all staff are trained and documentation for each individual staff member is maintained.

  o If the training is presented in a group or the paper checklist provided by MDE is used, staff will need to complete the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* on paper in order to ensure that staff are able to read and agree to the requirements outlined. The *Test Security Training Checklist* includes the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* and can be used to print a hard copy.

  o If the district documents the completion of a group training for the *Test Security Training* in the TMS, the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* will also be documented as completed. However, the paper copies documenting the group training (e.g., sign-in sheets) and the

assurances that staff signed must be kept on file in case of a security violation; an electronic file (e.g., scanned documents) is acceptable. This is a change from previous years, when it was not necessary to retain paper documentation for group trainings if they were documented in TMS.

o *NEW!* If the paper *Test Security Training Checklist* is completed, the paper copies must be kept on file, even if documented in TMS as a group training. An electronic file (e.g., scanned documents) is acceptable.

While some staff may not feel that the content of the *Test Security Training* is relevant to them, especially if they have only keys and access to test materials, MDE requires that the training is completed so all involved staff have a basic understanding of test security and data integrity and why it matters. Often, security violations are unintentional and are the result of lack of awareness, and the training is intended to give staff a broad sense of what is and is not allowed.

Note that the MDE-provided *Test Security Training* must be completed by staff. Even if this training is completed as part of another group training (e.g., along with district policies and procedures training), this specific training must be used and cannot be replaced by a district training.

District Policies and Procedures Training

While the *Test Security Training* addresses MDE policies and procedures for testing, each district has additional policies and procedures for test administration that must be communicated and followed. Because they are specific to each district, it is the DAC's responsibility to identify these policies and procedures in the district test security procedure; see *Required District Test Security Procedure* earlier in this chapter for further information. Each district determines how this information will be communicated to staff as appropriate for their role. This may be through a district or school training or in writing (e.g., email, handout, etc.). For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, district policies and procedures information or training needs to be provided to applicable staff before those administrations, in addition to policies and procedures that will be provided to staff later for MCA and MTAS.

Test-Specific Trainings

There are test-specific training courses required for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators, MCA Test Monitors, and MTAS Test Administrators. These test-specific courses must be completed as outlined below for each role, and are in addition to any district-provided trainings or resources on district policies and procedures for test administration.

If staff are involved in different test administrations, they must complete the required trainings for each administration. However, they only need to complete a given module once annually. This may mean that one course may not appear as completed in the TMS for an individual staff member but DACs can verify that all applicable modules have been completed through their reports in the TMS.

DACs may also require other staff members, like School Assessment Coordinators or administrators, to complete any of these courses as needed to become familiar with the requirements for the staff in their buildings.

If there are other staff members in the testing room, like paraprofessionals, the district must determine if test-specific trainings other that the *Test Security Training* are required based on their role. If the staff member is in the room only to assist a specific student, additional trainings may not be needed. However, if the staff member is serving as a second Test Monitor and may assist with the administration of the test, the applicable test-specific training should be completed.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators

All ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators complete the applicable online WIDA Training Courses and pass the applicable quizzes prior to administration of any assessment. Required MDE trainings in the TMS must also be completed once annually. Note: although Test Administrators giving more than one type of ACCESS (e.g., administering both online and paper grades 1–12 ACCESS or grades 1–12 and Kindergarten ACCESS) are required to complete multiple WIDA Training Courses and quizzes , they are only required to complete the *Test Security Training* and *Active Monitoring for Statewide Tests* (if applicable) once annually. Refer to the Table 4 on the following page for training requirements for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

Training requirements for the grades 1–12 ACCESS paper administrations have been updated to be more consistent with online administrations. Test Administrators must annually complete specific portions of the *Paper Based 1–12 Training Course* and corresponding quizzes, and there are no longer different requirements for the first year.

Table 4. Training Requirements for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

Test Administration	Trainings Required on WIDA Secure Portal	Trainings Required on TMS > Test Monitor Tab
Kindergarten ACCESS	Kindergarten Training Course: • All material in the Preparing, Testing, Afterward, and Domains tabs • Quizzes tab > *ACCESS Kindergarten Quiz*	*ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Kindergarten/ Alternate ACCESS* course
Grades 1–12 ACCESS Online	Online Grades 1–12 Training Course*: • Testing tab > *Administering the Test* • Quizzes tab > *ACCESS Online Administration Quiz Grades 1–12*	*ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Grades 1–12* course
Grades 1–12 ACCESS Paper Accommodations	Paper-Based Grades 1–12 Training Course: • Testing tab > Administering the Test • Domains tab > *Speaking*** • Quizzes tab > *ACCESS Paper Administration Quiz Grades 1–12* and *ACCESS & Screener Speaking Quiz Grades 1–5* and/or *Grades 6–12*	*ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Grades 1–12* course
Alternate ACCESS	Alternate ACCESS Grades 1–12 Training Course: • All material in the Preparing, Testing, Afterward, and Domains tabs • Quizzes tab > *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Quiz*	*ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Kindergarten/ Alternate ACCESS* course

* MDE also recommends that Test Administrators view information about each domain in the Domains section of the Grades 1–12 Online training, as needed.

** MDE also recommends that Test Administrators view information about each domain in the Domains section of the Grades 1–12 Paper training, as needed.

MCA Test Monitors

For MCA Test Monitors, the online and paper administrations courses have been combined and include three modules, outlined in Table 5 below. The *Administering the MCA* module includes three options, and Test Monitors must select one option that best fits their role in order to complete the module: administering online assessments only, administering paper assessments only, or administering both paper and online assessments.

Table 5. Training Requirements for MCA Test Monitors

Test Administration	Trainings Required on TMS > Test Monitor Tab
MCA	*MCA Test Monitor* course: • *Test Security Training* • *Active Monitoring for Statewide Tests* • *Administering the MCA*

MTAS Test Administrators

MTAS Test Administrators must complete the applicable course in the TMS based on their years of experience administering the MTAS, as outlined in Table 6.

Table 6. Training Requirements for MTAS Test Administrators

Number of Years as Test Administrator	Trainings Required on TMS > MTAS Test Administrator Tab
First or second year administering MTAS	*MTAS New Test Administrators – 1–2 years* course: • *Test Security Training* • *MTAS Administration Overview* • *MTAS Administration and Scoring Practice*
Three or more years administering MTAS	*MTAS Experienced Test Administrators – 3 or more years* course: • *Test Security Training* • *MTAS Administration and Scoring Practice*

Additional Training Resources for Staff

Districts have access to optional trainings in the TMS that can be assigned to staff as needed. Some trainings are related to specific test administration tasks (such as managing MCA test sessions, entering MTAS score data, or handling secure materials) or responsibilities (such as determining MCA linguistic supports and accommodations). Others provide background information on the Minnesota Assessments or data and reporting.

Training Resources for District Assessment Coordinators

In addition to the resources listed above, MDE and the service providers provide training opportunities specifically for DACs throughout the year via live webinars/in-person trainings and online training modules. The *Assessment Update* provides detailed information on trainings as they are offered or available.

For new DACs, a series of trainings address roles, responsibilities, and upcoming tasks throughout the year. These trainings include a New DAC Orientation in the fall, monthly Q&A webinars throughout the school year, and online New DAC modules, available in the TMS, which include information on scheduling testing, training requirements, district policies and procedures, and student precode files.

It is the DAC's responsibility to annually review applicable MDE training resources and attend MDE trainings specific to test security and test administration. A *Resource Overview for District Assessment Coordinators* is available on the MDE website (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources). This document identifies the following resources that are required for DACs to be considered trained:

- Review weekly *Assessment Update* email newsletters.

- Review the current version of this *Procedures Manual.*

  o New DACs should review the entire manual.

  o Experienced DACs should minimally review new or clarified information and review complete chapters as needed.

- Complete the *Test Security Training*.

  o If the district hires a new DAC (or another person working closely with testing in a similar position) over the summer when MDE online modules have been removed for updating, MDE recommends using the *Test Security Training Checklist* to provide basic information about test security before the updated training is available for the current year.

- Attend (or watch the recording of) the spring MDE Test Administration Training. MDE will track completion of this training through the TMS; for the in-person and live webinar sessions, the sign-in sheets (for in-person) and webinar attendance report (for the live webinar) will be used to update the information in TMS.

As part of the staff training certification in Pretest Editing, DACs need to certify that they will complete all required DAC trainings and resources. If there is a security violation, documentation of trainings will be requested by MDE.

Though not required, DACs may want to complete trainings or courses that are required for other staff so they are familiar with the information addressed and can support staff who may have questions.

DACs can use any of the training resources from MDE or service provider trainings to create training materials for the district or provide to district staff to view or read.

Summary of Training Requirements

ⓘ Table 7 outlines the trainings discussed in this section that MDE requires to be completed annually. Districts may require that staff complete other trainings, or staff may be required to complete trainings for multiple roles (e.g., if they are administering both ACCESS and MCA); however, the *Test Security Training* (and *Active Monitoring for Statewide Tests*, if applicable) only needs to be completed once per year. Because roles vary from district to district, email mde.testing@state.mn.us for an electronic version of this table that can be customized per district specifications.

Table 7. Annual Training Requirements for Minnesota Assessments

Role	Training Requirements
District Assessment Coordinator	• *Test Security Training* • MDE Test Administration Training (in-person, webinar, or recording)
School Assessment Coordinators	• *Test Security Training* • Other district required trainings • District-specific policy and procedures training/information
Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Monitors/ Test Administrators[18]	• *Test Security Training* • District-specific policy and procedures training/information

Kindergarten ACCESS Test Administrator	• Kindergarten Training Course:
	  o All material in the Preparing, Testing, Afterward, and Domains tabs
	  o Quizzes tab > ACCESS Kindergarten Quiz
	• *ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Kindergarten/ Alternate ACCESS* course
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

Grades 1–12 ACCESS Online Test Administrator	• Online Grades 1–12 Training Course:
	  o Testing tab > *Administering the Test*
	  o Quizzes tab > *ACCESS Online Administration Quiz Grades 1–12*
	• *ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Grades 1–12* course
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

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[18] This includes all staff who are involved in any aspect of testing, including technology staff, office staff, staff providing assistance, administrators, and custodians who have keys and access to test materials.

Role	Training Requirements

Grades 1–12 ACCESS Paper Test Administrator	• Paper-Based Grades 1–12 Training Course:
	   o Testing tab > Administering the Test
	   o Domains tab > *Speaking*
	   o Quizzes tab > *ACCESS Paper Administration Quiz Grades 1–12* and *ACCESS & Screener Speaking Quiz Grades 1–5* and/or *Grades 6–12*
	• *ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Grades 1–12* course
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator	• Alternate ACCESS Grades 1–12 Training Course:
	   o All material in the Preparing, Testing, Afterward, and Domains tabs
	   o Quizzes tab > *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Quiz*
	• *ACCESS for ELLs Test Administrator – Kindergarten/ Alternate ACCESS* course
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

Test Monitors for MCA	• *MCA Test Monitor* course:
	   o *Test Security Training*
	   o *Active Monitoring for Statewide Tests*
	   o *Administering the MCA*
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

MTAS Test Administrators (first or second year administering)	• *MTAS New Test Administrators – 1–2 years* course:
	   o *Test Security Training*
	   o *MTAS Administration Overview*
	   o *MTAS Administration and Scoring Practice*
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

MTAS Test Administrators (three or more years administering)	• *MTAS Experienced Test Administrators – 3 or more years* course:
	   o *Test Security Training*
	   o *MTAS Administration and Scoring Practice*
	• District-specific policy and procedures training/information

Part VI: Monitoring and Audits

Appendix C contains the related documents and checklists for monitoring and audits. Documentation that districts are required to retain related to statewide testing are listed in the *Document Retention Policy for Districts* in Appendix B and reflected throughout this manual. Note: MDE may request that districts provide any documentation specified in that list as part of monitoring or audits.

District Monitoring of Test Administration

MDE requires District and School Assessment Coordinators (or any of their designated, trained staff) to conduct random, unannounced observations of testing rooms to confirm adherence to state and district policies and procedures by Test Administrators, Test Monitors, and other staff. This requirement applies to both ACCESS and MCA administrations. Similar observations can be conducted for other aspects of test administration, like inventorying and organizing secure test materials, distributing test materials on the day of testing, and preparing technology for online testing. Districts can develop their own monitoring list or use the *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* in Appendix C, as needed. It is up to the district to determine how many schools and testing rooms to observe.

Monitoring of individual administrations (Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS) is not required, but districts may include them in applicable portions of their monitoring, if desired.

District Inter-Rater Reliability Monitoring for Grades 1–12 Paper ACCESS Speaking Tests

Students who take the grades 1–12 ACCESS Speaking test on paper have their spoken responses scored by the Test Administrator who administers the test. As a result, districts must develop a process for documenting training and inter-rater reliability for the Speaking test to ensure that all raters interpret students' spoken language consistently and fairly. Inter-rater reliability refers to the consistency of scores awarded to a student by multiple raters (Test Administrators).

MDE requires that at least 10 percent of Speaking tests be monitored for inter-rater reliability. In cases where fewer than 10 students take the paper Speaking test at a school, at least one test should be scored by a second rater at each school. The second rater is not required to be a licensed teacher, but they must complete all training requirements for administering the Speaking test (Speaking portion of the *Paper-Based Grades 1–12 Training Course* and the applicable quiz). If a second rater is not available during the administration, the administration may be recorded so the second rater may listen to it at another time; because the recording is of secure test content, it must be kept secure and destroyed following the second rating.

If the two raters do not assign the same score, districts may determine their method for assigning the score the student will receive:

- Districts may submit the primary rater's score as the score of record, whether or not a second rater is in agreement with that score.
- Districts may submit a score that two or more raters agree upon following discussion and reexamination of the rating criteria.

There are three resources that provide further information: *Maintaining Rater Reliability in Scoring the ACCESS for ELLs Paper Speaking Test, Rater Reliability Calculator for ACCESS for ELLs Paper Speaking Test*, and *Using the Rater Reliability Calculator*, which are posted to the WIDA Minnesota page (WIDA website > Minnesota [under Members/States dropdown at the top of the page]).

Districts must keep documentation of this monitoring for one year following the academic school year in which testing took place.

MDE Review of District Test Security Procedures

Annually, MDE will request and review copies of district test security procedures from a sampling of districts, as detailed in *Required District Test Security Procedure* earlier in this chapter. Note: the rubric that MDE uses to evaluate these procedures is included in Appendix C. In addition to the procedures specified in the requirements, MDE verifies district testing calendars during this review. After the review process, MDE will provide feedback to the DAC about the district's test security procedure and any recommended changes or required actions.

MDE Review of Training Documentation

Annually, MDE will request and review training documentation from a sampling of the schools selected for an ACCESS or MCA monitoring visit. These schools will be identified by MDE prior to the monitoring visits, but the request for training documentation will be included in the follow-up letter sent to the DAC following the monitoring visit. The DAC will have until early June to submit the requested training information to MDE.

The rubric that MDE will use to evaluate training documentation is included in Appendix C. In order to confirm that staff completed the correct trainings, information that identifies staff members by role will need to be provided along with the training documentation (as described under *Training Documentation* earlier in this chapter).

Within two weeks after receiving the documentation, MDE will provide feedback to the DAC about the documentation and training process, any recommended changes, or any required actions.

MDE Site Visits

MDE conducts site visits throughout the year for various purposes. All forms of site visits are done based upon the overall MDE goals of prevention, detection, investigation, and resolution of security violations. Any topic that is reviewed or discussed during any type of monitoring visit reflects current policies, procedures, and/or requirement as discussed in this *Procedures Manual* or in other resources.

The current types of site visits include, but are not limited to, the following which are described in more detail in this section:

- Monitoring of an ACCESS test administration

- Monitoring of an MCA test administration

- Auditing of an MTAS test administration

Schools are expected to allow MDE to conduct site visits. Schools or staff that refuse access to the MDE staff person or do not cooperate with requests for information may jeopardize the student results for the selected school (e.g., scores may be invalidated by MDE). Any school that refuses access to the MDE staff person or does not cooperate with requests for information will be selected for a required site visit the following year.

MDE Monitoring of Schools for ACCESS and MCA

MDE and MDE representatives visit schools to monitor ACCESS (grades 1–12) and MCA test administrations as part of an overall strategy to improve the administration of the Minnesota Assessments and to verify that test security requirements are followed. What MDE learns from these monitoring visits is used to clarify policies and procedures, and to develop training resources that will help districts construct uniform testing conditions across the state. A school may be chosen based upon past concerns, information known by or reported to MDE, or random selection.

The *Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List* in Appendix C outlines the areas that MDE monitors will observe or request during site visits for either assessment. This list has been updated as follows:

- The interview questions have been reworded to clarify what District/School Assessment Coordinators will be asked to describe or show the monitor;

- The District/School Assessment Coordinator will be asked to show an example of the method for tracking which students tested with which Test Monitor and any other adults present in the testing room;

- The monitor will verify that required materials on walls or desks have been covered or removed for ACCESS in addition to MCA;

- Only students who are testing or who finish testing during the current test sessions are present in the testing room will be verified; and

- The monitor will verify that students work on appropriate materials once they are finished for testing for ACCESS in addition to MCA.

In order for MDE to observe schools on testing days, testing calendars for each grade and subject must be posted and kept current throughout the school year. MDE may follow up with the DAC to confirm that testing calendars are up to date. Refer to Chapter 8 for additional information about posting testing calendars.

During monitoring visits, a monitor will arrive unannounced at the school office and request to see the Assessment Coordinator (District or School). The monitor will stay on site until at least one test session is observed and the interview with the Assessment Coordinator has been completed; depending on the test administration schedule, they may stay on site for the full day of testing. The monitor is there only to observe, not to participate in the administration of the test or clarify MDE policies or procedures. Since the monitor may not be meeting with the District Assessment Coordinator, it is important that the School Assessment Coordinator or a designated school-level testing contact is able to answer the interview questions and provide the documentation noted in Appendix C.

Within two weeks following the monitoring visit, the DAC will receive a letter from MDE. This letter will include notification of any concerns raised by the monitoring visit. If there were concerns, the DAC will need to submit appropriate documentation and a plan to help prevent any issues from occurring in the future. The letter may also include recommendations from MDE and requests for training documentation, as described under *MDE Review of Training Documentation*.

MTAS Field Audits

Each year, MDE employs Field Auditors to observe MTAS administrations in selected schools. The primary purpose of MTAS field audits is to gather evidence to evaluate the validity and reliability of the assessment. Since the assessment is scored by the Test Administrator at the school site, it is critical that the Test Administrator be properly trained in MTAS administration and scoring, and be able to apply that training consistently when assessing each student. Likewise, it is critical for test score integrity that all Test Administrators are applying this training consistently across the state.

Following a proportional sampling procedure within nine regions of the state, eligible school sites are selected to ensure that audited sites reflect the distribution of MTAS administrations across the state. School sites may be required for an audit based on any of the following:

- A previous audit found non-adjacent score discrepancies for one or more Test Administrators.

- A previous audit found one or more MTAS misadministrations.

- An audit found that the Test Administrator had not completed required trainings prior to administration.

- When selected for an audit in the previous school year, the school was excused because of a demonstrated hardship.

- When selected for an audit in the previous school year, the school refused to provide their schedule or did not respond to requests for their testing schedule in a timely manner.

- When selected for an audit in the previous school year, the school refused access to the Field Auditor or did not cooperate with appropriate requests for information during the audit.

- Other concerns as identified by MDE through observation or data audit.

Note: Schools that are selected as eligible for an audit may request to be excused from the audit when the review would place a hardship on the students or staff. This request must be submitted to MDE and demonstrate overwhelming evidence of the hardship. After review by MDE, any school that is excused because of a demonstrated hardship will be automatically selected for an audit the following year and may not request to be excused in that year.

MDE notifies the DAC, Superintendent, and Special Education Director of the school or schools selected for an MTAS audit within the district.

- The DAC must provide the schedule of MTAS administrations at the selected schools following the instructions and timeline in the letter. If the DAC does not provide the schedule of MTAS administrations by the due date, the Field Auditor will contact MDE.

- Once Field Auditors receive the schedules for selected schools, they will determine which sites they will visit, prioritizing schools that have a mandated field audit.

- Field Auditors will notify DACs of the date and time of their visit, if selected, or if they will not be visiting the school.

The *MTAS Field Audit Checklist* in Appendix C outlines the areas that the Field Auditors will observe and the questions they will ask Test Administrators. While observing test administration, Field Auditors will score the

tasks administered to students in order to evaluate inter-rater consistency. The Test Administrator's score stands, unless a non-adjacent score is observed. A non-adjacent score occurs when the Test Administrator assigns a score to a task that differs by more than one point from the score assigned by the Field Auditor. For example, a Test Administrator may have assigned 3 points to a student's performance on a task, where the auditor assigned 1 point.

Following the audit, the DAC will receive a letter from MDE that includes notification of any concerns raised by the Field Auditor, and indicate if any scoring changes were required. It may also include recommendations from MDE. This letter will be sent at the end of the testing window, once Field Auditors have submitted all documentation to MDE and any scoring changes (non-adjacent scores or invalidations) have been confirmed.

Chapter 4 — Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

Overview

This chapter defines roles and responsibilities to ensure state and district policies and procedures are followed and test security is maintained throughout test administration. Depending on the number of staff in the district or charter school, staff may be assigned to more than one of the roles with the corresponding responsibilities identified below. Throughout this chapter, the term "district" is used to denote both districts and charter schools.

References to the applicable chapter/appendix for detailed information about the tasks listed below are included in parentheses. Any new responsibilities or applicable changes for this year are included in this chapter; however, since these changes are discussed in detail in other chapters, the "new" and "clarification" symbols are not used to call them out. (Symbols are only used if this chapter contains the only mention of a change.)

Superintendent's/Executive Director's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The Superintendent or Executive Director is responsible for providing the resources a district needs to administer assessments.

Superintendent's/Executive Director's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Designate or confirm a District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and a District Technology Coordinator (or an Assessment Technology Coordinator, if a separate role) who will complete the responsibilities listed below. This should be done no later than early fall so these individuals receive necessary training to fulfill these roles.

2. Ensure the Site Verification Coordinator (SVC) has designated these contacts in the Minnesota Department Education-Organization Reference Glossary (MDE-ORG) through the District and School Site Verification system, and verifies their contact information annually.

3. Designate alternate contacts to fulfill the responsibilities for testing in case of absence, as needed. Alternate District Assessment Coordinators may be designated in MDE-ORG or contacts may just be designated in the district. If no alternate is designated and the DAC is absent, then all responsibilities default to the Superintendent/Executive Director.

4. Ensure you (or a designated person) are identified in MDE-ORG as the Identified Official with Authority (IOwA). As the IOwA, provide staff access for MDE secure systems for statewide testing: Test WES, Assessment Secure Reports, and the Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) system.

5. In conjunction with the DAC, ensure that a district test security procedure is in place and up to date, and that information or training on district policies and procedures has been provided to staff.

6. Complete the *Test Security Training* annually to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

7. Confirm that the DAC has annually reviewed applicable MDE training resources and/or attended MDE trainings specific to the administration of the statewide assessments.

8. As part of establishing a culture of academic integrity, communicate the importance of test security and the expectation that staff will keep test content secure and act with honesty and integrity during test administration.

9. Designate staff who will confirm that all eligible students have unique state student identification (SSID) or MARSS numbers, and make corrections as needed in the Student Identity Validation Interface.

10. Designate a MARSS Coordinator who will submit MARSS data on an ongoing basis throughout test administrations, as needed, to ensure accurate student enrollment eligibility and information.

11. Confirm that the DAC will have time to complete Pretest Editing in Test WES.

12. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable, during testing.

Superintendent's/Executive Director's Responsibilities After Testing

1. Verify with the DAC that all test security issues have been reported to MDE and are being followed up on as needed.

2. Verify with the DAC that any missing secure test materials have been reported to the service provider or MDE and are being followed up on as needed.

3. Confirm that the MARSS Coordinator has updated all student records and the DAC has finalized the district's assessment records prior to the close of Posttest Editing, so that accurate information is used for final assessment reports and accountability.

4. Confirm that the DAC or another designated staff person has access to the GRR system and has time to request and confirm reimbursements for eligible students for college entrance exams.

5. Discuss the final assessment results with the DAC as well as district and school administrators.

6. Prepare for questions from local media and constituents about final test and accountability results.

District Assessment Coordinator's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) is the district's main contact with MDE, the service providers, and the School Assessment Coordinators for statewide testing. If your district does not have staff assigned as School Assessment Coordinators, all responsibilities listed under that role also apply to the DAC.

The DAC should be the person who calls or emails MDE with policy and procedure questions related to test administration and then distributes the information within the district as needed. In general, the DAC should not direct other district and school staff to contact MDE with questions. This ensures that the DAC 1) knows testing policies and procedures and can serve as the source of information across the district, and 2) is aware of all test administration issues within the district. However, if your district experiences any technical issues related to online testing, remind Technology Coordinators and Test Administrators/Test Monitors (following your district policies) to contact the applicable service providers to report the issue and receive further instructions as soon as possible. While MDE should be contacted for questions related to testing policies and procedures, the service providers can provide the immediate assistance needed for technical issues.

District Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Establish district test administration and test security policies and procedures (Chapter 3).

    o   Confirm that there is a written district test security procedure on file. If a district test security procedure does not exist, write such a procedure in collaboration with other administrators prior to test administration (Chapter 3 and Appendix B).

    o   Annually review test administration and test security policies detailed in this *Procedures Manual* (Appendix B), the *Test Security Training*, and other applicable resources and guides; incorporate these policies into the district policies and procedures as needed.

    o   Determine how information on district policies and procedures will be provided to staff: through training or other written resource (Chapter 3).

    o   Provide the district test security procedure to MDE, if requested.

2. Complete and verify training(s) completed by all staff involved with testing (Chapter 3).

    o   Use the *Resource Overview for District Assessment Coordinators* to identify DAC trainings and resources to review and attend MDE trainings (Chapter 3).

    o   Complete the *Test Security Training* to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

    o   Provide training to School Assessment Coordinators on district policies and procedures and assign other training resources, as needed.

    o   Collaboratively develop and implement with each School Assessment Coordinator a plan ensuring all staff involved with testing complete the required trainings (Chapter 3).

    ▪   Verify that all staff involved with testing complete the *Test Security Training*.

    ▪   Verify that all Test Administrators who will administer ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS have completed the applicable online WIDA *Training Courses* and *Quizzes*, along with MDE required training courses.

    ▪   Verify that all Test Monitors who will administer the MCA and Test Administrators who will administer the MTAS have completed the applicable MDE required training course.

    ▪   Verify that staff have completed any other trainings required by the district.

    ▪   Verify that all staff have received applicable training or information on district policies and procedures for testing.

    o   Determine how training completion is tracked by role for all staff, and keep records of completed trainings for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

3. Identify appropriate tests for students and ensure student data sent to service providers for testing are correct.

    o   Collaboratively determine with the MARSS Coordinator that all student data are current and submitted to MARSS as needed.

- In conjunction with the MARSS Coordinator and Special Education and English learner staff, ensure Special Education students and English learners are correctly identified in MARSS.

- Identify and manually add any students not included in the precode files who will be testing (e.g., home-schooled students) using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES.

- Identify students who may change grades between the start of the school year and the start of testing, and ensure that each student takes the correct test at the time of testing (Chapter 7).

- Determine which college entrance exam will be offered and establish a contract with the applicable service provider (Chapter 2).

- Work with the English learner and Special Education staff to determine which English learners in grades 1–12 require accommodations for ACCESS, as specified in their IEPs and 504 plans.

- Work with the Special Education and English learner staff to determine which English learners, according to participation guidelines (Chapter 5), will take the Alternate ACCESS.

- Indicate the number of ACCESS online testers in grades 1–12, order ACCESS test materials (Kindergarten ACCESS and paper test materials for grades 1–12), and order Alternate ACCESS test materials in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS).

- Collaboratively determine and document—with School Assessment Coordinators and Special Education and English learner staff—any general supports (Chapter 8), linguistic supports (Chapter 6), or accommodations (Chapter 5) needed by individual students for MCA.

- Work with the Special Education staff to determine which students, according to the eligibility requirements (Chapter 5), will take the MTAS.

- Complete Pretest Editing in Test WES for MCA and MTAS to change test assignments and indicate accommodation and linguistic support codes as needed (Chapter 8).

- Complete District Options and District Confirmations in Test WES during Pretest Editing to indicate shipping preferences and confirm information (Chapter 9).

4. Establish the district testing calendar within the testing windows specified in the *Important Dates* (Chapter 8).

- Determine the district testing calendar for ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, MCA, and MTAS.

- Publish the district testing calendar before the first day of the school year; ensure testing dates (by grade and subject) for each school in the district are kept up to date. (Chapter 8).

- In collaboration with the School Assessment Coordinator, schedule testing sessions and testing rooms and ensure sufficient staff are available to monitor them (Chapter 8).

- In collaboration with the School Assessment Coordinator, determine where students who finish testing in earlier sessions will go while other students finish testing.

5. Prepare testing conditions.

- o Ensure that the applicable staff involved with administering the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are set up with user accounts for the WIDA Secure Portal and WIDA AMS.

- o Ensure that the applicable staff involved with administering MCA and MTAS are set up as users with active accounts in PearsonAccess Next.

- o Create reporting groups if teachers in the district will access preliminary results in PearsonAccess Next (Chapter 10).

- o In collaboration with the Technology Coordinator, use technical resources on the service provider websites to ensure readiness for ACCESS and MCA online testing (Chapter 8).

- o Work with technology staff to prepare for online testing. This includes ensuring all hardware and software requirements are met and equipment is available (e.g., headphones, headsets for ACCESS) (Chapter 8).

- o Determine which student resources will be used to prepare students for testing and ensure students are familiar with the format and functionality of the test they will be taking (Chapter 8).

- o For ACCESS online testing, in collaboration with School Assessment Coordinators, ensure the following preparations are completed:

  - ▪ Verify students are showing in WIDA AMS as enrolled in the correct school and district when verifying test sessions. For the Writing domain, verify students are showing in the correct test session (either handwriting or keyboarding).

  - ▪ Print test session rosters and student testing tickets and keep them secure until test administration.

- o For MCA, ensure accommodation and linguistic support codes are updated in Pretest Editing in Test WES throughout the testing window, as needed.

- o For MCA online testing, in collaboration with School Assessment Coordinators, ensure the following preparations are completed:

  - ▪ Verify students are showing in PearsonAccess Next as enrolled in the correct school and district, and eligible for the correct test when setting up test sessions.

  - ▪ Print test session rosters and student testing tickets and keep them secure until test administration.

- o With School Assessment Coordinators, review and prepare for any general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations and specific test administration procedures as described in this *Procedures Manual*, including scheduling for small group and individual administrations and preparing for translated directions and scribes (Chapters 5, 6, and 8).

- o Establish a process for inventorying and distributing secure test materials to each school building if test materials are shipped to the district (Chapter 8). The District Assessment Coordinator may want to establish the process collaboratively with School Assessment Coordinators.

- o Notify School Assessment Coordinators when test materials will be arriving and the quantities of test materials to expect.

- o In conjunction with the School Assessment Coordinator, determine staff who will enter student responses from MCA paper test materials and MTAS data online.

6. Maintain security of test content and test materials.

- o Receive secure paper test materials from the service providers, and immediately lock them in a previously identified secure area.

  - ▪ If schools are receiving test materials directly from the service providers, confirm that each school has received test materials and that they are locked in a secure area.

  - ▪ Confirm paper test materials have been inventoried using the security checklists, and contact the applicable service provider if there are any discrepancies (Chapter 3).

  - ▪ Keep a record of staff having access to secure areas, inventorying materials, and completing the security checklists.

  - ▪ Organize secure test materials remaining at the district, ensuring that they are kept secure and not distributed unless needed for test administration.

- o Verify that each school has the needed paper test materials for each school, and order additional test materials as needed.

- o In collaboration with the School Assessment Coordinator, organize secure test materials for online administrations, including student testing tickets and scratch paper, and keep them secure.

- o For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, if students are using Writing Response Booklets (dependent upon grade level) or paper test booklets, confirm that all students have the appropriate test materials and that preprinted student information on the label is accurate. Arrange for student information to be filled in (hand bubbled) on test booklets that do not have labels (Chapter 8).

- o In collaboration with School Assessment Coordinators, define the chain of custody for providing secure test materials to Test Administrators/Test Monitors.

  - ▪ The chain of custody must address the process for providing test materials on the day of testing, distributing test materials to and collecting test materials from students at the time of testing, keeping test materials secure between testing sessions, and returning test materials after testing is completed.

  - ▪ Secure test materials should not be distributed prior to the day of testing (exceptions to this are specified in Chapter 3).

District Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities on Testing Days

1. Answer questions from School Assessment Coordinators as needed.

2. In conjunction with School Assessment Coordinators, conduct (or designate trained staff members to conduct) random, unannounced visits to testing rooms within the district to observe staff adherence to test security and test administration policies and procedures (Chapter 3).

3. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits as applicable.

4. If security violations occur, contact MDE within 24 hours, and submit the *Test Security Notification* (TSN) in Test WES within 48 hours (Chapter 3).

5. Monitor testing progress to ensure all students complete testing during the testing window.

6. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, indicate appropriate test codes in WIDA AMS or indicate on test booklets as needed, and/or keep notes for entry during Posttest Editing (Chapter 8).

7. For MCA and MTAS, indicate applicable test codes in PearsonAccess Next as needed, and/or keep notes for indication during Posttest Editing (Chapter 8).

District Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities After Testing

1. Collaboratively work with School Assessment Coordinators to ensure that designated staff have entered student responses from MCA paper test books and MTAS data online. All information must be entered before the testing windows close in order for the tests to be scored and reported.

2. With School Assessment Coordinators, arrange for secure disposal of all test materials that are not required to be returned as outlined in the applicable resources and guides. The secure disposal must be completed within 48 hours after the close of the testing window (Chapter 8).

3. Collaboratively work with School Assessment Coordinators to follow procedures for returning scorable test materials (for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS) and secure test materials (for all assessments) as outlined in the applicable resources.

4. Ensure that all materials returned are received by the service providers.

5. Complete a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) for all administered assessments as needed and keep on file at the district for two years following test administration; completed TARs must be available if requested by MDE (Chapter 3).

6. Collect security documents (e.g., security checklists) from the School Assessment Coordinators. Keep on file at the district for two years from the end of the academic school year in which testing took place (Chapter 3).

7. Review assessment records and resolve discrepancies in Test WES during Posttest Editing (Chapter 9), including verifying or indicating test, accommodation, and linguistic support codes. Work with the MARSS coordinator to resolve any issues in MARSS.

8. Request reimbursement for eligible students for college entrance exams as needed (Chapter 9).

9. Retrieve final assessment results from Secure Reports, and prepare for media/stakeholder questions (Chapter 10).

10. Work with principals and School Assessment Coordinators to communicate information on what it means to abide by the embargo and ensure the requirements for embargoed final assessment results are followed.

11. Distribute Individual Student Reports (ISRs) to parents/guardians no later than fall parent/teacher conferences (Chapter 10).

School Principal's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The School Principal's role is to designate the School Assessment Coordinator and other school staff members who will serve as Test Monitors or Test Administrators.

School Principal's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Designate a School Assessment Coordinator and a Technology Coordinator for the school.

2. Be knowledgeable about proper test administration and test security as outlined in this *Procedures Manual* as well as other applicable resources and guides.

3. Complete the *Test Security Training* annually to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

4. Complete or attend any district-required trainings and/or review information on district policies and procedures for testing.

5. Verify with the School Assessment Coordinator that all staff involved in testing, including Test Administrators and Test Monitors, complete the required trainings for administering the tests.

6. As part of establishing a culture of academic integrity, communicate the importance of test security and the expectation that staff will keep test content secure and act with honesty and integrity during test administration.

7. Provide adequate secure storage space for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing until they are returned to the service provider or securely disposed of.

8. In conjunction with the Technology Coordinator, ensure that adequate computers and/or devices are in place and rooms are set up appropriately for online testing.

9. Ensure students have had a chance to become familiar with the format and functionality of the test they will be taking.

School Principal's Responsibilities on Testing Days

1. Ensure that all test administration policies and procedures and test security requirements in this *Procedures Manual* and other applicable resources and guides are followed.

2. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable.

School Principal's Responsibilities After Testing

1. In conjunction with School Assessment Coordinator, ensure that all secure test materials are collected, returned, and/or securely disposed of as required (Chapter 8).

2. Discuss the assessment results with the School Assessment Coordinator as well as district administrators and the District Assessment Coordinator. In conjunction with the District Assessment Coordinator, ensure the requirements for embargoed final assessment results are followed.

3. Prepare for questions about test results.

School Assessment Coordinator's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The School Assessment Coordinator is an important link between the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and the Test Administrators/Test Monitors. In conjunction with the DAC, the School Assessment Coordinator is responsible for implementing the test administration procedures that maintain test security and the integrity of the test results.

School Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Implement test administration and test security policies and procedures (Chapter 3).

   o Be knowledgeable about test administration and test security policies and procedures detailed in this *Procedures Manual* and other applicable resources and guides, and review district policies and procedures related to statewide testing.

   o In collaboration with the DAC, provide information to staff on district policies and procedures through training or other written resource.

2. Complete training and verify training(s) completed by all staff involved with testing (Chapter 3).

   o Complete the *Test Security Training* to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

   o Complete or attend any other trainings required by the district and/or or review information on district policies and procedures for testing.

   o Following the plan developed with the DAC, verify all staff involved with testing complete required trainings.

     ▪ Verify that all staff involved with testing complete the *Test Security Training*.

     ▪ Verify that all Test Administrators who will administer ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS have completed the applicable online WIDA *Training Courses* and *Quizzes*, along with required MDE training courses.

     ▪ Verify that all Test Monitors who will administer the MCA and Test Administrators who will administer the MTAS have completed the applicable MDE required training course.

     ▪ Verify that staff have completed any other trainings required by the district.

     ▪ Verify that all staff have received applicable training or information on district policies and procedures for testing.

3. Identify appropriate tests for students and ensure student data sent to service providers for testing are correct.

   o Work with the English learner and Special Education staff to determine which English learners in grades 1–12 require accommodations for ACCESS, as specified in their IEPs and 504 plans.

   o Work with the Special Education and English learner staff to determine which English learners, according to participation guidelines, will take the Alternate ACCESS.

   o Work with Special Education and English learner staff to determine any general supports, linguistic supports, or accommodations are needed by individual students for MCA.

   o Work with the Special Education staff to determine which students, according to the eligibility requirements, will take the MTAS.

   o If directed by the DAC, indicate the number of ACCESS online testers in grades 1–12, order ACCESS test materials (Kindergarten ACCESS and paper test materials for grades 1–12), and order Alternate ACCESS test materials in WIDA AMS.

   o If directed by the DAC, complete Pretest Editing in Test WES.

4. Prepare testing conditions.

   o Schedule rooms and computer labs for testing, as needed.

   o Arrange for Test Monitor(s) and Test Administrator(s) to administer the test(s), and assign students to them.

   o Plan seating or testing room arrangements for students to ensure independent work.

   o Determine which student resources will be used to prepare students for testing and ensure students are familiar with the format and functionality of the test they will be taking (Chapter 8).

   o In collaboration with the DAC, determine where students who finish testing in earlier sessions will go while other students finish testing.

   o In collaboration with the DAC, ensure the following preparations are completed for ACCESS online testing:

     ▪ Verify students are showing in WIDA AMS as enrolled in the correct school when verifying test sessions. For the Writing domain, verify students are showing in the correct test session (either handwriting or keyboarding).

     ▪ Print test session rosters and student testing tickets and keep them secure until test administration.

   o In collaboration with the DAC, ensure the following preparations are completed for MCA online testing:

     ▪ Verify students are showing in PearsonAccess Next as enrolled in the correct school and eligible for the correct test when setting up test sessions.

     ▪ Print test session rosters and student testing tickets and keep them secure until test administration.

- o For MCA, ensure accommodation and linguistic support codes are updated in Pretest Editing in Test WES throughout the testing window, as needed.

- o Verify with the DAC how secure paper test materials will be arriving and the quantities of test materials to expect.

- o Set up for any general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations and specific test administration procedures as described in this *Procedures Manual*, including scheduling for small group and individual test administrations and preparing for translated directions and scribes (Chapters 5, 6, and 8).

- o In conjunction with the DAC, determine staff who will enter student responses from MCA paper test books and MTAS data online.

5. Maintain security of test content and test materials.

- o When secure test materials are received from the service providers or the district, immediately lock test materials in a previously identified secure area.

- o Inventory paper test materials using the security checklists, and contact the DAC if there are any discrepancies (Chapter 3).

- o Keep a record of staff having access to secure areas, inventorying materials, and completing the security checklists (Chapter 3).

- o Organize secure test materials for online administrations, including student testing tickets and scratch paper, and keep them secure.

- o Record and assign all secure paper test materials on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist.

- o Contact the DAC if additional test materials are needed.

- o Distribute the applicable ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS *Test Administrator's Scripts* and *Test Administration Manuals* to Test Administrators so they can become familiar with the script and prepare for test administration.

- o For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, if students are using Writing Response Booklets (dependent upon grade level) or paper test booklets, confirm that all students have the appropriate test materials and that preprinted student information on the label is accurate. Arrange for student information to be filled in (hand-bubbled) on test booklets that do not have labels (Chapter 8).

- o Distribute the applicable MCA *Testing Directions* to Test Monitors so they can become familiar with the script and prepare for test administration.

- o In collaboration with the DAC, define the chain of custody for providing secure test materials to Test Administrators/Test Monitors.

  - ▪ The chain of custody must address the process for providing test materials on the day of testing, distributing test materials to and collecting test materials from students at the time of testing, keeping test materials secure between testing sessions, and returning test materials after testing is completed.

- Distribute materials to Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS Test Administrators prior to testing to allow for administration preparation and adaptation of materials to meet individual student needs (Chapter 3).
  - Provide MTAS Data Collection Forms if scores will be centrally entered by the district or school.

School Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities on Testing Days

1. Distribute materials to Test Administrators/Test Monitors on the day of testing and ensure secure test materials are kept secure between testing sessions, including student testing tickets and scratch paper, according to district procedures.

2. Ensure that ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS *Test Administrator's Scripts* and MCA *Testing Directions* are followed.

3. Be available to answer questions from Test Administrators/Test Monitors.

4. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable.

5. In conjunction with the DAC, conduct random, unannounced visits to testing rooms to observe staff adherence to test security and test administration policies and procedures (Chapter 3).

6. Report testing irregularities to the DAC using the *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

7. Report security violations to the DAC as soon as possible so the DAC can report the violation to MDE within 24 hours.

School Assessment Coordinator's Responsibilities After Testing

1. Ensure that secure paper test materials, student testing tickets, and scratch paper are kept in a locked, secure location after testing. Following district procedures, materials may be collected at the district or school level or kept secure between testing sessions by the Test Administrator/Test Monitor.

2. Use security checklists to verify receipt of all secure paper test materials from the assigned Test Administrator/Test Monitor after testing is completed. Return copies of the security checklists to the DAC.

3. Ensure that designated staff have entered student responses from MCA paper test books and MTAS data online. All information must be entered before the testing windows close in order to have the tests scored and reported.

4. Arrange for secure disposal of all test materials that are not required to be returned as outlined in the applicable guides and resources. The secure disposal must be completed within 48 hours after the close of the testing window.

5. Follow procedures for packaging scorable and secure test materials for return as outlined in the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS manuals and resources.

6. Follow procedures for packaging MCA and MTAS secure test materials for return as outlined in the applicable resources.

7. Prepare materials for pickup by the carrier designated on the designated date(s). Ensure that all boxes containing the secure testing materials are in a secure location known to appropriate school staff or are returned to the district office, if directed by the DAC.

8. If directed by the DAC, complete Posttest Editing in Test WES.

9. In conjunction with the DAC and principal, communicate information on what it means to abide by the embargo and ensure the requirements for embargoed final assessment results are followed.

Technology Coordinator's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The District Technology Coordinator (or Assessment Technology Coordinator) is responsible for ensuring that the district is prepared for online test administration and providing technical support to district staff.

1. Acquire a user account for PearsonAccess Next and WIDA AMS from the District Assessment Coordinator.

2. Complete the *Test Security Training* annually to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

3. Complete or attend any district-required trainings and any service provider technology trainings.

4. Review all technical documentation available on the service provider websites (Chapter 8).

   o Prepare computers and devices for online testing following requirements outlined in the *Technology Readiness Checklist for WIDA Online Assessments*.

   o Prepare computers and devices for online testing following requirements outlined in the *Infrastructure Readiness Checklist* for MCA.

5. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable.

6. Provide technical support/troubleshooting during test administration and contact the service provider help desks, as needed.

ACCESS Test Administrator's and MCA Test Monitor's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

Test Administrators and Test Monitors are responsible for maintaining test security during test administration, including actively monitoring test sessions and keeping test materials secure. The following information applies to grades 1–12 ACCESS Test Administrators except as noted below. Requirements for selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors are available under *Selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors* in Chapter 8.

ACCESS Test Administrator's/MCA Test Monitor's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Complete or attend any required test-specific or district trainings annually to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, complete the applicable online WIDA *Training Courses* and *Quizzes* in the WIDA Secure Portal for the tests being administered, along with required MDE training courses in the Training Management System (TMS).

- For MCA, complete the required MDE training course in the TMS.

- Ensure you have received information on and understand district- and school-specific policies and procedures for testing.

2. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, review the *Test Administrator's Scripts* for detailed information and scripted instructions. For MCA, review the *Testing Directions: Online* and/or *Testing Directions: Paper* for detailed information and scripted instructions for each test administration.

3. Know how to contact the District or School Assessment Coordinator during testing if any test-related issues or questions arise.

4. Know where to pick up secure test materials on the day of the test.

5. Know the school's plan for keeping test materials and test content secure between test sessions when students are taking an assessment over multiple days or taking a break on the same day.

6. Know the plan for what students will do if they finish testing within the testing session, and where students who finish testing in earlier sessions will go while other students finish their tests in subsequent sessions.

7. In conjunction with District or School Assessment Coordinator, know which students are to be provided with appropriate general supports, linguistic supports, and/or accommodations, and any related specific test administration procedures.

8. Remove or cover any required materials in the testing room or on student desks. This step can be taken shortly before testing begins.

ACCESS Test Administrator's/MCA Test Monitor's Responsibilities on Testing Days — Before Students Arrive

1. Receive secure test materials from the District or School Assessment Coordinator and keep them secure until the test session.

2. Make sure there are enough computers/devices or paper test materials for the number of students taking the test.

3. For online testing, make sure you have the student testing tickets for the students in your test session. Ensure all allowable materials for students (e.g., scratch paper, pens, or pencils) are ready to distribute to students as needed.

4. Check paper test materials to verify that all the test materials listed on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist are in the test materials you receive.

5. Use the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist to assign numbered test booklets to individual students.

6. If directed to do so by the District or School Assessment Coordinator, fill in appropriate information on a student's new Writing Response Booklet or paper test booklet for ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS. Ensure that all hand-bubbled information matches MARSS.

7. Record extra test materials on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist.

ACCESS Test Administrator's/MCA Test Monitor's Responsibilities on Testing Days — During the Test

1. Verify that students are logged in and taking the correct test.

2. For ACCESS, verify that the students testing with the paper test materials are using the correct grade-level and tier test booklet.

3. Follow the script in the *Test Administrator's Scripts* (ACCESS) and/or applicable *Testing Directions* (MCA) exactly.

4. Follow the district policies and procedures for restricting student access to cell phones and other devices during testing.

5. Stay in the room and actively monitor during the entire test session.

6. Know what to do and whom to contact if an emergency or unusual circumstance arises (e.g., a student gets sick, the fire alarm goes off).

7. Know what to do and whom to contact if technology issues are encountered during an online test administration so that you can continue to actively monitor the students who are testing.

8. Do not review, discuss, capture, email, post, or share test content in any format.

9. Ensure all students have been provided the opportunity to independently demonstrate their knowledge.

10. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable.

11. Document students who require a scribe or translated directions or any unusual circumstances and provide the information to the District or School Assessment Coordinator.

12. Notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator of any possible security violations as soon as possible.

ACCESS Test Administrator's/MCA Test Monitor's Responsibilities on Testing Days — After the Test

1. Follow the *Test Administrator's Scripts* (ACCESS) and/or applicable *Testing Directions* (MCA) exactly.

2. Collect all student testing tickets, scratch paper, and other materials provided during testing (e.g., formula sheets) and keep them secure after each testing session. When testing is complete, return these materials to the District or School Assessment Coordinator or securely dispose of them, if instructed.

3. Use the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist to verify receipt of all test books from assigned students before they leave the testing room.

4. Enter student responses from MCA paper test books online, or return test materials to the District or School Assessment Coordinator if the district enters data centrally.

5. Keep paper test materials secure after the test session and return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator or to a secure location, as directed.

6. Immediately notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator if any test materials are missing.

Kindergarten ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS/MTAS Test Administrator's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

Kindergarten ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS/MTAS Test Administrator's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Complete or attend any required test-specific or district trainings annually to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.

   o For Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, complete the applicable online WIDA *Training Courses* and *Quizzes* in the WIDA Secure Portal for the tests being administered, along with required MDE training courses in the Training Management System.

   o For MTAS, complete the applicable training course in the Training Management System (TMS) based on the number of years you have administered the MTAS.

   o Ensure you have received information on district policies and procedures for testing.

2. Review the *Test Administrator Manual* for Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS or MTAS Task Administration Manual for policies and procedures related to test administration.

3. Know when and where to pick up secure test materials.

4. Know the school's plan for keeping test materials secure when not preparing for test administration or administering the test.

5. Become familiar with the test materials, including special instructions for certain tasks (e.g., not reading aloud the question or answer options).

6. For Alternate ACCESS and MTAS, prepare test materials for administration.

   o Plan for instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives; any materials gathered for testing may remain in the classroom for daily use.

   o Plan specific adaptations for each student, as needed, to meet individual student needs. Reproduction of secure test materials is allowed only for adapting student-facing materials to a student's individual needs (e.g., enlarging materials or incorporating texture). Secure test materials may not otherwise be reproduced.

Kindergarten ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS/MTAS Test Administrator's Responsibilities on Testing Days — Before Students Arrive

1. Keep materials secure until the test session.

2. Ensure the appropriate test materials are available and ready for the student who is being administered the test.

Kindergarten ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS/MTAS Test Administrator's Responsibilities on Testing Days — During the Test

1. Administer each task to the student and record the score.

2. Know how to contact the District or School Assessment Coordinator during testing if any test-related issues or questions arise.

3. Know what to do if an emergency or unusual circumstance arises (e.g., a student gets sick, the fire alarm goes off).

4. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable.

5. Document any unusual circumstance and report it to the District or School Assessment Coordinator.

Kindergarten ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS/MTAS Test Administrator's Responsibilities on Testing Days — After the Test

1. Keep materials secure after administering the test.

2. Return all secure test materials, including materials that were adapted for Alternate ACCESS and MTAS (e.g., enlarged materials or those with texture incorporated), to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, and report if any materials are missing.

3. For MTAS, if directed by District or School Assessment Coordinator, securely dispose of Response Option Cards (no more than 48 hours after the close of the testing window).

4. For Alternate ACCESS and MTAS, return instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives to the classroom unless directed to return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator.

5. For Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, return Student Response Booklets to the District or School Assessment Coordinator to send back for scoring.

6. Enter Learner Characteristic Inventory (LCI) data and MTAS scores online or return Data Collection Forms and LCI data to the District or School Assessment Coordinator if entered centrally.

MARSS Coordinator's Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

MARSS Coordinator's Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Confirm that all eligible students have unique state student IDs (SSIDs) or MARSS numbers so that students are included in assessment precode files, and, if authorized, make corrections as needed in the Student Identity Validation Interface.

2. Ensure EL and Special Education designations are up to date and correct for students who are taking an assessment, using a linguistic support or accommodation based on their EL or Special Education status.

3. Submit MARSS data on an ongoing basis so the student information is correct and available for the assessment precode files prior to and throughout test administrations.

MARSS Coordinator's Responsibilities After Testing

1. Ensure accurate enrollment of students in schools during the accountability windows. The enrollment from MARSS for these windows will serve as the basis for accountability calculations.

2. Ensure State Aid Categories and other MARSS identifying characteristics are correct, especially for shared-time students, Foreign Exchange students, and any other students who are not expected to test.

3. Work with the District Assessment Coordinator to resolve discrepancies during Posttest Editing in Test WES, which may include multiple submissions to MARSS before the close of the Posttest Editing window.

Chapter 5 — Accommodations for Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans

Overview

This chapter provides information on participation of students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan in statewide testing, and descriptions of accommodations available to these students for the English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments. See Chapter 6 for an overview of linguistic supports for MCA.

MDE convenes a committee of educators to review proposed additions to the general supports, linguistic supports, and accommodations for this manual. These reviews ensure that a student does not use a particular practice that could undermine the integrity of the resulting test score. Refer to *Statewide Testing Assessment Advisory Groups Overview* for more information about this committee (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing).

Supports and Accommodations Considerations

All public school students participate in statewide assessments. However, it is important to clarify the role of supports and accommodations in these decisions when considering *how* students will participate in assessments. Supports and accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the integrity of test results.

- **General supports** are features or practices available for all students that tailor the testing experience based on student needs or preferences. General supports include online tools and accessibility features available in online assessments and general test-taking practices. The use of a general support may remove the need for an accommodation, depending on the student's disability; general supports may also be provided along with accommodations and linguistic supports. See *General Supports Available to All Students* in Chapter 8 for information on supports available to all students.

- **Linguistic supports** are available for students who are identified as English learners in MARSS. Linguistic supports are different from the general supports that are available to all students because they are specific to the needs of English learners on standards-based accountability assessments. See Chapter 6 for information on linguistic supports.

- **Accommodations** are changes in the way that a test is administered which reduce or eliminate the effects of a disability. Accommodations are only available to students with an IEP or 504 plan, and all needed accommodations are documented annually in the IEP prior to testing. Likewise, a 504 plan team should document its decision to provide an accommodation in the 504 plan.

Many supports and accommodations provided to a student during statewide assessments should also be used during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments. In general, a new support or accommodation should not be introduced to a student at the time of test administration because it may negatively affect the student's performance. The decision to provide a support or accommodation for the first

time during testing should be made carefully by an IEP or 504 plan team who is very familiar with the student's needs; however, practice with the support or accommodation (e.g., using item samplers) is encouraged whenever possible.

Some supports and accommodations that are used during instruction may not be appropriate for use on certain statewide assessments, and educators should consult policies in this manual before determining which, if any, will be provided on statewide assessments. Supports and accommodations must be selected and implemented in ways that maintain the integrity of the assessment so that valid inferences can be made about what students know and can do.

Statewide Testing Participation for Students with IEPs or 504 Plans

There are no exemptions from participation in statewide assessments based on disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. 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, are appropriate for students with disabilities. Accommodations are documented in the IEP or 504 plan and must be provided, based on individual need, as long as they do not invalidate the assessment. It is recommended, although not required, that teams also document any general supports that students will use, particularly if they are locally provided, such as a magnification device, audio amplification, plastic color overlay, etc. This ensures that the student has access to the general support during the assessment.

- **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 IEP.

  o English language proficiency accountability assessments: For English learners with significant cognitive disabilities, it is recommended that the IEP team collaborates with EL staff to determine if the Alternate ACCESS is the most appropriate English language proficiency accountability assessment in place of the ACCESS, using the *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Criteria Decision Tree* (WIDA website > Assess > Alternate ACCESS for ELLs).

  o Standards-based accountability assessments: For students with significant cognitive disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements, the IEP team may determine that MTAS is the most appropriate measure of academic skills in one or more subject areas in place of the MCA. Access the *Eligibility Requirements for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Minnesota Tests).

Note: English learners with disabilities should participate in as many domains of the ACCESS or the Alternate ACCESS as possible. If it is impossible to administer the test in a given domain due to the student's disability (e.g., the listening domain for a student who is deaf), indicate Special Education Deferred (SPD) for that domain; refer to *Test Codes* in Chapter 8 for more information. If the EL staff and the IEP team determine that the SPD code is appropriate for more than two domains, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance.

General Information about Statewide Testing Accommodations

For a student served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all needed accommodations are documented annually in the IEP prior to testing. Likewise, a 504 plan team should document its decision to provide an accommodation in the 504 plan prior to testing. For more information about documenting accommodations in the IEP or 504 plan, refer to the contacts listed at the front of this manual.

Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations

In some cases, a student with an injury may be allowed to have an accommodation if supported by medical documentation (e.g., student with a broken arm having the scribe accommodation, student with a concussion requiring a paper test book), even if they do not have an IEP or 504 plan. Refer to Table 9 or email mde.testing@state.mn.us to verify if an accommodation is allowed. The medical documentation must be kept with the *Test Administration Report* (TAR) that documents the use of an accommodation in these instances. When possible, practice with the accommodation should take place before test administration.

Timeline for Accommodation Decisions

The decision on which accommodations will be used must be made prior to test administration. Districts may set timelines for accommodation decisions to be made so that test materials can be ordered in a timely manner; however, accommodation decisions can be made throughout the year as long as they are made prior to testing.

Accommodation Codes

Accommodation codes are used to inform MDE which accommodations were used at the time of testing.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, accommodation codes are indicated in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) during the testing window. After testing, districts are able to indicate, remove, or change accommodation codes in Posttest Editing in Test WES.

- For MTAS, accommodations are not indicated, as described below.

- For MCA, accommodation codes are indicated, removed, or changed in Pretest Editing in Test WES throughout the testing windows. After testing, districts are able to indicate or correct accommodation codes in Posttest Editing in Test WES.

Accommodations for English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

Minnesota follows all guidelines and accommodations recommended by WIDA in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement* (WIDA > Assess > Accessibility and Accommodations). In addition, MDE allows additional general supports that are outlined under *General Supports Available to All Students* in Chapter 8.

The following is additional information about accommodations that are available for the English language proficiency accountability assessments (ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS) for ELs who also have an IEP or 504 plan.

Linguistic supports are not available on the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS because these assessments measure language proficiency.

- 🛈Extended testing time within a day and across multiple days are considered accommodations for grades 1–12 ACCESS and must be documented in WIDA AMS. Note that the extended across multiple days accommodation is rare and must be approved by MDE.

- A scribe accommodation may be provided to ELs in instances when visual or motor difficulties prevent students from indicating their own responses. It can be provided to ELs without an IEP or 504 plan if injury or other situations require it.

  o This accommodation must be provided in an individual setting so as not to disrupt other students who are testing.

  o Scribes for online assessments will navigate in the test, access tools (as requested by the student), and indicate the responses provided by the student directly into the online test. Scribes for paper test materials will indicate the responses provided by the student directly into the test booklet.

  o Scribes must be impartial and understand what they can and cannot do in secure test administrations. Students must be given time, if desired, to review their responses. Scribes cannot read aloud student responses.

  o For the ACCESS Writing test, refer to the scribe guidance for the writing domain in Appendix D of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement*. For constructed responses, the student must indicate all capitalization and punctuation, and must provide the exact spelling of nouns and verbs relevant to the context the first time they are used.

- Paper test materials for accommodations may be ordered for the online grades 1–12 ACCESS. Students must take all four domains—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—using the paper test materials. The accommodation code for regular print test materials (12) must be entered during Posttest Editing as it cannot be entered into WIDA AMS.

- Tier B Listening, Reading, and Writing braille tests can be ordered for English learners in grades 1–12 who have some proficiency in reading braille. Contracted or uncontracted format must be specified when ordering braille materials. District Assessment Coordinators should only order braille materials if they are certain they will be used.

  o 🛈With the addition of materials for grades 9–12 this year, materials for all grades are now in Unified English Braille (UEB).

  o In addition to braille text, the testing materials include tactile graphics and written descriptions of graphics where appropriate as well as test administration instructions. For scoring purposes, student responses on the braille form must be transferred into a regular ACCESS test booklet.

- The Speaking test is not available in braille. Administration of the Speaking test to a blind student may be accomplished by using a regular test booklet and describing graphics in the student's first language. Graphics cannot be described in English.

- 🛈Braille materials are not available for Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, but student materials can be brailled at the district, as needed.

- For ELs who are deaf or hard-of-hearing:

  - (i) Participation in paper-based testing is not required, but it is strongly recommended to be provided as an accommodation for several reasons, including the following:

    - Ease of providing manually coded test directions

    - Eliminating the need to force submit the Listening domain, when needed

    - Eliminating the need to override tier placement

  - NEW! Manually coded English supports, such as cued speech or finger spelling (Rochester Method), are allowed. Any of the other manually coded supports listed in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement* may also be provided if used by the student in instruction.

Accommodations for Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

MTAS Accommodations

Indicating accommodations for the MTAS is not required. Accommodating student needs is integral to the MTAS, and the Test Administrator may provide needed supports (e.g., objects, tactile graphics, counters, any type of calculator, braille, and signed interpretation) as long as the support is not specifically prohibited in the task script.

For signed interpretation, if the Test Administrator determines that a sign or signs will give away the answers to items, he or she must finger spell those words. If the interpreter is not the Test Administrator, ensure the interpreter is provided the MTAS test materials up to 5 business days prior to test administration for review. NEW! This time has been extended from 48 hours to 5 business days to ensure sufficient preparation time prior to administration. Materials must be kept secure by interpreters as they prepare for testing. The interpreter is required to complete the *Test Security Training*; the other modules in the *MTAS New Test Administrators – 1–2 years* course are also recommended so the interpreter is familiar with how the test is administered. For information on allowable test administration activities, see the MTAS Task Administration Manual or Chapter 3 of this *Procedures Manual*.

MCA Accommodations

On the MCA, students with an IEP or 504 plan may be provided any accommodations from Tables 8 and 9 on the following pages. In cases where English learners also have an IEP or 504 plan, decision makers should refer to both Chapters 5 and 6 when determining appropriate assessment accommodations and linguistic supports for the MCA.

Summary and Explanation of MCA Accommodations

The tables that follow list accommodations that may be considered for students with an IEP or 504 plan for the MCA. Table 8 provides a summary of the accommodations available. Table 9 explains these accommodations in more detail.

Some accommodations can be used together, but others cannot. Make sure accommodations are compatible and that the codes are indicated correctly. While some information is included in the tables, detailed information about conflicting codes for Pretest Editing is provided in the *Pretest Editing User Guide* in Test WES.

Tables 8 and 9 provide an extensive—but not exhaustive—list of possible accommodations. MDE recognizes that IEP and 504 plan teams may consider accommodations for the MCA that are not specifically addressed in this chapter yet are entirely appropriate for a particular student and assessment. Some IEP or 504 teams may identify something as an accommodation on the student's IEP or 504 plan that MDE considers a general support for statewide testing. If IEP or 504 plan teams determine the need for an accommodation not specifically addressed in this chapter, and not included in the table of general supports in Chapter 8, email mde.testing@state.mn.us to verify the accommodation is permitted.

Entering Student Responses Online

In order to be scored, student responses in paper test books for the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs must be entered online in a Data Entry form in TestNav (refer to *Data Entry for MCA and MTAS* in Chapter 8 for additional information). For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing windows for entering student responses.

The responses must be entered exactly as the student responded, without edits or changes. The test items include specific instructions for students on how the item should be answered, and the student's answers cannot be modified if they did not follow these instructions.

Note: Student responses in MCA paper test books will NOT be scanned and scored when they are returned to the service provider. Only student responses entered online are scored.

Table 8. 2019–20 Summary of Accommodations on the MCA

SUMMARY OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Code	Test Materials Required from Service Provider
Presentation		
12-point regular print paper test book for reading and mathematics	12	X
Accommodated text-to-speech for mathematics and science	MC	
Assistive technology	AT	
Braille version of test book	BC or BU	X
Handheld calculator for grades 3–8 mathematics only (requires use of paper test book)	HC	X
Large print test book	18 or 24	X
Mathematics manipulatives or an abacus for grades 3–8 mathematics only (requires use of paper test book)	HC	X
Recording a reading test	MT	
Script for mathematics (requires use of paper test book)	MS	X
Script for science (for use with the online assessment or paper test materials)	MS	X
Signed interpretation of mathematics and science scripts	OA	X
Signed interpretation of test directions	TD	
Response Format		
Assistive technology	AT	
Audio recording for transcription (requires use of paper test book)	SC	X
Braille or other notetaking device	AT	
Scribe (with transcription into the test book or online test)	SC	
Other Accommodations		
Some IEP or 504 teams may identify something as an accommodation that MDE considers a general support for statewide testing. If IEP or 504 plan teams determine the need for an accommodation not specifically addressed in this chapter, and not included in the table of general supports in Chapter 8, email mde.testing@state.mn.us to verify the accommodation is permitted.	Varies	

Table 9. 2019–20 Summary of Accommodations on the MCA

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **12-point regular print test book** for Reading and Mathematics MCAs may be used by any student with an IEP or 504 plan whose disability prevents them from accessing the content on a computer. A 12-point regular print paper test book is not available for the Science MCA. Requests for this accommodation must be determined by the IEP or 504 team rather than student or administrator preference. The test book will be automatically shipped if the code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next. All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. In some cases, a student with an injury that prevents them from testing online (e.g., concussion restrictions) may be allowed to use a paper test book if supported by medical documentation, even if they do not have an IEP or 504 plan. See *Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations* in this chapter. Notes: - Paper test books (12, 18, 24, BC, or BU) cannot be used together. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates a 12-point regular print test book (12) and script (MS), only the MS code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates 12 and handheld calculator or mathematics manipulatives/abacus (HC), only one code can be indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when either code is indicated by Jan. 17. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates a 12, MS, and HC, only the MS code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17.	x	x		12

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Accommodated text-to-speech is available for the online Mathematics and Science MCAs. Accommodated text-to-speech provides computer-generated audio for charts and graphs in addition to the audio that is provided for standard text-to-speech. With either type of text-to-speech, students can select the parts of the item they want to listen to (e.g., specific sentences or all text-to-speech). Because accommodated text-to-speech also provides audio for all the labels, graphs, and charts, it may be a heavy language load beneficial for a limited number of students with an IEP or 504 plan. Typically, only a small number of students need accommodated text-to-speech; the default should be the standard text-to-speech available as a general support on the Mathematics and Science MCAs. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech to help determine which is best based on individual student needs. Notes: • Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together. • MC is not available with paper test books (12, 18, 24, BC, or BU).		x	x	MC

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Assistive technology refers to technology that is used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of students with disabilities. In general, Internet access cannot be available and calculator use must follow the guidelines in Chapter 8 and Appendix B. The following are the approved uses of assistive technology devices. Failure to comply with all conditions specified below may result in a test invalidation. For online testing, the device used as assistive technology must be in addition to the device used for testing because TestNav will not allow other programs or applications to run at the same time as the test; this means a student may be using two tablets or a tablet and a computer, for example. • Use of a device for scratch paper is allowed as long as Internet access is turned off and other applications are not accessed. In addition, the student must be the one to recreate the item as needed and all test content must be erased at the end of each test session. The student must test in an individual setting to ensure the device is used only for scratch paper. • Use of a device calculator application is allowed as long as the calculator used follows the guidelines in Chapter 8 and Appendix B (including calculator memory clearing), Internet access is turned off, and other applications are not accessed. The student must test in an individual setting to ensure the device is used only as a calculator. The device cannot be used in conjunction with the online grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA or the Science MCA—only with paper test materials. For grade 11 Mathematics MCA, the device could be used in conjunction with the online test or a paper test materials. For all other questions on the use of assistive technology for a student, including a specific device or software, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us.	x	x	x	AT

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Audio recording for transcription may be used by the student in an individual setting to record and edit answers for paper test materials if the student is unable to mark their answers. A scribe will enter the student responses exactly as recorded; refer to the scribe accommodation below and *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter for additional information. The device used for the audio recording must be school owned, and any recordings must be deleted after transcription. Audio recording cannot be used with the online MCAs because the items must be answered to move forward in the test.	x	x	x	SC
A **Braille or other notetaking device** may be used by students competent in their use as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team. Student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. Refer to *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter for further information. Use of audio features on a notetaking device is allowable if the IEP or 504 plan specifies it. The device must be used in an individual setting to play back text the student has entered. The Test Monitor is responsible for monitoring that the student is using the audio feature only to enter and play back notes, and not for any portion of the passage or test items. Any notes must be deleted following each test session. Internet access cannot be available and calculator use must follow the guidelines in Chapter 8 and Appendix B.	x	x	x	AT

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **Braille version of the test book** is available to a student who is blind or partially sighted and is competent in the braille system, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team. Unified English Braille (UEB) format for braille test materials is used. *NEW!* Separate codes have been added to Pretest Editing for contracted (BC) and uncontracted (BU) braille test books. The applicable braille test book will be automatically shipped if the code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order on PearsonAccess Next. *NEW!* Note: Each year, the code will default to the BC code; districts must change the code to BU if a student requires uncontracted materials. *Test Monitor Notes for Braille* are provided along with the braille test books for the Test Monitor to reference during test administration. Under the supervision of the District or School Assessment Coordinator, a Test Monitor administering a braille test may access the *Test Monitor Notes for Braille* and the corresponding test books up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled administration. *NEW!* This time has been extended to allow Test Monitors sufficient preparation time prior to administration. Materials must be kept secure by Test Monitors as they prepare for testing. ⓘ Test Monitors must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to accessing the test materials. Students taking a braille test may need more time to test than print readers, and this should be taken into account when scheduling testing. Student responses may be recorded in one of the following ways, which should be discussed with the student prior to test administration; some require additional accommodation codes to be documented: • In the braille test book by the student • With a typewriter or word processor by the student (AT) • Dictated to a scribe by the student (SC) • With braille writer, slate, and stylus used by the student (AT) All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Note: Paper test books (12, 18, 24, BC, or BU) cannot be used together.	x	x	x	BC or BU

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Handheld calculator is considered an accommodation for the grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA. The student must use paper test materials, follow the calculator use policies in Chapter 8 and Appendix B, and only use the calculator for segments where calculators are allowed. Note that because the handheld calculator accommodation requires students to move from an online test to a paper test, students lose the benefits of online testing, including interactive test items and an adaptive test tailored to their skill level. Standard, scientific, or graphing calculators with a talking feature may also be used in an individual setting if the use is documented in the IEP or 504 plan and the calculator policies in Chapter 8 and Appendix B are followed. A 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, the test book must be ordered as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next. All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Notes: - Since a calculator is allowed on all sections/segments of the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, the use of a handheld calculator is not indicated as an accommodation for grade 11 Mathematics MCA. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates handheld calculator (HC) and a 12-point regular print test book (12), only one code can be indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when either code is indicated by Jan. 17. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates HC and script (MS), only the MS is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17. - If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates HC, MS, and 12, only the MS code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17.		x		HC

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **large print test book** is for students with low vision who need a large print test book to see the test items. Large print test books are available in 18-point and 24-point fonts. For students without low vision, a large print test book may be provided for Science MCA if the IEP or 504 plan specifies a paper test book since the only paper test book available is in large print. The applicable test book will be automatically shipped if the code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next. All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Note: Paper test books (12, 18, 24, BC, or BU) cannot be used together.	x	x	x	18 or 24

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Mathematics manipulatives or an abacus are considered accommodations for the grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA. Mathematics manipulatives (like unifix cubes or base-10 blocks) can be the same color or different colors, but they must not be grouped or organized by the Test Monitor. ⓘ Manipulatives that have any numbers or writing on them are not allowed. MDE does not produce a comprehensive list of allowable manipulatives; email mde.testing@state.mn.us for specific questions about providing manipulatives. The student must use a paper test book in an individual setting and only use the mathematics manipulatives or an abacus on the segments where calculators are allowed. Note that because the use of mathematics manipulatives or an abacus requires students to move from an online test to a paper test, students lose the benefits of online testing, including interactive test items and an adaptive test tailored to their skill level. A 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, the test book must be ordered as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next. All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Notes: • Since a calculator is allowed on all sections/segments of the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, the use of mathematics manipulatives/abacus is not indicated as an accommodation for grade 11 Mathematics MCA. • If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates mathematics manipulatives/abacus (HC) and a 12-point regular print test book (12), only one code can be indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when either code is indicated by Jan. 17. • If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates mathematics manipulatives/abacus (HC) and script (MS), only the MS is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17. • If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates mathematics manipulatives/abacus (HC), MS, and 12, only the MS code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17.		x		HC

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Recording a reading test must be done in an individual setting. Students may record their voice while reading the reading test aloud and replay the recording while taking the test. Recording must be done independently by the student without the Test Monitor providing verbal or nonverbal prompts. Students may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Monitor. The device used for the audio recording must be school owned; the Internet or applications beyond the recording function cannot be accessed. ⓘ Any recordings must be deleted after each test session. Students should finish all items associated with a passage before stopping testing for the day because the recording must be deleted.	x			MT

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **scribe** may be provided to students in instances when visual or motor difficulties, including injuries, prevent them from indicating their own responses. This accommodation must be provided in an individual setting so as not to disrupt other students who are testing. • Scribes for online tests will navigate the test, access text-to-speech and other tools (as requested by the student), and indicate the responses provided by the student for all items directly into the online test. • Scribes for paper tests will indicate the responses provided by the student into the paper test book. All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. • Additional guidelines for the administration of a test with the scribe accommodation are provided in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). The student's IEP or 504 plan should document the need for a scribe, except in injury situations. The student should be competent in the use of a scribe as determined by the student's IEP or 504 plan team. Scribes cannot read aloud student responses or any part of the test, and they must be impartial and experienced in transcription. Students must be given the opportunity to review their responses. All scribes must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration. The use of a scribe, including the name(s) of the district staff completing the transcription, must be documented on a TAR. Note: Entering student responses online from paper test books is not considered a scribe accommodation. For example, if students use a large print test book, they indicate their responses directly in the test book. The student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window in order to be scored, which is not considered a scribe accommodation.	x	x	x	SC

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **script for Mathematics MCA** may be provided to students with an IEP or 504 plan, and can be administered in a small group or individual setting. Because the online test is adaptive and the test items presented vary by student, the script must be administered with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille test book). The script and 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17. ⓘ After this date, both the script and test book must be separately ordered as additional orders in PearsonAccess Next. • The Test Monitor reads from the script while the student responds directly into the paper test book. Refer to the *Braille versions* accommodation code earlier in this table for alternate ways for the student to respond (e.g., a scribe or braille writer). • Additional guidelines are provided in the script and in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). • All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Test Monitors must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration. The script requires students to move from an online test to a paper test, so students lose the benefits of online testing, including interactive test items and an adaptive test tailored to their skill level. In addition, Test Monitors must read all the text for labels, graphs, and charts. This may be a heavy language load beneficial only for a limited number of students. If the IEP or 504 plan requires read-aloud support, consider if the student needs this support from a human reader or if the standard text-to-speech available in the online test can provide it; if the student needs the additional read-aloud support for the labels, charts, and graphs, accommodated text-to-speech may also be an option. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech. Notes: • Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together. • If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates MS and either 12 or HC (handheld calculator or mathematics manipulatives/abacus), only the MS code is indicated; a 12-point test book and a script are automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17. However, large print or braille test book codes must be indicated separately. • If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates 12, MS, and HC, only the MS code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book and a script are automatically sent when the script is indicated by Jan. 17.		x		MS

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **script for Science MCA** may be provided to students with an IEP or 504 plan, and can be administered in a small group or individual setting. The script can be used in conjunction with the online test because the test is not adaptive; it can also be used in conjunction with large print and braille test books. The script will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17. Large print or braille test book codes must be indicated separately, if needed. After this date, the script and test book (if applicable) must be ordered as additional orders in PearsonAccess Next. • For administration of the script in conjunction with the online test, the Test Monitor reads from the script while the student enters responses directly into the online test. • For administration of the script with large print or braille test books, the student enters responses into the test book. Refer to the *Braille versions* accommodation code earlier in this table for alternate ways for the student to respond (e.g., a scribe or braille writer). • Additional guidelines are provided in the script and in the *[Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports](#)* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). • All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in this chapter. Test Monitors must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration. The script requires that Test Monitors must read all the text for labels, graphs, and charts. This may be a heavy language load beneficial only for a limited number of students. If the IEP or 504 plan requires read-aloud support, consider if the student needs this support from a human reader or if the standard text-to-speech available in the online test can provide it; if the student needs the additional read-aloud support for the labels, charts, and graphs, accommodated text-to-speech may also be an option. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech. Note: Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together.			x	MS

Table 9. 2019–20 Explanation of Accommodations on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Signed interpretation (e.g., ASL or signed English) of the Mathematics MCA and Science MCA script may be provided for deaf or hard-of-hearing students. The script must be used by the interpreter for the signed interpretation in conjunction with the corresponding paper test book or online test (science only) during administration. The interpretation must strictly adhere to the literal meaning of the text in the script. The interpreter must review the script prior to administration to determine when a sign or signs will give away the answer to items. In cases where signs give clues to the answer, interpreters must use finger spelling for those words. The interpreter will have access to the script up to 5 business days prior to the scheduled test administration. *NEW!* This time has been extended to allow additional time for interpreters to prepare for administration. Materials must be kept secure by interpreters as they prepare for testing. Additional guidelines for a signed interpretation of the script are provided in the script and in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). *(i)* All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training* prior to accessing test materials, and the use of an interpreter must be documented on a TAR. *(i)* If they are also the Test Monitor, interpreters must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to accessing the test materials.		x	x	OA
Signed interpretation (e.g., ASL or signed English) of test directions may be provided for deaf or hard-of-hearing students. Only the scripted *Testing Directions* may be signed; no interpretations of test items or reading passages are allowed. Additional guidelines for administering a test with signed interpretation of test directions are provided in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training*, and the use of an interpreter, including the name of the people interpreting, must be documented on a TAR. If they are also the Test Monitor, interpreters must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration.	x	x	x	TD

Chapter 6 — Linguistic Supports for English Learners

Overview

This chapter provides information on linguistic supports for the MCA and MTAS for English learners. Chapter 7 provides additional information about the participation of English learners in statewide assessments.

MDE convenes a committee of educators to review proposed additions to the general supports, linguistic supports, and accommodations for this manual. These reviews ensure that a student does not use a particular practice that could undermine the integrity of the resulting test score. Refer to *Statewide Testing Assessment Advisory Groups Overview* for more information about this committee (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing).

Supports and Accommodations Considerations for English Learners

When considering how English learners will participate in assessments, it is important to clarify the role of supports and accommodations in these decisions.

- **General supports** are features or practices available for all students that tailor the testing experience based on student needs or preferences. General supports include online tools and accessibility features available in online assessments and general test-taking practices, and may be provided along with linguistic supports, if appropriate. See *General Supports Available to All Students* in Chapter 8 for information on general supports available to all students.

- **Linguistic supports** are available for students who are identified as EL in MARSS. Because these students are in the process of acquiring English, these linguistic supports enable them to demonstrate what they know and can do to meet academic content standards in reading, mathematics, and science (specific information about linguistic supports available for the MCA and MTAS are provided later in this chapter). These supports are different from the general supports that are available to all students because they address the unique linguistic needs of English learners. Linguistic supports are not available on the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs because these assessments are measuring language proficiency.

- **Accommodations** are changes in the way that a test is administered in order to reduce or eliminate the effects of a disability. Accommodations are only available to students with an IEP or 504 plan. English learners who also have an IEP or 504 plan may receive any appropriate combination of general supports, linguistic supports, and accommodations, as determined by the IEP or 504 team. Information on accommodations is in Chapter 5.

Linguistic Supports for Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

Who May Receive Linguistic Supports?

English learners must be designated as EL in MARSS in order to use the majority of linguistic supports. Word-to-word translations in mathematics and science and translated directions are also available for former English learners and students in immersion or dual language programs who receive or have received their instruction in a language other than English. Districts determine how word-to-word translations are provided: online pop-ups, translated word lists provided by MDE, word-to-word dictionaries, or word-to-word translations using an online application. Detailed information on these linguistic supports is included in Table 11 later in this chapter.

Selecting Linguistic Supports

The district determines the linguistic supports individual English learners will use when taking the MCA. Each district must establish a process for determining an appropriate course of action for testing English learners.

Districts are encouraged to develop individual learning plans for English learners that document the linguistic supports to be provided during testing. Districts are also encouraged to involve parents in these decisions related to their student's learning plan; translators may be needed to allow full participation of the families. A collaborative dialogue between EL teachers, general education teachers, and families can help determine what is best for the individual student based on the instruction that student is receiving at the classroom level. A similar team should also be considered for former English learners and students in immersion or dual language programs. Individuals designated to determine appropriate linguistic supports may include:

- The student's bilingual or EL teacher

- The EL program coordinator

- The student's other classroom teacher(s)

- District or School Assessment Coordinator

- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s), when appropriate

- The student, when appropriate

- IEP and 504 plan teams, if the student has a disability (this team should be involved in the selection of both linguistic supports and accommodations)

When making decisions about appropriate linguistic supports for an English learner, the district should consider the following information:

- Current English language proficiency level

- Literacy in home language and in English

- Opportunity to learn the content areas assessed

- The primary language of instruction in the content areas

- Experience and length of time in U.S. schools

- Degree of familiarity with using the support in instruction and assessment

- Grade level

- Other school- or district-level related data

When making decisions about selecting word-to-word translations for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs, the district should also consider the following information:

- English and primary language proficiency are the primary factors when determining the need for translations and not name, ethnicity, race, country of origin, or other demographic characteristics.

- Students who speak a language other than English may not be proficient readers of that language. Translated text may not be a useful support for these students, and audio is not provided in pop-up translations.

- Students may have received most or all of their instruction in English and may be unfamiliar with academic vocabulary in their primary language.

- Pop-up translations in the online tests may be a distraction and add testing time for students who do not need them or cannot derive benefit from them.

Students may require multiple linguistic supports, such as translated directions and a dual language word-to-word dictionary.

Many linguistic supports provided to a student during statewide assessments should also be used during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments (e.g., translated word lists). In general, a new linguistic support should not be introduced to a student at the time of test administration because it may negatively affect the student's performance. The decision to provide a linguistic support for the first time during testing should be made carefully by the team who is very familiar with student's needs; however, practice with the linguistic support (e.g., using item samplers) is encouraged whenever possible.

Timeline for Linguistic Support Decisions

The decision on which linguistic supports will be used must be made prior to test administration. Districts may set timelines for linguistic support decisions to be made so that test materials can be ordered in a timely manner; however, decisions about linguistic supports can be made throughout the year, as long as they are made prior to testing.

Linguistic Support Codes

Linguistic support codes are used to inform MDE which linguistic supports were used at the time of testing.

- For MTAS, accommodations are not indicated, as described below.

- For MCA, linguistic support codes are indicated, removed, or changed in Pretest Editing in Test WES throughout the testing windows. After testing, districts are able to indicate or correct linguistic support codes in Posttest Editing in Test WES.

Linguistic Supports for MTAS

Indicating linguistic supports for the MTAS is not required. Accommodating student needs is integral to the MTAS, and the Test Administrator may provide needed supports similar to those provided during instruction as long as the type of support is not specifically prohibited in the task script. Full translations of the tasks are not allowed; however, Test Administrators may give directions in a student's first language, and students may use a word-to-word translation application or dictionary to translate academic vocabulary in math and science tasks.

- Directions in primary language: The Test Administrator may use the student's primary language to focus attention and give direction for how to interact with the task. The bold text in the Task Administration Manual scripts and text on Presentation Pages and Response Option Cards may not be translated except as described below for word-to-word translations.

- Word-to-word translation: Mathematics and science terms in the task (bold text in the Task Administration Manual and/or information on the Presentation Page) or response options may be entered into a translation program, as requested by the student. The student may enter the term or may request the Test Administrator to enter it. Only individual terms may be entered, not the entire test item.

Linguistic Supports for MCA

On the MCA, English learners may be provided any appropriate linguistic supports from Tables 10 and 11 on the following pages; EL students may use these supports whether or not they have an IEP or 504 plan. If an English learner has an IEP or 504 plan, refer to the tables of accommodations for students with disabilities in Chapter 5.

Some linguistic supports can be used together, but others cannot. Make sure linguistic supports are compatible and that the codes are indicated correctly. While some information is included in the tables, detailed information about code conflicts is provided in the *Pretest Editing User Guide* in Test WES.

The summary of English learner-responsive supports displayed in Table 10 was guided by the work of the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education at George Washington University (GW-CEEE). The team at GW-CEEE identified direct linguistic supports in English, direct linguistic supports in the student's first language, and indirect linguistic supports. A panel of experts then recommended the use of the identified supports at various proficiency levels. Table 10 shows the linguistic supports allowed on the MCA organized by type and English language proficiency level. The supports in Table 10 are described in greater detail in Table 11.

