Procedures Manual for Minnesota Statewide Assessments 2026-27

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment

October 2026

Statewide Assessment Websites

Website Name	Website URL	Description
Minnesota Department of Education	education.mn.gov	The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) website includes information for parents/guardians, educators, and District Assessment Coordinators, including testing calendars, user guides for MDE systems, test specifications, and technical reports.
Data Submissions Page of MDE's website	education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/datasub	MDE systems used by District Assessment Coordinators and other district staff. Access must be granted for each site separately. • Assessment Secure Reports: Secure section of MDE's website for obtaining student, school, and district data. • Test Web Edit System (Test WES): MDE system for a variety of activities before and after statewide testing, including working with precode files, providing information for Pretest Editing, performing essential edits for Posttest Editing, and submitting security violations. • Graduation Requirements Records (GRR): MDE system for requesting reimbursement for students participating in college entrance exams.
Minnesota Assessment Hub	mn.mypearsonsupport.com	Districts access user guides, trainings, and student resources on the Minnesota Assessment Hub website. Users sign in to Pearson's LaunchPad to access the Assessment Delivery and Management (ADAM) and Learning Management System (LMS) platforms to access trainings, administer the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, create and manage staff users, and access results.
WIDA	wida.wisc.edu	Districts access general and Minnesota-specific information about WIDA assessments on WIDA's website. Users sign in to the WIDA Secure Portal to create user accounts for staff, access trainings, track staff training completion, and download resources.
WIDA AMS	wida.wisc.edu/login	Districts access the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) to manage student data and test sessions, order paper test materials, and access score reports for WIDA assessments.
Testing 1, 2, 3	testing123.education.mn.gov	Testing 1, 2, 3 is a website that contains resources for assessment and data literacy that can be used and shared with district and school staff who interpret results from the statewide assessments.

MDE Contacts

400 NE Stinson Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55413

Email: mde.testing@state.mn.us

TTY users may call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711.

Assessment Administration and Results

- District Contact: 651-582-8674, mde.testing@state.mn.us
- Pearson: MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA
  - 888-817-8659; submit a Pearson help desk request
- WIDA and DRC: WIDA Assessments
  - WIDA: 866-276-7735, help@wida.wisc.edu
  - Data Recognition Corporation (DRC): 855-787-9615, WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com

Accountability System

- Division of Student Access and Opportunity, 651-582-8332, mde.essa@state.mn.us

English Learner (EL) Education

- EL Programs: 651-582-8579, mde.el@state.mn.us
- WIDA Assessments**:** mde.testing@state.mn.us

Students with Disabilities

- Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs): Garrett Petrie, Special Education, 651-582-8396, garrett.petrie@state.mn.us
- Students with 504 Plans: MDE's Section 504 website
- English Learners with Disabilities: Billy Brooks, 651-582-8595, billy.brooks@state.mn.us
- Accommodations and Alternate Assessments: mde.testing@state.mn.us

Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) and Ed-Fi

- MARSS: 651-582-8456, marss@state.mn.us
- Ed-Fi: ed-fi.mde@state.mn.us

Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment (MnKFA)

- MnKFA: MnKFA.mde@state.mn.us

Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act

- Minnesota READ Act: 651-582-8800, MDE.READAct@state.mn.us

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

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

Table of Contents

Statewide Assessment Websites **2**

MDE Contacts **3**

Table of Contents **4**

Chapter 1 — Introduction **9**

Purpose of This Manual 9

Educational Equity 9

Communication 10

Information for District Assessment Coordinators 10

Test Vendors 11

Accessing MDE Secure Systems 12

Comments and Suggestions 12

New for 2026-27 12

Chapter 2 — Overview of Statewide Assessments **15**

Overview 15

System of Assessments 15

Minnesota's Statewide Assessments 16

Career and College Readiness 27

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 30

Local Testing Time Limitations 33

Chapter 3 — Roles and Responsibilities for Testing **35**

Overview 35

Superintendent/Executive Director Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 36

District and School Assessment Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 37

School Principal Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 44

Technology Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 45

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 45

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 48

MARSS Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing 50

Chapter 4 — Universal Supports and Accommodations for Statewide Assessments 51

Overview 51

Statewide Assessment Participation for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan 54

Statewide Assessments and Multilingual Learners 57

Universal Supports and Accommodations for WIDA Assessments 58

Supports and Accommodations for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA 68

Chapter 5 — Responsible and Ethical Practices to Maintain Test Security and Test Score Integrity 123

Overview 123

Part I: Professionally Responsible Assessment Practices 124

Part II: Practices in Preparation and Administration of Statewide Assessments 125

Part III: Practices in the Use and Interpretation of Statewide Assessment Results 133

Part IV: Test Security 135

Part V: Monitoring and Audits 144

Chapter 6 — Overview of Test Administration 151

Overview 151

Important Dates 151

Which Assessment Students Will Take 151

Establishment of Testing Windows 152

Extension of Testing Windows 153

District Testing Calendar 154

Technology Preparation 156

Overview of Student Demographics and Data Collection 157

Valid Score Rules 161

Chapter 7 — Before Test Administration 163

Overview 163

Scheduling Requirements and Estimated Test Administration Times 163

Materials Ordering Window in WIDA AMS for WIDA Assessments 173

Test Materials for WIDA Assessments 174

Pretest Editing for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA 179

Test Materials for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA 181

Preparing for Test Administration 185

Defining Staff Involved in Test Administration 192

Selecting Test Administrators 193

Communication about Test Administration 195

Student Resources for Testing 195

Training 197

Chapter 8 — Test Administration 207

Overview 207

Tracking Secure Test Materials Provided to Students 207

Verifying and Correcting Student Information for Testing 208

Directions During Testing 210

Calculator Use 212

General Test Administration Considerations 215

Cell Phone and Other Prohibited Personal Device Policy 222

Monitoring Test Administration 224

What Help Test Administrators Can Give Students 225

Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues 228

Misadministrations Occurring During Test Administration 229

Breaks and Leaving During Testing 230

Defective or Damaged Test Materials 232

What Students May Do After They Complete a Test 232

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA 233

Chapter 9 — Student Participation and Students in Special Circumstances and Situations 235

Overview 235

Student Participation 235

Special Circumstances Guidance 236

Test Codes 251

Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students 255

Chapter 10 — After Test Administration 257

Overview 257

Collection and Return of Secure Test Materials 257

Missing Secure Test Materials 258

Posttest Editing 260

WIDA Assessment Requests 261

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Requests 262

Chapter 11 — Statewide Assessment Results 265

Overview of Secure Systems and Available Reports 265

Process for the Release of Final Assessment and Accountability Results 271

Guidelines for Communicating Assessment Results 278

Appropriately Using Assessment Results 280

Additional Reporting Resources 289

Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments 290

Use of Student Information and Results 291

Appendix A 297

Test Administration Report 298

Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist 300

Sample Group Training Documentation 302

Test Room Tracking Template 303

Request for Late Student Response Entry Form 305

Sample Medical Excuse Documentation Form 306

Sample Non-Disclosure Agreement for Sharing Assessment and Accountability Results 309

Appendix B 311

Building a Test: From Academic Standards to Scoring 312

MDE Test Security Procedures 318

Test Security Investigation Guide 320

Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide 322

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Requirements 324

Test Administration Calendar Examples 327

Calculator Use General Guidelines 330

What Does It Mean to “Abide by the Embargo”? 334

Policy for Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments 335

Document Retention Policy for Districts 337

Appendix C 339

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Evaluation Rubric 340

Training Verification Evaluation Rubric 342

Medical Excuse Documentation Evaluation Rubric 343

Minnesota Statewide Assessments Monitoring List 344

MTAS Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire 346

Alt MCA Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire 348

Appendix D 351

Key Testing Terms 352

Appendix E 359

Minnesota Statutes 359

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 361

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's statewide assessments. It presents and describes Minnesota's policies and procedures for implementing statewide assessments and using the results in your district or charter school. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

MDE has tried to make this manual as definitive as possible, and the procedures within this manual should be followed. However, legislative changes or other policies and procedure changes—as well as suggestions received from those who use this manual—require revisions to this manual each year.

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 the **Jump to** feature in the table of contents to go to a specific chapter or section.
- Print the lists to use as checklists.
- Use the *MDE Contacts* page in the front of the manual to find someone who can help you.
- Provide specific chapters to district and school staff (for example, special education staff or English learner staff).
- Use the *Document Retention Policy for Districts* in Appendix B as a reference for how long MDE requires districts to keep documentation for statewide assessments, as described throughout the manual.
- Note: For new DACs, MDE will discuss how to use the *Procedures Manual* as a reference and suggest ways to break up the content throughout the school year during *New DAC Orientation* (virtual or pre-recorded training).

Educational Equity

The State of Minnesota is committed to educational equity by providing all students with access to opportunities, resources, and support they need to learn and grow. Creating equitable opportunities is dependent upon having inclusive policies and practices that represent all students and providing each student with increased access to, and meaningful participation in, high-quality learning experiences where they can realize positive outcomes. Refer to the Mission, Vision, Strategic Plan page on MDE's website, which includes the *Ten Minnesota Commitments to Equity* document.

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division supports this commitment through the creation and administration of the Minnesota statewide assessments, which are designed to provide valid and reliable data about student learning of the applicable standards: the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts, Math, and Science and, for English learners, the WIDA English Language Development Standards. Statewide assessment results play a key role in our education system, as they help identify opportunity and access gaps between student groups, help determine where educational resources are needed, and provide

insights for targeted support so all students have access to a high-quality and equitable education, regardless of race, zip code, and prior lived experiences.

Communication

Clarifications and updates between publications of this *Procedures Manual*, as well as important reminders, will be published in the weekly *Assessment Update* newsletter. DACs and District Technology Coordinators indicated in MDE-ORG automatically receive the weekly *Assessment Update*. Others interested in receiving the *Assessment Update* may subscribe through this link.

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division also distributes the following newsletters:

- The monthly *Educator Edition* newsletter provides timely information regarding standards-based instruction resources, including professional development opportunities. The target audience is educators and Curriculum Directors. All Curriculum Directors in MDE-ORG automatically receive it.
- The *Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment Newsletter* is the division's semi-annual newsletter. It is intended to help strengthen schools and districts in their implementation of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and the WIDA English Language Development Standards. Articles cover all content areas and strive to support districts' assessment systems. The target audience is Curriculum Directors and DACs who receive it automatically if indicated in MDE-ORG as one of these roles.

To subscribe to the *Educator Edition* or the *Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment Newsletter*, refer to the Statewide Testing page of MDE's website (under the Communication expandable heading). All three newsletters are also posted on the MDE Updates pages of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Information for District Assessment Coordinators

In addition to this *Procedures Manual*, many DAC resources are available on the test vendor websites and on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable heading). These resources are reviewed annually with several resources developed specifically for new DACs.

- New DACs should begin with the *New District Assessment Coordinators: Getting Access* document, which provides instructions for being designated as a DAC and establishing DAC-level accounts in test vendor systems (Pearson, WIDA, and WIDA AMS) and relevant MDE systems.
- Other resources for new DACs are introduced during the New DAC Orientation training in the fall. These resources are meant to be used as quick reference guides to support DACs in their daily work.