Table 10. 2019–20 Summary of Direct and Indirect Linguistic Supports on the MCA*

Linguistic Supports	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced/Transitional
English Language Proficiency Level			
Direct Linguistic Support in English			
Scripted oral English			
Use accommodated text-to-speech for math/science		Optional	
Read aloud math/science script	Optional	Optional	
Clarification			
Simplify test directions	Optional	Recommended	
Clarify test directions		Optional	
Direct Linguistic Support in First Language			
Dual-language/first-language reference materials			
Provide word-to-word translations for math/science (online pop-up, translated word list, word-to-word dictionary, or online translation application)	Optional	Recommended	Recommended
Written translation			
Provide written translation of test directions in student's first language	Recommended		
Scripted oral translation			
Read aloud written translation of test directions in student's first language	Recommended	Optional	
Sight translation			
Translate directions in student's first language	Recommended	Optional	
Clarify/explain test directions in student's first language	Recommended	Optional	
Indirect Linguistic Support			
Allow student to read a reading test aloud, recording his or her voice for later playback	Optional	Optional	Optional

*Recommended = Recommended for ELs at this English language proficiency level
Optional = Optional for ELs at this English language proficiency level based on individual student need

Table 11. 2019–20 Explanation of Linguistic Supports on the MCA

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Accommodated text-to-speech is available for the online Mathematics and Science MCAs. Accommodated text-to-speech provides computer-generated audio for charts and graphs in addition to the audio that is provided for standard text-to-speech. With either type of text-to-speech, students can select the parts of the item they want to listen to (e.g., specific sentences or all text-to-speech). Because accommodated text-to-speech also provides audio for all the labels, graphs, and charts, it may be a heavy language load beneficial for a limited number of English learners. Typically, only a small number of students need the accommodated text-to-speech; the default should be the standard text-to-speech available as a general support on the Mathematics and Science MCAs. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech to help determine which is best based on individual student needs. Note: Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together.		x	x	MC
Recording a reading test must be done in an individual setting. Students may record their voice while reading the reading test aloud and replay the recording while taking the test. Recording must be done independently by the student without the Test Monitor providing verbal or nonverbal prompts. Students may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Monitor. The device used for the audio recording must be school owned; the Internet or applications beyond the recording function cannot be accessed. ⓘ Any recordings must be deleted after each test session. Students should finish all items associated with a passage before stopping testing for the day because the recording must be deleted.	x			MT

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **script for Mathematics MCA** may be provided to English learners, and can be administered in a small group or individual setting. Because the online test is adaptive and the test items presented vary by student, the script must be administered with a paper test book. The script and 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17. ⓘ After this date, both the script and test book must be separately ordered as additional orders in PearsonAccess Next. • The Test Monitor reads from the script while the student responds directly into the paper test book. • Additional guidelines are provided in the script and in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). • All student responses must be entered online by district staff within the testing window. See *Entering Student Responses Online* in Chapter 5. Test Monitors must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration. The script requires students to move from an online test to a paper test, so students lose the benefits of online testing, including interactive test items and an adaptive test tailored to their skill level. In addition, Test Monitors must read all the text for labels, graphs, and charts. This may be a heavy language load beneficial only for a limited number of English learners. Consider if the student needs the read-aloud support from a human reader or if the standard text-to-speech available in the online test can provide it; if the student needs the additional read-aloud support for the labels, charts, and graphs, accommodated text-to-speech may also be an option. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech. Note: Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together.		x		MS

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
A **script for Science MCA** may be provided to English learners, and can be administered in a small group or individual setting. The script can be used in conjunction with the online test because the test is not adaptive. The script will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by Jan. 17; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next. • For administration of the script in conjunction with the online test, the Test Monitor reads from the script while the student enters responses directly into the online test. • Additional guidelines are provided in the script and in the *Guidelines for Administration of Accommodations and Linguistic Supports* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). Test Monitors must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course prior to test administration. The script requires that Test Monitors must read all the text for labels, graphs, and charts. This may be a heavy language load beneficial only for a limited number of English learners. Consider if the student needs the read-aloud support from a human reader or if the standard text-to-speech available in the online test can provide it; if the student needs the additional read-aloud support for the labels, charts, and graphs, accommodated text-to-speech may also be an option. Refer to the item samplers on PearsonAccess Next to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech. Note: Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script (MS) cannot be used together.			x	MS

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Simplified or clarified directions can be provided by the Test Monitor for English learners; they are not provided by MDE. The Test Monitor can simplify or clarify the scripted *Testing Directions* using vocabulary that the individual student would understand and therefore know how to take the test. However, the Test Monitor cannot change the meaning of the directions or provide information that would lead or cue the student. The use of simplified or clarified directions should be documented on the *Test Administration Report* (TAR).	x	x	x	TD
Translated directions (oral or written) in first language are allowed for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs. This linguistic support may be provided in a small group, if all the students require it. Otherwise, it must be provided to a student individually if provided orally. • Only the scripted *Testing Directions* may be translated; no translations of test items or reading passages are allowed. • For online MCAs, the student directions embedded in the online test can be translated using the transcript of the directions included in the *Testing Directions: Online*. The student directions cannot be translated from an individual student's screen. • ⓘ A district may also create an audio recording of the translated scripted *Testing Directions* and/or transcript of the student directions for students to listen to. Translators cannot be family members. If a translator is needed to provide allowable translations, districts must use a local process to hire a qualified person. Districts arrange for and provide all translations. All translators must complete the *Test Security Training*, and the use of a translator, including the name(s) of the people completing the translation, must be documented on the TAR. If they are also the Test Monitor, translators must complete the *MCA Test Monitor* course.	x	x	x	TD

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Word-to-word translations using commercial word-to-word dual-language dictionaries are allowed for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs on the Mathematics and Science MCAs. The student must use the dictionary to look up individual terms; Test Monitors cannot translate the terms. A commercial word-to-word dictionary contains mathematical and scientific terms in English and in the first language of a given learner. No definitions or pictures may be provided—only direct translations of the terms. • Mathematics and science word-to-word dictionaries are available on the [Steinhardt Metropolitan Center website](). • ACT maintains a [list of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries]() commercially. • The [English-Spanish mathematics dictionary]() available on the Math2.org website is another online example of a bilingual mathematics dictionary. Word-to-word dictionaries can be printed and provided to the student or made available electronically. If accessed electronically, the student must test in an individual setting to ensure only the dictionary is accessed. The Internet or applications cannot be accessed outside of the program or application that is being used for translation. If printed, the dictionary must be collected at the end of each test session and kept secure, as students may have written parts of test items on it. Following test administration, the dictionary must be securely disposed of. Consider that a word-to-word dictionary should be appropriate for the respective grade level, containing only the words a learner at a given grade should be expected to know (for example, a fifth grade word-to-word dictionary would likely contain mathematical or scientific words children learn in fifth grade as well as words from lower grades). The Minnesota Academic Standards provide the basis for determining appropriate mathematical and scientific terms for each grade level.		x	x	OL

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Word-to-word translations using online translation programs are allowed for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs on the Mathematics and Science MCAs. The student must use the translation program to look up individual terms, and Test Monitors cannot translate the terms. In addition, an entire test question cannot be typed into a translation program. A word-to-word translation may be provided to the student using an online translation program, like SYSTRANet. When looking at applications or programs to provide this support, ensure that no definitions or pictures are provided. Because applications and programs can change frequently, MDE does not provide a list; however, note that Google Translate is **not** allowed because it provides definitions. For questions on the use of applications or programs, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us. • This linguistic support must be administered in an individual setting to ensure the device is used only for word-to-word translation. • The device used for the translation must be in addition to the testing device because TestNav will not allow other programs or applications to run at the same time as the test. The Internet or applications cannot be accessed, outside of the program or application that is being used for translation. • **NEW!** If the online translation program has audio support for the term, the student may use it.		x	x	OL
Word-to-word translations using pop-up translations are allowed for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs. Pop-up translations are available in the online Mathematics and Science MCAs in Hmong (HM), Somali (SO), and Spanish (SP). Academic terms and direction words that have been translated are underlined in the online test. When selected, a pop-up window with the translation appears. No audio is provided for the translations. Note: The Hmong (HM), Somali (SO), and Spanish (SP) online pop-up translation linguistic support codes cannot be used together.		x	x	HM SO SP

Table 11. 2019–20 Explanation of Linguistic Supports on the MCA (continued)

EXPLANATION OF LINGUISTIC SUPPORTS	Reading	Math	Science	Code
Word-to-word translations using translated word lists are allowed for English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual language programs on the Mathematics and Science MCAs. Academic terms and direction words are translated in the following languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Khmer, Laotian, Oromo, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. • The lists must be printed versions of the current-year lists posted on PearsonAccess Next (Preparing for Testing > Translated Word Lists); instructions for printing the lists are also available on PearsonAccess Next. • The list may be provided in conjunction with the online test (with or without other linguistic supports, including the pop-up translation) or with paper test materials (for students with an IEP or 504 plan). • If students use these translated word lists during instruction, Test Monitors must ensure that the list does not have any additional writing on it before it is used for testing. • The list must be collected at the end of each test session and kept secure, as students may have written parts of test items on it. Following test administration, the lists must be securely disposed of. Note: These lists are intended only for the purpose of providing this linguistic support during testing and are not intended as the basis for curriculum and instruction. Districts may not translate additional terms or translate their own lists. In addition, districts may not translate these lists in languages not available on PearsonAccess Next. If a student needs word-to-word support in a different language, districts can consider using a commercial word-to-word dual-language dictionary or online translation program if the student is familiar with using these supports during instruction; these supports are described previously in this table. Note: Word lists are not permitted for Reading MCA.		x	x	OL

Chapter 7 — Student Participation and Students in Special Circumstances and Situations

Overview

This chapter provides definitions and clarifications for the wide variety of circumstances that can affect student participation in the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Questions on some of the information referenced in this chapter (e.g., MARSS indications, accountability calculations) may need to be addressed by other divisions at MDE; refer to the *MDE Contacts* at the beginning of this manual for contact information.

The information provided in this chapter is meant to provide guidance and transparency for student participation requirements under ESSA; however, districts should always make decisions based on what is right for each individual student. The policies and procedures outlined here should not be used to justify acting against a student's best interest.

504 Plan Students

Students with a 504 plan must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Refer to Chapter 5 and the Section 504 page for information on accommodations (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Section 504).

Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs), Alternative Learning Programs (ALPs), and Private Contract Alternatives

School Classifications 41, 42, and 43 provide educational alternatives for certain students. With the exception of facilities located in Cities of the First Class (i.e., population over 100,000), these sites must accept any student who meets the entrance criteria, space permitting. All students at these sites must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is a member of the WIDA consortium. The BIE pays for and oversees the implementation of the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS tests administered in BIE-funded schools across the WIDA Consortium. BIE schools are required to participate in the MCA and MTAS and are automatically included in the same process for statewide testing as public school districts and charter schools.

Care and Treatment and Private Facilities

School Classifications 70, 71, 72, 74, 76, 77, 78, and 79 are care and treatment programs that provide a range of medical and mental health services to students. These students must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments unless they have been medically excused.

Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students

The test materials, scoring, and results for the Minnesota standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments are provided at no cost to public school districts testing public school students. See Table 12 for 2019–20 testing costs for nonpublic and home-schooled students.

Service providers will invoice nonpublic schools directly. For any home-schooled students participating in the district's MCA or MTAS testing, Pearson will invoice the district and the district may request payment from the parent/guardian.

The standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments meet the definition of a standardized test under Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.41, which means nonpublic pupil textbook aid may be used by the nonpublic school or home school to pay for this testing.

Table 12. 2019–20 Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students

Test	Per Student Cost
MCA (reading, mathematics, science)	$6.36 per subject $6.55 per subject for paper tests
MTAS (reading, mathematics, science)	$56.91
ACCESS	$27.75 + processing fee[19]
Alternate ACCESS	$77.00 + processing fee[19]

Determining a Student's Grade Level

There will be situations in which the student's grade sent in the precode file is incorrect due to inaccurate data submitted in MARSS.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, grade changes are made in WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS). For Kindergarten, grades 1–5 writing, Alternate ACCESS, and for students using paper materials, change the grade in WIDA AMS and use the student's preprinted label (even though it specifies the incorrect grade) on the appropriate grade-level test booklet.

- For MCA and MTAS, grade changes must be submitted in MARSS at least two business days prior to testing and data entry; grade changes cannot be made in PearsonAccess Next. The grade must be correct in PearsonAccess Next before the student starts testing or data entry begins. Note: The grade can also be changed in Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES one business day prior to testing. If changing grades in Test WES, ensure the grade change is also submitted in MARSS.

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[19] Cost noted above is per student (includes test materials, scoring, and basic reporting services), plus an additional 3 percent processing fee (minimum $25, maximum $600). DRC is the contact for ordering and invoicing information.

Students must take the assessment for the grade indicated in MARSS during the accountability window. (Refer to *Accountability Windows* in Chapter 8 for the windows for English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments.) For example, a student enters an alternative high school and is indicated in MARSS as a grade 10 student based on earned credits. Before the accountability window, this student has earned enough credits to be promoted to grade 11, and the grade indicated in MARSS is changed to grade 11. In this case, the school should administer the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, not a grade 10 Reading MCA.

If possible, it is best to avoid changing grades during the accountability window. If students change grades during the accountability window for those assessments, additional assessments must be administered.

- For ELs who change grades during the ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS accountability window, districts need to ensure that there are assessments for all the grades indicated during the accountability window if they are not within the same grade-level cluster. If a student's grade is changed within any of the ACCESS grade-level clusters, they should not take the ACCESS again in the new grade because it will be the same test the student has already taken that year.

- For students changing grades during the MCA/MTAS accountability window, districts need to ensure there are assessments for all the grades indicated during the accountability window. For example, if a student was promoted from grade 10 to grade 11 during the accountability window, both a grade 10 Reading MCA and grade 11 Mathematics MCA would be expected.

The District Assessment Coordinator must check if there are any students who will be changing grades during testing.

In the unusual circumstance when a student is enrolled in one grade in a high school and in another grade in an ALC (or dual-enrolled in different grades across districts) for MCA and MTAS, the student will only be sent in precode for the school that has the student indicated in the lower grade; however, the student will need to test for both grades (see *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students* below for more detailed information). For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, all students who are EL-identified in MARSS are sent in precode.

Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students

The term dual-enrolled indicates that a student is taking classes in two sites and at least one of them is an ALC or ALP. The typical dual-enrolled student is enrolled in a traditional middle or high school full-time and an ALC or ALP for additional courses.

A concurrent-enrolled student attends two sites part-time. The concurrent sites may be a traditional middle or high school and an ALP or ALC, two traditional schools, or an ALC and an ALP.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, dual-enrolled students are sent in precode for only one school within a district; if a student is enrolled in two districts, both districts will have the student included in their precode. The districts will need to collaborate to ensure the student is only tested once.

- A student's information will be sent for precode for only one of the schools for MCA and MTAS, which means that only one school will have the student's information sent for online testing or data entry.

The student's test results, including results in service provider systems and the Individual Student Report (ISR), are provided only to the school where the student completed the test.

The bullets below provide additional information about testing dual-enrolled students.

- **For dual-enrolled students who are in the same grade at both schools**: Student information is sent for precode for only one school, and only one school will test the student. For MCA /MTAS, the testing location can be changed using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES if needed.

- **For dual-enrolled students who are in different grades at each school**: The school that has the student indicated at the lowest grade will have the student's information sent for testing. If the schools come to agreement on the student's grade, the grade must be changed in MARSS so they match (see the previous bullet and *Determining a Student's Grade Level* above for further information). However, if the grade remains different between the schools, both schools must test the student in the grade in which the student is enrolled in MARSS.

  o For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, if the two grades are within the same grade-level cluster, the student only tests once. If the two grades are in separate grade-level clusters (e.g., grade 8 and grade 9), the student's grade can be changed in WIDA AMS (or hand-bubbled on a test booklet, as applicable) for the second test once the first is completed.

  o For online MCA, one school will test the student in the grade indicated in MARSS. Once testing is completed, the second school will change the student's grade and testing location in Precode Student Eligibility. Once the updated student information appears in PearsonAccess Next, the second school will test the student in the grade it has indicated in MARSS.

  o For data entry of MCA student responses from paper test materials and MTAS, both schools can test the student using the test materials for the appropriate grade. One school will enter the responses/scores online for the grade indicated in MARSS. Once data entry is complete, the second school will change the student's grade and testing location in Precode Student Eligibility. When the updated student information appears in PearsonAccess Next, the second school can enter the responses/scores online for the grade it has indicated in MARSS.

In the case where students take the MTAS or an English language proficiency accountability assessment (ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS), the district that reports the student as special education or indicates EL in MARSS must be the same district that administers the test in order for the test to be valid.

English Learners

For testing purposes, English learners are students designated as EL in MARSS, and in eligible grades, they must take the applicable standards-based accountability assessment (MCA or MTAS). Refer to Chapter 6 for information on linguistic supports.

All English learners in grades K–12 must take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS.

- When EL services are provided, the MARSS Coordinator enters a valid EL Start Date. If a student is identified as an English learner but services are refused by the parents/guardians, no EL Start Date is entered in MARSS. However, because the student was designated as EL in MARSS, an ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS record is still expected. If the parents/guardians refuse testing, DEC (declined) is indicated in WIDA AMS during the testing window.

- The EL indicator in MARSS reflects identification of each EL during the current school year. If a student is identified as EL at any time during the school year before the testing window ends, the student should take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS.

- If the district is in the process of identifying students as English learners during the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS accountability window, the students should be tested.

- If an English learner from another Minnesota district moves in during the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS testing window, check to see that the student has tested in the other district. If not, the student should be tested if possible (refer to *Moving Into or Out of the District During Testing* in this chapter for additional information).

- If an English learner moves from another state and was administered the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS in that state, the student must be tested again in Minnesota if they are enrolled during the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS accountability window.

Contact mde.el@state.mn.us or refer to the English Learner Education page for questions about identification of English learners (MDE website > Districts, School and Educators > Teaching and Learning > English Learner Education).

Enrolled in Another State (MARSS State Aid Category = 14 or 52)

Students who reside in Minnesota but are enrolled in a district in another state, usually in a neighboring state, are indicated in MARSS using the State Aid Category of 14 or 52. These students are not expected to participate in the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments; presumably the state where they are enrolled will include the students in its assessment system.

Expelled Students

Expelled students who are still enrolled in the district are required to take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. If the expelled student is unable to test, districts will indicate the ABS (Absent) test code in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

Foreign Exchange Students (MARSS State Aid Category = 2)

Although Foreign Exchange students are enrolled full-time in a public school, their participation in the standards-based accountability assessments is optional. If a foreign exchange student will not participate in MCA or MTAS, no action is needed. The student's record will appear in PearsonAccess Next but no test record will be expected if the State Aid Category is indicated correctly in MARSS. If a foreign exchange student does test, the student's test will not be included in test results summary information.

If a foreign exchange student lacks the necessary English skills to fully participate in classes in English, they may be identified as EL in MARSS and served in the district's EL program. Foreign exchange students who are designated as EL in MARSS and are served in an EL program must participate in the English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Only foreign exchange students categorized in MARSS as State Aid Category 2 are considered foreign exchange students for the purposes of testing; students designated as State Aid Category 15 are not, and are therefore expected to participate in the applicable assessments. Foreign exchange status will be validated against MARSS. For questions on how to report foreign exchange students in MARSS, contact marss@state.mn.us.

GED Students

GED students do not need to participate in standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments because they are not considered public school students.

Homebound/Non-Attendance Students

These students are enrolled in a district even though they may not actually physically attend a Minnesota public school. Educational services are provided as appropriate, given the circumstances of the student, and they must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Homebound students are expected to test online, unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan that requires paper test materials or the student is administered an alternate assessment. District-owned devices must be used, the Test Administrator or Test Monitor must have completed all required trainings, and the student should test where educational services are provided. All security and test administration procedures must be followed even when administering tests in settings outside of the school, and applicable testing windows must be followed.

Homeless Shelters

School Classification 73 defines shelters as temporary housing for students in crisis. Educational services are provided as appropriate, given the circumstances of the student. Students must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Home-Schooled Students

Home-schooled students are not public school students. Therefore, they are not required to participate in the standards-based accountability assessments, no matter which courses or classes they are taking in the public school. However, if the student has a MARSS enrollment and is not designated as a shared-time student (MARSS State Aid Category = 16, 17, or 18), then the student cannot be considered home-schooled and must test; see *Shared-Time Students* later in this chapter.

Home-schooled students who wish to test are charged a fee (see *Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students* earlier in this chapter) and must have the test administered by public school staff.

Home-schooled students must be manually added to precode files using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES with the Home-Schooled Student enrollment code.

Incarcerated Students at Correctional Facilities

School Classification 70 defines students placed in a correctional program but still enrolled in a district; these students are required to participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. For online testing, correctional facilities need to provide the necessary and appropriate resources for students to test. If the student is unable to test, indicate the ABS (Absent) test code during Posttest Editing.

Independent Study Students

Students participating in independent study programs are required to participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. These students must take the accountability assessment for the grade indicated in MARSS during the testing window.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Students

Students with an IEP must take the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Refer to Chapter 5 and the Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities page for information on accommodations and participation (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Special Education > Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities).

Intermediate Districts

Students enrolled in intermediate districts are required to participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. It is important for regular school districts to work with intermediate districts to make sure that dual-enrolled students are tested (see *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students* above).

Medical Excuse

There may be circumstances when a student cannot be assessed at any time during the testing window due to a significant medical emergency. A medical emergency is defined as a debilitating onset of a severe or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, and/or emotional trauma that meets all of the criteria listed below. The district will indicate the ME (Medical Excuse) test code for a student unable to take the test because of a medical emergency that has been officially documented at the district.

A medical emergency is different from a medical condition. A medical emergency is a short-term circumstance that directly interferes with a student's ability to participate in testing where no alternate arrangements can be made or appropriate supports provided to assess the student. An ongoing medical condition, unlike a medical emergency, is a situation in which a school and/or district is providing instruction and the student should be tested with any supports or accommodations for which the student may be eligible. A student who has an IEP or 504 plan due to a medical condition is still expected to participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments, unless the criteria for medical excuse apply.

The following criteria are provided for districts to make decisions on when to appropriately use the ME test code; districts do not request approval from MDE to use the code. All of the following criteria must be met to use the ME test code:

- The medical emergency arises from an accident, disaster, crisis, or other circumstance that was not foreseeable and is beyond the control of the student, the parent/guardian of the student, and the student's school or district.

- The medical emergency affects the student so severely as to incapacitate the student from participation in the assessment for the duration of the testing window.

- The student's medical emergency and incapacity to participate cannot be remedied with appropriate supports or accommodations provided to the student by the district.

- The school or district has been provided with written documentation by a licensed medical professional, operating under the scope of their medical professional license, stating the underlying medical emergency exists.

Note: The ME code may be applied even if the medical emergency was not present for the entire testing window, if the student had not yet started testing before the emergency occurred. For example, testing is scheduled in the school for mid-April but the medical emergency occurs at the end of March; in this case, the ME test code could apply, even though the emergency was not present for the entire testing window. However, ME cannot be indicated if a student started the test before the medical emergency; in this situation, the test will be scored as is since the student did participate in part of the test. The district may indicate on the *Test Administration Report* (TAR) that the student was unable finish the test due to the medical emergency.

Table 13. Examples Regarding Medical Excuse

May Qualify for Medical Excuse	Does Not Qualify for Medical Excuse
Student has been admitted to a hospital or treatment facility for the duration of the testing window that prohibits the student from appropriately testing	Pregnancy (unless complications meets the criteria of a medical excuse)
Terminal illness or undergoing chemotherapy	Short term or minor illness
Traumatic brain injury	A broken limb (but a 504 plan or supports or accommodations may be applicable)
Comatose	A significant injury and/or illness for a family member or legal guardian

MDE requires that a licensed medical professional, operating under the scope of their medical professional license, verifies and documents that a student coded with a medical excuse could not have appropriately tested. Districts must keep this documentation on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

By definition, it is most likely that medical excuse would only apply for one school year; there may be rare cases where the nature of the medical emergency (as opposed to a medical condition as defined above) may mean the student cannot participate in testing the following year.

For ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS, districts will need to indicate the ME test code during Posttest Editing in Test WES. For MCA and MTAS, ME can be entered during the testing window in PearsonAccess Next in addition to during Posttest Editing.

Moving Into or Out of the District During Testing

Districts should attempt to test all students who are enrolled during the testing windows. If a student moves during a testing window and has not tested in their former district, the new district should test the student. Since the testing windows are longer than the accountability windows, students who enroll during the accountability windows must be tested, even if other students in the school complete testing prior to or after the accountability windows.

A student who moves from one district to another near the end of the testing window and has not yet taken the test should be tested if possible as the test will still provide useful information.

If a student moves from another state and was administered the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS in that state, the student must be tested again in Minnesota if they are enrolled during the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS accountability window.

Students Moving Prior to Testing

For students who move out of your district before the accountability window opens:

- ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS: No action is required for online testing. For paper test materials, securely dispose of the preprinted labels. If labels have already been attached to the test booklets, return the test booklets to DRC with the Do Not Process labels attached.

- MCA and MTAS: No action is needed. The student's test eligibility will be removed from PearsonAccess Next once submitted MARSS data indicates the student is no longer enrolled.

For students who move out during the accountability window but before the test is administered:

- ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS: Indicate the ABS (Absent) test code in WIDA AMS during the testing window. During Posttest Editing, the code must be changed to NE (Not Enrolled). If students started but did not complete all domains before moving, indicate ABS (Absent) for the domains not completed in WIDA AMS during the testing window; the code for those domains must be changed to NE (Not Enrolled) during Posttest Editing.

- MCA and MTAS: Indicate the NE (Not Enrolled) test code during Posttest Editing in Test WES, as needed. The NE code will be validated against MARSS.

Students Completing Part of Assessments

For grades 1–12 online ACCESS, if a student takes one or more domains in one district and transfers to another district, the new district will complete the online Student Transfer Form in WIDA AMS. This will allow the student to finish testing at the new district.

If a student moves to a new school or district and has not started the MCA or MTAS, the student's test eligibility will automatically move to the new school when updated MARSS data is submitted and sent to Pearson through the precode files. No additional action is needed. However, if a student moves to a new school or district and the test has already been started, the student's test will NOT automatically move. Even if updated MARSS data is submitted and Precode Student Eligibility reflects the updated information, the test will not move to the new school or district in PearsonAccess Next. The district will need to take further action depending on whether the student has moved to a different school in the same district or has moved into a new district. Refer to _MCA/MTAS Irregularities_ for detailed instructions (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

Nonpublic Schools (Private Schools)

Nonpublic/private schools are not required to participate in the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments, but may choose to participate at a cost (refer to _Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students_ earlier in this chapter). Details for nonpublic/private school participation in standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments are available in the _Nonpublic School Participation in Minnesota Assessments_ document (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources).

For each test nonpublic/private schools administer, they must follow all test administration and security policies and procedures outlined in this _Procedures Manual_ and related resources, including completing all required trainings, reviewing the weekly _Assessment Update_ emails, and following state-designated testing windows. Nonpublic/private schools that do not adhere to these policies and procedures may be disallowed from participating in future statewide assessments.

Note: Students attending a nonpublic school through an IEP or for care and treatment are reported in MARSS through the resident district using the State Aid Category of 28. Student information is sent in precode because MDE does not know if it is a permanent or temporary placement for the student. They are not expected to participate in the standards-based or English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Online Schools (Virtual Schools)

Students enrolled in online schools (School Classification 46) must participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Because of the technical requirements involved, only district-owned computers/devices can be used for online tests; student-owned computers/devices are not permitted.

It is the online school's responsibility to test these students.

- Online schools in different districts may choose to work together to test each other's students.

- In some circumstances, the online school may arrange to have resident districts test these students. Ultimately, the online school is responsible for testing the students, and it is up to the resident district to determine if they will accommodate these requests.

- In any situations where students are testing in a different district, the online school is responsible for the security of any test materials and ensuring that the tests are administered in accordance with all policies and procedures outlined in this *Procedures Manual* and related resources. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for procedures for administering tests across districts.

Open Enrollment/Parent Choice Program Students

Districts that enroll students through the open enrollment process should treat them as if they were district residents. These students must participate in applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. The accepting district becomes the *de facto* resident district for open-enrolled students, and the students test at their open-enrolled site.

Physical Limitations (Temporary)

Sometimes students encounter circumstances immediately before or during testing (e.g., a broken arm, concussion) that make it impossible to take a test as usually administered. If such a special circumstance requires the student to have a testing accommodation (e.g., a scribe is needed for a student who breaks their arm, paper test materials are required due to concussion restrictions), the student may use it (see *Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations* in Chapter 5 for additional information). Districts should document the instance on the TAR*.*

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Students

Full-time PSEO students are public school students who attend a postsecondary institution **full time** during testing. These students are identified as PSEO in MARSS. Districts are responsible for testing these students on the standards-based accountability assessments if they are present when testing is scheduled. If not present, the student's record will appear in PearsonAccess Next but the student will not test; no further action is needed.

Note: If the student was not full-time PSEO for the entire school year (e.g., enrolled in a course at the school in the fall) but is full-time PSEO in the spring during testing, a second enrollment record should be created at the time the student becomes full-time PSEO; this ensures that the student is still considered full-time PSEO for testing purposes, and therefore not required to test if not present.

In some special cases, districts pay the college directly, and PSEO is not indicated in MARSS. This creates a discrepancy in Posttest Editing if the student did not test, and the district will need to submit information to MDE during Posttest Editing to resolve the discrepancy. Detailed information is provided in the *Test WES Posttest Editing User Guide*. The close of Posttest Editing is the deadline for submitting information on these PSEO students.

Students who are part-time PSEO in MARSS must participate in the standards-based accountability assessments.

For either full-time or part-time PSEO students, if the student is designated as EL in MARSS, the student must participate in the English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Recently Arrived English Learner (RAEL)

A recently arrived English learner (RAEL) is defined as a student who is designated as EL in MARSS and who first enrolled in a school in one of the 50 states in the United States or the District of Columbia less than 12 months from the first day of the MCA/MTAS accountability window. Districts identify RAEL students in the Student Support Data Collection System. Note: a student is only eligible to be identified as RAEL one time.

Students identified as RAEL are required to participate in all subjects of the standards-based accountability assessments during their first year of enrollment, including reading. Their results are included in test results summary information.

Students identified as RAEL are also required to participate in the English language proficiency accountability assessments during their first year of enrollment.

Contact mde.el@state.mn.us for questions on RAEL identification, and contact mde.essa@state.mn.us for accountability questions for RAEL.

Refusal by Parent

Parents may refuse to allow their children to take the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

- A parent refusal must be submitted to the district in writing before testing. MDE requires that parent refusals are documented annually; this documentation must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. While a district may set a timeline within their district for parent/guardian refusals to be received, districts must make every attempt to honor the parent/guardian refusal if received before the student begins testing.

- In compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, MDE provides a form that includes information about statewide testing that parents and guardians may use as documentation if they refuse to have their student participate. The *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing Form* is available on the MDE website (MDE website > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

- Districts must post the current year's complete form on the district website and include it in the district's student handbook. Posting only a link to the student handbook is not sufficient; the full 3-page form must be posted separately on the district's website.

- Each district determines what specific documentation they require for parent refusals, and they may require additional/other documentation than the form provided by MDE. Though districts can choose to use other forms or documentation for refusals, all refusals must be documented annually and in writing.

  ⓘ If the district wants to modify the MDE form for their documentation (e.g., to request additional

information or add district-specific dates), the MDE logo must be removed and it must have the district's name on it, clearly identifying it as the district's form. However, the MDE version of the form must still be posted on the district website and included in the student handbook.

- In order for parents to make fully informed decisions regarding their child's participation in statewide assessments, districts must provide complete and transparent information when asked by parents if they can refuse testing; this information must be provided upon request in a timely manner to parents and guardians. However, districts are **not** required to send out specific communications related to the option to refuse testing. If a district does choose to communicate this information, they should consider including information on how the district uses information from statewide assessments and the value it provides.

- The school is required by state and federal law to ensure participation by all students in statewide accountability assessments. A student not participating in the statewide assessments will not be counted as proficient for the purposes of school and district accountability, which has implications for support and recognition opportunities.

- For students whose parents refused testing, the school is not required to provide alternative educational opportunities on demand while other students are testing.

If a student has started or completed the test at the time the parent refusal is received, the test will be scored as is. The district cannot invalidate the test because the portion the student completed is still valid; however, the district should indicate on the TAR that the parent's request for refusal could not be honored. The district will determine with the parent if the student report generated will be provided to the parent.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, districts indicate a parent refusal (DEC) in WIDA AMS during the testing window. For MCA and MTAS, the test code for parent refusals is REF-P, and districts can indicate parent refusals in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. Parent refusals may also be indicated in Test WES during Posttest Editing, with the exception of refusals for high school science; these must be entered in PearsonAccess Next.

Refusal by Student

Districts may require that students who are unwilling to test provide written refusal documentation for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. The district may also determine if a student's behavior prevents the student from testing. In the case of behavior, districts can attempt to administer on another day before documenting the refusal. Student refusals are not required to be documented on the TAR, but districts may choose to document the circumstances surrounding student refusals as needed to address questions from parents/guardians or staff during reporting.

If a student has started an assessment and then refuses to finish it, the test will be scored as is since the student did participate in part of the test. The district should indicate on the TAR that the student refused to finish the test in case there are questions.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, districts indicate a student refusal (DEC) in WIDA AMS during the testing window. For MCA and MTAS, the test code for student refusals is REF-S, and districts can indicate student refusals in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. Student refusals may also be indicated in Test WES

during Posttest Editing, with the exception of refusals for high school science; these must be entered in PearsonAccess Next.

The expectation is that students will test. The REF-S code exists for documentation purposes, like the collection of other test codes, and does not imply MDE condones the behavior. Districts are to address student refusals according to district policy.

Retained Students

Students who have been retained are required to participate in the applicable standards-based accountability and English language proficiency accountability assessments for the grade indicated in MARSS, even though they took the assessment the previous year. For example, if a student took the grade 7 Reading and Mathematics MCAs in 2019 and is retained in grade 7 for 2020, the student will take the grade 7 Reading and Mathematics MCAs again, regardless of proficiency the previous year.

Shared-Time Students (MARSS State Aid Categories = 16, 17, or 18)

Shared-time students are not public school students. These students are enrolled full-time in a nonpublic/private school or are home-schooled and attend public school for one or more classes during the school day. Regardless of the classes they are taking in the public school, they are not required to participate in the standards-based accountability assessments. If shared-time students will not participate in MCA or MTAS, no action is needed. No test record will be expected if the State Aid Category is correctly indicated in MARSS.

If shared-time students do want to test, they must be manually added using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES with the Home-Schooled Student enrollment code. The student's results are not included in test results summaries.

Shared-time students who receive eligible EL instruction through the public school and are EL-identified in MARSS must take an English language proficiency accountability assessment. These students must be indicated as shared-time in MARSS.

Special Education Sites, Combined Special Education/Vocational Education Programs

School Classifications 50 and 55 are sites that provide central placement options for students whose resident districts do not have the resources to serve them locally. Students at these sites are placed through an IEP process that has determined the site to be the least restrictive environment. Students at these sites typically come from multiple districts.

To meet legislative requirements, students at these sites must participate in the applicable standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments, with the IEP team determining the assessment for which each student is eligible.

Suspended Students

Suspended students who are enrolled in the district are required to participate in the applicable standards-based accountability and English language proficiency accountability assessments. If the student is unable to test, the district indicates the ABS (Absent) test code in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

Chapter 8 — Test Administration

Overview

This chapter contains information on the many policies and procedures related to planning and administering the Minnesota Assessments in a school district. The topics are organized in the sequence a District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) would likely encounter them.

- For detailed information on administering the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, refer to the manuals and guides on the WIDA website and in the WIDA Secure Portal.

- For detailed information on administering the MCA and MTAS, refer to the user guides on PearsonAccess Next and the applicable *Testing Directions*.

Important Dates

The *Important Dates* in the front of this manual has a chronological list of tasks, arranged by test, which DACs must be aware of and follow during the 2019–20 school year.

What Test Students Will Take

Before test administration, districts must determine which assessments and, if applicable, which general supports, accommodations, and/or linguistic supports each student will receive. Specific requirements must be followed when determining which students should be assessed with the Alternate ACCESS or MTAS; see Chapter 2 for details. Information about general supports is provided later in this chapter; available accommodations and linguistic supports are outlined in Chapters 5 and 6.

The decision regarding which assessment to administer must be made before a student takes any assessment for the year.

- If the incorrect test is administered as a result of a misadministration (e.g., the student was supposed to take MTAS but the Test Monitor administered the MCA), the student should be administered the correct test. If it is discovered after the testing window that the incorrect assessment was administered, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for next steps.

- If a student changes school districts, and the new district determines a different test is appropriate, the new district should administer that test.

Note: If multiple test records are received for a student, the most accommodated test becomes the test used for accountability purposes (e.g., MTAS is used instead of MCA).

Establishment of Testing Windows

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 charges MDE with establishing a uniform testing calendar each year; districts set their testing calendars within the state-designated testing windows. Several factors are evaluated

when establishing a testing window, including test security and the impact on scoring, reporting, and accountability calculation timelines. MDE continues to evaluate how to keep testing windows open as long as possible to allow the most scheduling flexibility for districts and to allow students to test as close to the end of the school year as possible, while balancing test security and the timelines for reporting data.

MDE determines the testing windows based on the following:

- To ensure districts have sufficient time to administer all statewide assessments, the testing window for the English language proficiency accountability assessments is scheduled before the testing windows for the standards-based accountability assessments. With this schedule, there are only a few weeks where the windows overlap, minimizing the impact on students, staff, and the capacity to administer online tests.

- For the standards-based accountability assessments, the testing windows vary by subject and test for the following reasons:

  - Science MCA goes one week longer than the Reading and Mathematics MCAs, as additional time is needed to prepare the reading and mathematics data for scoring and quality control procedures before Posttest Editing; because Science MCA is only three grades, less time is needed for those procedures once the testing window ends.

  - The testing window for all three subjects of MTAS ends at the same time because the test is administered to students individually, and the subjects are more likely to be administered together. In addition, the MTAS testing window must end at the same time as the Reading and Mathematics MCA testing window so that the data will be available for Posttest Editing.

- To ensure accurate information for final reports, MDE provides a Posttest Editing window for districts in late May–early June. This window allows districts the opportunity to verify that all students enrolled who are expected to test have the appropriate test record matched to their enrollment record. The standards-based accountability assessments testing windows need to end early enough in May for data to be available for Posttest Editing while district staff—especially staff contracted only during the school year—are available to make the edits.

- Final data are available to districts in the summer. This allows districts time to review their data for use in curricular and instructional decision-making for the following year. (The only exception to this is when standard setting must occur for standards-based accountability assessments. "Standard setting" is the process by which performance level expectations are set after the first operational administration of a new assessment; see *Building a Test* in Appendix B for additional information.)

Extension of Testing Windows

MDE expects districts to schedule test administrations early enough in the testing window to ensure students have the opportunity to complete testing. To ensure a smooth online testing experience, MDE expects districts to follow all recommended steps and procedures for online testing preparation at each of their sites prior to testing. If a school or district experiences technical difficulties at the local level, MDE does not grant an extension of the testing window. The same is true for weather conditions; the length of the online testing windows mitigates the need to extend online testing windows for inclement weather.

- Districts scheduled to test the last week of the testing window must have a contingency plan (such as an alternative site to test students) should they experience technical issues in a building.

- If the state experiences a systemic failure of a test due to widespread issues such as service provider delivery failure affecting the entire state, MDE may consider additional time for a testing window at its sole discretion.

Testing window extension announcements are made in as timely a manner as possible—once all factors have been considered and new timelines are established. Such rare extensions could affect the dates for other events that occur after the testing window, such as Posttest Editing or test results releases.

Accountability Windows

An accountability window is a timeframe during which enrolled students are considered for accountability calculations. There are separate accountability windows for English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments:

- Accountability window for English language proficiency accountability assessments:
  Feb. 3–14, 2020

- Accountability window for standards-based accountability assessments: April 6–17, 2020

Students who are reported as enrolled in your district at any point during the accountability window will be considered when determining accountability calculations. MDE uses the Status Begin and End Dates of a student's MARSS enrollment record to determine if a student was enrolled during the accountability window.

Districts should attempt to test all students who are enrolled at any time during the testing window, not only during the accountability window. See *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent Enrolled Students* and *Moving Into or Out of the District During Testing* in Chapter 7 for additional information.

District Testing Calendar

To increase transparency on assessments, both state legislation and ESSA include requirements for a comprehensive district testing calendar. This calendar must be posted before the first day of the school year. Districts must post the information that follows on the district website; this information may also be posted on school website(s), if the district chooses.

Districts choose how to provide the information (e.g., links, separate documents) and its format (e.g., in a chart, in calendar format). While links to the information may be provided rather than including all of the information in one place, districts need to make sure the information is publicly available and as accessible as possible. This is especially important for test administration dates. For example, the test administration dates for each school can be directly posted on the district's website with the other testing calendar information, or links to each school's website could be provided.

On the testing calendar, districts must:

- Provide information about all tests administered, which includes both statewide testing and any local assessments given. Schools and districts determine what constitutes a local districtwide assessment;

generally, if most students within a grade are being given the same assessment, it would be included on the testing calendar.

- Provide the subject matter for each assessment.

- Provide the purpose for which each assessment is used. The rationale for administering the assessment and the source of the requirement must also be included. Sample information for statewide assessments is provided in Table 14. Districts may develop their own language or adapt this language as needed.

Table 14. Purposes and Rationales of Statewide Assessments

Test	Purpose	Rationale	Source of the Requirement
MCA and MTAS	To measure achievement on the Minnesota Academic Standards	Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 and ESEA	Minnesota Statutes 120B.30 ESEA
ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	To annually assess English language proficiency of all English learners	ESEA	ESEA
College Entrance Exams (ACT and/or SAT)	To provide Minnesota students information related to career and college readiness	Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30	Minnesota Statutes 120B.30

- Include the amount of time students will spend taking the assessment. For statewide assessments, MDE recommends using the estimated test administration times provided in this chapter. Since the *Procedures Manual* is not posted before the beginning of the school year, districts should use information from the most recent version of the *Procedures Manual* and adjust as needed once the updated manual is posted.

  o While not a requirement, districts may consider including information about the amount of time spent in their district on test preparation and test administration, as well as how much overall instructional time is spent on testing. This information can help provide a frame of reference for parents and other stakeholders.

  o For local district/school assessments, information about the testing time limitations (see Chapter 2) may also be addressed.

- Post the specific dates when most students will be testing for each grade and subject at each school within the district; for grades 1–12 ACCESS, this includes specifying by domain. Note: the actual test administration dates must be posted, not just the dates of the state-designated testing window. Sample calendars showing test administration dates are provided in Appendix B.

- o ⓘSpecific dates must be indicated for grades 1–12 ACCESS, even if there is only one, or very few, English learners in the school.

- o For assessments that are individually administered (i.e., Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, MTAS), the range of dates each assessment will be administered may be indicated. ⓘThis guidance now includes Kindergarten ACCESS, in addition to Alternate ACCESS and MTAS.

- o At the beginning of the school year, districts should include the best estimates for test administration windows. Specific testing schedules by grade and subject should be updated as changes are identified, preferably no later than two months before the applicable testing window.

- Include the timeline and format for disseminating assessment results.

  - o Depending on the district's process for providing final assessment results, this could include a link to the Minnesota Report Card section of the MDE website for school and district results, or information on how results are provided through the district's parent portal.

  - o Information about the delivery and distribution of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) should be included.

  - o If the district provides preliminary results from a service provider's system, this process could be included as well.

  - o At the beginning of the school year, the general process for disseminating results may be included if reporting dates have not been provided by MDE; once provided by MDE, specific reporting dates can be added.

While not required, districts may consider providing hard copies of the testing calendar to parents along with other information about testing and/or translations of testing calendar information.

ⓘIf MDE discovers that a testing calendar is not available, they will follow up with the DAC. In addition, MDE verifies testing calendars as part of other processes throughout the school year (e.g., when district test security procedures are requested or when preparing for monitoring visits). MDE sends communication directly to DACs when testing calendars are incomplete or not available.

Scheduling Requirements and Estimated Test Administration Times

This section provides information for districts on scheduling test administration, including estimated test administration times. All tests must be administered within the testing window and follow any requirements outlined in this section. The testing windows for each assessment are located in the *Important Dates* at the front of this manual.

Districts set their own schedules for testing, and MDE asks that they prioritize the best interests of students when doing so. Administering the entire test on one day may work well for scheduling, but it could be demanding for some students. DACs can check with Test Monitors to find out what has worked well for scheduling in their district in the past. It is important to keep in mind different requirements for tests when scheduling. For example, the online MCA can be administered over multiple days, but an online grades 1–12

ACCESS domain must be completed in one sitting. The following sections include detailed information on the requirements that must be taken into account when scheduling.

Scheduling ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Administrations

Districts administer the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS during the state-designated testing window. The testing schedule can be set separately for each school, grade, and language domain—Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing—across the district as needed.

- For the grades 1–12 online ACCESS, the administration order is Listening, followed by Reading, with the Speaking and Writing tests following in either order. The student's tier placement for Speaking and Writing will be determined by their performance on Listening and Reading tests; therefore, the Listening and Reading tests must be administered first.

- For Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, WIDA recommends a sequence of Listening/Reading, followed by Writing, and then the Speaking test.

- Different domains should not be administered in the same testing room. For example, Listening should be administered in a different testing room than Reading, Writing, or Speaking tests. However, as long as students are taking the same domain, it is possible for students from different grade-level clusters and tiers to test in the same room. Note: the Speaking Tier Pre-A and grades 1–3 Writing are exceptions to this guideline.

- The tests are designed to take no more time than indicated below. However, Test Administrators may use their judgement to extend more time to a student who will productively use it. IEP and 504 plan teams may indicate that individual students need additional time on the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS as an accommodation.

- It is recommended that Kindergarten ACCESS be administered in one session. However, if needed, the test may be separated into two sessions with no more than two consecutive school days in between the sessions.

- For the grades 1–12 ACCESS, each domain is scheduled in a separate testing session. Each domain is to be given in one sitting and cannot be scheduled across multiple days or times during a single day. Do not start testing a domain if a student will not be able to finish it in that sitting (e.g., before a lunch break or the end of the day).

  o If the student is unable to finish the domain in the same sitting, the district must have plans in place for the student to finish it within the same day.

  o If a student does not finish the domain within the same day (except for cases of illness, emergency, or technology-related issues as described below), contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for additional guidance. District and School Assessment Coordinators are no longer required to automatically submit the incomplete domain if a student does not finish a domain within a day.

  o In cases of illness, emergency, or technology-related issues that cannot be resolved by the service provider, students may finish the domain another day. See *Breaks and Leaving During Testing* later in this chapter for additional information.

- Note: Students who have an IEP or 504 plan that specifies that the domain can be completed with extended time within a day or across multiple days may be scheduled over multiple sittings or days, as required for their accommodation. Note: An accommodation that extends testing across multiple days for an ACCESS grades 1–12 domain is rare and must be approved by MDE.

- It is recommended that the Alternate ACCESS be administered in four separate administration sessions, one for each language domain. Students are able to take a break after completion of any test item at the discretion of the Test Administrator, based on student's needs.

- Make-up test sessions can be scheduled any day after the initial administration days but must be completed before the end of the testing window.

Refer to the *District and School Test Coordinator Manual* and the *Test Administrator Manual* in the WIDA Secure Portal for further information on scheduling and test administration.

ACCESS Administrations

The Kindergarten ACCESS is an individually administered assessment designed to take an average of 45 minutes per student. This average time does not include breaks during the test administration session, which may be appropriate for Kindergarten students.

Table 15 lists the testing times for the grades 1–12 ACCESS. The testing times do not take into account the time needed for Test Administrators to answer student questions or for students to sign in to the test, go through the test directions, and practice items. The testing times have been updated for Writing Tier A to reflect the additional embedded field test prompt.

Table 15. Testing Times for Grades 1–12 ACCESS

Test	Minutes per Test (student work only)
Listening	Up to 40 Minutes
Reading	Up to 35 Minutes
Speaking	Up to 30 Minutes
Writing Tier A	45–60 Minutes
Writing Tier B/C	60–65 Minutes

Table 16 lists the approximate Alternate ACCESS test administration times for scheduling purposes only. Alternate ACCESS is not a timed test, and there may be variation in testing times based on a student's grade level, ability, and behavior. In addition, the test administration times do not include the time that may be needed to set up the testing space, prepare the students for test administration, and distribute test materials.