Test Vendors

Pearson

Pearson is the test vendor for the standards-based accountability assessments: Reading, Math, and Science Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), Math Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS), and Reading and Science Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (Alt MCAs).

For questions regarding LaunchPad, ADAM, LMS, or TestNav, contact the Pearson help desk:

- Submit a help desk request through an online form on the Support page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.
- Phone: 888-817-8659
- Hours of operation:
  - September-May: Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.
  - June-August: Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- Website: Access user guides, trainings, and student resources on the Minnesota Assessment Hub website (mn.mypearsonsupport.com). From the website users can access and sign in to LaunchPad and ADAM to complete administration tasks for the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, create and manage users, and access results.

WIDA

Minnesota is a member of the WIDA Consortium. As a member, Minnesota districts administer the WIDA assessments (WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA ACCESS, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessments) to all English learners in grades K-12. WIDA is the test vendor for the WIDA assessments. 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 access to the WIDA Secure Portal, training, interpreting score reports, and WIDA resources.
  - Email: help@wida.wisc.edu
  - Phone: 866-276-7735
  - Hours of operation:
    - November-March: Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
    - April-October: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
  - Website: The WIDA website (wida.wisc.edu) is used to access training courses for test administration, technology, and reporting resources for WIDA assessments; 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, 7 a.m-6 p.m.
    - Website: WIDA AMS is used to complete administration tasks and access results.

Accessing MDE Secure Systems

MDE's secure systems that are related to assessments include the Test Web Edit System (Test WES), Assessment Secure Reports, Graduation Requirements Records (GRR), MARSS WES, and Student Identity Validations Interface. The district's DAC typically has access to Test WES, Assessment Secure Reports, and the GRR system, while the district's MARSS Coordinator typically has access to MARSS WES and the Student Identity Validations Interface; however, this arrangement may vary in some districts. Use the *New District Assessment Coordinators: Getting Access* document posted on the District Resources page of MDE's website for information on access and authorization for MDE secure systems (under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable heading). Test WES, Assessment Secure Reports, and GRR are described in chapters throughout the manual according to the tasks and timelines when DACs access them.

Comments and Suggestions

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

New for 2026-27

Symbols are used throughout the manual to help call attention to new information or updates. These symbols are searchable: use the **Find function** (Ctrl+F, Command+F) and search for either "new!" or "info!" throughout the manual. Tip: Using the exclamation point (!) with the word will narrow results to symbols only.

- The **New!** symbol indicates changes or additions to policies and procedures in this edition of the 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 are included to aid in this review.
- The **Info!** 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 relevant chapters to fully illustrate what has changed. Many of these clarifications were provided in the *Assessment Update* in the past school year (after last year's *Procedures Manual* was published).

General

- Pearson has transitioned from PearsonAccess Next to new platforms: LaunchPad and ADAM (Assessment Delivery and Management). LaunchPad is used for creating and managing user accounts for district and school staff and also provides centralized access to ADAM and the Learning Management System (LMS). ADAM is used for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA test management and reporting.
- The title of "Test Monitor" has been replaced with "Test Administrator" for the MCAs in this *Procedures Manual* and other test administration resources for consistency with other statewide assessments.

Assessments

- Materials for MTAS and Alt MCA will now be shipped as a single kit per grade that includes all applicable subjects for that grade (in previous years, kits were separated by both subject and grade) (Chapter 7).
- Data Collection Forms and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) forms are now included as separate materials in each MTAS/Alt MCA kit and are no longer included as perforated pages within the Task Administration Manual. Districts can make copies of these forms to distribute to Test Administrators as needed. Fillable PDF forms can still be accessed on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub (Chapter 7).

Test Security and Monitoring/Audits

- Field audits for WIDA Alternate ACCESS will be piloted in 2026-27 with a small number of schools. More information will be provided to districts selected (Chapter 5).

Training

- The Learning Management System (LMS) is now accessed through LaunchPad, Pearson's new platform. All users who need an LMS Learner account will need an account in LaunchPad. Users are no longer able to self-register an LMS account (Chapter 7).
- A new requirement for 2026-27 has been added to the topics listed in Appendix B and the template: The district's process for ensuring staff are aware of the available universal supports and accommodations when making decisions about appropriate supports for students (Chapter 5, Appendix B).

Universal Supports and Accommodations

- The Manual Control of Item Audio (MC) accommodation no longer applies to WIDA ACCESS Online and will only be applicable to WIDA ACCESS Paper. All students taking WIDA ACCESS Online will select the **Play** button on each screen to begin playing audio. The audio will no longer play automatically (Chapter 4).
- Specific types of external assistive technology devices and third-party software can now be used as an AT accommodation for all domains of the WIDA ACCESS Online. Examples of AT include voice navigation, eye-tracking tools, and Smyle Mouse (Chapter 4).
- A Speech-To-Text (STT) accommodation can be used on the Writing domain of the WIDA ACCESS Online. The specific tools available depend on the student's testing device (Chapter 4).

- Minnesota no longer requires prior approval from MDE for the extended testing of a test domain over multiple days (EM) accommodation for WIDA assessments; however, the need for extended testing across multiple days must be documented in the student's IEP or 504 plan (Chapter 4).
- The online grades 5 and 7 Math MCAs now contain animated videos with captioning (Chapter 4).

Administration

- For paper WIDA ACCESS, Test Administrators will stream the Listening and Speaking audio tracks from the WIDA ACCESS Paper Audio application in WIDA AMS. CDs containing the audio recordings can be ordered during the Additional Material Ordering window and are required for the braille version of the assessment. (Chapter 7).
- Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data must be entered in TestNav prior to being able to enter MTAS data or Alt MCA student responses, or completing Alt MCA online or hybrid testing. Data entry was previously completed in PearsonAccess Next (Chapters 2, 6, 8)
- Data for the Math MTAS must be entered online in a data entry test form in TestNav. MTAS data was previously entered in PearsonAccess Next (Chapters 2, 6, 8).
- To confirm assistive technology (AT) compatibility with the online assistive technology forms for Reading or Science MCAs/Alt MCAs, the District or School Assessment Coordinator will need access to the Training Administrations in ADAM to access sample AT test administrations. (Chapter 4).
- For the Reading MCA-IV, data from the new assessments in 2025-26 indicated that there was no change in the testing times from the Reading MCA-III for grades 3-8 (Chapter 7).
- For the Reading MCA-IV, data from the new assessments in 2025-26 indicated that the estimated time to impact performance is within the typical range for scheduling for all grades (Chapter 7).
- Staff can only enter student responses and data in TestNav between 6 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. This limit in TestNav applies to all tests and data, including paper MCA, paper Alt MCA, MTAS, and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data entry (Chapter 8).

Reporting

- Districts can now choose whether to have final paper ISRs and/or results labels delivered to individual schools or to the district (default is shipping to the district). This selection applies to all MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA reports, and the choice can be indicated in Test WES during Pretest Editing (Chapter 7).
- Results Explorer in ADAM—formerly called On-Demand Reports in PearsonAccess Next—provides student scores for Reading MCA/Alt MCA, Math MCA/MTAS, and Science Alt MCA within 60 minutes after testing or data entry is completed. Results for Science MCA are available within 72 hours after testing or data entry is complete due to the additional time required for scoring constructed-response items. Results in Results Explorer are available to authorized users only (Chapter 11).
- Report Assets in ADAM—formerly called Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next—include ISRs, Benchmark Reports, and other reports available for DACs and other authorized users (Chapter 11).

Chapter 2 — Overview of Statewide Assessments

Overview

This chapter focuses on the assessments administered as part of statewide testing in Minnesota, including the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments and other assessments such as college entrance exams for career and college readiness and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Local testing time limitations are described at the end of this chapter. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

System of Assessments

Before discussing the statewide assessments in detail, it is important to understand how they fit within a district's broader system of assessments. This system should be a coordinated set of classroom, school, district, and statewide assessments, each with a specific purpose, that together provide a more complete picture of student learning than any single assessment can alone. **Info!** This section has been updated to shift the focus more to the purpose of each assessment and the questions its results can answer.

Classroom assessments: Classroom assessments include both formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment is a process in which teachers and students gather and use evidence of learning during instruction to adjust teaching, support learning, and determine next steps. Summative classroom assessments are used to evaluate and report what students have learned after a period of instruction, often for grading purposes.

District- or school-wide assessments: District- or school-wide assessments, often called interim or benchmark assessments, are administered across classrooms or schools periodically throughout the school year. Depending on their purpose, use, and what the assessment is aligned to, they can provide information for instructional planning, monitoring progress toward learning goals, evaluating programs or curriculum, or predicting performance on later summative assessments. Their results are most useful when interpreted by teams of educators and school leaders to inform instructional, programmatic, or resource decisions.

Screeners: Screeners are brief assessments used to identify students who may need additional support or further diagnostic assessment. They identify potential areas of concern and help determine whether more detailed assessment is needed; they do not diagnose specific needs on their own. Examples include the universal literacy screeners required by the Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act, such as FastBridge, DIBELS, and Capti ReadBasix. The WIDA screener serves a related but distinct purpose: it is used to help educators identify whether a newly enrolled student qualifies for English language services, and if so, their initial English language proficiency. Because screeners and statewide assessments measure different skills for different purposes, screener results are not designed to predict how a student will perform on the MCAs or WIDA assessments.

Statewide assessments: Statewide assessments are standardized, summative assessments administered annually. They provide information about student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and English language proficiency expectations and are most useful for identifying trends and patterns across student groups, schools, and districts.

Assessments should work together in a cohesive system that produces data documenting student progress toward meaningful learning targets based on the standards. For more information about assessment types and assessment systems, refer to the System of Assessments page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website.

Minnesota's Statewide Assessments

The statewide assessments administered in Minnesota have been designed to provide system-wide evidence of student learning of the applicable standards: progress toward proficiency for English learners (ELs) as described by the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards (for the English language proficiency accountability assessments – the WIDA assessments), or learning of the grade-level Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards (for the standards-based accountability assessments – the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA).

- For more information on the WIDA ELD Standards, refer to the English Language Development Standards page of MDE's website.
- For more information on the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards, refer to the Academic Standards (K-12) page of MDE's website.