Table 16. Testing Times for Alternate ACCESS

Test	Tasks	Minutes per Test (student work only)
Listening	9	20 Minutes
Reading	9	20 Minutes
Speaking	8	20 Minutes
Writing	10	20 Minutes

Scheduling Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCA Administrations

Districts administer the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs during the state-designated testing windows. The testing schedule can be set separately for each school and grade across the district as needed.

- To maintain test security, it is best practice to schedule and administer one subject on the same days in a school for the majority of the students (in a given grade) before administering the next subject.

- For high school science, test administration can be scheduled based on coursework completion (i.e., high school students who completed their life science course in the fall can take the Science MCA at the beginning of the testing window, while students completing their life science course in the spring can test near the end of the window).

- Students who are absent or not enrolled on test administration day(s) can make up their test at any point within the testing window. However, the make-up test session should occur after the initial administration in the school, whenever possible, to maintain test security. There may be exceptions when a test needs to be administered early (e.g., a student is moving out of the district) but the majority of make-up sessions should be held after the initial administrations.

- Districts may decide to administer different grades and/or subjects in the same testing room, but Test Monitors should be aware of any differences in administration or directions (e.g., use of headphones, scripted instructions about calculators) that may need to be clarified for students. While more uncommon, districts may administer paper and online tests in the same room if they choose, but districts must consider what is in the best interest of students and any accommodations or supports specified in the IEP or 504 plan; if administered together, Test Monitors must understand that both versions of the *Testing Directions* need to be used, and they must be familiar with the differences in administration.

- The MCA and MTAS are not timed, so students should be allowed to continue working on a test as long as they are making progress. Districts must have a plan in place for students who need extra time, as well as for students who finish testing and cannot be in the testing room on subsequent days. Refer to *What Students May Do after They Complete a Test* later in this chapter for more information.

MCA Online Test Administrations

Districts have flexibility in how online MCA administrations are scheduled, as students are not required to exit in the same place as other students.

- Students must answer each item before they can go to the next item, but they can review their answers before exiting the test or before going to the next group of questions (Reading and Mathematics MCA) or section (Science MCA). Once students go on or exit the test for more than 20 minutes, they cannot go back to items completed previously. At the end of the test, students can only review items from the group of questions/section that they have taken during that test session (i.e., students cannot review all items in the test).

- Test Monitors should use scripted language in the *Testing Directions: Online* to alert students prior to the end of the day's testing session so that they have time to review their answers before exiting.

One option for scheduling for all subjects is to schedule test sessions based on time, using the estimated times that appear later in this section. Note: If scheduling by time for Reading and Science MCAs, students may exit at any time within a passage or scenario, as each item is shown with its associated passage or scenario. However, it is best practice for test administration and test security for students to finish all items associated with a passage or scenario before exiting so they do not need to read it again when they resume testing.

However, if the district wishes to schedule testing so that most students complete the test in the same number of days, there are some important differences to consider based on the design and construction of tests for each subject. Refer to the MCA information in Chapter 2 for more details about adaptive and fixed-form assessments and each subject's test design.

- For **Reading MCA**, if the goal is for most students to complete the test in the same number of days, then the number of items and the end of a group of questions (which corresponds to the end of a reading passage) should be used for scheduling. While students may exit in the middle of a passage (because each item is shown with its associated passage), it is best practice for students to finish all items associated with a passage. When selecting where students should end, keep in mind that the Reading MCA is adaptive, so the number and length of passages each student receives will vary. For this reason, the number of passages for Reading MCA has been removed from the table below because the number of passages is not a useful measure for scheduling testing (e.g., even if a student receives one passage, it may be longer or be more challenging than two shorter passages).

- For **Mathematics MCA**, the number of items should be used for scheduling if the goal is for most students to complete the test in the same number of days. A single number (e.g., item 25) or range of numbers (e.g., between items 25–30) may be used.

- For **Science MCA**, there are two sections in the test and these sections are roughly equal in length. If a district is testing over multiple days, two days should be scheduled and students should exit after completing the first section of the test. Scheduling by item number does not work for Science MCA because the item numbers start over in each section and vary by grade and form.

Districts may also consider both setting specific times and also setting a range of items to complete. For example, scheduling three 50-minute testing sessions for grade 3 math with a goal of completing 15–20 items per session.

Note: If scheduling by item number (reading and mathematics) or section (science), some students may not be able to complete the items planned for the session, so districts need to have a plan in place to address this situation (e.g., students finish the items in a different testing location, students resume where they left off in the next test session).

The estimated test administration time tables are separated by subject below. These tables have been updated based on data from the 2019 MCA administrations and include different information based on the scheduling considerations described above.

- The Typical Range provides the length of time the majority of students spent taking the test, with "majority" referring to approximately 70% of students.[20] The time includes student review of the directions in the test and student work time, but it does not include the time needed for students to sign in to the test or for Test Monitors to provide scripted directions from the *Testing Directions: Online* and answer student questions.

- Note: Any changes in estimated times are based on collected data that demonstrates how long actual students spent completing the test; they do not necessarily represent the length of time that MDE recommends. In addition, each district should consider its own information and experience related to testing time. If different lengths of time have worked well in the past (based on district testing time reports and/or feedback from staff), those times should not be replaced with this information.

- When considering the estimated times, keep in mind that the length of time to read passages and/or complete items (both multiple choice and technology-enhanced) will vary by student.

- The number of items represents the total number of items on the test, including operational items (which count towards the student's score), field test items, and off-grade items (for grades 3–8 Reading and Mathematics MCA only). The number of off-grade items has been reduced, and the total number of items reflects this reduction.

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[20] The Typical Range for grade 11 Mathematics MCA is an exception, with 54% of students finishing within this range. This MDE estimated range for scheduling should be adjusted as needed based on each district's experience.

Table 17. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Reading MCA

Grade and Test	End of Group 1	End of Group 2	End of Group 3	End of Group 4	End of Group 5	Total Number of Items	Typical Range
3 Reading MCA	Item 8	Item 24	Item 32	Item 48	Item 50	50 items	1–2.5 hours
4 Reading MCA	Item 8	Item 24	Item 32	Item 48	Item 50	50 items	1–2.5 hours
5 Reading MCA	Item 8	Item 24	Item 32	Item 48	Item 50	50 items	1–2.5 hours
6 Reading MCA	Item 15	Item 30	Item 38	Item 53	Item 55	55 items	1–2.5 hours
7 Reading MCA	Item 15	Item 30	Item 38	Item 53	Item 55	55 items	1–2.5 hours
8 Reading MCA	Item 15	Item 30	Item 38	Item 53	Item 55	55 items	1–2.5 hours
10 Reading MCA	Item 17	Item 34	Item 44	Item 61	NA	61 items	1–2.5 hours

Table 18. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Mathematics MCA

Grade and Test	Total Number of Items	Typical Range
3 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
4 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
5 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
6 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
7 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
8 Mathematics MCA	49	1–2.5 hours
11 Mathematics MCA	55	1–2 hours

Table 19. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Science MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Section 1	Number of Items in Section 2	Total Number of Items	Typical Range
5 Science MCA	26–27	27–28	54	0.5–1.5 hours
8 Science MCA	32–34	32–34	66	0.5–1.5 hours
High School Science MCA	40–42	41–43	83	0.5–1.5 hours

MCA Paper Test Administrations

NEW! For students using paper test materials, testing can be scheduled by segment or by time. If a student will not complete a segment during the testing session, scripted instructions for ending the test are included in the *Testing Directions: Paper*. Estimated test administration times, with the number of items per segment, are provided below to help with scheduling. The Total Test Administration time is meant to provide an estimate of the length of student work time, and it does not include the time needed for Test Monitors to provide scripted

directions from the *Testing Directions: Paper* and answer student questions. The tables have been updated based on the estimates for online administrations, but each district should consider its own information and experience related to estimated testing times for students.

When scheduling test sessions for paper test administrations, ensure there is sufficient time planned for a staff member to enter student responses online; all responses must be entered before the end of the testing window.

Table 20. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Reading MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Segment 1	Number of Items in Segment 2	Number of Items in Segment 3	Number of Items in Segment 4	Total Number of Items	Total Test Administration
3 Reading MCA	15	8	16	9	48	1–2.5 hours
4 Reading MCA	16	16	8	8	48	1–2.5 hours
5 Reading MCA	17	8	12	11	48	1–2.5 hours
6 Reading MCA	19	8	8	19	54	1–2.5 hours
7 Reading MCA	13	13	18	10	54	1–2.5 hours
8 Reading MCA	18	11	8	17	54	1–2.5 hours
10 Reading MCA	19	10	12	19	60	1–2.5 hours

Table 21. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Mathematics MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Segment 1	Number of Items in Segment 2	Number of Items in Segment 3	Number of Items in Segment 4	Total Number of Items	Total Test Administration
3 Mathematics MCA	10	16	12	12	50	1–2.5 hours
4 Mathematics MCA	12	11	14	13	50	1–2.5 hours
5 Mathematics MCA	12	12	14	12	50	1–2.5 hours
6 Mathematics MCA	11	14	13	12	50	1–2.5 hours
7 Mathematics MCA	9	15	14	12	50	1–2.5 hours
8 Mathematics MCA	12	15	15	8	50	1–2.5 hours
11 Mathematics MCA	13	15	14	14	56	1–2 hours

Table 22. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Science MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Items in Segment 1	Number of Items in Segment 2	Total Number of Items	Total Test Administration
5 Science MCA	22	19	41	0.5–1.5 hours
8 Science MCA	27	24	51	0.5–1.5 hours
High School Science MCA	37	31	68	0.5–1.5 hours

Scheduling Reading, Mathematics, and Science MTAS Administrations

The entire testing window may be used to administer the MTAS and enter student scores. Test administration times will vary for each student. The following estimated times are based on feedback from MTAS auditors.

Table 23. Estimated Test Administration Times for MTAS

Subject and Test	Estimated Time
Reading MTAS	45–90 minutes
Mathematics MTAS	30–60 minutes
Science MTAS	30–60 minutes

When scheduling MTAS test administrations, ensure there is sufficient time planned to enter Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data and student scores online. LCI data must be entered prior to entering MTAS scores, and all scores must be entered before the end of the testing window.

Technology Preparation

To ensure that districts are prepared to administer online assessments, District Technology Coordinators and DACs must collaborate to ensure they have taken the necessary steps to prepare school computers and supported devices for online testing.

For ACCESS, WIDA AMS is the website where district and school users sign in to monitor test sessions for online testing. Online tests are delivered to students using DRC INSIGHT, which is installed on each device. For ACCESS online testing and the WIDA screener, the Testing Site Manager (TSM) has been replaced with the Central Office Services-Service Device (COS-SD). A number of resources are available for Technology Coordinators to ensure readiness for online testing, including a *Technology Readiness Checklist*, *Technology User Guide*, supported system requirements, training webinars, and other user guides. These resources are available in WIDA AMS and in the WIDA Secure Portal.

For MCA, PearsonAccess Next is the website where district and school users sign in to create and manage test sessions for online testing. Online tests are delivered to students using TestNav, which is accessed through an installable application. The *Infrastructure Readiness Checklist*, which is updated annually, outlines all steps to prepare for online testing. Supported system requirements and other technology support are all available on Pearson's [Technology Page](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Technology). Training webinars are posted to the Training Management System (TMS).

MDE provides timely technology reminders, updates, and resources to District Technology Coordinators, technology staff, and DACs throughout the school year in the *Assessment Update*. It is expected that districts will use the available resources, including service provider technology support staff, to make certain their schools are ready for online testing.

Test Administration Information in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

In WIDA AMS, districts must complete the following information for each school beginning in late November through mid-December (see the *Important Dates*):

- Indicate the number of online testers for each grade band.

- Indicate the number of Kindergarten testers.

- Indicate quantities of large print, braille, or paper test booklets needed for eligible students.

- Indicate the quantities of Alternate ACCESS test booklets needed.

If this information is not completed, districts will not automatically receive test materials for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, ACCESS Writing (for grades 1–5), or any paper test booklets. In this case, an additional order would be need to be placed for the necessary test materials.

In December, MDE uploads the precode file to WIDA AMS. The precode file includes all students indicated as English learners in MARSS. It is used to load students into WIDA AMS for online testing and to create student labels for Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, ACCESS Writing (for grades 1–5), and paper test booklets.

Test Materials Quantities for English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

The Kindergarten ACCESS and the Alternate ACCESS are administered individually using paper test materials. Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS test materials are automatically sent based on the number of students the district has indicated for each test in WIDA AMS as noted in the previous section. Table 24 outlines the test materials available for Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

Table 24. Test Materials for Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Available from DRC

Test	Test Materials
Kindergarten ACCESS	Test Administrator's Script
	Student Storybook
	Activity Board
	Cards and Card Pouch
	Student Response Booklet
Alternate ACCESS	Test Administrator's Script
	Alternate Test Booklet
	Student Response Booklet

Table 25 outlines the test materials available for grades 1–12 ACCESS. The grades 1–12 ACCESS is administered online, and paper test materials can be ordered for students with an IEP or 504 plan that require them. There are some paper test materials automatically sent for the writing domain for grades 1–5 based on the information entered into WIDA AMS:

- For grades 1–3, DRC automatically sends Writing Test Booklets based on the number of online testers the district indicates in WIDA AMS. Students view the writing prompts and provide a hand-written response in the Writing Test Booklet.

- For grades 4–5, DRC automatically sends Writing Response Booklets based on the number of online testers the district indicates in WIDA AMS. Students view the writing prompt online and provide a hand-written response in the Writing Response Booklet.

- If the information is not entered in WIDA AMS as noted in the previous section, an additional order would be need to be placed for the necessary test materials.

Table 25. Test Materials for Grades 1–12 ACCESS Available from DRC

Test Administration Mode	Test Materials
Online Administration	Test Administrator's Script
	Grades 1–3 Writing Test Booklets
	Grades 4–5 Writing Response Booklets
Paper Administration	Test Administrator's Script
	Speaking Test Booklet
	Student Test Booklet
	Large Print Test Materials
	Braille Test Materials
	Human Reader Accommodation Script
	Listening and Speaking CD

All test materials will be shipped to the district. DACs can order extra materials during the additional orders window in WIDA AMS. These added materials can be used for new students who enroll in the district or when new or different accommodation or Alternate ACCESS decisions are made. WIDA requests that districts use both the district overage and school overage before requesting additional orders. Districts should combine all additional material needs from individual buildings as one district order, if possible. The *Important Dates* at the beginning of this manual include the additional orders window.

Pretest Editing for MCA and MTAS

Pretest Editing in Test WES is where districts complete important tasks for MCA and MTAS to ensure student information is sent in precode files for online testing and data entry, and that the appropriate MCA paper test materials and MTAS test materials are ordered. Districts also have the opportunity to select options for the

initial test materials shipment (e.g., delivery date, whether to receive MTAS test materials automatically) and confirm tasks completed at the district (e.g., certifying that staff have received training, verifying ISRs from the past year have been delivered). Pretest Editing is available in Test WES beginning in December and throughout the testing windows. See the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* for more detailed information (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Test WES).

Test Materials Quantities for MCA and MTAS

Initial Test Materials Shipment

While some accommodations and linguistic supports are built into the assessment (like accommodated text-to-speech) or are part of the administration (like a scribe), some require paper test materials. Test materials are shipped to the district or individual schools based on the option selected during Pretest Editing under District Options. When possible, Pearson will implement options to reduce waste and improve cost efficiency in the packaging process.

In order to receive MCA paper test materials in the initial test materials shipment, districts indicate the applicable code during Pretest Editing in Test WES. If the accommodation/linguistic support code is entered in Test WES by the deadline for the initial test materials shipment (for 2019–20, this date is Jan. 17; see the *Important Dates*), the appropriate test materials will automatically be sent. Refer to the tables of accommodations (Chapter 5) and linguistic supports (Chapter 6) for detailed information. Table 26 outlines the test materials available for MCA.

Table 26. MCA Test Materials Available from Pearson[21]

Test Materials	Reading MCA	Mathematics MCA	Science MCA
Regular print test books[22]	X	X	N/A
18-pt large print test book	X	X	X
24-pt large print test book	X	X	X
Braille test book (contracted, uncontracted)	X	X	X
Script[23]	N/A	X	X

For MTAS, student information is sent in precode to Pearson if the MTAS test assignment is indicated during Pretest Editing. If MTAS is indicated by the deadline for the initial test materials shipment (Jan. 17 for 2019–20), MTAS materials are automatically sent to districts. Since MTAS materials can be used for more than one student, districts may choose (under District Options in Test WES) to order MTAS materials in additional orders rather

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[21] All students using paper test books for MCA respond directly in their paper test books. District staff must enter their responses online; no answer documents are used, and Pearson does not scan or score any student responses.

[22] For the Reading and Mathematics MCA, a regular test book is available as an accommodation for students with an IEP or 504 plan. See Chapter 5 for more information.

[23] For the Mathematics MCA, the script must be used in conjunction with a paper test book. For the Science MCA, the script can be used in conjunction with the online test or with large print or braille test books.

than receiving them automatically. This may be helpful if the district has historically received more materials than needed.

If the student uses symbolated materials during instruction, the symbol format of Reading MTAS Presentation Pages and Response Option Cards can be requested, but only as an additional order.

Table 27: MTAS Test Materials Available from Pearson

Test Materials	Grade(s) and Subjects
Task Administration Manual, Presentation Pages, Response Option Cards	3, 4, 6, 7: Reading and Mathematics
	5, 8: Reading, Mathematics, and Science
	10: Reading
	11: Mathematics
	High School: Science
Symbol ONLY - Presentation Pages and Response Option Cards[24]	3–8, 10: Reading

Additional Orders

After Jan. 17 (the deadline for the initial test materials shipment), the DAC must order any MCA and MTAS test materials during the additional orders windows in PearsonAccess Next. These testing materials would be for new students who enroll in the district or for students who did not have an accommodation/linguistic support or MTAS test assignments indicated by Jan. 17. After Jan. 17, test materials are no longer automatically sent based on indications in Pretest Editing.

Additional orders can be made until noon on the Wednesday of the last week of the testing windows so that any test materials arrive in time for test administration. The *Important Dates* at the beginning of this manual include the additional orders windows for each assessment.

Preparing for Test Administration

Testing Rooms

- Rooms should have adequate lighting, a comfortable temperature, and a quiet atmosphere.

- The location must be a closed room that is being used only for testing, not a public venue.

- If testing in a large room, ensure the room can be set up to maintain test security; see *Seating Arrangements* below.

- For online administrations:

  o Tests may be administered in a computer lab or a regular classroom.

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[24] Available only as an additional order in PearsonAccess Next.

- Only district-owned computers or devices can be used for online tests; student-owned computers or devices are not permitted. Devices issued to students by the school can be used for testing; these devices can be used for activities other than testing or taken home, as permitted by the district.

- Ensure students have enough space for their testing device and any related materials (e.g., scratch paper). For the grades 4–5 ACCESS Writing domain, students must have room for their test booklet.

- For paper administrations:

  - The ideal testing room is a typical classroom.

  - Each student should have a writing surface that accommodates the test book and any allowable materials (e.g., calculator).

- Testing in a room that has an active security camera is allowed, including recording the video feed; however, test security should be considered and the following steps are considered best practices:

  - The ability to control remotely (and therefore zoom in or focus on test content) should be turned off or disabled.

  - Prior to testing, take steps to ensure that no content from any screen is visible on the video.

  - If these steps cannot be taken due to the functionality of existing cameras, discuss options for reducing the risk of a security violation (e.g., limit staff who have access to the video feed, delete the video feed at the end of the day, situate computer screens so content is not visible to the camera).

Freedom from Distractions

- Only people involved in taking or administering the test are allowed to be in the room; other students, staff, or visitors are not permitted to enter the room while testing is in progress. While students who finish testing in the current testing session may remain in the room, other students who have completed testing previously may not; see *What Students May Do after They Complete a Test* later in this chapter.

- Take appropriate actions to reduce noise such as limiting the use of alarms (except emergency alarms), bells, and announcements.

- The doors of each testing room are to be closed during test administration. Post signs on the doors which state "Testing—Do Not Disturb."

Seating Arrangements

- There should be at least one Test Administrator/Test Monitor for every 30 students. If there are more than 30 students in a given testing session, keep as close to this ratio as possible. If additional Test Administrators/Test Monitors are not available, consider added precautions like privacy screens or extra spacing.

- Enough space should be allowed between students to ensure that students work independently. The chances for student cheating can be minimized by arranging seating so students cannot easily see other student tests.

  - Separate computer monitors as much as possible, and stagger where students sit to further limit what students can see on other monitors.

- o   Spread students around the computer lab or classroom to the extent possible.

- o   If students are testing at tables and not individual desks, ensure that there is enough space between students.

- If space is limited and students can potentially see other screens or test materials, consider any of the following in addition to actively monitoring to ensure students are working independently:

- o   Using commercial privacy screens or something similar (e.g., taping cardboard to the sides of monitors so that it extends out from the front of the screen).

- o   Creating a barrier with the desktop computer towers.

- o   Assigning additional Test Administrators/Test Monitors.

- For the ACCESS Speaking domain, ensure there is enough space between students so that each student's headset is recording their speech alone.

Materials Allowed during Testing

Refer to the applicable *Testing Directions* for specific lists of materials allowed during MCA test administrations. Detailed information for ACCESS is included below as applicable. Materials may be provided by the school or student, unless otherwise specified.

- **Pencils or Pens**—what is allowed varies by test and/or administration mode:

- o   For ACCESS test booklets (i.e., paper accommodations and writing responses), students must use **only** a Number 2 pencil in order for the test to be scanned and scored. Similarly, Test Administrators must use **only** a Number 2 pencil in order for the Kindergarten ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS to be scanned and scored.

- o   For ACCESS and MCA online testing, students may use pencils or pens with scratch paper.

- o   For MCA paper test materials, students may use pencils or pens to mark answers in the paper test book because district staff enter the responses online.

- **Calculators**—Handheld calculators, when allowed, may be supplied by the school, or students may use their own. Handheld calculators are not allowed on the online grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA or the Science MCA. See *Calculator Use* section later in this chapter for more details on calculators.

- **Headphones**—Headphones may be supplied by the school, or students may use their own.

- o   Headphones must be provided for the online reading, listening, and writing domains of ACCESS.

- o   Headsets with microphones are required for the speaking domain of grades 1–12 ACCESS. For more information on headsets for ACCESS, refer to the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Headset Specifications* in the WIDA Secure Portal. Sufficient headsets with microphones are needed to administer to recommended group sizes of 3 to 5 students.

- o   Because text-to-speech is available as a general support for all students, headphones must be provided for the online Mathematics and Science MCA. The student directions in the Reading MCA have text-to-speech available, so headphones are also recommended. Although headphones must be provided to all students for the MCA, students are not required to use them.
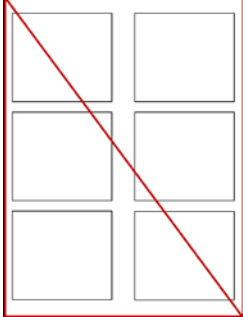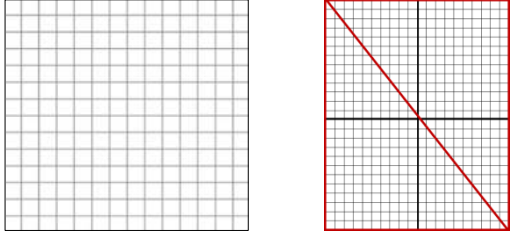
- o **NEW!** Bluetooth headphones are not allowed as they have the ability to connect to and receive information from a device other than the testing device, which cannot be verified by the Test Administrator or Test Monitor during testing.

- **Mouse and keyboard**—A mouse and keyboard are recommended. Refer to requirements on the applicable service provider websites for detailed information.

- **Hard-copy mathematics formula sheets**—Schools may provide students hard-copy versions of the current year's formula sheets posted on PearsonAccess Next for the grades 5–8 and 11 Mathematics MCA.

- **Hard-copy translated word lists**—Schools may provide eligible students hard-copy versions of the current year's translated word lists posted on PearsonAccess Next for Mathematics and Science MCA.

- **Seals**—Seals are included in initial and additional order test materials shipments for MCA paper test materials and are used by students to secure the test book segments after completion. If a district runs out of seals, tape can be used instead. District staff must break the seals in order to enter student responses online after testing. Segments do not need to be re-sealed after data entry.

- **Scratch paper**—Schools may provide or allow scratch paper for all ACCESS and MCA domains/subjects and modes (online or paper). Table 28 provides guidelines for allowable scratch paper.

  - o Students may draws lattices, diagrams (e.g., number lines), or charts (e.g., multiplication table or hundreds chart) on scratch paper if they choose, but examples cannot be displayed in the classroom or handed out during testing. Students may use scratch paper at their discretion, but any direction or strategy for using scratch paper to answer questions must be handled prior to testing; the Test Administrator or Test Monitor cannot prompt students to use it in any specific manner once testing has begun.

  - o Students must write their name on the scratch paper, and Test Administrators and Test Monitors must treat scratch paper as secure test materials. It must be collected at the end of each testing session and securely disposed of following testing (no more than 48 hours after the close of the testing window).

  - o For grades 1–12 ACCESS, use of scratch paper is discouraged during the Speaking test as students writing a draft of their spoken responses may compromise the validity of that domain.

  - o For paper test books for MCA, students can also use blank spaces in the test book or use the grid paper and formula sheets provided in the mathematics test books to work items and make notes. If students remove the grid paper or formula sheets from the test book, they must write their names on the sheets. All materials must be collected after each testing session and securely disposed of following testing (no more than 48 hours after the close of the testing window).

Table 28. Scratch Paper Guidelines

Allowable Scratch Paper	Guidelines	Examples
Blank paper	Notebook paper is acceptable but the paper must be blank. No boxes or numbers may be added to guide students to show their work, ⓘ and paper may not be pre-folded in to sections.	Not allowed:
Individual whiteboards	Must be blank before and after administration.	N/A
Commercially-produced graph paper	Even commercially produced graph paper may **not** contain numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes.	Allowed: Not Allowed:
Hard-copy mathematics formula sheets	May be used if provided to students from PearsonAccess Next.	N/A
Student testing tickets	May be used.	N/A

Materials Not Allowed during Testing

It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of what is not allowed during testing. Below are some common items that are not allowed. Refer to the applicable *Testing Directions* for a list of materials that are allowed for MCA test administrations. Unless explicitly allowed, students should remove or put away all other materials before test administration. MDE has the authority to invalidate student tests if the requirements outlined in this section are not followed.

- Dictionaries, thesauruses, and other reference materials, including text books, are not permitted (see word-to-word dual-language dictionary in Chapter 6 for the exception for English learners). Calculator manuals are not permitted.

- Students may not use or access cell phones or any other devices, including wearable technology, at any time during testing, including during breaks or when testing is completed (if students remain in the testing room). Follow district policies for ensuring students do not use cell phones or other devices. See *Cell Phone and Device Policy* later in this chapter for more information.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, any materials used for a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) should be covered or removed during administration. If testing is taking place in the EL classroom, all materials on walls or student desks that pertain to language instruction should be covered or removed. Although content is referenced in the test items, a student's content knowledge is not part of the language proficiency scoring. Because of this, standards-based materials on the walls or on a student's desk can stay as determined by the district.

- For MCA and MTAS, all academic or instructional posters and graphics, including strategy techniques or methods, in the testing room or on a student's desk must be covered or removed during test administration. Any academic or instructional information or strategies must be covered, even if it is not related to the subject being tested (e.g., science information must be covered even if reading is being tested).

  o MDE does not have a list of materials that can remain visible to students during testing.

  o This policy is required to ensure that students are answering items independently, without extra support or guidance that could be present in academic or instructional materials. For example, information in a historical poster about a scientist may provide an advantage for a reading passage or science scene; likewise, information on a mathematics concept may provide information that could be used to answer a science item.

Selecting Test Administrators and Test Monitors

All students must be assigned to a Test Administrator or Test Monitor who will administer the test, monitor the students, and maintain test security throughout test administration (see Chapter 4 for Test Administrator/Test Monitor roles and responsibilities). Test Administrators and Test Monitors must complete all trainings required for their role, as specified in Chapter 3. It is considered a security violation if untrained staff are monitoring statewide assessments.

Only staff involved in testing are allowed in the room during testing.

- In addition to Test Administrators and Test Monitors, any individuals in the room during test administration, like paraprofessionals, must complete required trainings, including the *Test Security Training*, annually (see Chapter 3 for detailed information).

- If there are any non-school personnel involved with testing (e.g., volunteers assisting as hall monitors), there must be school personnel directly responsible for supervising them, and they must complete the *Test Security Training*. Note: Non-school personnel cannot be Test Administrators or Test Monitors.

- Since student teachers are involved in daily instruction of students, they are allowed to be in the testing room during test administration. However, student teachers cannot be the sole Test Administrator or Test Monitor and must complete required trainings for their role as outlined in Chapter 3.

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

Test Administrators for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators should be selected using the criteria indicated below.

ⓘ Note: even when a licensed teacher is required, the Test Administrator does not have to have EL licensure or be the EL teacher unless otherwise specified (i.e., for Kindergarten ACCESS, grades 1–12 ACCESS Speaking on paper, and all Alternate ACCESS). Refer to the *Guidance on English Learner Instruction during ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Testing* for further information (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > English Learner Education).

- For the Kindergarten ACCESS, Test Administrators must be licensed teachers. It is strongly recommended that raters of the Speaking domain are trained in second language acquisition.
- For grades 1–12 of the ACCESS:
  - For the online administration of the grades 1–12 ACCESS, the Test Administrator may be selected using the ranked criteria provided below for MCA.
  - For the paper-based administrations:
    - Speaking domain: The Test Administrator must be a licensed teacher. It is strongly recommended that raters of the Speaking domain are trained in second language acquisition.
    - All other domains: The Test Administrator may be selected using the ranked criteria provided below for MCA.
- ⓘ For the Alternate ACCESS, MDE strongly recommends that the Test Administrator is someone who is familiar with the student's response mode, who works with the student during instruction, and with whom the student feels comfortable. When selecting Test Administrators for Alternate ACCESS, priority should be to select licensed teachers, and for the Speaking domain, staff who are trained in second language acquisition if possible.

Test Monitors for MCA

Test Monitors should be selected from the highest possible ranking from this list. If a school has exhausted the availability of persons in category "1," it should select staff in category "2," and so on.

1. Licensed teachers or administrators who work in the school
2. Licensed teachers or administrators who work in the district
3. Paraprofessionals who work in the school
4. School district personnel employed by the school district
5. Licensed substitute teachers

Test Administrators for MTAS

For the MTAS, MDE strongly recommends that the Test Administrator is someone who is familiar with the student's response mode, who works with the student during instruction, and with whom the student feels comfortable. If this is not possible, Test Administrators may be any district employee who has completed the applicable *MTAS Test Administrators* training in that year.

Student Resources for Testing

MDE requires that districts ensure that all students are familiar with the test that they will take, but MDE does not specify which resources must be used. Each district determines which resources, if any, will be used and how they will be used. This decision may vary by school, grade, or student; based on students' familiarity and experience with testing, the district may determine that no student resources are required.

Several resources are available on the WIDA website to help students prepare for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS test administration, including QuickStart guides to prepare students for ACCESS (WIDA website > Assess > Preparing Students for ACCESS for ELLs) and to prepare to administer the Alternate ACCESS (WIDA website > Assess > Preparing to Administer Alternate ACCESS). WIDA has provided the following recommendations for using the available student resources:

- For students who are new to taking the ACCESS, the test demo and practice test are recommended.

  o The **test demo** is available for each grade-level cluster to show students how to navigate different features of the test. WIDA recommends that students watch the test demo before taking the practice test.

  o The **practice test** can be used to familiarize students with the ACCESS test format. These items are very easy, but will help students become familiar with the test environment.

- For students who have experience taking the ACCESS, the **sample items** are recommended. These items can be used to familiarize students with the content and grade-level appropriate language development expectations, and they are representative of the item difficulty a student will experience on the actual test. WIDA also advises using the previous year's ACCESS score report to focus on domains where students may need additional support.

- For Alternate ACCESS, review sample items with the student.

For MCA and MTAS, student resources are available on PearsonAccess Next under Preparing for Testing. The *Purpose of Student Resources* document provides additional information about the student tutorial and the item samplers, including frequently asked questions (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Student Resources). Districts may use this document as a resource to share with administrators and educators.

- The **student tutorial** is available for the online MCA. The tutorial is used to familiarize students and educators with the general functionality of the online test, and includes three components: navigation, tools, and item types. Detailed information for educators is provided in accompanying Teacher Guides.

- **Item samplers** are provided to help students and educators become familiar with how the content is presented in the test. Corresponding Teacher Guides are available for all grades and subjects of the MCA, which provide item images that show correct answers and rationales for answer options.

    o Online item samplers for all grades and subjects of the MCA are available. In addition, accommodated text-to-speech item samplers and pop-up translations item samplers are available for mathematics and science.

    o Paper item samplers for all grades and subjects of the MCA are available, including 12-point regular print item samplers, 18- and 24-point large print item samplers, and mathematics and science scripts. Braille item samplers can be ordered from Pearson.

    o For MTAS, item sampler Task Administration Manuals, Presentation Pages, and Response Option Cards are available.

- **Stand-alone online calculators** and **formula sheets** for MCA are available to allow students to practice using them outside of the item samplers.

Tracking Secure Test Materials Provided to Students

Each district determines its procedures for keeping test materials secure for all assessments (ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS and MCA/MTAS), and documents the necessary steps in the district's test security procedure (see Chapter 3 for additional information).

Secure test materials for online tests include student testing tickets (because they provide access to tests and contain private student data), and, after testing has begun, student scratch paper (because students may have written test items on it). Similarly for MCA, all hard-copy mathematics formula sheets or translated word lists provided to students must be treated as secure materials because students could have used them as scratch paper. Any materials used as scratch paper must also contain the student's name. Student testing tickets and any materials used as scratch paper must be collected at the end of each testing session before students leave the testing room. MCA may be scheduled over multiple days, and these materials must be kept secure between testing sessions following the district's policies (e.g., Test Monitors secure materials, Test Monitors return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator between testing sessions).

Districts must keep paper test materials secure at all times and track them from receipt until they are returned. The security checklists, which are included in the test materials shipments, are used for this purpose. Each district determines how it will use the security checklists to track secure test materials. Assessment Coordinators and Test Administrators/Test Monitors can use the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* (available in Appendix A) to assign materials to students. For MCA and MTAS, districts also have access to similar versions of their security checklists in PearsonAccess Next once test materials have shipped.

Districts should have all applicable test materials (e.g., student testing tickets, paper test books, scratch paper) organized by Test Administrator or Test Monitor for each student at least one day before test administration. Be sure to maintain security by following all test security procedures throughout administration.

Calculator Use

All MCA and MTAS mathematics test items can be solved in a variety of ways; therefore, calculators are not required. However, they may be used to answer items when a calculator is allowed. Calculator use general guidelines and the handheld calculator memory clearing policy have been moved to Appendix B to make it easier to provide the necessary information to staff.

Calculator Use with Online Tests

This section addresses the use of calculators on the Mathematics MCA and Science MCA. These tests have an online calculator tool available; see Table 29 for information on the type of online calculator available. The graphing calculator in the online test has been updated to the CE (color edition) version of the TI-84 Plus. While the appearance is slightly different, the calculator functions the same.

- For the online grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA, calculator and non-calculator items are divided into different groups, and the online calculator tool is available in groups of items where a calculator can be used. Students **may only use the online calculator** on the grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA. Use of a handheld calculator by a student on the online grades 3–8 Mathematics MCA invalidates the assessment. If a student's IEP or 504 plan states that a handheld calculator must be used, the student must take the test using a regular print paper test book (see Chapter 5 for further information).

- For the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, the online calculator will be available throughout the entire test. In addition, handheld calculators may be used on the entire grade 11 Mathematics MCA since there are no non-calculator items; see Appendix B for requirements related to the use of handheld calculators, specifically the policy for clearing calculator memory.

- For Science MCA, the online calculator is available when an item requires any simple mathematical computations. Handheld calculators are not allowed for the Science MCA.

Table 29. Calculator Use for Online Assessments

Test	Type of Online Calculator	Can Handheld be Used?	Notes
Grade 3–8 Mathematics MCA	• Grades 3–5: Basic (TI-108™) • Grade 6–7: Scientific (TI-30XS™) • Grade 8: Graphing (TI-84 Plus CE™)	No	The online calculator is available when calculator use is allowed. If an IEP or 504 plan states that a handheld calculator must be used, a paper test book must be used.
Grade 11 Mathematics MCA	Graphing (TI-84 Plus CE™)	Yes	The online calculator is available throughout the entire test.
Science MCA	Basic (TI-108™)	No	The online calculator is available for items that require simple mathematical computations.

Calculator Use with Paper Test Materials and MTAS

This section addresses using a calculator with paper test materials, including paper test materials for the online Mathematics and Science MCAs and Mathematics and Science MTAS.

For Mathematics MCA, handheld calculators are allowed on the paper test materials (regular print, large print, and braille test books), except for the non-calculator segment in grades 3–8 (Segment 1). Students in grade 11 are allowed a calculator in any segment of the paper test materials. A student who does not follow directions and uses a calculator for any items during the non-calculator segment will have his or her test invalidated because the assessment no longer measures what was intended.

For Science MCA, some items in the large print and braille tests may require simple mathematical calculations, and a calculator may be used for these items. Since these types of items are not included on the science test each year, the item in the large print or braille test book will indicate whether a calculator can be used.

For Mathematics and Science MTAS, calculators or anything that the student uses as a calculator (e.g., assistive technology devices) may be used on any tasks.

Verifying and Correcting Student Information for Testing

Student information loaded into the service provider's systems may include a student's name, grade, MARSS/SSID number, and birth date, as well as district and school information. This information appears in the service provider systems for online tests, and for ACCESS, is preprinted on student demographic labels for paper test booklets. **Never allow a student to take an online test assigned to another student; never provide a student with an ACCESS booklet that has another student's label on it.** This will result in test scores being attributed to the wrong student.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Administrations

DACs should verify that all English learners are loaded to WIDA AMS. MDE sends student information for English learners to DRC through a single precode file in December. After this initial precode file is sent, districts must add newly enrolled or newly identified students directly into WIDA AMS.

For Kindergarten ACCESS, Alternate ACCESS, ACCESS paper test materials, and the writing test materials for ACCESS, verify the student information on preprinted labels prior to applying them to the test booklet. If a preprinted label is incorrect, the label may still be used but the information should be corrected in WIDA AMS.

If a student needs to test but does not receive a preprinted label, a District/School label must be used and the demographic information for the student must be indicated on the test booklet. Both the front and back of the test booklet contain many student demographic information fields, but not all data fields are required. Only the following student information is required for Minnesota:

- Last Name
- First Name
- Middle Initial
- District Name
- School Name
- State Name Abbreviation

- Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
- Grade Level
- Gender
- State Student ID Number (MARSS number)
- District Student ID Number (MARSS local use number; if used in the district)

The Date of Testing field is optional; the date the test was completed for the student may be indicated in situations where the student has left the district and did not complete all four domains. ⓘNote: this is Minnesota-specific guidance that replaces the information provided by WIDA and DRC.

There is a table on the inside cover of the Alternate ACCESS test booklet about the student's disability and their participation in alternate assessments. This information is not necessary for Minnesota to match the student's assessment to their MARSS enrollment record; however, this information helps WIDA better understand the characteristics of students taking the Alternate ACCESS, and it is recommended that this table is completed.

MCA and MTAS Administrations

For online testing and data entry, DACs should verify that all students are loaded to PearsonAccess Next and eligible for the subject and test expected.

- MDE sends student information to Pearson through nightly precode files, and districts cannot manually add student information directly into PearsonAccess Next. The information sent in precode files is pulled from MARSS data submitted to MDE. Districts may also use Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES to manually add students who are not enrolled in MARSS or to make changes, as needed, before the next district MARSS submission (see Chapter 9 for more information).

- Student demographic information cannot be changed in PearsonAccess Next and must be updated in MARSS or Precode Student Eligibility. Student information submitted in MARSS will typically be reflected in PearsonAccess Next in two business days; students manually updated in Precode Student Eligibility will typically be visible in PearsonAccess Next the next business day.

- It is recommended that districts confirm all students who will test appear in the test session 1–2 days before testing.

If a new student enrolls in your district and the updated information is submitted in MARSS, but no test assignment is available in PearsonAccess Next, it could mean:

- The student started a test in another district. Contact Pearson to move the test so the student can finish in your district.

- The student already completed the test in another district. Contact Pearson to confirm since the on-demand report does not move with the student.

- A test code was entered for the student in another district. Contact Pearson to confirm since the on-demand report does not move with the student. If the test was invalidated, the student may not resume testing. If the student or parent refused testing, the new district may request Pearson to reset the test assignment if the student will now test.

Testing Directions

Use of the testing directions ensures that the administration of the tests is standardized across the state as much as possible. For this reason, it is imperative that Test Administrators and Test Monitors are familiar with and use the applicable directions throughout test administration, especially any scripted instructions that must be provided to students.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the scripted instructions for students and the specific directions for Test Administrators are provided in the *Test Administrator's Scripts*. The applicable *Test Administrator's Script* must be provided and used for every test administration.

For MCA, testing directions have two components: directions that students receive in their test and directions for Test Monitors. These components are described in more detail in the following sections. The MTAS does not have a separate directions component since all instructions for the Test Administrator and the student are part of the scripted instructions in the Task Administration Manual.

Testing Directions for MCA

There are two versions of the MCA *Testing Directions*, depending on the test format: *Testing Directions: Online* for online testing and *Testing Directions: Paper* for paper administrations. The names of these directions have been updated to more clearly define their purpose and use.

The *Testing Directions* are available on PearsonAccess Next, and contain the following sections:

- *Script to Read to Students*; there are separate sections for the first day of testing for a subject and subsequent days of testing.

- *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance*; information and guidance on what assistance may be provided by Test Monitors and how to address student questions during testing.

- *Test Monitor Checklist*; a checklist of test administrations tasks for Test Monitors to use for reference.

- *Detailed Information*; information for Test Monitors about policies and procedures for test administration.

- A transcript of the student directions (for online administrations) or information about entering student responses online (for paper administrations).

There are two sections of the *Testing Directions* that must be provided and used for every test administration: *Script to Read to Students* and *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance.* These sections

must be provided in their entirety and cannot be modified (e.g., portions of the script removed). However, districts may work with Test Monitors prior to testing to determine what will be said for the open portions that districts fill in (e.g., how testing is scheduled).

 Districts decide which other reference information they will provide (e.g., only portions of the checklist or detailed information) and how they will present it (e.g., detailed information in a district training on policies and procedures or as a physical checklist). Districts are not required to provide all sections.

ⓘDistricts may also determine if they will allow Test Monitors to access the directions electronically during test sessions, rather than using a printed copy. If accessed on an electronic device, Test Monitors must follow MDE and district polices regarding device use (e.g., not checking email or using the device for other work).

Student Directions

For the online MCAs, students review directions after they sign in and before they begin each test. Text-to-speech directions are available for all subjects, including reading. The *Testing Directions: Online* contain a transcript of the student directions; Test Monitors may use this transcript to repeat directions to students as needed, but they may not read directions from the student's screen.

For MCA paper administrations, student directions appear at the front of the test book and are included in the *Testing Directions: Paper*.

General Test Administration Considerations

General Supports Available to All Students

General supports include tools and accessibility features available in online assessments, as well as general test-taking practices that are available for any student who needs them, including students without disabilities. These supports are available for the English language proficiency accountability assessments (ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS) and the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS).

General supports are not documented with accommodation codes in Pretest Editing in Test WES. However, if a student has an IEP or 504 plan, supports are often documented to ensure they are provided during testing.

In Table 30, supports are organized by presentation (how an assessment is administered or accessed by the student), setting, timing/scheduling, and response (ways students solve items).