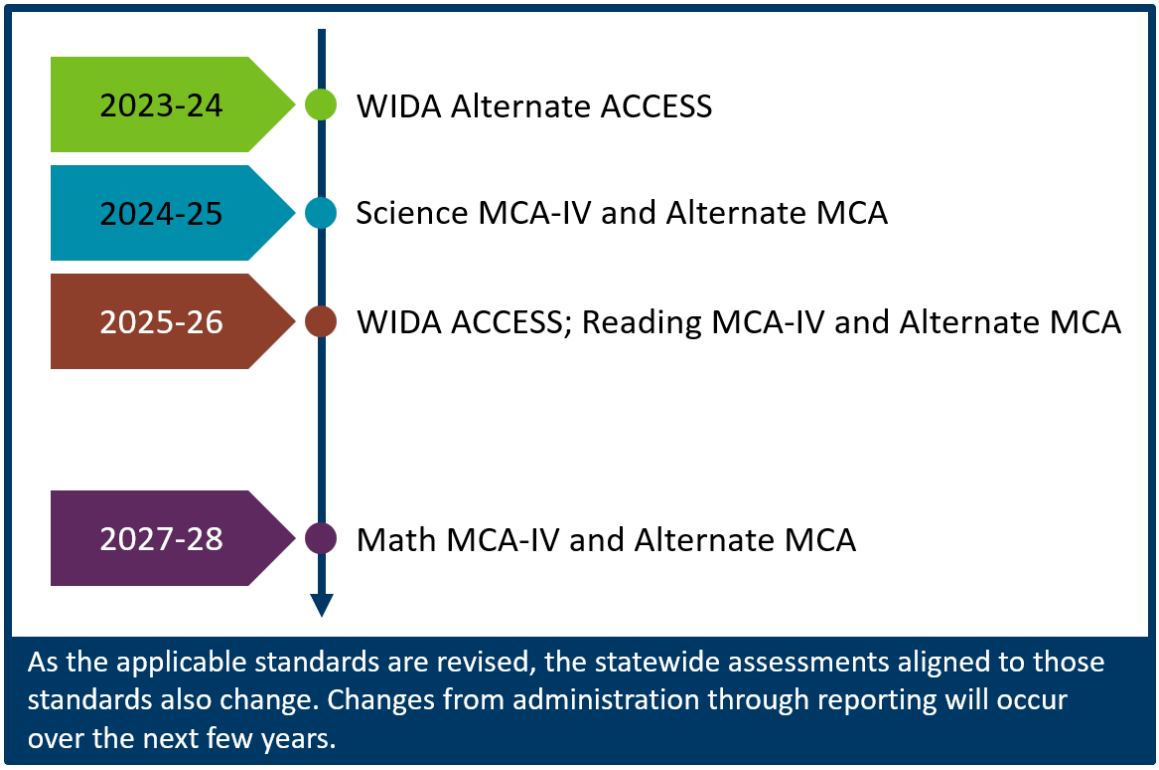
Minnesota has gathered strong evidence that these assessments do what they are designed to do. Through ongoing research, careful test development, and yearly review, MDE confirms that scores can be trusted to reflect what students have learned relative to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for their grade and subject.

Both the WIDA assessments and the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA also are used to meet federal accountability requirements. Results are used to identify districts and schools for support and to evaluate progress at the state level. This purpose exists alongside what these assessments show about student learning.

Statewide assessments are criterion-referenced, meaning they measure performance against a fixed set of criteria rather than by comparison to how other students perform. For the WIDA assessments, those criteria are the WIDA ELD Standards; for the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, they are the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. This differs from norm-referenced assessments, which rank a student's performance relative to other test-takers' performance. Criterion-referenced assessments are used to determine student learning of concepts and skills defined in the standards; however, it is not possible for them to provide a complete picture of what a student has learned. They also measure learning at a single point in time, so statewide results are one source of evidence and most useful when considered alongside classroom and district data from the district's system of assessments.

As the standards to which the assessments are aligned change, the assessments themselves must also change. Figure 1 shows a timeline of assessment changes that have occurred or will be occurring. More details are included throughout this chapter and manual.

Figure 1: Changes to Minnesota's Statewide Assessments



English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)) and Minnesota Statutes require that all English learners (ELs) in grades K-12 be assessed in English language proficiency (refer to Appendix E). Minnesota uses the WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS (referred to as the WIDA assessments throughout this manual), developed by the multi-state WIDA Consortium, to meet this requirement. Most ELs take the WIDA ACCESS; however, students receiving special education services who meet the participation criteria may take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS instead.

The primary purpose of the WIDA assessments is to measure English learners' progress toward English proficiency as described by the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. WIDA ELD Standards describe the social, instructional, and academic language students need to possess to engage with peers, educators, and curriculum. These standards can be understood as "language instruction through academic content," whereas academic content standards such as the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards can be understood as "content instruction through language."

For more information about the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition, refer to the English Language Development Standards page of MDE's website.

The WIDA assessments assess a student's ability to speak, write, and represent information on academic topics in the expressive domains. They do not evaluate whether the content is factually accurate. For example, a

student who writes a cohesive paragraph using complex and varied sentences with precise academic vocabulary—even if it contains factual errors—will score higher on the WIDA ACCESS Writing test than a student who writes a few simple sentences with general vocabulary, even if the information is entirely correct.

In addition to measuring progress toward proficiency, WIDA assessment results are used to help determine whether a student is ready to be reclassified and exited from EL services. For more information about reclassification and exit decisions, refer to the English Learner Education page of MDE's website.

> The purpose of the WIDA assessments is to measure English learners' progress toward proficiency as described by the WIDA English Language Development Standards and to determine if individual students are ready to exit their English learner services.

WIDA ACCESS

The WIDA ACCESS and WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten are English language proficiency accountability assessments aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. Both assess English language development in four language domains: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. While the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten is paper-based, the WIDA ACCESS for grades 1-12 is primarily administered online. WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten is individually administered. Information on test formats and grade-level clusters can be found in Table 1.

WIDA Alternate ACCESS

The WIDA Alternate ACCESS is an individually administered English language proficiency accountability assessment designed for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The WIDA Alternate ACCESS is aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition.

Participation is limited to students whose IEP team, in collaboration with EL staff, determines that the student meets eligibility requirements based on the *Eligibility Guidance and Decision-Making Support for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS in Minnesota* document, which is available on the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website. This resource includes special considerations for students in grades K-2. Extra caution should be given during these early grades, as a student's abilities may change quickly.