Table 30. Summary of General Supports Available for All Students

Support	Administration Guidelines
Presentation	
Amplification devices	Student uses an amplification device, including personal hearing aids, FM systems, or other amplification systems. Any amplification device that can be heard by others requires that the student using it test in an individual setting.
Classroom materials: • Color overlay • Highlighter • Low-vision aids • Magnifier • Pencil grips • Place marker • Stylus for devices • Templates to reduce the visual print field	Student uses provided materials while testing; these should be provided to students who have used them in instructional or other assessment settings. Examples of low-vision aids are magnifying glasses, electronic magnifiers, cardboard cut-outs, and colored overlays.
Different monitor screen size and resolution	Student uses larger monitor screen size and different resolution for online assessments.
Repeated directions or written version of directions	For ACCESS, the Test Administrator repeats scripted directions from the *Test Administrator's Scripts*. For MCA, the Test Monitor repeats or writes out scripted directions from the applicable *Testing Directions*. Additional prompts are not allowed.
Sensory tools (e.g., fidgets, weighted pads)	Student uses, or has access to, sensory tools during testing. These should only be provided to students who have used them in instructional or other assessment settings, and their use must not be a disruption to other students. No test content or writing may be present on the tools.

Support	Administration Guidelines
Tools in online assessments	Student uses tools or accessibility features available in the online test; availability may vary based on the grade and/or subject/domain of the test. • For ACCESS, available accessibility tools include a highlight tool, line guide, screen magnifier, sticky notes, color contrast, and color overlay. • For MCA, available online tools include answer eliminator, highlighter, notepad, calculator, ruler, and straightedge. The following accessibility features are also available for all students: standard text-to-speech, magnifier, zoom, color contrast, line reader mask, and answer masking.
Voice feedback devices/whisper phones or student reading the test out loud	Voice feedback devices and whisper phones allow students to vocalize as they read and work problems. • Students may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Administrator/Test Monitor and the Test Administrator/Test Monitor cannot provide verbal or nonverbal prompts. • This support must be provided in an individual setting.
Setting	
Individual or small-group settings	Student is tested individually or in a small-group setting.
Music or noise buffers	Music and noise buffers provided by the district may be used, but only by students who have used them in instructional or other assessment settings. Noise buffers (white noise) reduce noise distractions for the student taking the test. Noise buffers may include individual study carrels, headsets, earplugs, and individual portable buffers set on the student's desk, or an audio player that generates white noise or instrumental music. • Noise buffers or instrumental music are provided at an individual level, not to an entire group on the assumption that all will benefit. The noise buffer or instrumental music can be accessed through headphones or in an individual setting. • Individuals must be able to control on/off and volume. • Audio players must be school owned, and the audio must be provided by the school.
Special settings	The assessment is administered in a special setting (e.g., certain lights, acoustics, seating arrangements).

Support	Administration Guidelines
Timing/Scheduling	
Different time of day	The time of day an assessment is given is changed.
Extended testing time	Testing time is extended for MCA. Consideration for students requiring extended testing time should be taken when scheduling testing sessions and planning for testing sessions (e.g., planning locations for students to continue testing if they need more time, planning fewer items or more testing sessions for some students). ⓘ For grades 1–12 ACCESS, extended testing time (both within the testing day and over multiple days) is considered an accommodation for English learners with an IEP or 504 plan; see Chapter 5 for additional information. For Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, however, extended testing time is part of the administrative procedures and is not indicated as an accommodation.
Response	
Calculator use	See *Calculator Use* in this chapter for information about when a calculator may be used.
Lattices, diagrams, or charts	Student draws lattices, diagrams (like number lines), or charts (like multiplication or hundreds chart) on scratch paper. Students must create their own drawings; these cannot be displayed in the classroom or handed out during testing.
Mathematics manipulatives and an abacus for grade 11 Mathematics MCA	Since a calculator is allowed on all items in the grade 11 Mathematics MCA, the use of an abacus or mathematics manipulatives is considered a general support and not documented as an accommodation. An abacus or manipulatives must be used in an individual setting with the online test or paper test materials. MDE does not produce a comprehensive list of allowable manipulatives; email mde.testing@state.mn.us for specific questions about providing manipulatives for statewide testing. Note: Mathematics manipulatives and an abacus are accommodations for grades 3–8 (see Chapter 5 for additional information).
Scratch paper	Students may use scratch paper for online and paper administrations. See *Materials Allowed during Testing* earlier in this chapter for information about materials that may be used and maintaining security of scratch paper.

General Test Administration Procedures

Districts must have a process for tracking which students tested with which Test Monitors or Test Administrators, as well as any other adult(s) who are present in the testing room (e.g., staff providing assistance, paraprofessionals). This applies to each test session (initial administration and any make-up test sessions) for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Districts must keep this documentation on file at the district for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. It must be available upon request for MDE audits, monitoring, or test security investigations.

ⓘ Note: The process also must include any monitors present in the testing room (i.e., the DAC conducting observations in the district, an MDE monitor during a site visit).

A student must be known to the Test Administrator or Test Monitor in order to test. When students are unfamiliar to the Test Administrator or Test Monitor (e.g., Test Monitors for online schools), the Test Administrator or Test Monitor should ask for a picture ID to verify each student's identity.

Districts must decide the process for signing students in to the online MCA or ACCESS. Some districts may have students sign themselves in, while others may sign students in before their arrival at the computer lab or testing room. Decisions will likely be based on the age of the students and their experience with the computers or devices they are using. Once signed in, students should verify that their name appears and must start or resume the test themselves so that test content is not exposed on their screen.

Test Administration Considerations for ACCESS

For online testing of the grades 1–12 ACCESS, student information sent in the MDE precode file automatically places students into test sessions in WIDA AMS based on grade cluster and domain. Districts do not need to edit the test sessions unless a student needs to be changed to a different one. Rosters of students in test sessions may be printed and provided to Test Administrators. Student tickets are provided by domain and contain student login information for testing. The student tickets must be printed and provided to students; since these printed tickets contain private student information and provide access to the online tests, they must be kept secure.

While the ACCESS for grades 1–12 is administered primarily online, there are provisions for the writing domain as follows:

- The grades 1–3 writing test is entirely a paper administration. This means students will read prompts and write their responses in a paper test booklet.

- The grades 4–5 writing prompts are presented to students online and students respond in a writing response booklet. If students in grades 4–5 are competent at keyboarding and wish to respond online, districts can move these students into a keyboarding test session.

- The grades 6–12 writing test is entirely online. Writing prompts are presented online and students will keyboard their responses.

  o Students in grades 6–12 who are inexperienced, unfamiliar, or uncomfortable with keyboarding may hand-write their responses in a writing response booklet. This decision must be made on an individual student basis and in conjunction with the student.

o   Students who need to hand-write their responses must be moved to a handwriting test session.

Paper administrations of the entire ACCESS test are considered accommodations for English learners with an IEP or 504 plan (see Chapter 5) or who have been enrolled in Minnesota schools for less than a year **and** have an English proficiency level of 2.9 or below based on the WIDA screener. English learners must be first enrolled within 12 months of the first day of the ACCESS testing window to be eligible for paper administrations. Before ordering a paper test for a student who meets these two criteria, please consider the following:

- Other than the provisions for the writing test noted above, it is not possible to combine administration modes. Students cannot take some domains on paper and some online.

- Students should be included in the decision-making process before selecting a paper administration.

Translated directions in a student's first language are allowed on the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS as a general support for any English learner if needed. Only the scripted directions in the *Test Administrator's Script* may be translated; no translations of test content are allowed. This support may be provided in a small group, if appropriate for all the students.

For the ACCESS Listening test, the test allows students to pause and replay a listening prompt for rare instances (e.g., a disruption in the room prevented the student from hearing a prompt); however, students should NOT use this functionality as a test-taking strategy. The Listening test must be invalidated if students intentionally pause and replay listening prompts. Students may only listen to the prompt one time per item, unless they have the repeat audio accommodation that allows them to repeat the listening prompt.

For all domains of the ACCESS, use of augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) devices is allowed and is considered the student's voice. It is considered a general support for students who use these devices during instruction.

Test Administration Considerations for MCA

For online testing, test sessions are created and managed in PearsonAccess Next by District and School Assessment Coordinators, or other staff as assigned. *The MCA Online Testing User Guide* is updated annually and provided on PearsonAccess Next. Only student responses that are entered online are scored.

For MCA test security purposes, access to student tests through TestNav is limited to the hours of 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. For data entry tests, staff access through TestNav is limited to the hours of 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing windows. If the district needs to test students or enter data outside of these hours, the DAC must contact mde.testing@state.mn.us at least two business days in advance and provide the rationale, along with the dates and times of the planned test administrations. MDE will review the rationale and determine if an exception is allowed.

Students using paper test materials for an accommodation or linguistic support enter their responses directly in the paper test book (unless they require the scribe accommodation). After testing is complete, student responses in the paper test book must be entered online by district staff during the testing window in order to be scored and reported. See *Data Entry for MCA and MTAS* later in this chapter for more information.

Cell Phone and Device Policy

Policy for Students

Students may NOT use or access cell phones, wearable technology, or any other devices at any time during testing, including during breaks or when testing is completed. District and School Assessment Coordinators must develop and train staff on school-specific policies and procedures (i.e., how they will implement the policy) prior to test administration. As technology continues to change, districts will need to discuss the types of technology students have and the plans for ensuring students do not access them during testing.

- If a student has a cell phone or device out at any point during a test session, the student's test has been compromised and needs to be invalidated, even if the student did not use the cell phone or device.

- Students also may not wear or access "wearable" technology (e.g., smartwatches, fitness trackers) during testing if the device can electronically send, receive, or capture information. If one of these devices is worn during testing, the student's test must be invalidated because the device is accessible, regardless of whether it was used or not. Ensure Test Administrators and Test Monitors are aware of the types of wearable technology that students may have. As technology continues to change, it may not be readily apparent that something a student is wearing has these capabilities, and Test Administrators and Test Monitors must ensure that they are not worn or accessible during testing.

- 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, and requiring students to store phones and other devices so they are inaccessible during test administration.

- Districts must determine what action will be taken to minimize disruptions during testing if the district cell phone and device procedure is not followed. For example, if a student receives a notification (e.g., ringtone, vibration) on a device kept in a backpack or pocket, the district procedure may be that the student will hand it directly to the Test Monitor and/or silence it without looking at it. In these cases, MDE does not require the district to invalidate the test if the student simply hands over the phone or device or silences it without looking at it; however, if there is any question that the student accessed the phone or other device, the test must be invalidated.

- Even if the student has exited or submitted the test, cell phones or other devices cannot be used in the testing room. If the student has exited or submitted the test and accesses a cell phone or other prohibited device (including wearable technology), the district will need to take further action to determine if test security or the integrity of another student's test was violated. The student's completed test is not invalidated in this case because it is still valid.

The test code for invalidations due to cell phone or device access is INV-D. The invalidation of a student's test must be documented on the *Test Administration Report* (TAR), which is kept on file at the district. The district will need to follow the policies and procedures they have set out for student accessing their devices during testing. This may involve verifying whether or not test security has been violated by checking text messages or determining what applications the student was accessing during the test session (the *Prohibited Electronic*

Devices Investigation Guide in Appendix B may be used for guidance). Only if there was a security violation (e.g., student uses the cell phone to take a picture of the test) does a *Test Security Notification* (TSN) also need to be submitted in Test WES.

The only exceptions to this policy are the use of supported devices, like tablets, for taking the online test or if the device is used as a medical monitor.

- For supported devices used to take the test, these devices cannot be used for any other purpose during testing sessions, including during test session breaks, and must be turned off or put away after the student has completed testing.

- If used as a medical monitor, the use must be officially documented by a medical professional, such as a licensed school nurse or family doctor; the documentation must be kept with the TAR. If a student will use a device as a medical monitor, ensure the Test Administrator or Test Monitor is aware that the student must retain the device and understands how the student will need to access it. If testing in a group, the student must notify the Test Administrator or Test Monitor before accessing the device; the Test Administrator/Test Monitor must ensure the device is not accessed for other purposes.

Policy for Test Administrators/Test Monitors and Staff

Test Administrators and Test Monitors must be focused on active monitoring throughout test administration. Districts must determine how Test Administrators and Test Monitors will alert others if issues arise (e.g., sick student in the room, technical issues), like using a phone, email, text or instant message, or hanging a sign outside the door.

To allow Test Administrators and Test Monitors to continue active monitoring with the least disruption, districts may choose to allow Test Administrators and Test Monitors to use their cell phones to alert other staff of issues. Test Administrators and Test Monitors may use cell phones or other electronic devices ONLY to alert others that assistance is needed or to access the *Testing Directions* electronically. Test content can never be photographed or communicated, including when the Test Administrator or Test Monitor needs to alert others of an issue (see *Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues* below). Test Administrators and Test Monitors cannot check email or work on their cell phones, and cell phones should be silenced to reduce disruptions. If a district chooses to allow Test Administrators and Test Monitors to use cell phones for contacting other staff during testing or to access the *Testing Directions*, the district must place particular emphasis on proper and improper cell phone use when they communicate to staff about district policies and procedures for testing.

Staff who may be going between rooms or helping troubleshoot technical issues, like the DAC or Technology Coordinator, can also use cell phones to contact the service provider's help desk; however, they should step out of the room to make calls, if possible, to minimize disruptions.

Monitoring Test Administration

A critical component of successful test administration is having Test Administrators and Test Monitors who actively monitor students at all times. "Active monitoring" means carefully observing student behavior throughout testing and ensuring students are working independently and making progress in their tests.

Active monitoring may mean different things depending on the type of testing room and the number of students in the testing session. For example, in a small computer lab or classroom with a small group of students, Test Administrators or Test Monitors may be able to stay in the front of the room and actively see that all students are working independently and making progress in their tests. However, in a large computer lab or classroom, Test Administrators and Test Monitors will need to circulate around the room to ensure that test security is maintained and students are working independently. Depending on the setting, more than one Test Administrator or Test Monitor may be needed to ensure that students are working independently and not accessing unallowable materials. Walking around the test room discourages prohibited behavior and also makes Test Administrators and Test Monitors available to answer allowable questions and respond to unexpected situations.

Test Administrators and Test Monitors must actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration, even after students have been successfully testing for a period of time and do not have any questions. Examples of Test Administrator or Test Monitor activities that are not allowed include planning lessons, grading papers, working online, or talking casually with other staff. While the Test Administrator or Test Monitor may need to check online test status on the computer, or stop to answer a student question, the primary focus must remain on actively monitoring students who are testing, even when test administration or technical issues arise. Districts must have a plan for providing assistance to Test Administrators and Test Monitors in these situations (e.g., additional Test Administrators/Test Monitors, technology staff) so active test monitoring can continue.

What Help Can Test Monitors Give to Students

This section has been updated to align with the changes made last year to the *Testing Directions* and the guidance on providing assistance included there.

Providing the scripted instructions from the applicable *Testing Directions* to students throughout test administration is required to ensure that the administration of statewide tests is standardized. Test Monitors must use and refer to these scripted instructions as students start the test, to address student questions that arise during testing, and provide reminders to students near the end of the testing session.

- Test Monitors may write information specific to test administration on the board or in the room. Examples of allowable information include information about scheduling (i.e., We will stop after answering 25 questions, We will stop testing at the end of the class period) and what students may do when they are done with testing (i.e., Read a book when you are done testing).

- Students must be familiar with how to answer different types of items for the test they are taking, use the online tools and accessibility features, and navigate through the online test. The only exceptions where Test Monitors may provide additional guidance are included in the *Testing Directions*; the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section outlines the kinds of help that may be given during testing. It specifies what type of assistance may be given for test-related scenarios, and also provides student and classroom management scenarios to help Test Monitors evaluate what is appropriate to say and do for situations not directly related to test content.

- Test Monitors may repeat—but may not paraphrase—the scripted instructions in the *Testing Directions*.

- If students need any of the student directions that appear in the beginning of their online tests repeated, Test Monitors must use the transcript included in the *Testing Directions: Online;* Test Monitors may not read them from the screen.

  o Similarly, Test Monitors may repeat any student directions included in the *Testing Directions: Paper*, but may not read directions from the student's test book.

- Test Monitors may not define or pronounce a word within a test item, discuss a test item, or give an opinion regarding a test item.

- To ensure that all students receive a score that accurately reflects what they know, Test Monitors may not give any indication that there may be a different approach or answer or help students with answers to items in any way.

- During testing, Test Monitors cannot remind students of any test-taking strategies. Help of this sort should be provided prior to testing, such as when the student tutorial or item samplers are used.

- Test Monitors also may not control the pace at which students test, as the tests are not timed and students should be allowed to continue as long as they are making progress.

  o For example, if a Test Monitor notices that a student is moving quickly through their test, he or she can repeat any scripted instructions from the *Testing Directions*, but it is not permissible to say, "Slow down" or "Take your time." Help of this kind is a short step from saying something that guides the student to changing test item answers.

  o If a student has gone beyond the number of items or science section planned for that day's testing, the Test Monitor may use scripted instructions to remind students where to stop. Similarly, if a student is not able to complete the number of items or science section planned for the testing session, the Test Monitor may use scripted instructions to direct the student to stop testing.

  o Test Monitors must follow the district policies and procedures regarding what to do when students finish early or need extra time.

- While Test Monitors may observe student tests to verify where students are at in terms of how testing is scheduled (e.g., verifying how many items students have completed, verifying which section they are in for science), they must ensure they are not viewing secure test content. Unauthorized viewing of secure test content is when someone views the content long enough to determine the essence of it.

- For paper administrations, if the Test Monitor believes a student missed any item(s), they may use only the scripted instructions from the *Testing Directions* to remind the student to make sure they have answered all items. They may not point out specific items or provide any other instructions that may lead the student to change or reconsider their answers.

- Following testing, Test Monitors or other staff may not ask students about specific test items. If students ask about a specific item following testing, Test Monitors should remind students that items are secure and cannot be discussed. If all testing is completed for the grade and subject in the school, the Test Monitor or other staff may provide instruction on the general concept. However, targeted instruction as a result of student questions on the general concept is not allowed if any students still need to complete testing. In any case, a Test Monitor or other staff must not address or solve the specific test item.

Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues

If a student points out a test item that appears to have an error, the Test Monitor should instruct the student to continue the test and note the grade, subject, item number, section number (Science MCA only), student MARSS/SSID number, and information on how the online test was accessed (i.e., device or operating system); this same process is used if a student points out a translation that appears to be incorrect in translated word lists or the pop-up translations. Following the test session, the Test Monitor should notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator about any test items or translations that appear to have an error.

If a technical issue occurs and a student receives an error message in an online test, the Test Monitor should write down the error message and number along with the student and test information specified above. If the technical issue prevents the student from responding to the item, the student should exit the test. For technical issues, the Test Monitor should contact district technology staff following the district's procedure, as needed, and provide information to the District or School Assessment Coordinator following the test session.

For all suspected item/translation errors or technical issues, the DAC contacts MDE or the service provider and gives the information collected by the Test Monitor.

The content of the item itself should never be referenced, captured as an image, or emailed within the school or district or in a communication with MDE or the service provider because doing so is a security violation.

Misadministrations Occurring during Test Administration

If a Test Administrator or Test Monitor creates a non-standard situation during test administration, the student's test will be scored if it still measures what is being assessed. However, if the misadministration compromises the validity of the test results, the test must be invalidated. Similarly, security violations will result in the invalidation of a test if the validity of any student's test is compromised or a student was not allowed an opportunity to independently demonstrate their knowledge. Misadministrations, and invalidations if applicable, must be documented on the TAR; security violations must be reported on the TSN.

MCA/MTAS Irregularities outlines some situations or misadministrations that may occur during an MCA or MTAS test administration that require action by the district, MDE, or Pearson (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures). The name of this document has been updated (formerly *Testing Situations and Misadministrations*) to better reflect its purpose. In many cases, the DAC will contact the Pearson help desk and provide detailed information about the issue that occurred and the affected student(s). While not an exhaustive list, the document provides examples of possible test administration situations or misadministrations and the likely outcomes.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS irregularities, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance.

Valid Score Rules

The rules for determining how many responses are required to generate a Valid Score (VS) score code that can be reported for a student vary by test. Information about Not Complete (NC) and Not Attempted (NA) score codes is included below as applicable.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Valid Score Rules

For the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the criteria outlined in Table 31 are used to determine if the student attempted the domain in order to generate a valid score. If the attemptedness criteria are not met, an NA score code is received. ⓘ The attemptedness criteria for Alternate ACCESS were updated in 2018–19 to include "No Response" as an attempt in all domains.

Table 31. ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Domain Attemptedness Criteria

Domain	Minimum Criteria for "Attempting" the Domain*
Listening	Online ACCESS: There is one response captured to a scored item. Paper and Kindergarten ACCESS: There is one scored item with a response entered. Alternate ACCESS: There is at least one scored item that has a bubbled response of Correct, Incorrect, or No Response.
Reading	Online ACCESS: There is one response captured to a scored item. Paper and Kindergarten ACCESS: There is one scored item with a response entered. Alternate ACCESS: There is at least one scored item that has a bubbled response of Correct, Incorrect, or No Response.
Speaking	Online ACCESS: The record button was clicked for one scored item. Paper and Kindergarten ACCESS: There is one scored item with a response entered. Alternate ACCESS: There is at least one scored item that has a bubbled response of Meets, Approaches, or No Response.
Writing	Keyboarding (ACCESS): A visible key stroke is captured to one scored item (example: a letter, a symbol). Note: Space bar and returns do not count as attempted. Hand Writing (ACCESS): There is some marking on the booklet in the response space. Kindergarten ACCESS: There is one scored item with a response entered. Alternate ACCESS: There is at least one scored item that has a bubbled response of Meets, Approaches, or No Response.

* Practice items are not scored, and therefore do not count towards an "attempt."

Refer to Table 32 for information on determining composite scores for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

Table 32. Determining Composite Scores for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS

Domain Scores	Composite Scores
All domains have valid scores.	Composite score is Valid Score (VS).
Some, but not all, domains have valid scores.	Score code of Not Complete (NC) is assigned for the composite code.
No domain has a valid score.	Score code of Not Attempted (NA) is assigned for the composite score. OR If the same test code is indicated for all domains, the test code is assigned for the composite score.

MCA and MTAS Valid Score Rules

For MCA, students must respond to 90 percent of the assessment's accountability portion to receive a VS. Students responding to one or more items but fewer than 90 percent receive an NC score code. Students who start a test but do not respond to any items receive an NA score code.

For MTAS, a Test Administrator score entry for every task is required to receive a VS. When scores are submitted for at least one but not all tasks, an NC score code is received. If no scores are submitted, an NA score code is received.

Breaks and Leaving During Testing

- For breaks:
  - For Kindergarten ACCESS, the breaks are scripted into the *Test Administrator's Script*; for grades 1–12 ACCESS, breaks are only allowed between domains, unless a student has an IEP or 504 plan that documents the need for breaks.
  - After approximately every 30 minutes of testing for MCA (or on a schedule determined by the district), students may be allowed a short break.
  - Test Administrators and Test Monitors must continue to actively monitor students during a break to ensure students do not discuss the test.

- Whenever leaving the testing room during online testing (e.g., bathroom break, break in testing), students should exit the test or cover the test content in some way (e.g., close the laptop, turn off the monitor, turn over the device) unless an emergency prevents them from doing so. For paper test materials, students should close their test books.

- Only one student at a time should be allowed to leave the room, or there must be a plan with additional staff available to monitor students if more than one student leaves. If multiple testing rooms are being used, there must be a procedure to coordinate and/or supervise the absence of students from different rooms. Test security must be maintained, and any prolonged absences or repeated requests for breaks must be investigated for a potential security violation.

- If the entire group must leave because of an emergency (e.g., fire alarm, school safety issue), the Test Administrator or Test Monitor should close the door and secure the room when leaving, if possible. Test Administrators and Test Monitors must continue to monitor students to ensure students do not discuss the test during their time away from the testing room.

- If students leave a test session and are unable to return:

  o For grades 1–12 ACCESS, students are to finish the domain within a sitting. For the rare case when this does not occur, districts must have a plan in place for the student to finish the domain within the day.

    ▪ In cases of illness or emergency, students may complete the started domain in make-up session on another day; when resuming, the student cannot return to previously completed items.

    ▪ If a student is not able to complete testing within the same day for any other reason, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for additional guidance.

  o For online MCA, students will resume testing during a make-up session. Students cannot review previously completed items if more than 20 minutes have elapsed.

  o For paper test materials for MCA, students will resume testing during a make-up session. Students may complete a started segment but Test Monitors should remind students that they cannot go back to previously completed items. Note: For reading and science, students may need to go back to access the passage or scene but they cannot change answers to previously completed items.

- If technical issues lead to a break in a testing session:

  o For online grades 1–12 ACCESS, students should resume testing the domain within the same day if the issues are resolved. If the issues cannot be resolved by the service provider within the same day, the students may resume the domain during a make-up session but the students cannot return to previously completed items.

  o For online MCA, if the issue is resolved and the students are able to continue testing within 20 minutes, the students can review any previously completed items in the section. However, if issues are not resolved within 20 minutes, students cannot review previously completed items but can complete the remainder of the test.

- If a student does not return for the remainder of the test window:

  o For Kindergarten and Alternate ACCESS, the items the student completed in the test booklet will be scored when the test booklet is returned to DRC.

  o For online grades 1–12 ACCESS, all complete and incomplete domains will be scored.

  o For online MCA, the items the student has completed will be scored. All incomplete tests will be marked complete by Pearson at the end of the testing window.

  o For paper test materials for MCA, the responses to the items the student completed should be entered online during the testing window for scoring.

Defective or Damaged Test Materials

If a paper test book is defective, obtain another test book (ensuring it does not also contain the defect) and give the new test book to the student. Secure test materials that contain a defect or that are torn or damaged must be returned, following the instructions provided by the service provider. If the security number is illegible or the secure test material has been destroyed, report the security number of the affected material(s) to the service provider.

Any paper test book that is damaged by vomit or blood must have the responses entered online (or transferred to a new test booklet for ACCESS), if possible. If the answers cannot be entered or transferred, the student may complete any segments or domains not yet taken during a make-up session in a new test book but cannot retake any portions of the test completed previously. The incident, including the name of the staff person entering the responses, must be included on a TAR. Any secure test materials damaged by vomit or blood should be destroyed or disposed of securely (e.g., shredding, burning) and the security number of the destroyed test materials reported to the service provider. These test materials should not be returned to the service providers.

What Students May Do After They Complete a Test

The policies in this section apply to both ACCESS and MCA test administrations.

After exiting or submitting a test, students may either stay in the testing room until the test session is over, or they may leave if permitted by the district. It is the DAC's responsibility to make sure the district has established its procedure before testing begins.

If students stay in the testing room after they exit or submit their test, disruptions for other students must be kept to a minimum. Students who have exited their tests may: read a paper book, work on activities on paper that are not related to the domain or subject(s) being tested, or sit quietly. Note that students may read a paper book, even if reading is being tested, but textbooks for any subject(s) being tested are not allowed. If multiple subjects are being tested (e.g., during a make-up session), the materials students can use must be taken into consideration. Cell phones or other devices (including wearable technology) cannot be used at any time, even if the student has completed testing or is working on something unrelated.

Students who have finished testing in a previous test session are not allowed to be in the testing room on subsequent days of testing. Districts must ensure they have plans in place for students who have finished testing in a previous test session.

- It is important to keep in mind that students who are not testing may cause a distraction for students who are still testing. As the number of students who have completed testing increases, students who are still testing may feel pressure to rush or finish their test, which is not conducive for a positive testing experience.

- Another important reason for this policy is related to test security: students who are in the testing room but not actively testing have additional access to test content that they would not if they were no longer in the testing room. This increases the risk for test security violations and invalidations due to cheating (e.g., a student who is not testing sees test content and provides an answer to a student who is still

testing) or device usage (e.g., a student who is no longer testing may be more likely to access a prohibited device).

Test Codes

For English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments, test codes are used to describe why a student did not participate in an assessment, or, in the case of invalidations, why the student's test is not a valid measure. Districts should account for all students enrolled in the accountability window who did not test by indicating the applicable test code.

- Because the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are designed for all states in the WIDA consortium, some of the Minnesota-specific test codes can only be indicated during Posttest Editing in Test WES. There are four test codes available for indication in WIDA AMS and on the test booklets during the testing window: Absent (ABS), Invalid (INV), Declined (DEC; used for both parent and student refusal), and Special Education Deferred (SPD). Not Enrolled (NE) and Medical Excuse (ME) are Minnesota-specific test codes and can only be indicated in Posttest Editing. More information on test codes for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS is available in the *District and School Test Coordinator Manual*.

- For MCA and MTAS, test codes for invalidations, refusals, and medical excuse may be entered in PearsonAccess Next during the testing windows. During Posttest Editing in Test WES, all test codes may be entered.

    o Since blank assessment records cannot be added during Posttest Editing for high school science, any refusal or medical excuse test codes must be entered in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. *(i)* Since absent and not enrolled test codes cannot be entered in PearsonAccess Next, a refusal or medical excuse may be entered during the testing window and then changed during Posttest Editing.

    o *(i)* In addition, if a districts wants a test code to be assigned to an MTAS record, it is important that the test code is indicated in PearsonAccess Next for MTAS. Since absent and not enrolled test codes cannot be entered in PearsonAccess Next, a refusal or medical excuse may be entered during the testing window and then changed during Posttest Editing. If a district waits until Posttest Editing, a test code can only be added to a blank assessment, which defaults to MCA and cannot be changed to MTAS at that time.

The close of Posttest Editing is the deadline for entering test codes for English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments.

Absent (ABS)

A student was absent. The student was absent on the testing date for a subject and was unable to make up the test at any time during the entire testing window. This includes students expelled/suspended from school and unable to be tested. ABS should not be indicated if the student took any part of the test. ABS can only be indicated during Posttest Editing.

Invalidations

A student's test was invalidated. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, one code (INV) is used for all invalidations. There are three different codes listed below for MCA and MTAS invalidations. Invalidations can be indicated during the testing window or during Posttest Editing.

The reason for all invalidations must be documented on a TAR. If an invalidation was the result of a security violation, a TSN must also be submitted to MDE.

Invalidations can only be indicated if the student has already started testing. If the student has not completed at least one item, the district cannot invalidate the test. In the rare situations where the student's test has not been started but should be invalidated, email mde.testing@state.mn.us. Since there is no way to invalidate in this situation once the testing window has closed, MDE must be notified during the testing window.

Invalidation due to Student Action (INV-S)

INV-S is indicated if a student engages in inappropriate activity or behavior during testing that affects the validity of the test. Inappropriate activity or behavior by students includes, but is not limited to, copying from another student, providing answers to another student, using prohibited aids such as notes, and having prohibited materials out during testing even if not used (like a calculator or text book). Note that accessing or using prohibited cell phones or devices is a separate code and not indicated as INV-S. A student's test is not invalidated if it is not started or if it is already completed when the behavior occurs because the test is still valid, regardless of the student's actions.

MDE has the authority to require a student's test to be invalidated with INV-S if a student's actions create a security violation that compromises the validity of the test results.

If the student rushed through the test and did not appear to be taking the test seriously or did not complete the test, the test should **not** be invalidated. The test should be scored as is and information on the situation can be noted on the TAR if the district chooses to document the occurrence in case of questions after testing.

Invalidation due to Device (INV-D)

INV-D is indicated if a student accesses a cell phone, wearable technology, or other device at any point during test administration (including breaks), even if the student did not use it. The INV-D code is also used in circumstances where test security is violated using a device (e.g., capturing test content, looking up answers). Refer to *Cell Phone and Device Policy* earlier in this chapter for more information.

Invalidation Other (INV-O)

INV-O is indicated for misadministrations or other situations, including staff actions, which compromise the validity of test results. Inappropriate activity or behavior by staff includes, but is not limited to, giving answers or unauthorized help or cues to students, making any attempt to improve a student's test score or altering a

student's responses, allowing prohibited materials in the testing room or on a student's desk, leaving the room unattended during testing, or allowing students to leave the room unattended during testing.

MDE has the authority to require a student's test to be invalidated with INV-O if staff actions create a misadministration or security violation that compromises the validity of the test results.

Medical Excuse (ME)

A student is unable to take the test because of a medical emergency that has been officially documented at the district. A medical emergency is defined as a debilitating onset of a severe or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, and/or emotional trauma; refer to Chapter 7 for detailed information, including the criteria for determining a medical emergency.

ME is only to be used for students unable to test at all. ME cannot be indicated if a student started the test before the medical emergency; the test will be scored as is since the student did participate in part of the test. The district may indicate on the TAR that the student was unable finish the test due to the medical emergency.

Medical excuse can be indicated during the testing window in PearsonAccess Next for MCA and MTAS and/or during Posttest Editing for all assessments.

Not Enrolled (NE)

A student was not enrolled when the test was administered in the district. Do not use NE if a student started taking the test. Districts determine when tests will be administered and should attempt to test all students who are enrolled during and after those testing dates. Students may be enrolled when one subject is administered and not enrolled for another depending on when testing is scheduled in the district. NE can only be indicated during Posttest Editing.

Refusals and Declines

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, both parent and student refusals are indicated as Declined (DEC). For MCA and MTAS, there are two different codes based on whether the parent or student is refusing testing: Refusal by Parent (REF-P) and Refusal by Student (REF-S).

Refusals can be indicated during the testing window in PearsonAccess Next for MCA and MTAS and/or during Posttest Editing for all assessments.

Refusal by Parent (REF-P)

A student did not take the test because their parent or guardian requested that the district not administer the test to their child. MDE requires that parent refusals are documented annually; this documentation must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. Refer to Chapter 7 for detailed information.

Do not indicate REF-P if a student has started or completed the test at the time of the parent refusal; the test will be scored as is since the student did participate in part of the test. However, the district should indicate on

the TAR that the parent's request for refusal could not be honored. The district will determine with the parent if the student report generated will be provided to the parent.

Refusal by Student (REF-S)

A student did not take the test because the student refused to test. Districts may require that students provide written refusals; the district may also determine if student behavior prevents the student from testing. In the case of behavior, districts can attempt to administer on another day before documenting the refusal. Student refusals are not required to be documented on the TAR but districts may choose to document the circumstances surrounding student refusals as needed to address questions after testing.

REF-S cannot be indicated if a student has started the test and then refuses to finish it; the test will be scored as is since the student did participate in part of the test. The refusal to finish may be a stated refusal or based on behavior that prevents the student from finishing the test. The district should indicate on the TAR that the student refused to finish the test.

Special Education Deferred (SPD)

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS only, Special Education Deferred (SPD) indicates that an IEP or 504 team determined that a student should defer participation from one or more of the domains of this test. English learners with disabilities should participate in as many domains of the ACCESS or the Alternate ACCESS as possible. If it is impossible to administer the test in a given domain due to the student's disability (e.g., the listening domain for a deaf student), indicate the SPD code for that domain. If the EL staff and the IEP team determine that the SPD code is appropriate for more than two domains, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance.

Summary of Test Codes

Table 33 provides a summary of the test codes that can be indicated on student tests. In general, test codes provide a reason why a student did not test (with the exception of invalidations).

Table 33. Summary of Test Codes

Code	Enter If Test Is Not Started	Enter After Test is Started or Completed	Enter in PearsonAccess Next (MCA/MTAS)	Enter in WIDA AMS or Test Booklet (ACCESS/ Alternate ACCESS)	Enter in Posttest Editing[25]
ABS (Absent)	X			X	X
INV (including INV-S, INV-D, INV-O for MCA/MTAS)		X	X	X	X
ME (Medical Excuse)	X		X		X
NE (Not Enrolled)	X				X
REF and DEC (including REF-P and REF-S for MCA/MTAS and DEC for ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS)	X		X	X	X
SPD (Special Education Deferred for ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS)	X			X	X

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS

MCA Data Entry

Student responses from paper test materials for the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs must be entered online by district staff in a Data Entry test in TestNav during the testing window. These test materials cannot be returned to Pearson for scoring—student responses must be entered online in order to be scored. For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed during the hours of 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays throughout

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[25]Any refusal or medical excuse test codes for high school science must be entered in PearsonAccess Next during the testing widow; absent and not enrolled test codes cannot be entered in either PearsonAccess Next or Posttest Editing. Similarly, if the district wants a test code to be assigned to an MTAS record, it is important that the test code is indicated in PearsonAccess Next for MTAS.

the testing window for entry of student responses. The *MCA Data Entry User Guide* is updated annually and provided on PearsonAccess Next.

MTAS LCI and Score Entry

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data must be submitted in PearsonAccess Next before any MTAS scores can be entered; data entry opens one week prior to the start of the MTAS testing window to allow for earlier entry of LCI data. However, MTAS tasks cannot be administered and MTAS scores cannot be entered until the MTAS testing window opens.

Once LCI information is submitted, student scores from MTAS administrations must be entered online in PearsonAccess Next during the testing window. Note that the Science MTAS window ends with the Reading and Mathematics MTAS testing window (not Science MCA), so all Science MTAS tasks must be administered and scores entered by the close of that testing window. Data Collection Forms cannot be submitted to Pearson for scoring—student scores must be entered online in order to be scored. The *MTAS Data Entry User Guide* is updated annually and provided on PearsonAccess Next.

MTAS Data Collection Forms and LCI forms should be kept on file for one year after entering scores online in case there are any questions about scores/data entered. Because these forms contain private student data, ensure they are kept in a secure location. If the Data Collection Form within the Task Administration Manual is used to document student scores, make a copy of the form before returning the Task Administration Manual with other secure materials.

Collection and Return of Secure Test Materials

When testing is completed, Test Administrators and Test Monitors must verify that they have accounted for all secure test materials and return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator. While some secure materials must be returned, others can be securely disposed of at the district. Detailed information for MCA and MTAS is provided with the shipment of test materials. Detailed information for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS is provided in the *District and School Test Coordinator Manual*.

- Refer to the *Important Dates* sheet at the front of this manual for the date to ship secure test materials to service providers. The District or School Assessment Coordinator is responsible for collecting, packaging, and preparing all test materials for return.

- "Securely dispose" is defined as destroying materials so they are not accessible. This can be done through shredding or incineration. Each district determines the procedure to follow, including which staff will be responsible for the secure disposal (e.g., at a central location, securely disposed of by each Test Monitor). The secure disposal must be completed no more than 48 hours after the close of the testing window.

Note: For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, it is critical that the deadline for returning paper materials is followed to ensure that all paper tests can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. If the deadline is missed, assessment records may not be provided for Posttest Editing, scores may not be available for accountability calculations, and an Individual Student Report (ISR) may not be provided with the shipment of reports.

Missing Secure Test Materials

If secure test materials are missing at any point while in the district or school's possession (whether identified at the district/school or by the service provider after materials are returned), the DAC must take action to search for materials and collect documentation on the chain of custody or procedure the district follows to track secure materials.

Table 34 outlines the actions taken, based on the circumstances surrounding the missing materials and whether they are located.

Table 34. Actions to Take for Missing Secure Test Materials

Circumstance	District Action
Materials missing because of known circumstance (e.g., inadvertently shredded at the school, never received in shipment)	The DAC contacts the service provider and provides the missing material's security number. The service provider documents the status of the material. See *Defective or Damaged Test Materials* in this chapter for more information. The DAC documents circumstances caused by the district (e.g., shredding) on the TAR.
Materials missing during testing window and status is unknown	School staff notify the DAC that materials are missing, and the DAC works with the school to account for the missing materials, following the chain of custody. • If materials are found, determine if they were ever left unsecured (e.g., left out in a classroom) or always secured (e.g., locked in someone's desk). If unsecured at any point while missing, the DAC submits a TSN. • If materials are not found when all other secure materials are returned, the DAC continues to work with the school to locate missing test materials. If materials are not located, the service provider and MDE will follow up and request additional documentation (refer to next row).
Materials missing after the close of the testing window	The service providers and MDE will follow up with the DAC and superintendent/director on missing materials. • If materials are found, determine if they were ever left unsecured (e.g., left out in a classroom) or always secured (e.g., locked in someone's desk). If unsecured at any point while missing, the DAC submits a TSN. • If materials have not been found, the DAC must provide an account as requested by the service provider or MDE. • If materials have not been found and the DAC has not provided an account for their loss after a reasonable period following the return deadline, MDE will submit a TSN.

Since the return of secure materials occurs close to the end of the school year, DACs will need to develop a process with schools to ensure all test materials are returned. If the DAC is not available to respond to requests over the summer, another staff member must be aware of the chain of custody in order to assist in locating missing materials over the summer. If missing test materials are located at a much later point in time, the DAC should contact the service provider for instructions on returning these materials.

Posttest Editing

After testing is completed, DACs edit student assessment records (as needed) through Posttest Editing in Test WES. Posttest Editing in Test WES is available for the English language proficiency and standards-based accountability assessments. It is important to verify or correct student information on assessment records during Posttest Editing to ensure that final reports and data are based on accurate and complete information. See Chapter 9 of this manual and the *Test WES Posttest Editing User Guide* for additional information (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Data Submissions > Test WES).

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS Requests after Testing

After testing is complete, districts may make requests to WIDA or DRC for the circumstances described below. The fee associated with these requests varies by the type of request.

Test Booklet Search Requests

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, if a student's score is not included in the early student-level results in Test WES, a test booklet search may be requested. Test booklet searches include test booklets that:

- Did not include a student label or have any student information hand-bubbled

- Were damaged and not transcribed to a new test book, or the transcribed test booklet did not have student information hand-bubbled

The cost for a test booklet search may be up to $200 per test booklet. DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS number and detailed information on the situation where a test booklet search may be needed.

Transcription Requests

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, a transcription request may be submitted if there is a concern that a student or Test Administrator did not use a Number 2 pencil to complete any portion of the test items (i.e. pen, highlighter, marker) or a student or Test Administrator did not fill in the bubble or answer area to completion. Most commonly, there will be a hash mark, a check mark, a slash, a dash to indicate response in the answer bubble.

The cost for a transcription request may be up to $250 per test booklet, plus additional shipping costs. DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS number and detailed information on the situation where a transcription request may be needed.

Scoring Appeal Requests

Scoring appeals may be available for either the Writing (paper or online) or Speaking (online only) domain of the grades 1–12 ACCESS when there is a concern that a student's test may have been scored incorrectly. Once the final score is available (in the DSR/SSR files), DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS number and the rationale for the score appeal. MDE will review the request; if approved, there may be a $200 fee.

Score appeals cannot be requested for Reading or Listening scores, if a test code was indicated for any domain, or for score code changes (e.g., NC). Scoring Appeal Requests are not applicable for Kindergarten ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS because they are multiple choice only.

Late Score Entry of MCA Student Responses or MTAS Scores

If student responses in MCA paper test materials or MTAS scores are not entered during the testing windows, districts can contact Pearson to arrange for a late score entry. There is a $125 fee for late score entry for up to 10 students after the close of the test window; there is another $125 fee for up to 10 additional students. The *Request for Late Score Entry Form* in Appendix A includes instructions regarding the return of late score entry materials; the form has been updated to better collect the information needed for these requests.

A late score entry can be requested when some student responses or scores were entered during the testing window (i.e., NC or not complete score code), in addition to when there is no test record or a not attempted (NA) score code.

Depending on when requests are submitted to Pearson, late score entries may or may not be entered in time for the district to verify the records during Posttest Editing or for the records to be included in the final results or accountability calculations. Note: If test materials containing the student responses have already been returned to Pearson, contact Pearson as soon as possible. Materials that have already been shipped back by the district using the normal return process are sent to Pearson's warehouse. Pearson will work with warehouse staff to identify and gather these materials; however, there is no guarantee the materials will be located and entered in time for Posttest Editing.

MCA Rescores

A rescore may be requested when a parent/guardian or school district staff disagrees with the final score a student received (typically for an MCA paper administration). Because of the scoring processes for online MCA items (where items are reviewed multiple times before and during testing for scoring accuracy and unanticipated responses), a rescore is highly unlikely to result in a score change for an individual student; any scoring changes required for online items based on these scoring reviews are updated for all affected students.

Parents/guardians should work with the school district to initiate a rescore. DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS number and the rationale for requesting a rescore, and MDE will review the request. If approved, further information will be collected. The cost for rescoring a test is $125 per test.

A rescore does not include test or score code changes (INV, NC, etc.) or the late entry of student responses for paper test materials or the MTAS. Any questions regarding a test code must be addressed during Posttest Editing.

Chapter 9 — Student Demographics and Data Editing

Overview

Minnesota uses student demographic data throughout the testing and reporting processes. Correct demographic data are necessary for accurate reporting, and districts and schools have opportunities to edit incorrect student data used for testing, final reporting, and accountability calculations. The majority of this chapter addresses data files and processes for MCA and MTAS; specific references for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are included as applicable.