The WIDA Alternate ACCESS also assesses four language domains: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. It is a paper-based assessment. Information on grade-level clusters can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. 2026-27 WIDA Assessments Overview

Test	Grade-Level Clusters	Format	Description
WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten	K	Paper	All domains are assessed within the context of a single storyline. The test is individually administered and scored by the Test Administrator. Test materials include manipulatives.
WIDA ACCESS Online	1 2-3	Online (Listening, Reading, and Speaking) Handwriting (Writing; both prompts and responses are in a Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklet)	The Listening and Reading domains are adaptive tests that contain multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. The Speaking and Writing domains are not adaptive but are tiered, meaning that the items on different forms target specific proficiency levels. For the Speaking domain, students respond by speaking into a microphone to record their responses. The Writing domain contains a set of prompts to which students respond.
WIDA ACCESS Online	4-5	Online (Listening, Reading, and Speaking; for Writing, the prompts are viewed online) Handwriting (Writing; the prompts are viewed online, and the student responds in a Writing Response Booklet)	
WIDA ACCESS Online	6-8 9-12	Online (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing; some grades 6-12 students handwrite responses for Writing)	

Test	Grade-Level Clusters	Format	Description
WIDA ACCESS Paper	1 2-3 4-5 6-8 9-12	Paper (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing)	The WIDA ACCESS Paper is a semi-adaptive test that is available as an accommodation for eligible students. Refer to the *Accommodations for WIDA Assessments* section in Chapter 4 for additional information. The Listening, Reading, and Writing domains can be administered in group or individual settings. The Speaking domain is administered individually and scored by the Test Administrator.
WIDA Alternate ACCESS	K-2 3-5 6-8 9-12	Paper (Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing)	The Listening and Reading domains contain selected-response items, and the Speaking and Writing domains contain constructed-response items. The domains are individually administered and are all scored by the Test Administrator.

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

ESSA and Minnesota Statutes require that public school students be assessed annually in reading, math, and science (refer to Appendix E).

- Students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 10 take a reading test.
- Students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 11 take a math test.
- Students enrolled in grades 5 and 8 take a science test. High school students also take a science test during the year in which they complete their life science instruction (usually a biology course). Refer to the *Science MCA Details* section below for additional guidance.

Most students take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), but students who receive special education services and meet the alternate assessment eligibility requirements may take the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) or Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (Alt MCA) in place of the MCA. More information about alternate assessment eligibility is provided in the *Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (Alt MCA) Overview* section of this chapter. Students take one test (MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA) in each subject.

> The purpose of the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA is to measure student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

The primary purpose of the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA is to measure student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards, to which both the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA are aligned. 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 (for example, MCA-III designates the math academic standards adopted in 2007, while the MCA-IV designates the math academic standards adopted in 2022). Table 2 shows the academic standards to which the current assessments are aligned and the transition to revised standards. The Alt MCA, a redesigned alternate assessment replacing the MTAS, will also be administered in the same years as the applicable MCA-IV assessment.

Table 2. Standards-Based Accountability Assessments Overview and Standards Alignment

Subject	Administered in Grades	Academic Standards Assessed on MCA-III and MTAS	Last Administration of MCA-III and MTAS	Academic Standards Assessed on MCA-IV and Alt MCA	First Administration of MCA-IV and Alt MCA
Reading	3-8, 10	2010 Standards	Spring 2025	2020 Standards	Spring 2026
Math	3-8, 11	2007 Standards	Spring 2027	2022 Standards	Spring 2028
Science	5, 8, High School*	2009 Standards	Spring 2024	2019 Standards	Spring 2025

* Students in grades 9-12 take the Science MCA or Science Alt MCA once in high school.

The Minnesota Questions Tool (MQT) is a searchable database on the Testing 1, 2, 3 website for educators to use to better understand how the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA are aligned to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The MQT provides access to released and sample test questions, also called items, from past MCAs and MTAS/Alt MCA administrations. It includes items across all tested subjects (reading, math, and science) and grade levels, along with detailed information about each item, correct answers, scoring guides, and rationales. This information helps educators understand how test items are written to reflect the rigor and complexity of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and evaluate the knowledge and skills students are expected to demonstrate. Refer to the Plan and Teach section of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website for information and resources on how to support rigorous standards-aligned instruction.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) Overview

The Reading, Math, and Science MCAs are primarily administered online, with paper test materials available for eligible students (refer to Chapter 4 for additional information).

Adaptive and Fixed-Form Assessments

The Reading and Math MCAs are **adaptive** assessments, which means that each item (for math) or passage sets with associated items (for reading) are selected based on student performance on items taken earlier in the test. This process produces an individualized assessment that is tailored to measure each student's proficiency while still meeting the test specifications. While students are not presented with the same items, scores are comparable because each test measures the content and standards as defined in the test specifications.

The Science MCA is a **fixed-form** assessment, which means that items are pre-selected for all students. While students are presented with the same operational items (items that count toward their score), there are multiple forms of the test, and the placement of these items varies between forms. These items are selected to measure the content and standards as defined in the test specifications.

All tests include field test items that do not count toward student scores. Field testing is the process MDE uses to develop items for future years; as with all items, field test items are considered secure content, and the same test security procedures apply to them. These items are randomly assigned by student (for reading and math) and by form (for science).

Additional details by subject are included in the sections that follow, and detailed information on scheduling testing by subject is included in Chapter 7. More information about adaptive and fixed-form assessments is included in the *Technical Manual for Minnesota's Statewide Assessments* posted on the Technical Reports page of MDE's website (under the Technical Manual expandable heading).

Reading MCA Details

- The Reading MCA is an adaptive assessment that adjusts to each student's performance at the testlet level. A testlet is a group of two or more reading passages (or passage sets) and their corresponding items. A student's responses on a set of items associated with the passage set and previous testlets determine the next testlet the student receives. A student may review their responses to items in each testlet before moving on to the next testlet.
- Items are associated with reading passages. Each item appears on its own page with the passage on the left, so students always have direct access to the passage. Title pages appear at the beginning of each passage, and students know they have completed all items associated with a passage when they get to a review screen at the end of a group of items or get to the title page for the next passage. If there are two passage titles on the passage title page, the next set of items is associated with a text set (a pair of passages), which means there will be one set of items associated with this pair of passages. There are 7-10 passages (operational and field test) in the Reading MCA; because the Reading MCA is adaptive, the number and length of passages each student receives will vary within that range.
- The Reading MCA contains multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. For technology-enhanced items, students may manipulate graphics or text, 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.

Math MCA Details

- The Math MCA is an adaptive assessment that adjusts to each student's performance at an item level. This means that every time a student answers an item, that response, and any previous responses, determines the next item the student receives. Items are grouped within the test to limit the number of items a student may review, which is important for both test security and test construction (for example, to separate calculator and non-calculator items for grades 3-8). As students review and change answers to items within a group, the next item a student receives will be based on any response changes the student makes (for example, changing a response to item 1 after answering through item 5 may affect what a student receives for item 6). When moving to an item in a new group, the first item in the group is determined by all responses from previous groups.

- The Math MCA contains multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items. For technology-enhanced items, students may 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 or math expressions for an answer, or manipulate a graph. Students have access to online calculators and online math tables when allowed by the item and, in grades 5-8 and 11, can use the grade-level online formula sheet that is available for every item.

Science MCA Details

- The Science MCA is a fixed-form assessment, which means all students take the same operational items (in other words, the items that count toward their score). Since all items are pre-selected, any changes that students make to their responses during review will have no effect on subsequent items a student will receive. Items are grouped into two sections.
- In the Science MCA, items are based on a phenomenon, which is an observable event occurring in the universe that can be explained or predicted with scientific reasoning. The text, graphics, animations, or simulations included in the phenomenon provide context for students as they engage with the items. For each item, the relevant part of the phenomenon will appear in a tab on the left side of the page. Each phenomenon may be made up of multiple tabs, which students can navigate between and are referenced in the items. Title pages appear at the beginning of each phenomenon, and students will know they have completed a phenomenon when they get to the title page for the next phenomenon or see a review screen at the end of a section.
    - There are typically 15-20 phenomena (operational and field test) in the Science MCA. The number varies each year depending on the number of items per phenomenon as the tests are constructed.
- The Science MCA contains multiple-choice, technology-enhanced, and constructed-response items. For technology-enhanced items, 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 or letters for an answer, or manipulate a graph. Some items include simulations which require students to select variables and then use the results to answer items. There are also 1-2 constructed-response items, where students answer a question by writing a response. Students have access to online calculators when it is applicable for an item.
- 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.
    - These standards for high school science are typically addressed in one year of life science/biology instruction. Each district determines which coursework covers the Life Science standards, 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, the following situations provide information on whether a student is required to test:
        - Students who transfer to 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. This is true even if the student did not take the Science MCA previously, because the new district did not provide the life science/biology instruction.

- 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 retake their coursework during the summer or 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 the district determines that the student will likely not pass the course, they must also determine whether to still administer the test that year or wait until the course is retaken the following school year. If in doubt about when the student will complete coursework, the student should participate in the assessment. If the student completes the coursework over the summer (for example, credit recovery), the student should participate the following year.

Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (Alt MCA) Overview

The MTAS/Alt MCA are performance-based, alternate assessments in reading, math, and science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and they are available in every grade in which the MCA is available. These assessments are administered individually to students. These alternate assessments are based on extended benchmarks of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards that have been reduced in breadth, depth, and complexity. Extended benchmarks were written by Minnesota educators for use with the alternate assessments based on the benchmark language in the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The extended benchmarks are found in the test specifications documents on the Test Specifications page of MDE's website. Refer to the Alternate Assessments page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website for additional information about the transition from the MTAS to the Alt MCA.

The MTAS includes materials used by the Test Administrator to administer the tasks as well as paper test materials that include pictures and graphics for the student. The Reading Alt MCA includes brief passages that may be read aloud to students, and the Math MTAS and Science Alt MCA include object lists that provide guidance on the use of objects or manipulatives for students who need this type of support. Additional test materials, such as braille materials, Visual Descriptions, and Response Option Cards, are available to order for the Reading and Science Alt MCAs. Detailed information on all available test materials is included in Chapter 7 in the *Test Materials Quantities for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA* section.

The Reading and Science Alt MCAs can be administered in online, paper, or hybrid (any combination of online and paper) modes to meet student needs. The Alt MCA Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) are available for all administration modes, and they can be used by educators to become familiar with the Alt MCA test environment, make decisions on the administration mode, and then simulate the test for students. Alt MCA SRTs are available on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Note: For any administration mode, the Test Administrator should always actively monitor and be ready to offer support to the student as needed.

- An online administration is one where the student interacts with the online test with varying levels of Test Administrator support. This can range from the Test Administrator sitting next to the student and providing guidance as needed, to the Test Administrator guiding interactions and supporting the student's use of the online test. Note: Using objects or manipulatives to support the student's use of the online test is still considered an online administration.

- A paper administration is one where the student and Test Administrator use only paper materials for testing. Student responses are recorded on the Data Collection Form. The Test Administrator or district staff then enters the student responses into the online test form in TestNav.
- A hybrid administration is one where both paper test materials and the online test form are used to support the student during test administration. The following scenarios are examples of hybrid administrations:
    - A student uses paper Response Option Cards to indicate their response to the Test Administrator while the Test Administrator presents and reads the phenomena or passages and items from a device showing the online test in TestNav. The Test Administrator enters the student's responses online.
    - The Test Administrator presents the phenomena or passages and items to the student using the paper materials and the student indicates their responses on a device (such as a tablet).
    - A student begins using testing online, but the Test Administrator determines that they need to change to the paper test materials partway through testing, based on the student's needs. In this case, the Test Administrator continues the administration with the student using paper test materials and enters the student's responses online.