MDE requires that a particular MARSS or state student ID (SSID) number be held by just one student. MDE's Student Identity Validation Interface is used by authorized staff (often the MARSS Coordinator) to search for known students, to validate and create MARSS/SSID numbers for new students, and to resolve student identity issues with submitted data. MARSS data are used as the primary source of student demographics for all assessments, and validations are run on student identities in MARSS. MARSS Coordinators should maintain current and accurate student enrollment information in MARSS by submitting updated data through MDE's MARSS WES system (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > MARSS Web Edit System (WES)).

In an effort to streamline and connect data collection systems, MDE is moving to Ed-Fi, a data standard (or a set of rules). Additional information about implementation will be provided in the *Assessment Update*; for questions, contact mde.cas@state.mn.us. For the 2019–20 *Procedures Manual*, references to MARSS and MARSS WES will continue to be used to represent student data provided to MDE.

Demographic Data Elements and Assessment Precode Data

"Precode" refers to the data files that are sent to service providers with student information for testing. The precode files contain information from the MARSS enrollment record (such as the school the student is enrolled in), as well as the assessments for which the student is eligible along with any related information (such as any accommodations requested).

Demographic fields included in precode data:

- District Number, District Type

- School Number

- Grade

- Last Name

- First Name

- Middle Name

- Gender

- Birth Date

- MARSS/SSID Number

- MARSS Local Use Data (an optional field that may be created by the district for internal student identification purposes. MDE does not assign or track this number.)

Demographic fields that affect enrollment record selection for precode:

- English Learner
- Special Education Status

- State Aid Category
- Status End Date

Precode Files

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the precode file sent to DRC includes all students designated as English learners in MARSS; it is used to load students into the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) for online testing and to print student labels for paper test materials. This precode file is only sent once each year in December; any MARSS updates need to be submitted at least one day prior to the date when the precode data is sent. Any English learners who are newly enrolled or newly identified as EL after the precode file has been sent must be manually added into WIDA AMS.

For MCA and MTAS, precode files with student enrollment information for grades 3–12 are sent to Pearson nightly throughout the school year, beginning in the fall. Test assignments and accommodation/linguistic support indications from Pretest Editing are sent in the precode files nightly beginning in mid-January through the day before the last day of the testing windows. (Refer to the *Important Dates* at the front of this manual.)

In order for students to be loaded in PearsonAccess Next for online testing or data entry, any MARSS enrollment updates must be submitted at least two business days in advance. Once MARSS is submitted to MDE, that data is gathered overnight and is available the next business day in Test WES for districts to make edits in Precode Student Eligibility (e.g., changing schools) or Pretest Editing (e.g., test assignments or accommodations/linguistic supports) before it is sent to Pearson. Any changes made in Precode Student Eligibility or Pretest Editing will be sent in the next precode file and will typically be reflected in PearsonAccess Next the following business day. When students are dropped from enrollment in MARSS, their test eligibility is removed from PearsonAccess Next.

Note: Districts that work with a Regional Management Information Center (RMIC) or other service provider to submit their MARSS data might need to provide their MARSS data earlier than the precode dates listed under the *Important Dates*. Districts should verify dates and timelines with their provider.

Accessing MDE Secure Systems

MDE's secure systems that are related to assessment include Test WES, Secure Reports, Graduation Requirements Records (GRR), MARSS WES, and Student Identity Validation Interface. Although dependent on their roles in the district, the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) typically has access to Test WES, Secure Reports, and the GRR system, while the MARSS coordinator typically has access to MARSS WES.

MDE is transitioning to a new security system for managing user access and authorization for MDE secure systems (referred to as Education Identity and Access Management or EDIAM); refer to the Data Submissions page for more information (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions). For full details of the process for assessment, use the *New District Assessment Coordinators: Getting Access* document (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > District Resources).

Test WES

MDE's Test WES (Web Edit System) is used throughout the year by DACs and other district staff for the following activities related to data editing and other assessment tasks:

- Viewing precode files sent to service providers, using Precode Student Eligibility to verify student eligibility, and manually adding students for testing

- Completing Pretest Editing

- Selecting District Options and completing District Confirmations

- Submitting *Test Security Notifications* (TSNs) (refer to Chapter 3 for more information)

- Completing Posttest Editing

Detailed information about each activity in Test WES is available in a user guide under the Help link in Test WES shortly before the activity begins. Available trainings are communicated in the *Assessment Update*.

Precode Student Eligibility

If students are not included in the precode files sent to Pearson, districts may use Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES to investigate why. In addition, Precode Student Eligibility is used to manually add students for testing who will not be enrolled in MARSS (e.g., home-schooled students who are participating in MCA) or to change schools when a student is dual enrolled and the student was sent in precode for a school they will not test at. Students must have a valid MARSS/SSID number in order to be manually added to Precode Student Eligibility.

In general, Precode Student Eligibility should not be used in place of a MARSS submission to add students for testing. However, students can be manually added if they need to test before the next MARSS file will be submitted.

Note: Eligibility for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS do not appear in Precode Student Eligibility.

Pretest Editing

It is important that districts verify or enter the requested information during Pretest Editing in Test WES for MCA and MTAS so that 1) students are sent in precode for the correct assessment (with or without the appropriate accommodations or linguistic supports), and 2) the appropriate MCA paper test materials or MTAS test materials are automatically included in the initial shipment of test materials to the district or schools by Pearson. Note: ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are not part of Pretest Editing.

The following tasks are completed during Pretest Editing:

- Confirm student test assignment: Each student has been assigned an MCA or MTAS in reading, mathematics, and science (when applicable) based on their past assessments. The test assignment can be changed here as appropriate. Any students with an MTAS test assignment on Jan. 17 will have MTAS test materials automatically sent for them (unless otherwise indicated in District Options; see below).

- Indicate student accommodations and linguistic supports for MCA: Select the accommodations and linguistic supports individual students will need during testing. Codes can be entered or removed, as needed, throughout the testing windows. The applicable paper test materials will be automatically sent if the accommodations or linguistic supports are indicated by Jan. 17.

- Indicate custom group (optional): If you choose, a custom group name can be entered in Test WES to organize students in PearsonAccess Next for easier test session set up (e.g., Mr. Smith's class). Note: Custom groups are specific to setting up test sessions, not reporting groups.

Pretest Editing continues until the day before the last day of the testing windows so that student enrollment and eligibility information can continue to be updated in PearsonAccess Next. However, if accommodations or test assignments are changed or entered after the precode data is sent for the initial test materials shipment, any MCA test materials or MTAS test materials must be ordered through additional orders in PearsonAccess Next. Refer to *Test Materials Quantities for MCA and MTAS* in Chapter 8 for more information.

District Options and District Confirmations

Two separate screens are available in Test WES for districts to provide information to MDE. The majority of these tasks are available during Pretest Editing, with the exception of the confirmation of Posttest Editing. The deadlines for completing each of these are indicated on the applicable screen in Test WES and included on the *Important Dates*.

District Options

- District options for test materials shipment: Districts have options for the delivery location and delivery date for the shipment of MCA paper and MTAS test materials. The options selected apply to both MCA and MTAS.

- District option for MTAS test materials: Districts may choose if they want to receive MTAS test materials automatically or if they want to order them in additional orders in PearsonAccess Next. See *Test Materials Quantities for MCA* and MTAS in Chapter 8 for more information.

- District option for student results labels: Districts indicate whether they want to receive individual student results labels to place in cumulative folders.

District Confirmations

- District confirmation of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) delivery: Minnesota is required to document that districts have delivered ISRs from the past year's administration to families. DACs must confirm that their district provided the ISRs to families no later than fall conferences.

- District confirmation of MTAS eligibility: IEP teams must verify each year that students meet the eligibility requirements, and DACs must confirm before the end of the MTAS testing window that all students selected to take the MTAS will meet the requirements at the time of testing.

- District confirmation of training: DACs must confirm before testing that all staff with any role in test administration have completed required trainings, including the DAC.

- District confirmation of Posttest Editing: DACs must complete this confirmation during Posttest Editing if there were no edits needed for the district. DACs can also complete this confirmation to let MDE know that all posttest editing is complete.

Posttest Editing

DACs verify and correct student assessment records (as needed) through Posttest Editing in Test WES for MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, and Alternate ACCESS.

The ultimate goal of Posttest Editing is to have each student's MARSS enrollment record accurately linked to the assessment records for each test the student has taken. In order to link these records, it is important that the student's enrollment record is accurate in MARSS. Student enrollment and demographic information submitted in the most recent MARSS submissions are used for Posttest Editing. It is important to verify or correct student information on assessment records during Posttest Editing to ensure that final data, including ISRs provided to families, are based on accurate and complete information. Districts should also account for all students enrolled in the accountability window who did not test by indicating the applicable test code. Test scores are not available during this period, but attempt status (see *Valid Score Rules* in Chapter 8) is indicated for all assessment records.

Nonpublic schools can participate in Posttest Editing, but in a limited way since MARSS enrollment data is not submitted; test codes can be added or changed and student information on the assessment record can be updated.

Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) System

The Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) system is used to request reimbursement for administering college entrance exams to eligible students. Districts can request reimbursement for ACT and SAT from late spring through early Sept., following the receipt of student results. The deadline for entering reimbursement requests is annually in early September; detailed information is provided in the *Assessment Update*. Refer to Chapter 2 for additional information.

Details on entering information into GRR is available in a user guide posted to the MDE website.

Validation Against MARSS and Assessment Records

Validation Against MARSS

When determining if a student should be sent in precode for testing and for Posttest Editing, MDE uses the Status Begin and End Dates of a student's MARSS enrollment record to verify if a student was enrolled. Often a student's Status End Date is later than the actual date the student stopped attending school.

During Posttest Editing, student assessments will also be validated against their MARSS enrollment record. Students taking the MTAS must be designated as special education in MARSS during the testing window, or the reported score code will be set to INV-O; similarly, students taking the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS must be designated as EL in MARSS. If a district does not make a correction in MARSS during Posttest Editing, there is no way to remove the INV score code after Posttest Editing.

Grade is also validated against student MARSS enrollment records during Posttest Editing. For example, if a student takes a grade 6 test, but MARSS shows the student enrolled in grade 7, the student's test record will receive a wrong grade (WG) score code instead of a score. This situation may also require a correction in MARSS during Posttest Editing.

Validation Against Assessment Records

Students must take only one assessment per subject (e.g., Reading MCA or Reading MTAS). The assessment a student is to take must be identified prior to a student testing. If a student has two test records for the same subject, the most accommodated test becomes the test used for accountability purposes. For example, if a student takes the Reading MCA and the Reading MTAS, the MTAS will be used for final reporting and accountability purposes.

If a student inadvertently takes the incorrect assessment, the incorrect assessment must be invalidated (INV-O). The assessment with the valid score will be used for final reporting and accountability purposes.

Chapter 10 — Minnesota Assessment Results

Assessment results are the final component of the Minnesota Assessments. The summative results are best used by educators, school leaders, and policymakers to evaluate the effectiveness of school curriculum and instruction of the Minnesota Academic Standards or progress toward the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Assessment results for individual students, schools, districts, and the state are distributed to a variety of audiences through different media. This chapter provides an overview of these assessment reports and results for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments; clarifies the appropriate uses of results available in service provider systems; and provides information about other reporting resources for the interpretation of results.

Testing 1, 2, 3 is a website designed to help educators better use assessment data to inform instruction and decisions. It contains a number of resources for data literacy that can be shared with district and school staff working with results from the Minnesota Assessments.

Overview of Secure Systems and Available Reports

Results for the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS) and English language proficiency accountability assessments (ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS) are available in secure systems at both MDE and the service providers. Table 35 on the next page provides an overview of the available results, which are described in more detail in the following sections. Refer to the *Important Dates* at the front of the manual for specific dates when results are available and to *Use of Results from Service Provider Systems* later in this chapter for information on why results provided by MDE are considered the official results.

Table 35. Assessment Results At-a-Glance

Category	Name of Results	Assessments	Location of Results	When Available
Individual student-level results (current year)	On-Demand Reports	MCA and MTAS	PearsonAccess Next	Within 60 minutes after testing or data entry is completed
	Early Student-Level Results	ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	Test WES	Beginning of Posttest Editing in late May
	District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files	MCA and MTAS ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE website	In June; embargoed when released initially
	Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and rosters*	MCA and MTAS ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next (MCA and MTAS) WIDA AMS (ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS)	When final assessment results are released publicly in August
Individual student-level results (historical)	Student Assessment History Report	MCA and MTAS ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE website	When student is submitted in MARSS; includes final assessment results
	Historical Student Data	MCA and MTAS	PearsonAccess Next	When final assessment results are released publicly in August
Summary results	Test Results Summary	MCA and MTAS ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE website	In July; embargoed when released initially
	Longitudinal Reports	MCA and MTAS	PearsonAccess Next	When final assessment results are released publicly in August
	Benchmark Reports	MCA	PearsonAccess Next	In September

*In addition to the electronic versions provided in service provider systems, hard copies of ISRs for distribution to families are shipped to districts. See *Individual Student Reports* later in this chapter.

Assessment Secure Reports

Reports provided by multiple divisions at MDE are available on the Secure Reports page(MDE website > Data Center > Secure Reports). Final assessment results are available in the reports under the Assessment Secure Reports heading. User guides for each report are available on each report's page and on a separate page on the MDE website, the Assessment Secure Reports Data Submissions page (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Assessment Secure Reports). For more information on access to MDE systems, refer to Chapter 9.

- **District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR)**: The purpose of DSR and SSR files is to provide schools and districts final student-level data on Minnesota's statewide assessments that can be sorted and analyzed to make data-driven decisions. These files contain all the student-level data for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments, including demographic information, achievement level information, and test scores.
    - These reports can be opened directly in Excel, or the tab-delimited text files can be imported into a student information system.
    - Information about the contents and structure, including the location and contents of each field in the file, are contained in the user guide.
- **Student Assessment History Report**: The purpose of this report is to allow districts to access test history for students who are newly enrolled, based on MARSS enrollment information submitted to MDE. Note: Information in the report is not available in the fall until the district submits MARSS enrollment for the new school year.
    - Student testing history can be accessed for an individual student; the ability to look up testing history for multiple students is also planned to be available.
    - Results include historical test records validated through the Student Identity System, including the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.
- **Test Results Summary**: The purpose of Test Results Summary reports is to provide schools and districts detailed final summary data for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. The functionality of Test Results Summary allows users to generate charts and graphs that may be used for school and district instructional decision-making and planning. This may be especially useful during the embargo, before similar functionality is available publicly on the Minnesota Report Card website. In addition, because it is a secure report, there are no suppression rules based on the number of students, so summary results for student groups with small numbers are available.
    - Grade-level summary reports can be generated at the district or school level. The report information generated can be printed in a PDF format or downloaded in Excel or tab-delimited text files.
    - The School Improvement Assessment Report was removed from Secure Reports, and some of the features were incorporated into Test Results Summary.

Results in WIDA AMS

When final results are released publicly, the following reports are available in WIDA AMS for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS: District and School Student Response Files, Individual Student Reports, Student Roster Reports, District and School Frequency Reports, and Translated Student Reports. WIDA provides resources on the ACCESS for ELLs Scores and Reports page for using the reports, including Interpretive Guides and a user guide on viewing student reports (WIDA website > Assess > ACCESS for ELLs > ACCESS for ELLs Scores & Reports).

The WIDA Data Dashboard is a component within the framework of the WIDA Data Warehouse. It is an interactive site used by WIDA researchers, staff members, and WIDA Consortium member state educational

agencies to view aggregated analytical information for ACCESS. Districts can log in to the WIDA State Dashboard using their WIDA Secure Portal information to analyze data at the consortium and state levels.

Results in PearsonAccess Next

In PearsonAccess Next, MCA and MTAS data are available at the student, school, district and state levels, depending on the type of report accessed and the user role. District- and school-level users have access to all available results for their organization; teachers must have student reporting groups assigned to them in order to access available results.

Reporting resources and user guides for PearsonAccess Next are available under Reporting Resources on the [Additional Reporting Resources page](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Additional Reporting Resources).

On-Demand Reports

On-Demand Reports provide preliminary student scores for MCA and MTAS within 60 minutes after testing or data entry is completed. Results in On-Demand Reports can be exported as a data file, downloaded in a list report, or generated as PDFs (Student Detail Reports) for individual students. Reporting groups can be created and assigned to teachers to provide them access to these reports.

Longitudinal Reports

Longitudinal Reports provide a graphical display of historical results for review and comparison at the student, school, district, and/or state level by administration, performance, and student group. Results in Longitudinal Reports are available to school- or district-level users only. There is also an option to export longitudinal results in Excel format.

Historical Student Data

Historical test results are available in Historical Student Data for students who previously tested in the district and for students who are currently enrolled in the district, regardless of where they tested. Student reporting groups can be created and assigned to teachers to provide them access to this data. Note: Students that did not complete testing in the district will not be included in Historical Student Data at the beginning of the school year; their results will be available once student enrollment information is sent to Pearson in mid-October.

Published Reports

Published Reports include PDF versions of final reports. Published Reports include reports that are delivered to districts (rosters and electronic copies of the ISRs) and Benchmark Reports. Results in Published Reports are available to school- or district-level users only.

Results in Test WES

In late May, MDE provides an Excel file of early student-level results for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS in Test WES to allow districts to make decisions about instruction or placement. Early results are not updated during Posttest Editing, and final results are provided following Posttest Editing in Assessment Secure Reports.

SIS and Data Warehouse Vendor Access to Results

ⓘStudent Information System (SIS) and Data Warehouse vendors have the opportunity to receive regularly scheduled extracts of preliminary results data for the MCA and MTAS during the testing window from Pearson and final data from MDE on behalf of their member districts. This allows vendors to load the data directly into their system for access by school districts who enter into a data sharing agreement with their associated vendor and MDE. Vendors must provide commitment annually in order to receive the data. Refer to the [Data Extracts](#) page for more information, including information on how vendors can participate (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Data Extracts).

Use of Results from Service Provider Systems

The following section explains why data in service provider systems (WIDA AMS for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, PearsonAccess Next for MCA and MTAS) must not be used for official reporting and accountability purposes. All official accountability data are provided by MDE.

Preliminary Student-Level Results

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, an Excel file of early student-level results is provided in Test WES. However, districts should not use this file to calculate school or district summaries to share with the public. Early results are not final: while the score of the student is final (except in very special circumstances), actions taken during Posttest Editing (e.g., district making changes to student information, validations against MARSS to confirm EL designations) could affect final results.

For MCA and MTAS, preliminary student-level results are available in PearsonAccess Next within 60 minutes after testing or data entry completion. These results in PearsonAccess Next are considered preliminary for the following reasons:

- For MCA, periodic reviews of student responses are conducted, which could result in score changes.

  o All items are reviewed multiple times before and during testing to ensure they are scored and functioning correctly.

  o In a process called adjudication, student responses to technology-enhanced items are reviewed multiple times during and after testing so that any unanticipated responses are considered.

- Test administration situations (e.g., test invalidations or misadministrations) could lead to changes from the preliminary results.

- MCA and MTAS assessment data go through Posttest Editing in Test WES before final reports are generated, and changes made during this process could lead to final results that differ from the preliminary results available in On-Demand Reports.

It is up to the district to determine how preliminary student results will be shared.

- Preliminary student assessment results can be shared with students, families, and staff for instructional purposes. Similarly, summary-level data may also be used for instructional and planning purposes.

However, for other purposes (e.g., grant applications or QComp), the final assessment results provided by MDE must be used.

- Preliminary student assessment results should not be discussed in public forums, reflected in public meeting minutes (e.g., school board meetings), or shared with the general public or media until the final assessment results have been released publicly. This includes any summarization, growth, or accountability calculations determined by the district. If sharing preliminary results with staff, ensure that staff understand that "abiding by the embargo" means that they cannot discuss or share results with others or the general public before the public release of results.

- While preliminary results can be shared with school board members, school officials, and charter school authorizers, all requirements outlined in *Sharing Students' Private Information Outside the School and District* must be followed, including collection and retention of non-disclosure agreements for sharing results. Note: The requirement for a data privacy and non-disclosure agreement is specific to school officials and not all district and school staff. Districts should follow their district data privacy policies and procedures for district and school staff who have access to embargoed results.

Final Results

Although results available in Published Reports, Longitudinal Reports, and Historical Student Data for MCA and MTAS will reflect edits made during Posttest Editing, any changes made after Posttest Editing would only be reflected in data at MDE. While this would be a rare occurrence, it is the reason final data are provided by MDE. Similarly, ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS assessment data also go through Posttest Editing in Test WES, and while this data is provided to WIDA, there may be differences in how the data is presented in WIDA AMS than what is provided by MDE.

Process for the Release of Final Assessment and Accountability Results

In an effort to provide a more comprehensive message to the public about the North Star accountability system established under ESSA, MDE publicly releases assessment and accountability results together. The intent is to provide greater context around results and improve public understanding of how Minnesota schools are held accountable under state and federal law.

The general process for the release of final assessment and accountability results is as follows; specific dates are included on the *Important Dates* at the front of this manual.

1. Embargoed final district assessment results are available for district review in Assessment Secure Reports (beginning with DSR/SSR files and then Test Results Summary data).

2. Embargoed district accountability results are available for district review in Accountability Secure Reports, and districts have an opportunity to submit an appeal of their accountability results.

3. Embargoed summary accountability results are provided to districts shortly before they are provided to the media and for public release.

4. When MDE lifts the embargo, final assessment and accountability results are made available publicly on the Minnesota Report Card and the Data and Analytics pages of the MDE website (summary level data; student-level data omitted). Assessment results are also available in service provider systems

(PearsonAccess Next and WIDA AMS), and Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are provided to districts for distribution to families.

Note: Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.36, require MDE to treat all data the department receives, collects, or creates to determine accountability calculations, set state growth targets, and determine student growth as nonpublic data until it is released publicly by the commissioner.

The following sections provide further information about the release of final assessment results. For more information about accountability results, go to the [School and District Accountability page](#) (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > School Achievement > School and District Accountability) or email mde.essa@state.mn.us.

Embargoed Final Assessment Results

When final assessment results are released through Assessment Secure Reports, they are embargoed until released publicly. Final assessment results include the DSR and SSR files (student-level data) and Test Results Summary reports (district- and school-level data) described under *Assessment Secure Reports* above.

During the embargo, districts can use the final assessment results for data retreats and to prepare for questions from the media and local stakeholders. This means that districts may share the results with district teachers and staff but **final assessment results cannot be shared publicly**.

In addition, individual student results can be shared with parents and students for instructional purposes. This includes sharing individual student results with parents/guardians through a secure parent portal, as long as no summary results are available. Under FERPA regulations, however, individually-identifying student results cannot be shared publicly at any point.

Final assessment summary results should not be discussed in public forums, posted online, or reflected in public meeting minutes (e.g., school board meetings) until the embargo has ended. This includes any summarization, growth, or accountability calculations determined by the district. See *Sharing Private Student Information Outside the School and District* later in this chapter for the requirements if embargoed results will be provided to school board members, other school officials, and charter school authorizers.

If media outlets contact the district for results during the embargo period, they should be directed to the MDE Communications division. Media outlets must enter into an embargo agreement, which allows them to receive results directly from MDE. If you receive press inquiries after results have been released to the media, you may comment on your results before the embargo is lifted; however, the media cannot publish that story until the embargo is lifted.

In order for MDE to continue to provide final assessment results to districts prior to the public release, it is important that all districts abide by the embargo constraints and timelines.

Abiding by the Embargo

This section has been added to provide further information about abiding by the embargo. As District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) work with district staff to determine how preliminary and final embargoed results will be shared, they also must provide information to all individuals with access to the results about

abiding by the embargo. *NEW!* A resource that can be shared with staff, *What Does It Mean to "Abide by the Embargo"*, is included in Appendix B.

- Consider timing: Since preliminary test results for MCA and MTAS are available during the testing window and ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS early student-level results are available in May, discussions around use of preliminary data may be needed to be shared earlier, with additional information provided when embargoed final results are released.

- Consider audience: Teachers who have access to results definitely need to understand what the embargo means. However, there are other staff members who may not be as directly related to test administration who will need more information too. For example:

  o While some teachers may have access to results or be provided information about results, other staff may simply hear about results as parts of discussions in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or other school committees for instructional or curriculum planning. While this is allowed, districts must remind staff in these instances that results cannot be shared or discussed with those outside of the school or district.

  o Administrators and principals likely have access to all preliminary and final embargoed results and may be the individuals who are asked questions about district and school performance by various stakeholders; it is important that they know what information can and cannot be provided before results are released publicly.

  o District communications staff who talk to the press, distribute information on social media, and prepare communications for the public also need to know when results and related information can be shared publicly.

- Consider what "sharing" means: Depending on how preliminary and final results are shared, DACs may need to clarify what it means to share results. In the majority of cases, sharing may be unintentional, so it is important to explicitly define what is and is not allowed during the embargo so all staff understand.

  o Discussing results in PLCs may be allowable sharing, if all members have a legitimate educational interest in the results, but talking about them with teachers in other districts is not allowed.

  o Summary results cannot be shared or discussed on social media (e.g., a staff member sharing how well the class performed this year) or in response to questions from the media, even in internal school-run publications or newsletters.

  o If results will be shared with school board members, they must follow all requirements outlined in this chapter, and cannot discuss the results in a public setting or answer questions from the media or other members of the public.

NEW! A *Test Security Notification* must be submitted if embargo policies are not followed.

Public Release of Final Assessment Results

Once results are released publicly, the information is available on the Minnesota Report Card (MDE website > Data Center > Minnesota Report Card). It allows users to see how various groups of students across the state and within districts and schools performed on various tests and subjects over the years.

The public release of results also includes assessment-only downloadable data files, which provide summary assessment data for the state, districts, and schools. The downloadable data files are under [Assessment and Growth Files](#) (MDE website > Data Center > Data Reports and Analytics). 🌟 Beginning with 2019 data, MCA and MTAS data are combined in the Assessment and Growth files (under "All Academic Accountability Tests") to give the full picture of results for a grade, subject, and student groups. This is consistent with the way results are reported on the Minnesota Report Card.

Results for the current year are also released in service provider systems once released publicly, as described earlier under *Overview of Secure Systems and Available Reports*.

Summary data is suppressed at certain levels on the public MDE website to protect student privacy. MDE continues to evaluate further suppression rules, and information will be provided in the *Assessment Update* as needed.

Individual Student Reports (ISRs)

Hard copies of the ISRs are mailed to the district to provide to parents/guardians. MDE will post (on its website) the date paper reports have been shipped to districts, and parents/guardians can ask the local district/school when and how the reports will be provided. Note: ISRs must be provided to parents no later than fall conferences.

ⓘ For student data privacy purposes, a staff member must be available to receive the reports when they are delivered to districts and then secure them until distribution.

Federal legislation requires that student reports are distributed to parents/guardians.

- While preliminary/early-student level results or district-created reports based on final test data can be provided to parents earlier than the receipt of the ISRs, MDE requires that districts provide the state-produced results, which have gone through rigorous quality checks.

- However, each district decides if the hard-copy reports are distributed or if electronic versions are provided (i.e., through a secure parent portal); if provided electronically, the final version from Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next or WIDA AMS must be used. ⓘ Hard-copy results must be securely disposed of if providing electronically.

- ⓘ If providing hard-copy reports, consideration should be given to issuing them in a method that maintains student data privacy. Mailing results home or providing them during fall conferences are two distribution methods that protect student data privacy.

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

Final reports for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, including hard-copy Individual Student Reports (ISRs), Roster Reports, and School and District Frequency reports, are sent to the district. The ISR shows all the scores for an individual student, and it provides brief descriptions of each proficiency level to facilitate interpretation. If a translated version of a student's ISR is needed for parents/guardians, it can be downloaded from WIDA AMS to be sent home or discussed at conferences with parents/guardians. Related resources and samples are available

on the [ACCESS for ELLs Scores and Reports page](#) (WIDA website > Assess > ACCESS for ELLs > ACCESS for ELLs Scores and Reports).

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

Paper copies of ISRs and rosters for MCA and MTAS are sent to the district. Electronic versions of the printed ISRs are available in Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next.

The ISR includes the student's overall results as well as performance within the subject. Performance level descriptions are also included on the ISRs to facilitate interpretation. A number of resources are available on [Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources page](#) (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources).

If requested by the district, adhesive student results labels with test score information are provided in the shipment for every student tested. These labels can be used on student permanent hard-copy files. Districts select whether they want to receive the student results labels under District Options in Test WES.

Straggler Data

Following the public release of assessment results in late fall/winter, the DSR/SSR files are updated with straggler assessment data (i.e., assessment data updated after final results were published) for ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS and MCA/MTAS. The loading of straggler data is communicated through the *Assessment Update*. While this data is updated in the DSR/SSR files (and therefore will appear in the Student Assessment History Report), it is not included in accountability calculations or typically loaded in publicly available data (e.g., Minnesota Report Card) unless communicated by MDE; ISRs are not provided.

- For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, this data typically comes from paper test materials that were returned after the shipping deadline or from a score appeal or transcription request.

- For MCA and MTAS, this data typically comes from late score entry requests that were processed after the deadline for results to be included in reporting has passed.

Guidelines for Communicating Assessment Results

Communicating assessment results is often a responsibility of the DAC. The suggestions below come from experienced DACs.

- The DAC should work closely with district administrators (e.g., Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Director) on the plan and procedures for sharing test results with the school board, school administrators, staff, families, and the media. This plan should include:
  - o Who will share the test results with each group
  - o When will the test results be shared with each group and how information on abiding by the embargo will be provided
  - o How and where will the test results be shared with each group
  - o What level of results will be shared with each group

- How test results fit in the overall context of the district's accountability results and other district- and school-level assessment data
- Keep these points in mind when communicating the test results:
  - Determine the main points you want to share and keep the message simple, especially for sharing across social media and with a variety of audiences.
  - Specify the test on which you are reporting and keep the message simple.
    - Explain the purpose of the test and any changes in the test, including changes in the academic standards assessed, or test administration.
    - Use acronyms sparingly; spell out names as much as possible or at least the first time they are introduced.
  - Create tables and graphs that the general public can understand.
  - Be proactive in your reporting message. The initial story will be the first time the public hears about your results.
  - Explain how the data will be used in the district and schools, and how it is used in context with other assessment and instructional data. Avoid defensive comments or making excuses for the results.
  - Highlight new district programs and innovations put in place to improve student achievement.

Possible questions that media and stakeholders may ask include:

- What is your general reaction to the results?
- What are the highlights and lowlights of the data?
- What is the district/school doing to increase achievement?
- What about achievement gaps?
- Why are the scores different from last year?

Using Assessment Results

Districts or schools may want to know how well they did this year compared with last year or how well they did this year compared to another district or school. Similarly, districts and schools may want to know how to track student performance over time. This section provides information about appropriate uses of the Minnesota Assessments results and important considerations to keep in mind when evaluating the data.

ⓘ Additional information has been incorporated throughout this section to provide more context related to the use of results for both standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

Comparing District and School Summary Results

Districts can use test results summary reports and data files, described in this chapter, as well as accountability data provided by MDE to compare district and school results over time.

Making appropriate comparisons and inferences can be complicated when changes in test content and scoring, test participation, or test administration context have occurred. Some information is included in this section, but a history of the Minnesota Assessments is included in the applicable *Technical Manuals*, described below under *Additional Reporting Resources*.

The first consideration to keep in mind for MCA and MTAS is the Minnesota Academic Standards that are assessed. Results should only be compared across years where the same versions of the academics standards were assessed. Refer to Table 36 for additional information; the schedule for revisions to the Minnesota Academic Standards is in Appendix B, *Building a Test*.

Table 36. Comparing MCA and MTAS Assessment Results from Year to Year

Test	Grades	Year Standards Last Revised	First Year Assessed on Revised Standards	Years Scores Are Comparable
Mathematics MCA and MTAS	3–8	2007	2011	2011 to present
Mathematics MCA and MTAS	11	2007	2014	2014 to present
Science MCA and MTAS	5, 8, HS	2009	2012	2012 to present
Reading MCA and MTAS	3–8, 10	2010	2013	2013 to present

Even within the period of time where the same standards are assessed, there may be other changes to keep in mind.

- When individual student graduation stakes associated with high school MCA tests changed in 2013–14, students no longer needed to achieve proficiency as a way to meet graduation assessment requirements. Consideration should be given to the extent to which performance changes are attributed to content mastery versus motivation.

- Similarly, comparing the results of the 2012 Mathematics MCA-III, with three online testing opportunities, against those of single-opportunity administrations in 2013 or afterward poses a number of interpretive challenges.

- From 2011 to 2014, schools could offer the MCA-Modified to persistently low-performing special education students in place of the MCA. As a result, participation on the MCA by special education students may have declined in some districts and schools. Starting in 2015, the MCA-Modified was no longer offered, and thus special education student participation in the MCA may have increased.

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS were first administered in 2012, and the test design for grades 1–12 ACCESS changed significantly in the 2015–16 school year. As a result, student results for grades 1–12 ACCESS should only be compared from 2017 to present. However, the test design did not change for Kindergarten ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, and student results can be compared for these groups from 2012 to present.

Using Subscores

Strand and substrand (or subscore) data for MCA is provided in DSR/SSR files, Test Results Summary reports, and Benchmark Reports. In addition, the Subscore Report is available publicly on the Data Reports and Analytics page and provides summarized subscore data for MCA.

Analysis of MCA subscore data at the district or school level may be an appropriate way to evaluate performance over time, especially looking at the proportions of students at the three different levels (Below Expectations, At or Near Expectations, and Above Expectations). However, using these scores at the student level is not an effective use of the data; local district and classroom assessment information is much better suited for student-level discussions.

Using Benchmark Reports

MCA Benchmark Reports are available in PearsonAccess Next annually in September. The reports were redesigned beginning with the spring 2019 administration, and benchmark reports and resources for previous years were removed. Benchmark reports are produced for each grade level for the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs and measure and report school- and district-level performance on each benchmark assessed from the Minnesota Academic Standards for the current year.

The benchmark reports are designed to be an additional resource educators can use to identify benchmarks within a grade and subject for which a school or district shows performance less than, similar to, and greater than the current year's MCA relative to the "Meets" achievement level—in other words, how those students who perform at the "Meets" achievement level on the test would likely perform on the particular items for a given benchmark. When analyzing a benchmark report, it is important to have conversations about the full educational experience and consider other factors, such as curriculum, instructional practices, and other school- and district-level assessment data.

Resources to support districts in the appropriate use and understanding of the benchmark report are available on the Additional Reporting Resources page (PearsonAccess Next > Reporting Resources > Additional Reporting Resources).

Using Individual Student Results

While federal and state legislation requires that individual student scores are reported for the assessments, it is important that parents/guardians and educators are given information and guidance on the appropriate use of these scores.

- As summative assessments, MCA and MTAS are designed as a "system check" at the school or district level, and their results may be appropriate to use at a student group level. While individual student results may be of some use, districts and families should consider the limitations of analyzing individual results as they provide information from one point in time. When making educational decisions about individual students, a comprehensive approach should be taken, with other assessment and instructional data used in conjunction with MCA and MTAS data.

- When looking at individual student results, a common tendency is to compare individual student scale scores from the past year to those in the current year. However, scale scores for the standards-based accountability assessments are based only on grade-level content, and it is not possible to compare the scale scores across grades. Achievement levels, however, may be used for comparison from year to year.

- Based on revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, student progress scores for grades 3–8 MCA will not be reported, beginning with results from the 2019–20 administrations.

- The English language proficiency accountability assessments are also summative assessments, but the scores are designed to evaluate an individual student's progress in acquiring English, as well as evaluate EL programs and instruction at a school or district level.

  - For individual students, the data may be used to inform individual instruction and planning, as well as exiting decisions; it can also be used to monitor student progress in the general curriculum and content classes.

  - The scale scores within a domain are on a vertical scale and do have meaning across grade levels, so they can be compared within a domain from year to year. However, the scale scores for each domain are independent and do not have meaning across domains.

Achievement Levels and Proficiency Levels

For MCA and MTAS, students are assigned an achievement level based on their scale score. There are four achievement levels for MCA (Exceeds, Meets, Partially Meets, and Does Not Meet the Standards) and MTAS (Exceeds, Meets, Partially Meets, and Does Not Meet the Alternate Achievement Standards). The achievement level provides a general measure to compare a student's performance from year to year. A student who moves up an achievement level from one grade to the next has demonstrated positive growth because they are showing greater mastery of more difficult standards. Students who maintain partially meeting, meeting, or exceeding the standards also display growth because students' skills must improve from the previous grade's standards in order to remain at the same achievement level across grades.

Corresponding achievement level descriptors (ALDs) for MCA and MTAS are also available (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Achievement Level Descriptors). The ALDs can be used to communicate about the basic skills and knowledge expected of the typical student at each achievement level. The ALDs give concrete meaning to a scale score by outlining the knowledge, skills, and abilities at each achievement level for each subject assessed, and they can be used as examples when talking with others about student performance. The ALDs may be used as a tool to inform parents of the performance expectations for their child and to suggest changes in skills and knowledge as a student moves from one achievement level to another, higher level. The ALDs, and supplementary ALD Maps, can also be used by educators in instructional planning and to evaluate the rigor of their curriculum and classroom assessments. Additionally, they can be useful to improve vertical alignment of skills across grade levels.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, students are assigned a proficiency level based on their scale score. There are six WIDA English language proficiency levels: 1–Entering, 2–Emerging, 3–Developing, 4–Expanding, 5–Bridging, 6–Reaching.

- Proficiency level scores are presented as whole numbers followed by a decimal. The whole number indicates the student's language proficiency level based on the WIDA ELD Standards. The decimal indicates the proportion within the proficiency level range that the student's scale score represents, rounded to the nearest tenth.

- The interpretation of scale scores to proficiency level scores is grade specific, not grade-level cluster specific. For example, a Reading scale score of 355 for a fifth grade student is interpreted as Level 4.0. The same scale score for a fourth grader results in Level 4.6, and for a third grade student that scale score results in Level 5.2.

- Each domain reports a separate score; therefore, the same scale score in Listening and Reading does not become the same proficiency level score. For example, consider a sixth grade student in grade-level cluster 6–8. She has a scale score of 370 for Listening and therefore has a proficiency level score of 4.3, while she has a scale score of 370 for Reading and therefore has a proficiency level score of 3.8.

For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, corresponding performance definitions are the equivalent of the ALDs. These performance definitions assist families, teachers, and administrators with the interpretation of the proficiency levels reported on a six-point scale. All of these resources are available in the WIDA Resource Library (WIDA website > Resource Library). In addition, "Can Do" descriptors are available for the ACCESS levels of performance. Educators can use the data to create personal learning profiles based on ACCESS scores, the Can Do descriptors, and classroom data. Knowledge of student proficiency levels across the four language domains can be used to offer instructional supports that enhance access to content and advance language use and development. Ongoing ACCESS data can be used to inform the creation and use of appropriate formative language assessments in the classroom. Additionally, the data can be used to support EL and content educator planning and collaboration to help provide ELs with opportunities throughout the school day to develop English language in all content areas.

Career and College Readiness Scores

Student career and college readiness (CCR) scores for grades 10 and 11 are provided for Reading and Mathematics MCAs on ISRs and in DSR/SSR files. These scores, required by Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, are measures of students' career and college readiness. Note: they are not reported for science.

Goal scores have been established for student CCR scores to compare whether students are on track to pass a college entrance exam by the end of grade 11. Additional information about CCR scores, including the goal progress scores, is available in the *District and School Student Results (DSR/SSR) User Guide* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Assessment Secure Reports).

For grades 10 and 11, the student's MCA reading or mathematics scale score is on the same scale as the CCR goal score and can help determine if a student is on track to demonstrate career and college readiness.

- Students who are at or above the CCR goal score are expected to be on track to demonstrate college and career readiness in that subject on a college admissions test at the end of grade 11, and to be able to successfully complete coursework in their respective subject without remediation.

- Student scores below the CCR goal score may indicate that the student's performance is not on track to meet career and college readiness.

Placement Scores

Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 indicates that Minnesota State colleges and universities may use the student's high school MCA scale score as one measure to inform course placement. Minnesota State colleges and universities have established MCA-III Placement Score Ranges to determine whether a student should be enrolled in a credit bearing college-level course or enrolled in a developmental non-credit bearing college course. For more information about how Minnesota State colleges and universities may use high school Reading and Mathematics MCA scores to help determine college course enrollment, call Minnesota State at 800-456-8519 or go to the Minnesota State Academic Readiness page (minnstate.edu > System Office Divisions > Academic and Student Affairs > Student Affairs > Academic Readiness).

Growth Z-Scores

Based on revisions to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30, growth z-scores are no longer required to be publicly reported. MDE is evaluating whether growth z-scores will continue to be reported on the ISR (as student growth levels of high, medium, and low) and in the DSR/SSR files for MCA. Further information about the reporting of growth z-scores will be communicated in the *Assessment Update*.

Accountability Measures

The North Star accountability system under ESSA uses five indicators that also may be used when evaluating results, including Academic Achievement, Academic Progress, and Progress Toward English Language Proficiency. More information on these indicators and how they are used in accountability is available on the Accountability Indicators page (MDE > Districts, Schools and Educators > School Achievement > School and District Accountability > Accountability Indicators). Email mde.essa@state.mn.us for any questions on accountability measures.

Keep in mind when looking at final assessment and accountability results that students may be included differently. For example, final assessment results include all students tested in the school and district whereas accountability results use different criteria to determine which student results are included (e.g., enrolled during the accountability window, enrolled half an academic year).

Additional Reporting Resources

Technical Reports

This section provides additional information on the assessment technical reports provided by MDE. Technical reports provide background and technical information about the construction, scoring, and psychometric characteristics of the statewide assessments; the majority of the available reports are for MCA and MTAS. View the Technical Reports page (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Technical Reports). The types of reports available on this section of the website include:

- **Achievement Level Cut Scores**: A document that provides the minimum scale scores required for each achievement level on the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCAs.

- **Alignment Reviews**: Information about studies conducted to evaluate the alignment of the grade-level assessments and the Minnesota Academic Standards.

- **Raw-to-Scale-Score Tables**: Documents that provide the correspondence between raw score (number of questions correct) and scale score for a specific test subject and grade. They are provided for the Science MCA and all subjects of the MTAS; raw-to-scale score conversion approaches are feasible only when all students take the same fixed form of the test.

- **Scale Score-Percentile Rank Tables**: Documents that provide the scale scores that correspond to the achievement level and percentile rank for each grade and subject. While the percentile ranks are updated annually, the scale score cuts for the achievement levels remain consistent from year to year until new academic standards are implemented. For Reading and Mathematics MCAs, the scale score is not based on a raw score total but on the specific pattern of correct and incorrect responses given by the student to the particular set of items that they were administered.

- **Standard Setting Technical Reports**: Reports on the process used to set the achievement levels for assessments that categorize student performance.

- **Technical Manuals and Yearbooks**: *Technical Manuals* provide detailed information on the construction, scoring, reporting, and psychometric characteristics for assessments. The corresponding *Yearbooks* provide statistics on the measurement properties and score distributions of the assessments for administrations during an academic year.

ⓘ For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, Scale Score to Proficiency Level Tables are available in the WIDA Secure Portal Download Library (log in to the WIDA Secure Portal required). These tables provide the scale scores that correspond to the proficiency levels for each grade and domain. The scale score cuts for the proficiency levels remain the same from year to year and can be applied back through the 2017 administration.

Perspective and Learning Locators

Pearson's Perspective website provides learning resources for families (through the Perspective for Families site) and educators (through the Perspective for Educators site). Both of the Perspective sites are available on PearsonAccess Next under Quick Links.

- Perspective for Families can be accessed without logging in or creating an account.

- For Perspective for Educators, resources are available to browse without an account; however an account is required in order to create assignments and quizzes to assign to students. To browse resources in Perspective for Educators without an account, enter the "mn_edu" pass phrase.

Learning Locator codes are provided for students on MCA On-Demand Reports and Individual Student Reports, and these codes lead directly to targeted instructional resources within the Perspective sites. Students, families, and educators can enter these codes into Perspective to access resources aligned to the student's achievement level. The Learning Locator Codes for Educators provides a reference list for the Learning Locator codes by grade and performance standard. For details on how to use Perspective, refer to the quick start guides available on the Perspective sites.

Lexile and Quantile Measures

Reading MCA On-Demand Reports and ISRs include student Lexile scores. The Lexile Framework, developed by MetaMetrics® Inc., measures a student's reading ability and provides the reading level of various texts. Parents and teachers can use Lexiles to determine whether a text with a known Lexile level is too easy, too difficult, or at the right level for a student. When reading a book within the predicted Lexile range, the reader should comprehend enough of the text to make sense of it, while still being challenged enough to maintain interest and learn from it. Students who read text at the right level are more likely to improve their reading skills.

Mathematics MCA On-Demand Reports and ISRs include student Quantile scores. The Quantiles Framework, developed by MetaMetrics® Inc., describes a student's ability to solve mathematical problems and the demand of mathematical skills and concepts. Quantile measures provide insight into a student's readiness to learn more advanced mathematical skills and concepts; using mathematics materials within the predicted Quantile range can challenge students without overwhelming them.

View additional information and find links to other resources on the Lexile and Quantile Measures page (MDE website > District, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Minnesota Tests > Lexile and Quantile Measures).

Public and Parental Review of Statewide Assessments Policy

MDE provides public and parental access to tests as outlined in *Policy for Public and Parental Review of Statewide Assessments* in Appendix B. All requests must be made in writing to the Division of Statewide Testing to set up a mutually agreeable time to view materials at MDE in Roseville.

Use of Student Information and Results

This section includes detailed information about data practices and the use of student information, including results.

Sharing Student Information in the School and District

Two laws govern how schools and districts must use and manage student information: the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA).

FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all districts and schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

- View FERPA language on the U.S. Department of Education website.

- View FERPA language on the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations page of the U.S. Government Printing Office website.

MGDPA, Chapter 13 of the Minnesota Statutes, also governs student information and establishes general requirements for data practices in schools. It applies to all public schools, including charter schools.

- View [MDGPA language](#) on the Minnesota Revisor's website.
- View [MGDPA language governing educational data](#) on the Minnesota Revisor's website.

Each district determines their district data privacy policies and procedures and how data will be shared within the district. These policies and procedures should be reviewed and shared with staff annually. In addition, districts are annually required to provide notification to parents/guardians about FERPA rights.

Much of the information in the student test reports and data files, such as test scores and eligibility for a free/reduced-priced meal, is classified as private data under both FERPA and the MGDPA. If the information is directly related to an individual student, then it is classified as private educational data and cannot be shared, even within the school community, unless either the district and school has parental consent to do so or an exception in state or federal law allows the data to be shared with the intended recipient. The responsibility to keep this information private applies to all individuals who have access to it, including teachers, teacher aides, and other education professionals working in the school and district.

One exception in FERPA allows the school and district to share private data from a student's record with school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in knowing the information. Each school and district makes its own determination as to whether teachers have a legitimate educational interest in a specific piece of information from a student's record (such as eligibility for a free/reduced-price meal). Thus, schools and districts should proactively make this determination **before** giving access to specific information about individual students to teachers and other school personnel. The MGDPA also requires that individuals should not have access to an individual student's private data unless they have a work assignment that requires access to the information. Therefore, information from a student's test reports and data files, including eligibility for a free/reduced-price meal, should be shared only with individuals who are directly involved in administering and enforcing an educational program, and who have a specific legitimate educational interest in knowing the information.

If a school plans to share information about all students with all teachers in the school, then it must be able to justify that all of the teachers have a legitimate educational interest in knowing the information about individual students, such as to coordinate services and training or to help students improve educational outcomes. However, schools should consider whether this method of sharing is most useful to the students (as opposed to convenience for staff). From a best practices perspective, schools should share student data on as limited a basis as possible to serve the needs of the students while also protecting their rights and privacy. MDE does not recommend that schools share all student test reports and data files with all teachers.

Note: The requirement for a non-disclosure agreement for sharing results described in the next section is specific to school officials who are not district and school employees, such as board members, contractors, or consultants. Districts should follow their district data privacy policies and procedures for district and school staff who have access to preliminary or final embargoed results.

Sharing Students' Private Information and Results Outside the School and District

School Board Members and Other School Officials

Schools and districts may only share student information (such as test scores and other information about the student in test data files) with the parent/guardian's consent or if a state or federal law allows the data to be shared with the intended recipient.

Schools and districts may choose to share educational data within the educational agency with school officials, including with the school board and contractors hired by the district. Like all FERPA exceptions, the exception allowing schools to share educational data within the educational agency is permissive but not required. If a school chooses to share data with the school board or contractors, it should do so selectively and only when it has determined that they have a legitimate educational interest in the information. Note that contractors hired by the district are included in the definition of "school officials" if they meet all of the following:

- They perform an institutional service or function for which the agency or institution would otherwise use employees;

- They are under the direct control of the agency or institution with respect to the use and maintenance of education records; and

- They are bound by FERPA requirements not to re-disclose personally identifiable information from an education record to any other party without the prior consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student, and will use it only for the purposes for which the disclosure was made.

- The school's annual notification of FERPA rights includes contractors or consultants as school officials with a legitimate educational interest in education records. Typically, this means putting in place a contract or other written agreement with the outside entity that establishes expectations about data practices.

Preliminary results and embargoed final assessment and accountability results are included in the data schools and districts may share with their school board members and other school officials. Refer to *Sharing Preliminary and Embargoed Assessment Results with School Officials* below for the policy on sharing this data.

Charter School Authorizers

Charter schools also may wish to report some information to their charter school authorizers to show how students are performing on statewide tests.

- If a charter school does not want to share student-level data with the charter authorizer, it can share summary data that reports testing information about groups of students in a way that does not potentially identify any individual student.

- If a charter school is considering sharing private student-level data with their authorizer, a FERPA exception allows schools to do so with an authorized representative for purposes of evaluating or auditing an educational program, or for purposes of ensuring compliance with federal education program requirements.

- To share student data with its authorizer under this exception, a charter school must determine that the purpose is compliant with FERPA; it must designate the authorizer as an authorized representative; and it must enter into a data sharing agreement with the authorizer.

As a best practice, MDE recommends that charter schools limit the amount of private information shared to that which is necessary, and that schools consider removing identifying student information, even if they enter into an authorized representative data-sharing agreement. The school should work with its legal counsel or other qualified person to ensure that the data-sharing agreement satisfies FERPA requirements.

Preliminary assessment results and embargoed final assessment and accountability results are included in the data charter schools may share with their authorizers. If only summary-level information is provided, a data sharing agreement is not required, but a non-disclosure agreement for these results is required; see the next section for additional information. If student-level data will be shared and a data sharing agreement is in place, it must include non-disclosure provisions about preliminary and embargoed final results if they will be shared.

Sharing Preliminary and Embargoed Assessment Results with School Officials

This section outlines the policy on sharing preliminary and embargoed data with school officials, including school board members and contractors hired by the district. (Charter schools can share results with charter school authorizers under a FERPA exception, as defined in the previous section; requirements in this section must also be followed for authorizers if a data sharing agreement is not in place or it does not address preliminary or embargoed final results.)

Only those school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the assessment results should have access to preliminary assessment results or embargoed final assessment and accountability results in any form.

Schools should limit the number of individuals who have access to preliminary results and/or final embargoed results, and must collect and retain non-disclosure agreements for all school officials who have access to these results in any form. These agreements must then be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. Such non-disclosure agreements are developed by districts and include confirmation that the individual will not share preliminary or embargoed assessment results prior to public release; a sample non-disclosure that may be used by districts for school officials is available in Appendix A.

If preliminary or embargoed results will be shared, they cannot be discussed in public forums, posted online, or reflected in public meeting minutes until the embargo has ended. Refer to *Embargoed Final Results* earlier in this chapter for more information. Note: Individual student-level results should not be shared publicly at any point as required under FERPA regulations. Student-level results should only be shared with school officials with a legitimate educational interest or others who are permitted by the MGDPA or FERPA to access private educational data, as described previously.

MDE Data Sharing

FERPA and the MGDPA place similar restrictions on MDE. FERPA regulations authorize MDE to redisclose private information about a student without consent only in limited situations:

- If the redisclosure is to an organization conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of improving instruction, or

- If the redisclosure is to authorized representatives for evaluation or audit of a state or federally funded education program.

In order for SIS and Data Warehouse vendors to receive extracts of preliminary results data for the MCA and MTAS during the testing window from Pearson and final data from MDE on behalf of their member districts, a data sharing agreement between the district and vendor must be on file with MDE. A separate data sharing agreement is required if a district has different vendors for preliminary and final data.

If MDE shares data with outside researchers or authorized representatives, it must enter a data sharing agreement before any data is shared. The agreement must identify the entity that will receive the data, the purpose for which the data will be used, the scope of data that will be shared, and how the entity will protect the privacy and security of the data. When sharing private student information from assessment data files with researchers or authorized representatives, MDE takes additional steps to protect data privacy. For example, all requests are reviewed by the MDE Data Sharing Review Team, and generally MDE does not share student identifiers such as name, MARSS number, or date of birth with researchers. MDE requests that districts and schools take similar steps to comply with FERPA and protect student privacy when sharing data with researchers.

Any entity (e.g., law firm, research organization) or individual outside of a school district that wishes to request assessment data must complete a data request. View the Data Practices section for more information (MDE website > About > Data Practices).

Secure Methods for Sharing Student Information

MDE recommends that schools and districts avoid using email to share student test results with staff members. If they choose to use email to share data, MDE requests that they use a secure email method ensuring the content of the email cannot be viewed by someone other than the intended recipient. Complete student demographic information (i.e., combination of student name, date of birth, and MARSS/SSID number) should **not** be emailed outside the district or school network for any reason. This includes screenshots or attachments where student information is included.

In addition, send only a student's MARSS number to MDE when requesting help on student records. Do not send multiple demographic data elements (e.g., a combination of student name, date of birth, and MARSS number) electronically. This includes screenshots of MDE systems or attachments where student information is shown. Districts should use the File Exchange in Test WES to upload a file if secure information needs to be provided to MDE.

Providing Assessment Results When Students Move or Are Not Enrolled

When a student moves between schools or districts, the school/district where the student tested is authorized under a FERPA exception to release test results to the receiving school or district. Minnesota law also requires that when a student transfers, the public school must transmit the student's educational records to the new school in which the student enrolls. Parents/guardians requesting test scores will need to contact the school district where their child was tested to receive them.

MDE expects districts and schools to provide statewide assessment results (and districts may also include any local assessment results, if they choose) to the receiving school or district when a student moves. However, if the sending school or district does not provide the test results, the receiving school or district may use the Student Assessment History Report to look up the statewide assessment history for any student enrolled in their district.

To obtain assessment history for students who are no longer enrolled, the district should first contact the district where the student was previously enrolled. If the DAC in the previous district cannot locate the requested test scores or does not respond, the DAC in the new district must complete a data request. View the Data Practices section for more information (MDE website > About > Data Practices).

Note: Since students enrolled in nonpublic schools are not submitted in MARSS, nonpublic schools cannot look up assessment history through the Student Assessment History Report.

Appendix A — Forms

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure

Effective for school year 2019–20

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is required by state statute to implement statewide testing programs. Test security must be maintained to provide equal opportunity for all students to demonstrate their academic achievement, and to ensure the validity of test scores and the integrity of state assessments. Failure to maintain test security jeopardizes district and state accountability requirements and the accuracy of student, school, district, and state data. Test scores are included in important decisions about students' future success; it is essential that they accurately reflect what students know and are able to do. **This assurance, as part of the *Test Security Training*, must be completed prior to involvement in any aspect of test administration**.

All test content, secure test materials, and student responses, whether in draft or final form, are considered secure, and only authorized district or school staff/personnel are permitted to have access to them. Authorized district or school staff/personnel:

- Are district and school administrators, teachers, building staff, or other persons designated by the district who have a role in storing, distributing, coordinating, or administering tests and/or have keys to storage locations of secure test materials.
- Have completed appropriate training annually to fulfill their assigned roles.

Responsibilities of authorized district and school staff/personnel who may potentially interact with secure test content, student responses, and data are outlined in the *Procedures Manual of the Minnesota Assessments* (hereafter *Procedures Manual)*. By completing this assurance, you agree to the following:

- As required for my role in the administration of the statewide testing program, I am responsible for understanding relevant information contained in the current year's *Procedures Manual* and directions for test administration. I will abide by policies and procedures detailed in the resources for statewide test administration.
- As required for my role, I am or will be trained in the administration policies and procedures for statewide tests before participating in any part of statewide test administration.
- As required for my role, I will instruct staff on state and district procedures for maintaining test security and will not allow unauthorized persons to distribute, coordinate or administer tests, or have access to secure test content and materials.
- As required for my role, I will follow the procedures in the *Procedures Manual* to investigate and notify the appropriate school and district staff or the Minnesota Department of Education immediately upon learning of potential misconduct or irregularities, whether intentional or unintentional.
- I understand that MDE has the responsibility to oversee the administration of the statewide tests. I will cooperate fully with MDE representatives, and school officials when applicable, in all aspects of test security compliance including, but not limited to, monitoring visits, desk audits, and investigations.
- I understand that test data and documents that contain student-level information are considered confidential and secure, both throughout test administration and after preliminary and final test results are available. When working with student-identifying information and student tests and results, both during and after test administration, I will follow all applicable federal and state data privacy laws related to student educational data.

This includes data within reports and data accessible in electronic systems provided by MDE or its service provider(s).

- I acknowledge that actively promoting the discouragement of student(s) and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) from test participation could result in negative consequences for my school or district.
- I understand my responsibility to enforce proper testing procedures and to ensure the security and confidential integrity of the test(s). I will apply and follow procedures designed to keep test content secure and to ensure the validity of test results. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - o Recognizing the rights of students and families to accurate test results that reflect students' individual, unassisted achievement.
  - o Protecting the confidentiality of statewide assessments and ensuring the validity of students' results by safeguarding test content, keeping test materials secure, and adhering to chain of custody requirements.
  - o Never retaining secure test materials in my custody beyond the allowed times to process, distribute, coordinate, administer, and return them, as appropriate for my role.
  - o Ensuring that no part of the paper or online tests are outlined, summarized, paraphrased, discussed, released, distributed to unauthorized personnel, printed, copied, photographed, recorded, or retained in original or duplicated format, without the explicit permission of MDE or as authorized in the *Procedures Manual*.
  - o Never permitting or engaging in the unauthorized use of student information to log in to the online testing system or access an online test.
  - o Never engaging in, or allowing others to engage in, unauthorized viewing, discussion, or analysis of test content before, during, or after testing.
  - o Actively monitoring students during test administration for prohibited behavior.
  - o Never leaving students unattended during test administration or under the supervision of untrained staff or volunteers.
  - o Never influencing test results by providing students with answers to secure test items, suggesting how to respond to secure test items, or influencing student responses to secure test items. Prohibited actions include, but are not limited to: providing clues or hints; providing reminders of content or testing strategies; prompting students to correct or check/recheck specific responses; permitting access to curricular materials (e.g., textbooks, notes, review materials, bulletin boards, posters, charts, maps, timelines, etc.); or using voice inflection, facial gestures, pointing, gesturing, tapping, or other actions to indicate a response or accuracy of a student's response.
  - o Never formally or informally scoring secure tests or individual test items except as required by the test-specific manuals and directions. Prohibited actions include but are not limited to: creating an answer key; reviewing or scoring a student's item response or responses unless items are designed to be scored by the test administrator using a rubric or script; retaining, reviewing, or scoring student scratch paper or paper test materials; or tracking student performance on test items.
  - o Never altering or engaging in other prohibited involvement with student responses.
  - o Never inducing or encouraging others to violate the procedures outlined above or to engage in any conduct that jeopardizes test security or the validity of test scores.

By accepting the terms of this assurance, you name yourself as an employee of the district or as an authorized person selected by the district. You also affirm that you are authorized by the district during the current academic school year to have access to secure test materials or student data related to statewide test administrations, including student identifying information and student tests and results, and hereby agree to be bound by the terms of this assurance. Consequences for failure to abide by these terms include, but are not limited to, further training requirements, the invalidation of student tests, and actions at the discretion of the school district.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (printed) _____ District/School _____

mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Test Administration Report

District Name/Number: _____

School Name/Number: _____

Date: _____ Form Completed By: _____

Signature: _____ Test: _____

The *Test Administration Report* (TAR) is used to record a variety of special circumstances, including, but not limited to, test misadministrations and reasons for invalidations. This report may be used to help answer questions from district staff, parents, and the media about what occurred during testing when student results are available. It may also be requested by MDE for audits or monitoring conducted by MDE. Refer to Chapter 3 of the *Procedures Manual* for additional information about circumstances and incidents to document on this form.

Provide the student information and description of the circumstance or incident below. If an adult was involved (e.g., translator), include the adult's name, signature, and role in test administration in the description. Attach additional sheets to this form as needed.

Districts are not required to return the TAR to MDE or service providers, unless requested. However, districts must maintain records for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place for audits or monitoring conducted by MDE, or to answer questions when reports are received. If completed by the School Assessment Coordinator, a copy of the report should be forwarded to the District Assessment Coordinator.

Name of Student	Gr.	MARSS (13 digits)	Description

Request for Late Score Entry Form

Pearson Minnesota Program Team Fax: 319-358-4299

Use this form to request late score entry if student responses in MCA paper test materials or MTAS scores were not entered during the testing windows. Only one student's late score may be submitted per request. There is a **$125 fee** for late score entry for up to 10 students after the close of the test window. A purchase order (PO) made payable to Pearson must be included with the completed form. Please keep a copy of this completed form for your records.

For MTAS, fax this completed form, purchase order, the MTAS Data Collection Form with reading, mathematics and/or science scores, and Learner Characteristic Inventory (LCI) data (if not already entered). If the scores were returned with the Task Administration Manual, ensure the security number is provided below, and submit the request as soon as possible.

For MCA paper test materials:

- If test materials **have** been returned to Pearson, fax this completed form and purchase order. Indicate when test materials were shipped and ensure the test book security number(s) are provided below. Submit these requests as soon as possible to ensure test materials can be located in a timely manner.
- If the test materials **have not** yet been returned to Pearson, **FAX** this completed form and purchase order to Pearson. **SHIP** the used test materials to Pearson at the following address: Pearson, Attn: Minnesota Program Team; 2510 North Dodge Street, Iowa City, IA 52245. Pearson does not supply return labels for this shipment. Once secure materials are received by Pearson, they will be removed from the missing materials list.

Note: If you do not have access to a fax machine, contact the Pearson help desk at 888-817-8659 or submit a Pearson help desk request for other options to securely submit the information.

DISTRICT/SCHOOL INFORMATION

District and School Name:_____

District #: _____ School #: _____ Phone #:_____

District Assessment Coordinator: _____ PO #:_____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name (last, first, MI): _____

Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy):_____Gender: _____Grade: _____

MARSS/SSID (13 digits): _____Date Tested: _____

LATE SCORE ENTRY AND TEST MATERIAL INFORMATION

Test:	Subject:	Test Material Security Number:	How Returned:
☐ MCA	☐ Mathematics	_____	☐ Returned with Secure Materials
☐ MTAS	☐ Reading	_____	☐ Shipped to Program Team
	☐ Science	_____	

Shipment Tracking Number: _____ Date Shipped: _____

_____   _____
DAC Signature   *Date*

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) for Alternate Assessments on Alternate Achievement Standards

Kearns, J., Kleinert, H., Kleinert, J., & Towles-Reeves, E. (2006). Learner Characteristics Inventory. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, National Alternate Assessment Center.

Use this form to collect student LCI data and assistive technology information for entry into PearsonAccess Next. **This form must be kept in a secure location for one year following entry of data into PearsonAccess Next.**

Select any of the assistive technology device(s) that the student will use on the assessment. If the student will not use any assistive technology device(s), select the "No assistive technology devices used" checkbox.

Student Name (last, first, MI): _____

Grade: _____ MARSS/SSID (13 digits): _____ Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

District and School: _____ Test Administrator: _____

Purpose: This inventory will be used to assist states in describing the population of students who take alternate assessments on alternate achievement standards. These students represent less than 1% of the total student population and come from a variety of disability categories but represent students with the "most significant cognitive disabilities."

1. **Classroom Setting (check the best description)**
   - ☐ Special school
   - ☐ Regular school, self-contained classroom for almost all activities
   - ☐ Regular school self-contained classroom except for homeroom, lunch, and "specials"
   - ☐ Self-contained (children go to some general education academic classes but return to special education (61% or more of school day in special education classes))
   - ☐ Resource room (e.g., children come for services and then go back to their general education classroom (at least 40% of the school day in general education classes))
   - ☐ Inclusive/Collaborative – students based in general education classes, special education services delivered in the general education class (at least 80% of the school day in general education classes)

2. **Augmentative Communication System (check the best description)**
   Does your student use an augmentative communication system in addition to or in place of oral speech?
   - ☐ No
   - ☐ Yes; uses only one symbol or sign at a time and is able to use only a few symbols in total to express simple or early intents (e.g., drink, eat, toilet, greeting, preferred activity, refusal).
   - ☐ Yes; can combine two symbols together to express broader intents such as social content, answer simple questions, etc. (e.g., expresses greetings, peer names, social exchanges, personal interests).
   - ☐ Yes; uses mostly iconic symbols (clear representations) or signs together in sequence to express functional intents, extensive social interactions, academic content, and to respond consistently to answer questions.
   - ☐ Yes; uses multiple abstract symbols, signs, or print in sentences or phrases on the augmentative communication system to express a variety of academic, social, and self-initiated interactions.

3. **Speech Language as a Related Service (check the best description of the extent to which the student is receiving speech/language as a related service)**

☐ Direct services for communication/language therapy (pull-out)
☐ Direct services integrated into student's routine/classroom-collaboration
☐ Consultation services only
☐ Student does not currently receive speech language as a related service

4. **Expressive Communication (check one answer that best describes your student)**

☐ Uses symbolic language to communicate: Student uses verbal or written words, signs, braille, or language-based augmentative systems to request, initiate, and respond to questions, describe things or events, and express refusal.
☐ Uses intentional communication, but not at a symbolic language level: Student uses understandable communication through such modes as gestures, pictures, objects/textures, points, etc., to clearly express a variety of intentions.
☐ Student communicates primarily through cries, facial expressions, change in muscle tone, etc., but no clear use of objects/textures, regularized gestures, pictures, signs, etc., to communicate.

5. **Receptive Language (check the best description)**

☐ Independently follows 1–2 step directions presented through words (e.g., words may be spoken, signed, printed, or any combination) and does NOT need additional cues.
☐ Requires additional cues (e.g., gestures, pictures, objects, or demonstrations/models) to follow 1–2 step directions.
☐ Alerts to sensory input from another person (auditory, visual, touch, movement) BUT requires actual physical assistance to follow simple directions.
☐ Uncertain response to sensory stimuli (e.g., sound/voice, sight/gesture, touch, movement, smell).

6. **Vision (check the best description)**

☐ Vision within normal limits.
☐ Corrected vision within normal limits.
☐ Low vision; uses vision for some activities of daily living.
☐ No functional use of vision for activities of daily living, or unable to determine functional use of vision.

7. **Hearing (check the best description)**

☐ Hearing within normal limits.
☐ Corrected hearing loss within normal limits.
☐ Hearing loss aided, but still with a significant loss.
☐ Profound loss, even with aids.
☐ Unable to determine functional use of hearing.

8. **Motor (check the best description)**

☐ No significant motor dysfunction that requires adaptations.
☐ Requires adaptations to support motor functioning (e.g., walker, adapted utensils, and/or keyboard).
☐ Uses wheelchair, positioning equipment, and/or assistive devices for most activities.
☐ Needs personal assistance for most/all motor activities.

9. **Engagement (check the best description)**

☐ Initiates and sustains social interactions.
☐ Responds with social interaction, but does not initiate or sustain social interactions.
☐ Alerts to others.
☐ Does not alert to others.

10. Health Issues/Attendance (check the best description)
- ☐ Attends at least 90% of school days.
- ☐ Attends approximately 75% of school days; absences primarily due to health issues.
- ☐ Attends approximately 50% or less of school days; absences primarily due to health issues.
- ☐ Receives Homebound Instruction due to health issues.
- ☐ Highly irregular attendance or homebound instruction due to issues other than health.

11. Reading (check the best description)
- ☐ Reads fluently with critical understanding in print or braille (e.g., to differentiate fact/opinion, point of view, emotional response, etc.).
- ☐ Reads fluently with basic (literal) understanding from paragraphs/short passages with narrative/informational texts in print or braille.
- ☐ Reads basic sight words, simple sentences, directions, bullets, and/or lists in print or braille.
- ☐ Aware of text/braille, follows directionality, makes letter distinctions, or tells a story from the pictures that are not linked to the text.
- ☐ No observable awareness of print or braille.

12. Mathematics (check the best description)
- ☐ Applies computational procedures to solve real-life or routine word problems from a variety of contexts.
- ☐ Does computational procedures with or without a calculator.
- ☐ Counts with 1:1 correspondence to at least 10, and/or makes numbered sets of items.
- ☐ Counts by rote to 5.
- ☐ No observable awareness or use of numbers.

Teacher Comments: Please share any additional information you would like for us to know about the learning characteristics of this student. Thank you for your time and honest answers.

Please check any assistive technology devices the student will use on the assessment.
- ☐ No assistive technology devices used
- ☐ Alternate computer input/access devices: keyboards including alternate keyboard layout, mouse, joystick, touch screen
- ☐ Portable electronic word processors, with or without voice output
- ☐ Alternate pointing system
- ☐ Augmentative communication devices, including a range of low and high tech, including talking switches and sign language
- ☐ Symbols of all types (e.g., objects, tactile, raised line drawings, photos, black/white & color, line drawings)
- ☐ Partner assisted scanning
- ☐ Calculator, all types
- ☐ Eye gaze board
- ☐ Colored overlays, visual screens or other visual supports
- ☐ Magnification devices/enlarged materials, including computer screen magnification
- ☐ Switches
- ☐ Braille
- ☐ Other

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) Data Collection Form

Use this form to collect student scores during test administration. **This Data Collection Form must be kept on file in a secure location for one year following test administration.**

All MTAS Test Administrators must complete the applicable *MTAS Test Administrators* training course each school year.

Student Name (last, first, MI): _____

Grade: _____ MARSS/SSID: _____ Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

District and School: _____ Test Administrator: _____

READING SCORES

Task	Score (circle one)	Reading Passage Access (circle one)
1	3 2 1 0	o Read passage aloud to student
2	3 2 1 0	o Student read along
3	3 2 1 0	o Student read independently
4	3 2 1 0	o Read passage aloud to student
5	3 2 1 0	o Student read along
6	3 2 1 0	o Student read independently
7	3 2 1 0	o Read passage aloud to student
8	3 2 1 0	o Student read along
9	3 2 1 0	o Student read independently
10	3 2 1 0	o Read passage aloud to student
11	3 2 1 0	o Student read along
12	3 2 1 0	o Student read independently
13	3 2 1 0	o Read passage aloud to student
14	3 2 1 0	o Student read along
15	3 2 1 0	o Student read independently

MATHEMATICS SCORES

Task	Score (circle one)
1	3 2 1 0
2	3 2 1 0
3	3 2 1 0
4	3 2 1 0
5	3 2 1 0
6	3 2 1 0
7	3 2 1 0
8	3 2 1 0
9	3 2 1 0
10	3 2 1 0
11	3 2 1 0
12	3 2 1 0
13	3 2 1 0
14	3 2 1 0
15	3 2 1 0

SCIENCE SCORES

Task	Score (circle one)
1	3 2 1 0
2	3 2 1 0
3	3 2 1 0
4	3 2 1 0
5	3 2 1 0
6	3 2 1 0
7	3 2 1 0
8	3 2 1 0
9	3 2 1 0
10	3 2 1 0
11	3 2 1 0
12	3 2 1 0
13	3 2 1 0
14	3 2 1 0
15	3 2 1 0

Test Administrator's signature: _____Date: _____

Data entry completed by: _____Date: _____

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist

Test(s):_____

(FOR DISTIRCT AND SCHOOL USE ONLY—Do Not Return to Service Provider.)

Test Monitor:_____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Use this form to assign secure test materials to students; secure materials that may be used for multiple students (i.e., a mathematics or science script) may also be included. All secure test materials distributed must be collected before students leave the testing room. Return ALL used and unused secure test materials to your District or School Assessment Coordinator as soon as possible after the completion of testing.

Test	Type of Material	Security Barcode	Student Name	Date Returned	Notes

Report any missing secure test materials and the circumstances surrounding missing items to the District or School Assessment Coordinator immediately.

I certify that I have accounted for all secure materials and have thoroughly documented any missing materials. I understand that if there is any discrepancy, this form may be used as a reference for investigation.

_____ _____ _____ _____
Test Monitor/Test Administrator (Signature)   *Date*   *Assessment Coordinator (Signature)*   *Date*

m1 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Sample Nondisclosure Agreement for Sharing Assessment and Accountability Results

This nondisclosure agreement applies to any preliminary or embargoed statewide testing or accountability data for the standards-based accountability assessments (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills) and English language proficiency accountability assessments (ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs). This data is provided by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and may be available to the school district through secure reports, service provider systems, or other district data systems.

This agreement must be completed by any school officials who will have access to preliminary or embargoed results in any form, and includes school board members and contractors hired by the district. It also includes charter school authorizers, if a separate data sharing agreement for these results is not in place.

I understand that:

1. All assessment and accountability data shared by MDE with the school district is educational data as defined by the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 C.F.R. Chapter 99, and by Minnesota Statutes, section 13.32.
2. Educational data that is related to an individual student is classified by FERPA and section 13.32 as private data, which means that it is not public and cannot be shared with anyone who does not have either legal authority to access it or signed parental consent to access it.
3. School officials or other authorized representatives of the school district may have access to private educational data if the district has determined that they have a legitimate educational interest in the educational data.
4. All assessment and accountability data, including summary data that is not about individual students, is under an embargo before it is released publicly. Embargoed results may not be shared or discussed with anyone who does not have authority to access them.

By accessing the assessment and accountability data made available by MDE, I agree and assure that:

1. I am a school official or other authorized representative of the school district.
2. The school district has determined that I have a legitimate educational interest in the educational data.
3. I will not share or discuss preliminary or embargoed assessment and accountability results in any form with anyone who does not have legal authority to access the data.
4. I will not share or discuss any assessment data related to individual students with anyone who does not have legal authority or a signed parental consent to access the data.
5. If I do not know whether someone has authority to access the data, I will not share it with them.
6. I understand that I should only access and use educational data to the extent needed to do my work. I will not access or use educational data for any reasons not related to my work and my authority to access the data.
7. I understand that educational data must be maintained in a secure manner that prevents unauthorized persons from accessing it. I will follow appropriate safeguards to reasonably and appropriately protect the privacy, security, and integrity of all educational data to which I have access.

_____   _____
Signature   Date

_____
Name (printed)

Appendix B — Policies and Procedures

Building a Test: From Academic Standards to Scoring

The development of a Minnesota Assessment is a meticulous process that takes place over a number of years. Minnesota contracts with assessment service providers in the process of building tests.

Note: ACCESS for ELLs (ACCESS) and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs (Alternate ACCESS) were developed by WIDA and are aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards. The development of ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS is not described in this section.

Test Development

It takes at least two years to create and evaluate a test item before it is ready to be included in an assessment. Each step of the process makes an important contribution to the reliability and validity of the assessment. The Minnesota Academic Standards play the primary role in the development of statewide assessments. The steps below outline how the statewide assessments are aligned to the academic standards.

1. Academic content standards are defined. Minnesota teachers and content experts write the Minnesota Academic Standards that delineate the skills and knowledge students at each grade level should possess.

2. Test specifications are developed.

   o Test specifications outline the content and format of an assessment, and part of the test specifications process is defining which academic content standards will be assessed. Committees of teachers and content experts contribute to the content and format of an assessment, including which academic content standards will be assessed with MDE-developed Minnesota Assessments and which can only be assessed within the classroom.

   o Test specifications also describe the types, number, and constraints of questions that may be asked on the assessments. Since test specifications are intended to remain consistent from year to year, the content of the tests aligned to these test specifications is similar from one year to the next.

3. Test questions are developed and reviewed. The service provider is responsible for item development, publication, scoring, and reporting for the MDE-developed Minnesota Assessments. Minnesota adheres to the principle of universal design when constructing test items. In this process, test items are linguistically modified to clarify and simplify the text without simplifying or significantly altering the construct that is being tested.

   o Contracted item writers develop questions to meet Minnesota's mathematics and reading specifications, and Minnesota science educators are trained to develop items and simulations for the science assessments.

   o All items in all subjects and all passages for reading are subsequently reviewed by Minnesota educators (in Educator Review Committees for items and passages) and community members (in Community Review Committees). These committees advise MDE on whether each item should be approved, edited, or rejected based on the appropriateness of each item's benchmark alignment and rigor (educator review of items); whether passages are age and grade appropriate (educator review of passages); and whether items and passages are fair and equitable (community review).

- An item is not included in a student's score until after it has been field tested and reviewed again by an Educator Review Committee for data. If the item is approved, it is then put into the operational pool of items the following year.

4. The test questions are assembled into a test form. Once test questions have been approved, MDE and the service provider construct a test form or build an adaptive algorithm that matches the test specifications. For example, if the mathematics test specifications require that Strand 4 (Data Analysis) make up a particular percentage of a test's points, the appropriate number of Strand 4 questions will be included on the test. MDE assessment specialists review all aspects of the proposed test items, such as clarity of tables and illustrations and layout.

The schedule for revising statewide standards is found in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.021, subdivision 4 and outlined in the table below. The table below reflects possible implementation of statewide assessments based on the revised schedule for statewide standards.

Introduction of the MCA-IV as required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 120B.021*

Year	Reading	Mathematics	Science
2018–19			Revise Standards
2019–20	Revise Standards		Write MCA-IV Test Specifications and develop MCA-IV Items
2020–21	Write MCA-IV Test Specifications		MCA-IV Items Field Tested
2021–22	To be determined by Standards Revision Committee**	Revise Standards	MCA-IV Items Field Tested
2022–23	To be determined by Standards Revision Committee**	Write MCA-IV Test Specifications	MCA-IV Items Field Tested
2023–24	To be determined by Standards Revision Committee**	To be determined by Standards Revision Committee**	MCA-IV Operational

*The proposed development schedules for the Reading, Mathematics, and Science MTAS aligned to new standards follow the schedule for the MCA.
**The duration of standards implementation will be recommended by the Standards Revision Committee.

Scoring

After the assessments have been administered to students and student answers are submitted to the service provider, every item is scored by machine or by a person.

- Multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items on online tests are captured by the test delivery system and scored electronically. Numerous quality control (QC) steps ensure that the responses are captured accurately. Refer to *Preliminary Student-Level Results* in Chapter 10 for additional information about reviews of student responses.

- Performance tasks from the MTAS are scored by the Test Administrator administering the test, and the scores are entered online.

Standard Setting

The first year that tests are administered operationally, they must go through a process to set the performance level expectations for students; this process is called "standard setting." Using rigorous, carefully defined procedures that have been widely used and validated in Minnesota and many other states, the psychometric staff at MDE and the service provider establish the standards for the new tests.

Prior to convening the standard setting committees, a team of MDE content specialists, assessment specialists, and Minnesota educators develop Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) based on the Minnesota Academic Standards and the test specifications for a given assessment. The ALDs provide a well-defined set of descriptions of the skills and knowledge associated with each of the four achievement levels for a particular grade and subject.

The standard setting committees begin their work once scoring and preliminary data analysis is completed. Minnesota educators (in standard setting committees) and community members (in stakeholder committees) review the ALDs and the content of the assessment; they then set cut scores to determine student performance levels that correspond to the four achievement levels. The committees also consider how proposed cut scores could impact students and schools before they recommend cut scores to the Minnesota Commissioner of Education.

After the Commissioner has approved the cut scores, specific methodology is documented in standard setting reports, which are available on the Technical Resources page (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Technical Reports). Scoring must be completed before standard setting can begin; therefore, reporting for new assessments is delayed while the standards are set.

MDE Test Security Procedures

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is charged with the duty to investigate and resolve all alleged violations of test security. An action taken by staff that creates a violation of test security or data integrity is subject to consequences up to and including those outlined in Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.20.

Initial Report of Test Security Violation

Information about possible test security violations may be provided to MDE in different methods:

- If a security violation occurs in the district, the District Assessment Coordinator collects information and submits it to MDE via the *Test Security Notification* (TSN) in Test WES.

- If individuals submit test security concerns to MDE through the Test Security Tip Line on the MDE website or via phone, MDE will follow up as necessary with the district to investigate alleged irregularities depending upon the nature of each report and the amount of information provided.

- Concerns about test security may be observed or discovered during MDE site monitoring or audits.

If concerns are reported through the tip line or discovered during MDE site monitoring or audits, additional information may be requested from district personnel and/or MDE may request that the district submit a TSN.

MDE Investigation and Follow-Up

Upon reviewing the information provided to MDE, several outcomes may occur. These include the following, which are communicated in a letter to the District Assessment Coordinator with the superintendent/director copied:

- Closure of the *Test Security Notification* with no further action required by the district and/or school.

- Required follow-up by the district and/or school such as additional training for an individual(s).

- Instruction to invalidate the test score(s).

- Other corrective action in conjunction with Statewide Testing staff at MDE, including MDE attendance and/or participation during a district's internal test security training or a post-assessment test security review with various district officials.

- Referral of the incident to the Data Practices staff at MDE.

- Referral of the incident to the Compliance and Assistance Division within MDE.

A reported incident is referred to the Data Practices staff at MDE if the violation affects student data privacy. While the majority of student data privacy issues will be handled through the typical follow-up procedures, additional notification of data privacy issues may be provided to the superintendent/director.

When a reported incident is referred to the Compliance and Assistance Division, a formal investigation is conducted. Investigative procedures will vary but may include telephone or on-site interviews, further requests for written submissions, reviews of test security procedures, or other procedures deemed necessary. Compliance and Assistance reviews the results of the investigations and recommends action, which may include:

- Closure of the case after finding that no violation has occurred.

- A plan for corrective action. If the investigation confirms a violation of test security, required corrective action(s) will be incorporated into the investigative report.

- Forwarding the findings to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) or Board of School Administrators, whichever has jurisdiction, to conduct an inquiry into whether disciplinary action against a license is warranted for possible educator/administrator misconduct pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 122A.20 subdivision 1(a). In certain cases, the Minnesota Attorney General's office may be involved with this inquiry.

The district may determine any additional consequences for staff involved if misconduct is found to have occurred.

Test Security Investigation Guide

In carrying out the Minnesota Department of Education's role of maintaining the security and integrity of statewide assessments, MDE has created this guide to help schools and districts ensure that best practices are carried out when testing irregularities occur. This document is designed to serve as a guide for local test security investigations by districts as well as a foundation for districts to develop their own test security investigation plans. This document is advisory and any questions should be sent to mde.testing@state.mn.us.

When a security violation or other event occurs that threatens test data integrity, the District Assessment Coordinator sets in motion a process of determining the facts of the incident and reporting them to MDE. The process is illustrated below and is described in greater detail in this guide.

Testing Irregularity Investigation Process
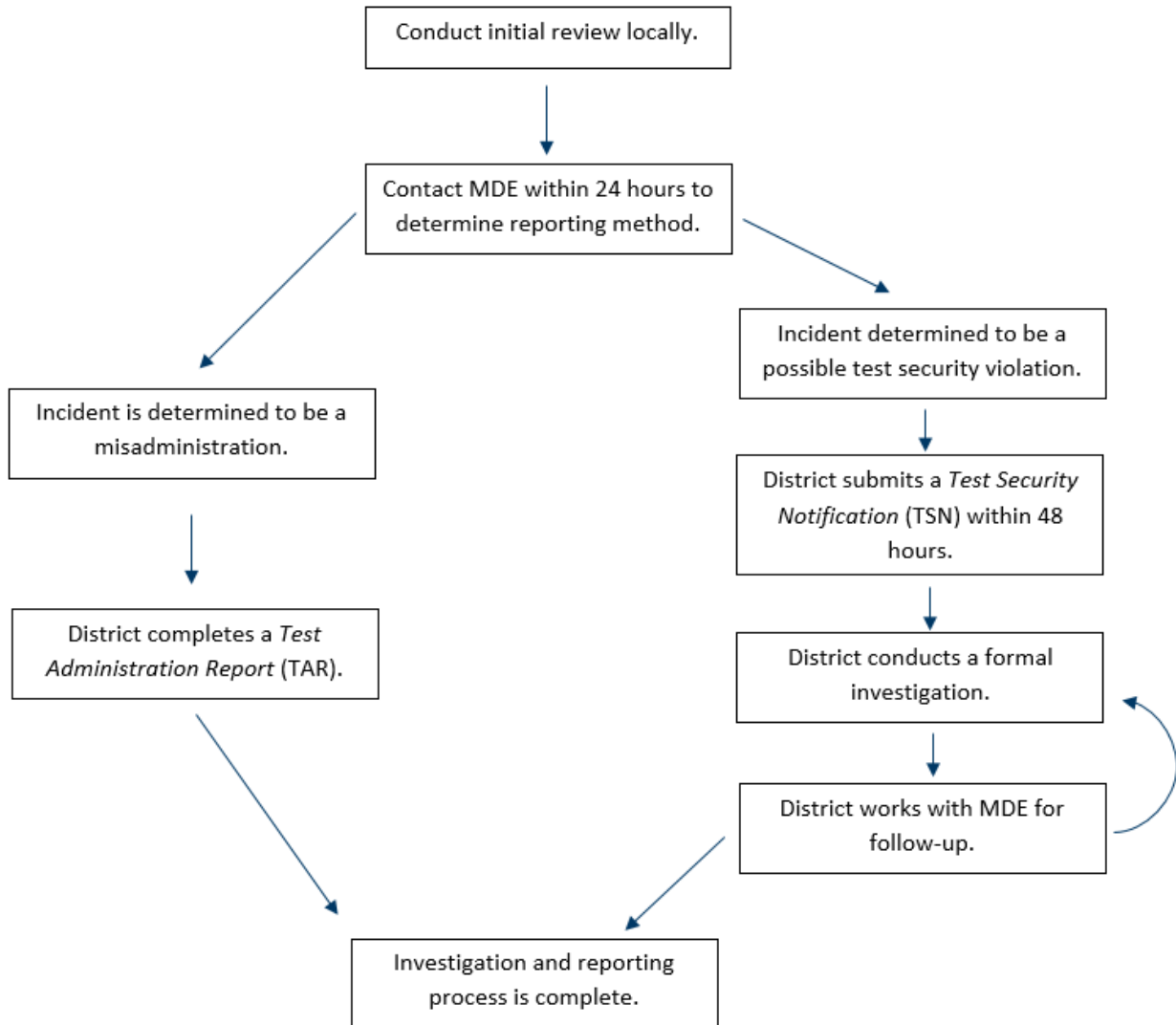
Incident Discovery

There are multiple ways to discover a testing irregularity; once an irregularity has been discovered, there are specific protocols to assist those involved with reporting, reviewing, and investigating the incident. Here are some of the more common ways an incident is reported:

- Staff informs the School Assessment Coordinator and/or District Assessment Coordinator; the District Assessment Coordinator informs MDE.

- A student, parent, or other member of the public reports an incident to school staff or to MDE. Reports to MDE may be received through the tip line, email, or phone call.

- A student, parent, or other member of the public reports an incident to the media; MDE reviews the report and will follow up as appropriate.

Employees who report incidents can have whistleblower protections and their identities are considered confidential.

Initial Review vs. Formal Investigation

The initial review determines what may have occurred. This review is often, but not always, performed by the District or School Assessment Coordinator. Therefore, these individuals need to be aware of district protocols for involving administrators or human resources representatives when initiating reviews of incidents impacting test administrations. After gathering initial information, the next step is to contact MDE to determine the appropriate reporting method. Incidents that are misadministrations and are unlikely to impact student results, test security, and/or data integrity should be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) which the district keeps on file.

If MDE indicates the incident should be reported as a *Test Security Notification* (TSN), then it should be completed within 48 hours of the incident. If it has not occurred already, the District or School Assessment Coordinator should inform the building administrator and/or district administration so that a formal investigation can be initiated according to internal district policy. It is also highly recommended that the district stays in contact with MDE during this process.

Key Questions and Steps in a Formal Investigation

When creating or carrying out an investigation plan, take the considerations listed below into account. This will help ensure the investigation is effective and satisfies all procedural requirements, including protecting the rights and privacy of all parties involved. In cases of educator misconduct, many of these steps will likely be completed by building or district administration and/or the district's human resources department. To be prepared to conduct a formal investigation, it is strongly recommended that districts create a plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of all who may be involved with a test security and/or data integrity incident, the starting point and the end point of an investigation, and the required steps that must occur. An internal plan can be used in staff trainings and serve as the document a district follows when an incident arises.

DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF THE INCIDENT

Ask and answer the following questions:

- What is the nature of the incident, who is involved, and what is the risk to students, data privacy, test security, and data integrity?

- Are all secure test materials accounted for and secure?

- Has cheating occurred, and is it necessary to take steps to ensure data integrity?

- Is the incident over, or does it continue to pose a threat to test security or data integrity locally or statewide?

FACT FINDING

- Coordinate with the building/district administrator; follow the district's investigation plan if one exists.

- Determine and document what evidence exists to support the determination that an irregularity occurred.

- Collect and retain all pertinent documents, such as documentation of completed training.

- Interview all individuals who were involved or may have information about the incident.

DUE DILIGENCE

- Notify all involved that the investigation is confidential and cannot be discussed with others.

- Consider whether an attorney or union representative is needed when interviewing staff.

- Consider whether a parent or guardian should be present when interviewing a student.

- Consult with MDE during the investigation and carry out any state required mitigation communicated by MDE.

Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide

Use of an electronic device during test administration can lead to a security and/or data integrity violation. This document is a guide to help districts with follow-up actions if an electronic device is accessible and suspected of having been used during test administration by a student. This document is advisory and any questions should be sent to mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Prevention Keys

As outlined in the Chapter 8 of the *Procedures Manual*, MDE strictly forbids access to electronic devices, including cell phones and wearable technology, during test administration, and districts are required to have and implement policies and procedures specific to their district and schools.

- Districts should require all students who enter the test room and will retain possession of a cell phone to show the Test Administrator or Test Monitor that it is on silent and not accessible. Wearable technology must be removed (as it is considered accessible if worn). If devices will be collected, districts must ensure they account for all devices, including wearable technology.

- All staff who are present in the test room should have received proper training and should be fully aware that these devices are not allowed to be accessible to students during testing.

- Test Administrators and Test Monitors need to be actively monitoring the room throughout the test administration so any possible incident is identified immediately.

Key Requirements for a Search

When a prohibited device is accessed during or after testing, the district will need to verify if the device was used and, if so, whether test content was impacted. When collecting and documenting evidence of the incident, it is critical that personnel involved understand the abilities and limitations involved. Applicable federal case law states that public school personnel can search the belongings of a student on school grounds without a search warrant but only if specific criteria have been met:

1. The search was justified at the inception of the incident: There has to be a reasonable belief by school personnel at the time that a search will discover evidence that the student has or is currently breaking school policy and/or the law.

2. The search must be reasonably related in scope to the violation and cannot be unreasonably intrusive: The search can only focus on what caused the search to arise and cannot go beyond that. It *does not* include searching for evidence of other types of wrongdoing unrelated to the violation in question.

Collection and Documentation of Evidence

Because accessing a prohibited electronic device during test administration is a violation of MDE and district policies and therefore fulfills the "justified at the inception of the incident" requirement, it is necessary to collect and search the device to document possible evidence. This ensures a proper investigation can be carried out and MDE can take the necessary steps to mitigate the impact of the potential violation. The following steps should occur in this process to ensure that the "reasonable in scope" requirement is also met:

1. Notify the DAC and building administrator immediately that a prohibited device was accessible during test administration and may have been used.

2. Retain possession of the device and do not allow the student to use it any further.

3. Ask the student, or a parent/legal guardian, to voluntarily allow a search of the device. If this does not occur, then a school administrator (or similar level district official) should conduct a search of the device that is reasonably limited in scope based upon the alleged violation. The parent/legal guardian of the student should be kept informed of what occurred and any findings throughout this process.

4. Gather and document evidence to determine if the device was used in any way to capture, retain, and/or communicate test content.

   o Contact MDE for further guidance on documenting the evidence for the specific situation before it is deleted or removed from the device.

   o Documentation must include the applicable information about the test content (e.g., subject, item number, name and MARSS number of the student), a detailed description of how the test content is captured (e.g., entire passage is captured, a general description was written), and whether it was communicated.

5. Submission of a *Test Security Notification* (TSN) to MDE will depend upon the outcome of evidence collection.

   o If the evidence gathered leads to the determination that test content was captured, retained, and or communicated in any manner, or if the device was used in any manner to potentially assist the student, then submission of a TSN to MDE is necessary

   o If the evidence gathered does not lead to either of the determinations listed above, then submission of a TSN is not necessary. However, a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) would still be required due to the test invalidation; documentation should include mention of the search and the purpose for it.

Situational Examples

In the following examples, a search of the device is justified at the inception of the incident as use of the device during testing violates MDE and district policy. If the device was not used in violation of the policy, a search of the device for other reasons is not justified.

Situational Example #1

It is reported that a student took a picture with his or her cell phone during testing.

- A search with reasonable scope could include reviewing pictures taken during test administration and social media locations where an identified picture could have been posted.

- A reasonable search would NOT include searching pictures on the device taken prior to testing.

Situational Example #2

A student who has past involvement in illegal activities uses his or her cell phone during testing. The student was seen typing on the device.

- A search with reasonable scope could include reviewing any texts received or sent during test administration.

- A reasonable search would NOT include looking through texts prior to testing to seek evidence of other activities.

Situational Example #3

It is reported that a cell phone was used to assist with a test question.

- A search with reasonable scope could include reviewing web browser history to ensure sites were not accessed to assist with a question.

- A reasonable search would NOT include looking through web browser history prior to testing.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

District Test Security Procedure Requirements

Each school district must have a written district test security procedure that addresses how test security policies and procedures will be implemented in the district for all statewide assessments. Districts may create their own procedure or use the template available on PearsonAccess Next, but all areas specified below must be addressed. If procedures vary by assessment, this must be noted as applicable. Districts may add areas or elements to the procedure, as needed and separate procedures must be specified by school, if they vary. If the district procedure references other district policies and procedures that are in place, they should be included with this procedure. Appendix C includes the evaluation rubric MDE uses when district procedures are requested for review.

- Identifying who the District Assessment Coordinator(s) and School Assessment Coordinator(s) are for the current school year. Specific names may be included directly in the procedure, identifying who is responsible for each task, or provided separately.

- Identifying the plan for the District Assessment Coordinator (and/or other designated staff) to monitor testing within the district (Chapter 3).

- Specifying who is responsible for determining the testing calendar, ensuring it is posted to the district website by the start of the school year, and keeping test administration dates updated (Chapter 8).

- Ensuring all staff involved in any aspect of testing complete required trainings annually for their role before test administration, and documenting completed trainings (Chapter 3).

- Providing all staff with the MDE test-security tip line and MDE contact information for reporting security concerns (Chapter 3).

- Determining the following district policies and procedures for testing and how they will be communicated to district staff prior to testing (Chapter 3):

  o Preparing students for test administration using the provided student resources, including determining which resources will be used (Chapter 8).

  o Reminding students of the importance of keeping test content secure and acting with honesty and integrity (Chapter 3).

  o Preparing rooms for test administration, including student seating/spacing to maintain test security, the plan for removing or covering materials on walls and desks, and considerations for any security cameras present in the testing rooms (Chapter 8).

  o Verifying materials allowed/prohibited for testing and how allowable materials (e.g., headphones, scratch paper) will be gathered and provided (Chapter 8).

  o Developing a plan to get students to their correct locations for testing (e.g., testing rooms and computer labs, small group or individual settings).

- Developing a plan to track which students test with which Test Monitor/Test Administrator for all administrations (including any other adults present in the testing room, like staff providing assistance, paraprofessionals) (Chapter 8).

- Ensuring students do not access or use cell phones, wearable technology, or other devices (e.g., collecting cell phones, verifying they are turned off and put away, ensuring wearable technology is not worn) and determining what action will be taken if the procedure is not followed (Chapter 8).

- Determining the district's plan for the following situations, including how to monitor students in each (Chapter 8):

  - Breaks for all students during testing (e.g., whether they are planned, duration) and how test content will be secured during breaks.

  - Use of the restroom or other interruptions during testing, including coordinating or supervising students from multiple rooms.

  - What to do if an unexpected situation arises with students during testing (e.g., illness, behavioral issue, early dismissal for activity).

  - What to do if an entire group of students needs to leave during testing (e.g., emergency situation, fire drill).

  - What to do when the Test Administrator or Test Monitor becomes ill or needs to leave during testing.

  - What students will do if they complete testing early (e.g., go to another location or remain in the testing room) and what paper activities they will complete if they remain in the testing room.

  - What students will do if they need extra time to complete testing (e.g., go to another room, make-up testing on another day).

  - What the plan is for students who have finished testing on a previous day.

- Determining the points of contact and the processes for the following situations:

  - Who will provide assistance/answer questions and what the process is for contacting others for assistance if a problem or question arises during the testing so active monitoring can continue (Chapter 8).

  - What to do if a student reports an error or technical issue with a test item and who to communicate that information to following testing (Chapter 8).

  - Who Test Administrators and Test Monitors should contact in case of emergency (Chapter 8).

  - Who to report misadministrations and security violations to within each school and how that information will be communicated to the District Assessment Coordinator (Chapter 3).

- Determining what Test Administrators/Test Monitors and staff may and may not discuss with students about the test administration experience, following test administration (Chapter 3).

- Establishing the process and assigning staff for entering student responses in MCA paper test materials and MTAS scores online following testing (Chapter 8).

- Establishing the process and chain of custody for how all secure test materials for both online and paper administrations will be kept secure before, during, and after testing, including:
  - Who has access to secure test materials (Chapter 3).
  - Who will receive, secure, and distribute materials to schools (if applicable) (Chapter 3).
  - Who will inventory and organize secure test materials (Chapter 3).
  - The specific locations where secure materials are stored in each school prior to, during, and after testing at each school.
  - How will distribution of test materials for test administrations be handled and who is responsible (Chapter 3).
  - What the process is for securing test materials between test sessions (Chapter 8).
  - Who will be responsible for collecting, inventorying, and returning secure test materials, as well as securely disposing of materials as required (Chapter 8).
- Determining the plan for providing access to test results (Chapter 10):
  - Whether preliminary results will be provided to students, families, and/or staff and what will be communicated about preliminary results.
  - Who the embargoed final results will be shared with.
  - How final results will be shared within the district (e.g., load to data warehouse or student information system, provide access to service provider systems).
  - How information regarding what it means to abide by the embargo (i.e., how preliminary and final results can and cannot be shared) will be provided to staff who may have access to or be part of discussions on results.
  - How Individual Student Reports (ISRs) will be provided to families, considering a method that maintains student data privacy.

Test Administration Calendar Examples

The test administration calendar examples provided below are meant to show some options for how specific dates for test administration can be included on the district testing calendar. MDE does not require that these examples be used as templates; they are instead meant to show the level of specificity required in terms of posting by 1) school, 2) test, 3) subject/domain, 4) grade, and 5) specific planned days of administration. Note: the second district below provides an example of when there is one school building (e.g., charter school or grades K–12 in one building).

These examples do not include other required information such as the purpose of each assessment, the estimated testing time for each test type, or the district's timeline and format for disseminating assessment results; refer to the *District Testing Calendar* section in Chapter 8 of the *Procedures Manual* for detailed information on all requirements.

Note: All information provided here is sample information and does not necessarily reflect correct testing or calendar dates and/or the district-required assessments used by districts; this information has been included for sample purposes only.

District Example 1 (district with multiple schools)

Elementary 1 (Grades 3–5)

Elementary 1	Districtwide Local Assessments		
	Districtwide Reading Assessment Grade 3: Oct. 5, May 20 Grade 4: Oct. 6, May 21 Grade 5: Oct. 7, May 22	Districtwide Mathematics Assessment Grade 3: Sept. 24, May 18 Grade 4: Sept. 25, May 18 Grade 5: Sept. 26, May 19	
	Statewide Accountability Assessments		
	ACCESS Listening Grade 3: Feb. 15 Grade 4: Feb. 15 Grade 5: Feb. 17	ACCESS Reading Grade 3: Feb. 18 Grade 4: Feb. 18 Grade 5: Feb. 19	ACCESS Speaking Grade 3: Feb. 20 Grade 4: Feb. 20 Grade 5: Feb. 22
	ACCESS Writing Grade 3: Feb. 23 Grade 4: Feb. 23 Grade 5: Feb. 24		Reading MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 27–29 Mathematics MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: April 3–5 Science MTAS Grade 5: April 13-15
	Reading MCA Grade 3: March 13–14 Grade 4: March 15–16 Grade 5: March 16–17	Mathematics MCA Grade 3: April 15–16 Grade 4: April 17–18 Grade 5: April 21–22	Science MCA Grade 5: April 23–24

Elementary 2 (Grades K–5)

Elementary 2	Districtwide Local Assessments		
	Districtwide Reading Assessment Grade 3: Oct. 5, May 20 Grade 4: Oct. 6, May 21 Grade 5: Oct. 7, May 22	**Districtwide Mathematics Assessment** Grade 3: Sept. 24, May 18 Grade 4: Sept. 25, May 18 Grade 5: Sept. 26, May 19	
	Statewide Accountability Assessments		
	ACCESS Listening Grades 1–3: Feb. 7 Grade 4: Feb. 8 Grade 5: Feb. 9	ACCESS Reading Grades 1–3: Feb. 14 Grade 4: Feb. 15 Grade 5: Feb. 16	ACCESS Speaking Grades 1–3: Feb. 21 Grade 4: Feb. 22 Grade 5: Feb. 23
	ACCESS Writing Grade 1: Feb. 23 Grades 2–4: Feb. 24 Grade 5: Feb. 25	Kindergarten ACCESS: Feb. 7–11 Alternate ACCESS Grades 1–5: Listening: Feb. 7–11 Reading: Feb. 14–19 Speaking: Feb. 21–25 Writing: Feb. 28–March 4	Reading MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 13–18 Mathematics MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 20–24 Science MTAS Grade 5: March 27–30
	Reading MCA Grade 3: April 4–5 Grade 4: April 4–5 Grade 5: April 4–5	Mathematics MCA Grade 3: April 12–13 Grade 4: April 12–13 Grade 5: April 12–13	Science MCA Grade 5: April 10–11

Middle School (Grades 6–8)

Middle School	Districtwide Local Assessments		
	None		
	Statewide Accountability Assessments		
	ACCESS Listening Grade 6: Feb. 18 Grade 7: Feb. 19 Grade 8: Feb. 20	ACCESS Reading Grade 6: Feb. 24 Grade 7: Feb. 24 Grade 8: Feb. 24	ACCESS Speaking Grade 6: Feb. 25 Grade 7: Feb. 25 Grade 8: Feb. 26
	ACCESS Writing Grade 6: Feb. 27 Grade 7: Feb. 27 Grade 8: Feb. 28	Alternate ACCESS: Grade 6, 7, & 8 Listening: Feb. 7–11 Reading: Feb. 14–19 Speaking: Feb. 21–25 Writing: Feb. 28–March 4	Reading MTAS Grades 6–8: March 14–25 Mathematics MTAS Grade 6: March 20–31 Grades 7–8: March 21–April 2 Science MTAS Grade 8: April 24–May 3
	Reading MCA Grade 6: March 17–18 Grade 7: March 18–19 Grade 8: March 19–20	Mathematics MCA Grade 6: April 12–13 Grade 7: April 13–14 Grade 8: April 14–15	Science MCA Grade 8: April 24–25

High School (Grades 9–12)

High School	College Entrance Exam		
	ACT Grades 11–12: April 2 (Makeup date April 20)		
	Statewide Accountability Assessments		
	ACCESS Reading Grades 9–12: Feb. 18–19 Writing Grades 9–12: Feb. 19–20 Speaking Grades 9–12: Feb. 20–21 Listening Grades 9–12: Feb. 21–22	Alternate ACCESS: Grades 9–12 Listening: Feb. 7–11 Reading: Feb. 14–19 Speaking: Feb. 21–25 Writing: Feb. 28–March 4	Reading MTAS Grade 10: March 10–12 Mathematics MTAS Grade 11: March 16–19 Science MTAS Grade 11: April 14–16
	Reading MCA Grade 10: April 2	Mathematics MCA Grade 11: April 4	Science MCA Grade 10: April 8

District Example 2 (district with one K–12 building)

Districtwide local assessment:

- Mathematics Grades 2, 3, 4, and 5: all on 10/3 and 5/10

- Mathematics Grade 6, 7, and 8: all on 10/4 and 5/11

- Reading Grade 2, 3, 4, and 5: all on 10/5 and 5/12

- Reading Grade 6, 7, and 8: all on 10/6 and 5/13

English language proficiency accountability assessments:

ACCESS:

- Kindergarten: administered week of 2/4

- Listening Grades 1–12: all grades on 2/4

- Reading Grades 1–12: all grades on 2/5

- Speaking Grades 1–12: all grades on 2/6

- Writing Grades 1–12: all grades on 2/7

College Entrance Exam (state required offering):

ACT: Grades 11–12: 4/10, makeup date 4/20

Standards-based accountability assessments:

Mathematics MCA:

- Grade 3: 3/5–3/6
- Grade 4: 3/5–3/6
- Grade 5: 3/5–3/6
- Grade 6: 3/7–3/8
- Grade 7: 3/7–3/8
- Grade 8: 3/7–3/8
- Grade 11: 3/13–3/14

Reading MCA:

- Grade 3: 3/12–3/13
- Grade 4: 3/12–3/13
- Grade 5: 3/12–3/13
- Grade 6: 3/13–3/14
- Grade 7: 3/13–3/14
- Grade 8: 3/13–3/14
- Grade 10: 3/20–3/21

Science MCA

- Grade 5: 3/20–3/21
- Grade 8: 3/21–3/22
- High School: 3/22–3/23

MTAS

- Reading Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10: administered week of 3/5
- Mathematics Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11: administered week of 3/12
- Science Grades 5, 8, and 11: administered on same day on 4/9

Calculator Use General Guidelines

All MCA and MTAS mathematics test items can be solved in a variety of ways; therefore, calculators are not required. However, they may be used to answer items when a calculator is allowed.

Overview

Refer to *Calculator Use* in Chapter 8 for detailed information about calculator use for online MCA, paper MCA, and MTAS. The following table provides a summary of what is addressed in Chapter 8.

General Calculator Use Information

Test	Can Handheld be Used?	Notes
Online Grade 3–8 Mathematics MCA	No	The online calculator is available when calculator use is allowed. If an IEP or 504 plan states that a handheld calculator must be used, a paper test book must be used in conjunction with it.
Online Grade 11 Mathematics MCA	Yes	The online calculator is available throughout the entire test.
Online Science MCA	No	The online calculator is available for items on the test that require simple mathematical computations.
Paper Grade 3–8 Mathematics MCA	Yes; allowed segments	Handheld calculators may be used, except for Segment 1 (the non-calculator segment).
Paper Grade 11 Mathematics MA	Yes	Handheld calculators may be used throughout the test.
Paper Science MCA	Yes; allowed items	Since these types of items are not included on the science test each year, the item in the large print or braille test book will indicate whether a calculator can be used
Mathematics and Science MTAS	Yes	Calculators or anything that the student uses as a calculator (e.g., assistive technology devices) may be used on any tasks.

General Guidelines

The information in this section is intended to be a general description of allowable practices related to calculator use. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list of specific calculators, devices, or technologies. Refer to the Chapter 8 for specific information on the use of handheld calculators. Note: As technology changes, these policies will be reviewed and may be updated.

- Students must be given an opportunity to become familiar with the handheld calculator or online calculator before testing. During testing, Test Monitors will not be able to assist students with the use of calculators. The only exceptions are if a handheld calculator is broken (e.g., dead batteries) or if the online calculator prevents a student from accessing an item, responding to an item, or moving within a test. For further information, see *What Help Can Test Monitors Give to Students* in Chapter 8.

- Students may use their own calculator or one provided by the school when a handheld calculator is allowed.

- Students may not share calculators.

- Students may not use instructions for their handheld calculators during the test.

- Students with memory-enabled graphing calculators are not allowed to bring stored examples into the testing session, access programs during testing, or store the test questions afterwards. See below for additional requirements for memory-enabled calculators.

- Students may be asked at any time to surrender their calculator for examination by a Test Monitor and may be asked to delete programs on the calculator.

- When handheld calculators are allowed, the following are permitted:

  o Standard or four-function calculators (recommended for grades 3–5 for mathematics and all grades for science)

  o Scientific calculators (recommended for grades 6–7 for mathematics)

  o Graphing calculators (e.g., the TI-83, TI-84 Plus series, and TI-Nspire, without computer algebra systems, are acceptable; recommended for grades 8 and 11 for mathematics)

  o Standard, scientific, or graphing calculators with a talking feature may also be used in an individual setting if its use is documented in the IEP or 504 plan.

  o Note: while specific Texas Instruments calculators are available in TestNav for online testing (as indicated in Table 22), any brand of calculator may be used when handheld calculators are allowed.

- The following are prohibited (except as an approved accommodation specified under Assistive Technology in Chapter 5):

  o Calculators with built-in computer algebra systems (CAS)

  o Tablets or laptop computers, including PDAs

  o Electronic writing pads or pen-input/stylus-driven devices

- o Calculators built into cell phones or any other devices that can electronically send, received, or capture information

- o Calculators with a typewriter keypad (e.g., a QWERTY keyboard is a mini-keyboard similar in appearance and function to a word-processing keyboard with function and letter keys)

- o Calculators with an infrared data port (students will be required to completely cover the infrared data port with heavy opaque material such as duct tape)

Handheld Calculator Memory Clearing Policy

Students with memory-enabled calculators are not allowed to bring stored examples into the test session, access programs during testing, or store the test questions afterwards. For this reason, a graphing calculator must either:

- Have its memory cleared both **before** and **after** each test session, or

- Have a feature that temporarily disables all flash applications and calculator files (e.g., the TI-NSpire has "Press to Test" mode).

Test Monitors are required to check memory-enabled calculators before the test and disable any stored programs and applications by either clearing the memory both before and after the test session or by using the temporary disabling feature. Test Monitors must invoke the temporary disabling feature at the beginning of each test session and can return it to normal functionality at the end of each test session. Note that clearing the calculator memory will delete stored programs or applications. Students should be told prior to test day to save all data and stored programs on a computer or different calculator that is not being used for the test.

If a calculator can neither have its memory cleared nor have the applications and files temporarily disabled prior to test administration, students are not permitted to use that particular calculator during the test. Failure on the part of the Test Monitor to verify that each calculator meets the above requirements will constitute a security violation and the student's test may be invalidated.

mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

What Does It Mean to "Abide by the Embargo"?

Before statewide assessment and accountability results are released publicly in August, they are considered "embargoed." While results can be used and discussed within the district and school before they are released publicly, there are specific rules around this use that are important for you to understand.

What is an "embargo"?

In terms of statewide assessment and accountability results, the term "embargo" means that results cannot be shared in any public forum (e.g., on social media), posted online (e.g., on the district website), or reflected in any public meeting minutes (e.g., for a school board meeting). They also cannot be shared or discussed with other staff members who should not have access to results.

What results are embargoed?

Any preliminary or final statewide assessment or accountability results are considered embargoed, including:

- MCA and MTAS On-Demand Reports for individual students available during the testing window, including any data loaded into your Student Information System (SIS) or data warehouse.
- ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS early student-level results available in May.
- Any final assessment or accountability data or reports for MCA, MTAS, ACCESS, or Alternate ACCESS provided by the district during the summer or loaded into your SIS or data warehouse.

Who has access to embargoed results?

Each district determines how preliminary and final results will be shared within the district and schools, and with which staff members. However, even if you do not have direct access to the results, you may be part of meetings or discussions where embargoed results are shared.

Individual student results can be shared with parents and students for instructional purposes, depending on your district's policy for providing these results. However, no summary results can be provided to parents or students while the results are embargoed.

How can results be used?

The following provide some examples of use that is and is not allowed during the embargo. Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) will provide you more information and can answer questions about how results are provided and shared in your district.

Example #1 Sharing results with staff who have a legitimate need to access the results. • Allowed: Results are shared through internal district communications (e.g., via email, SIS/data warehouse, presentation). • Not allowed: Results are shared on social media in any form, even in general terms (e.g., Our students did so well this year!)	*Example #2* Using results for instructional and curriculum planning. • Allowed: Results for a specific content area are shared with staff and discussed in PLCs for planning for the upcoming year. • Not allowed: Results are discussed with another teacher in a neighboring district to see how their students performed.	*Example #3* Answering questions about results. • Allowed: Answering questions from staff who you know have access to the results. If you are not sure, verify with your DAC or building administrator first. • Not allowed: Answering questions from parents about summary results (e.g., how the class did in comparison to their child).

Policy for Public and Parental Review of Statewide Assessments

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) provides public and parental access to tests pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.30 as stated below:

> Subdivision 4. Access to tests. Consistent with section 13.34, the commissioner must adopt and publish a policy to provide public and parental access for review of Minnesota-developed assessments which would not compromise the objectivity or fairness of the testing or examination process. Upon receiving a written request, the commissioner must make available to parents or guardians a copy of their student's actual responses to the test questions for their review.

Note: Because the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs were developed by the WIDA Consortium as a collaborative effort of consortium member states, they are not available for public/parental review.

Parental Request for Review

Parents/guardians who want to see their child's responses to a statewide test must make a written request to MDE no later than Jan. 1 of the next school year, but not before the delivery of final Individual Student Reports. The parent/guardian must provide a copy of their child's Individual Student Report with the written request.

The child's parent/guardian must also complete the *Request of Parent/Guardian to Review Student Responses* form and send it to MDE. MDE will set up a mutually agreeable time for the parent/guardian to view materials at MDE in Roseville. This opportunity is open only to parents/guardians of the student. Because the student's responses and test materials are secure materials, all security procedures will apply. The review of student responses and test materials will be done under the supervision of staff not familiar with the content of the assessment.

Review of materials cannot begin until the parent/guardian and the child, if present, have signed a non-disclosure agreement. The parent/guardian is not allowed to make copies or to take notes from the test out of the room. At the end of the review MDE will collect all materials that the parent/guardian and child may have generated (e.g., notes, solutions to problems).

Public Request for Review

Individuals who want to review a test following the release of results must make a written request to the Division of Statewide Testing. The review of the test will be conducted at MDE in Roseville. All security procedures will apply, including signing a non-disclosure agreement prior to reviewing any materials. The review of materials will be done under supervision and at a time mutually agreeable to the individual and MDE. The individual reviewing the materials is not allowed to make copies or take notes out of the room.

Request of Parent/Guardian to Review Student Responses

Step 1: Provide all information requested, including signature and date. Request must be made by Jan. 1 of the next school year but not before the delivery of the final Individual Student Report. Only those who have signed this request form will be allowed to review the assessments.

Step 2: Submit this form and a copy of the child's Individual Student Report.* The Individual Student Report must be submitted to provide the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) with the necessary information to retrieve the appropriate documents. Information may be submitted by fax or U.S. mail:

Fax: 651-582-8874
Statewide Testing Division
Attn: Request Coordinator

U.S. Mail: Minnesota Department of Education
Division of Statewide Testing
Attn: Project Management
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113–4286

Step 3: MDE staff will call to arrange a time that is mutually agreeable for the parent/guardian to view materials at MDE. Review of the materials will be supervised by staff not familiar with the content of the assessment.

Student Information

Name (last, first, MI): _____

Birth Date (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Grade When Tested: _____

MARSS/SSID (13 digits): _____ Year Tested: _____

District Name/Number: _____ School Name/Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Test Information

Test	Subject
☐ MCA	☐ Mathematics
☐ MTAS	☐ Reading
	☐ Science

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Service providers send the Individual Student Reports to school districts for distribution to parents.

Document Retention Policy for Districts

The table below indicates the minimum amount of time that assessment-related documents must be retained. If your district policy is above and beyond this policy, follow your district policy. If documents are completed or stored electronically, ensure you have copies of documentation for the required time period or are able to continue to track online. For any audits or monitoring, MDE may request that districts provide this documentation.

Outside the customary test administration period, secure test materials are to be located only at MDE or the service provider. No secure test materials may remain at the district or school after the service provider's courier picks up the test materials. MDE also follows a retention policy; contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to view it.

Test-Related Document	Retention Duration	Notes
Assurances of Test Security and Non-Disclosure	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep paper copies on file; electronic versions can be tracked through Pearson's Training Management System (TMS).
Test Administration Reports	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file; submit to MDE if requested for an audit or monitoring.
Test Security Notifications	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Submitted online to MDE in Test WES; access past years as needed through Test WES.
Test materials security checklists	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file; submit as documentation if requested for missing secure test materials.
Documentation of staff trainings	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	If trainings are completed online, completions can be tracked through service provider systems. If provided in a district/school training or on paper, keep records of staff completions. Submit to MDE if requested during monitoring, for an audit, or as part of a *Test Security Notification*.

Test-Related Document	Retention Duration	Notes
Records of which students tested with which Test Administrators and Test Monitors, including any other adult(s) present in the testing room	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file; submit to MDE if requested for an audit or monitoring.
Parent refusal and medical excuse documentation for test codes	2 years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file; submit to MDE if requested for an audit or monitoring.
ACCESS grades 1–12 paper Speaking test inter-rater reliability documentation	1 year after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file; submit to MDE if requested for an audit or monitoring.
MTAS Data Collection and Learner Characteristics Inventory forms	1 year after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file after entering scores online in case there are any questions about scores/data entered.
Final test results reports provided by service provider (e.g., rosters, student reports for MCA/MTAS, ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS, and college entrance exams for which the district is requesting reimbursement)	3 years beyond the scheduled graduation date	Keep on file.

Appendix C — Monitoring and Audits

District Test Security Procedure Evaluation Rubric

Each school district must have a written district test security procedure that addresses how test security policies and procedures will be implemented in the district (see Appendix B for the requirements that must be addressed in the procedure). MDE uses the following rubric to evaluate district test security procedures.

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met Most	Met All
1. Training and Preparation	• Identify coordinators and staff responsible for posting an accurate testing calendar; posted testing calendar meets statutory requirements • Ensure all staff involved in any aspect of testing complete all required trainings annually for their role • Compilation and retention of training documentation • Preparation of students for test administration • Preparation of test rooms, including considerations for security cameras				
2. Policies and Procedures	• Plan for district monitoring of test administrations within the district • Plan for how district policy and procedure information will be provided to staff prior to testing • Verification of allowable/prohibited materials for testing • Process for getting students to correct testing locations • Policy for prohibited electronic devices • Procedures for: breaks, restroom, unexpected situations, emergencies, finishing testing • Procedures and contacts for assistance, emergencies, or errors/technical issues reported during test administration • Policy for discussing test experience with students after testing • Process for data entry of student responses/scores online • Process for handling subsequent test results				
3. Secure Materials	• Chain of custody before, during, and after testing • List of all who have access to secure materials and are responsible for distribution and collection • Location of stored secure materials before, during, and after testing • Process for returning secure materials to provider and destruction of testing tickets and scratch paper				
4. Security Reporting and Documentation	• Reminder to students of test security, honesty, and integrity • Contact information provided to staff for MDE tip line/MDE • Process to report misadministrations and security violations within the school and district • Process to track which students tested with which Test Monitor/Test Administrator and other adults present				

Minnesota Assessments Monitoring List

This list outlines the areas that MDE monitors will observe or discuss during a monitoring visit of ACCESS or MCA administrations. The posting and accuracy of the school's testing calendar will be evaluated while scheduling the visit.

Interview with District/School Assessment Coordinator

- Are secure test materials kept in locked storage areas with limited staff access? Be prepared to show the MDE monitor where test materials are stored and describe who has key access to the storage area.

- Have the staff observed today completed all required trainings for their role in testing? Be prepared to provide documentation of training completion for the Test Administrator(s)/Test Monitor(s), the assessment coordinator, and any other adult present during testing.

- How do staff receive training or information, prior to testing, on the processes that are specific to your school or district (e.g., process for breaks, where to pick up materials)?

- What is the process for: a) tracking which student tested with which Test Administrator/Test Monitor, and b) tracking other adults present in the testing room? Be prepared to show an example of this tracking for the testing room observed.

- What is the process for providing assistance to Test Administrators/Test Monitors during testing (e.g., technical issues, answering questions, unexpected situations)?

- What is your process for noting things that happen during testing (e.g., misadministrations, unexpected situations, and security violations)?

Observations

- Test Administrators/Test Monitors collect secure materials on the day of testing from locked storage, or materials are securely handed off to them (at no time are materials left unattended).

- Online test items are not visible until time of testing; test books remain closed until students are instructed to begin.

- All materials related to a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) (ACCESS) or all academic or instructional materials (MCA) on walls or desks are covered or taken down, even if not related to the domain/subject being tested.

- All devices not used for test administration are collected or put away, including cell phones, other mobile devices, and wearable technology.

- Only materials authorized for use during testing are on student desks during the administration.

- Student questions about directions or testing procedures are answered before testing begins.

- Directions are provided exactly as scripted in the applicable *Test Administrator's Script* (ACCESS) or *Testing Directions* (MCA).

- Only students who are testing or who finish testing during the current testing session are present in the testing room.

- Designated staff members are available to Test Administrators/Test Monitors for troubleshooting, providing assistance, and answering questions.

- The testing room is supervised by at least one trained district staff member at all times.

- If a student needs to leave the room (restroom, illness, etc.), only one student is allowed to leave at a time, or there is a plan in place for staff to monitor multiple students.

- If a student needs to leave the room, the online test is exited/content is covered (items not viewable) or the test book is closed. The test is resumed/uncovered or materials are reopened upon return.

- Students are allowed to work at their own pace without being pressured to finish or slow down.

- Test Administrators/Test Monitors actively monitor test administration by moving through classroom and observing that students are working independently.

- Student questions during testing are addressed appropriately, using the *Test Administrator's Script* (ACCESS) or *Testing Directions* (MCA).

- The Test Administrator/Test Monitor maintains order, the testing room is quiet, and disruptions are kept to a minimum.

- There is at least one Test Administrator/Test Monitor for every 30 students.

- Enough space is allowed between students in the testing room to ensure students work independently. If space is limited, barriers/screens may be used or additional Test Administrators/Test Monitors may be present.

- When students finish testing, the school's process is followed with minimal disruption.

- If students remain in the testing room once they are finished with testing, students work on appropriate paper materials or sit quietly.

- Secure test materials are collected at the end of the testing session and properly secured.

- Test Administrators/Test Monitors account for all materials before returning them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator or designated staff member.

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Training Verification Evaluation Rubric

MDE uses the following rubric to evaluate a school's training documentation and training processes; training requirements are detailed in Chapter 3.

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met Most	Met All
MDE-Required Trainings for MCA/MTAS	Each person involved in testing in the school completed all MDE required trainings for their role and for the tests administered, including:* • Assessment Coordinator • Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Monitors • MCA Test Monitors • MTAS Test Administrators				
MDE-Required Trainings for ACCESS/ Alternate ACCESS	Each person involved in testing in the school completed all MDE required trainings for their role and for the tests administered, including:* • Assessment Coordinator • Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Administrators • ACCESS Test Administrators • Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators				
District Policy and Procedure Information or Training	Statement describing how all staff involved in testing in any way received information or training on district- or school-specific test administration policies and procedures.		N/A	N/A	
Timeliness of Training	Statement describing how assessment coordinator ensures training was completed for each person prior to their involvement in testing according to posted testing calendar dates.		N/A	N/A	

*Note: If *Test Security Training Checklists* were used and/or group trainings were held for the *Test Security Training*, the signed paper copies of the checklist and/or *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* must be included with the training documentation.

MTAS Field Audit Checklist

This list outlines the areas that MTAS Field Auditors will observe or ask of the Test Administrator during an observation.

Prior to Test Administration

- Does the student meet the requirements for the MTAS specified in the *Eligibility Requirements for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)*?

- Did you receive training for administering the MTAS (by completing the online training individually or in a group training arranged by the school)?

Testing Environment

- Distractions are kept to a minimum during the administration of the MTAS.

- Information that might clue the answers to the tasks is removed from the environment.

During Administration

- The student is adequately prepared for the administration and is comfortable.

- The Test Administrator reads/delivers each task according to the script without deviation.

- The Test Administrator reads/delivers each task in an appropriate manner for the individual student (e.g., the presentation of the task appears to allow the student to demonstrate knowledge and skills to the best of his or her ability).

- The test is administered individually.

- The administration is free of any clueing that might impact the response.

- Adaptations to the test materials prepared for the student preserve the construct of the task(s).

Scoring

- The Test Administrator scores tasks appropriately according to the script.

- Exact agreement or adjacent agreement is found for each task observed.

- Performance tasks stop after a task score had been clearly identified.

- The Test Administrator provides a copy of scores for the tasks observed during the audit visit.

MTAS Score Data Entry

- The Test Administrator has complete and accurate records and materials necessary for assigning a valid score for the student.

- The Test Administrator understands the district's procedure for entering MTAS scores online. (Scores may be entered in PearsonAccess Next by the Test Administrator, a score sheet is turned in to a central location for data entry, etc.).

Test Administrator Questionnaire Following Administration

- Did the administration training prepare you effectively?

- Did you use the object lists to present the tasks for mathematics or science?

- Were you provided adequate time to prepare materials for the MTAS administration?

- Were the directions for scoring the tasks clear?

Appendix D — Key Testing Terms

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Key Testing Terms

General Assessment Overview

- **Accommodations and Supports**: Changes in how students participate in assessments. These changes may be built into the online test, provided as part of the administration, or require paper test materials. They do not alter the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the integrity of test results.

  o *General Supports*: Available for all students on standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments; tailor the experience based on student needs or preferences (e.g., scratch paper).

  o *Linguistic Supports*: Available for English learners on standards-based accountability assessments only; supports that are specific to the needs of English learners (e.g., translated directions).

  o *Accommodations*: Only available for students with an IEP or 504 plan on standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments; provide changes in the way a test is administered to reduce or eliminate the effects of a disability (e.g., braille test book).

- **Criterion-Referenced Test**: Customized achievement test that describes student performance in terms of a specific standard (e.g., driver's license exams, which require would-be drivers to achieve a certain score to earn a license). Both the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA/MTAS) and the English language proficiency accountability assessments (ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS) are examples of criterion-referenced tests, as they are aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards and the English Language Development Standards, respectively.

- **District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)**: The DAC is the primary person in the district to oversee the implementation of statewide assessments, which includes managing required trainings, developing district policies and procedures, and ensuring test security is maintained. The DAC also serves as the district's main contact with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the service providers, and district staff regarding statewide assessment and any questions or issues that may arise.

- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**: A reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which initiated the current system for accountability, reporting, school improvement, and recognition in Minnesota.

- **Individual Student Reports (ISRs)**: Reports that describe an individual student's performance in terms of overall results and performance level for each subject or proficiency level for each domain.

- **Test Administration Report (TAR)**: The form districts use to document special circumstances (e.g., invalidations).

- **Test Security Notification (TSN)**: The online form DACs submit (in Test WES) to inform MDE of test security violations.

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

- **ACCESS for ELLs**: An English language proficiency accountability assessment based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards for listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

- **Alternate ACCESS for ELLs**: The alternate English language proficiency accountability assessment for English learners who have significant cognitive disabilities.

- **Alternate Model Performance Indicators (AMPIs)**: An educator resource that provides expectations of what English learners with significant cognitive disabilities should be able to process and produce at a given alternate English language proficiency level.

- **Can Do Descriptors**: An educator resource that highlights what language learners can do at various stages of language development across different content areas.

- **Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)**: The service provider that has subcontracted with WIDA to support administration of the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

- **Domains**: The four subtests in Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking that are assessed by the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS.

- **English Language Development (ELD) Standards**: WIDA-developed expectations that Minnesota has adopted as statewide ELD standards. These standards reflect the social and academic dimensions of acquiring a second language that are expected of English learners in grade levels PreK–12. The ELD standards provide a connection between language development and academic content.

- **English Learner (EL)**: Term used to identify students learning English as an additional language. May also appear as ELL (English language learner).

- **Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP)**: A language instruction educational program for English learners that addresses state academic and ELD standards.

- **Language Proficiency**: There are six language proficiency levels that outline the progression of language development implied in the acquisition of English as an additional language: 1–Entering, 2–Emerging, 3–Developing, 4–Expanding, 5–Bridging, 6–Reaching.

- **Model Performance Indicators**: An educator resource that illustrates how English learners process and use language for each English language proficiency standard, language domain, and language proficiency level by grade level cluster.

- **Performance Definitions**: An educator resource that outlines how English learners process and use language for each level of language proficiency in grades K–12.

- **WIDA**: A service provider for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. The WIDA Secure Portal is used to access test administration, technology, and reporting resources as well as training courses.

- **WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS)**: The website used for managing student data and online test sessions, indicating the number of online testers, ordering paper test materials as needed, and accessing score reports for ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS. DRC manages the WIDA AMS website.

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

- **Achievement Level:** A range of scores on a test are assigned to a level that describes a student's performance in relation to the Minnesota Academic Standards. There are four achievement levels on the standards-based accountability assessments: Does Not Meet Standards, Partially Meets Standards, Meets Standards and Exceeds Standards.

- **Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)**: An educator resource that describes the four levels of achievement on the MCA or MTAS using the Minnesota Academic Standards.

- **Minnesota Academic Standards**: Statewide expectations that identify the knowledge and skills all K–12 students are expected to achieve by the end of a grade level or grade band.

- **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)**: A standards-based accountability assessment for reading, mathematics, and science based on the Minnesota Academic Standards.

- **Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)**: The alternate standards-based accountability assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

- **PearsonAccess Next**: The website used for administering MCA and MTAS. It is used to manage users, set up MCA test sessions, enter MTAS scores online, and access results. User guides, trainings, and student resources are posted to it.

- **TestNav**: Pearson delivers online MCAs to students using the TestNav app. For students taking paper MCAs, staff use TestNav to enter student responses online.

Resources and MDE Systems

- **Assessment Secure Reports**: A secure location of the MDE website where districts can view test results.

- **District and School Student Results (DSR/SSR)**: Large data files that contain all student-level data from the assessments, including demographic information, achievement level information, and test scores.

- **Ed-Fi**: A data standard (or set of rules) that MDE has started implementing to streamline and connect data collection systems.

- **Graduation Requirements Records (GRR)**: The MDE system used by districts to request reimbursement for college entrance exams (ACT or SAT) for eligible students.

- **Minnesota Automated Reporting Student Systems Web Edit System (MARSS WES)**: The MDE system districts use to submit enrollment information to MDE. This information (along with test eligibility) is then submitted to service providers for testing through precode data files.

- **Minnesota Department of Education-Organization Reference Glossary (MDE-ORG):** A searchable database with organizational details on the MDE website, including contact information for DACs and other district roles.

- **Released Items and Passage Sets**: Math items and reading passages with accompanying items that were previously used on the MCA and are available on the MDE website for educators and students to reference.

- **Precode**: The term used to describe data files that are sent to service providers (i.e., Pearson and DRC) with student and test eligibility information.

- **Student Assessment History Report**: A report that allows districts to look up the assessment history for any student enrolled in their district.

- **Student Resources**: Since districts are required to ensure students are familiar with the assessments, a variety of student resources are available, including the following:

  o The **test demo** is available for each ACCESS grade-level cluster to show students how to navigate different features of the test. WIDA recommends that students watch the test demo before taking the practice test.

  o The **practice test** can be used to familiarize students with the ACCESS test format. These items are very easy but will help students become familiar with the test environment.

  o The **sample items** are recommended for students who have experience taking the ACCESS. The sample items can be used to familiarize students with the content and grade-level appropriate language development expectations. These items are representative of the item difficulty a student will experience on the actual test. Sample items are also available for Alternate ACCESS.

  o The **student tutorial** is available for the online MCA. The tutorial is used to familiarize students and educators with the general functionality of the online test, including navigation, tools, and item types. Detailed information for educators is provided in accompanying Teacher Guides.

  o **Item samplers** are provided to help students and educators become familiar with how the content is presented in the test. Item samplers are available for MTAS and for a variety of available accommodations and linguistic supports. Teacher Guides are available for MCA item samplers.

  o **Stand-alone online calculators** and **formula sheets** are available for MCA to allow students to practice using them outside of the item samplers.

- **Test Results Summary**: District- and school-level assessment data available by grade for the standards-based accountability assessments and the English language proficiency accountability assessments.

- **Test Specifications**: Specific rules guiding the development of a test, including information from the academic standards about how strands, sub-strands, standards, and benchmarks will be assessed.

- **Test Web Edit System (Test WES)**: The MDE system used throughout the year by DACs and other district staff for activities related to data editing and test security.

Upon request, the information in this manual will be made available in alternative formats.