The Math MTAS can only be administered in a paper mode. Educators must ensure that students are familiar with the test materials and administration of the MTAS, using the released questions available for each grade on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page (under the MTAS and Additional Alt MCA Resources expandable heading), which also include examples of the field test item formats.

Test Administrators will score each task using a rubric embedded in the Math MTAS task script. **New!** District staff must then enter MTAS data in a data entry form in TestNav (previously MTAS data was entered in PearsonAccess Next). This must be done during the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Test Administrators for Reading and Science Alt MCA must ensure that student responses for each item are recorded in the online test form in TestNav during the testing window. Pearson does not enter MTAS or Alt MCA data or responses, so in order for the test to be scored, it is the district's responsibility to enter this data. Fillable PDF versions of the MTAS and Alt MCA Data Collection Forms are available on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

The Math MTAS for the current testing year includes Alt MCA field test items to prepare for the new math assessment. Table 3 outlines the number of operational and field test tasks/items by subject.

Table 3. 2026-27 Alternate Assessment Tasks/Items Overview

Subject	Number of Operational Tasks/Items	Number of Field Test Items	Total Number of Tasks/Items
Reading Alt MCA	27 items	18 items	45 items
Math MTAS	9 tasks	18 items	9 tasks and 18 items
Science Alt MCA	27 items	18 items	45 items

While the redesigned items (field test items) in the Math MTAS do not count toward a student's score, it is critical that Test Administrators be familiar with how to administer them and record student responses. Field testing is the process MDE uses to develop items for future years. Field test items are required to be administered and are designed to be administered in order. They are also considered secure content, and the same test security procedures apply to them.

MTAS/Alt MCA Participation

Participation using the MTAS/Alt MCA is limited to students whose IEP team determines that the student meets eligibility for an alternate assessment based on the *Eligibility Requirements and Decision-Making Tool for Minnesota Alternate Assessments* available on the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website. The same considerations for the Science MCA apply when determining which high school students will take the Science Alt MCA. 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 Alt MCA.

Districts are annually required to complete an Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) response to provide information, assurances, and where appropriate, narratives regarding alternate assessment participation rates.

- The purpose of the ARC response is to provide a communication tool between Minnesota districts and MDE to ensure that each district is identifying the most appropriate assessment for each student.
- Special Education Directors, District Assessment Coordinators, special education case managers, and other key district staff should provide input in conversations about the completion of the ARC response.
- The Alternate Assessment Participation report, available in Assessment Secure Reports, provides historical MTAS/Alt MCA participation rates, including comparison data with similar districts and statewide participation (under the Assessment Secure Reports heading). Refer to Chapter 11 for additional information.

ARC responses are provided to MDE annually, and information about timelines is provided through the *Assessment Update*. More information, including resources and user guides to complete the ARC response, is available on the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website.

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI)

The Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) is a research tool developed by the National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) to enable a better understanding of the learning characteristics of students participating in alternate assessments based on extended benchmarks. The LCI used for students taking the MTAS/Alt MCA has been adapted from NAAC's version and contains concise questions about the characteristics of students taking an alternate assessment that are not easily found in other assessment data that is collected. The LCI data assists MDE in describing the population of students who take alternate assessments to ensure that the test is designed appropriately for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. **New!** The LCI must be completed and entered online in TestNav by district staff before a student's MTAS scores or Alt MCA responses can be entered in TestNav. A fillable PDF LCI form is available on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

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, districts have a number of requirements to fulfill for student career and college planning; however, Minnesota Statutes state that students are not required to achieve a specific score on an assessment in order to graduate or meet graduation assessment requirements (refer to Appendix E).

Overview

Districts must assist students with career and college readiness by:

- Offering students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized college entrance exam on a school day.
- Monitoring students' development and growth in career and college readiness.
- Assisting students no later than grade 9 in exploring 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 requirements are met.

There are exceptions concerning school attendance age that apply to specific groups of students. More information on school attendance age limitations can be found in the *School Attendance Age Limitation* guidance on the MARSS Reporting Instructions page of MDE's website.

Minnesota Statutes require a school or district to record student progress toward career and college readiness on students' high school transcripts (refer to Appendix E).

- The statutes state a student is career and college 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 statutes do 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 with the opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized college entrance exam (the ACT or SAT) on a school day, but individual students are not required to participate. MDE strongly encourages districts to administer the version of the exam with the writing and science components included to provide students the most comprehensive information. While a district may offer other assessment options to students at its discretion (for example, ASVAB or ACCUPLACER), a college entrance exam must still be offered. All grade 11 and 12 students must still be offered the opportunity to participate in this exam. Based on Minnesota Statutes, some students are eligible for full or prorated exam fee reimbursement from MDE (refer to the details below and Appendix E).

Districts annually determine which assessment(s) will be offered and enter a contract with ACT and/or College Board, the test vendor(s). Districts work directly with the test vendor(s) to determine administration mode, test materials needed, and test dates, as well as for any questions about 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 (ACT and/or SAT).
- The district must offer students a college entrance exam each year on a school day at their high school, even if the district already offers one of the assessments on a national test date.
- The district is required to offer the college entrance exam to both grade 11 and grade 12 students. It must be offered to both grades, as a student may choose not to participate in grade 11, for example, but may choose to participate in grade 12. Districts may decide if students are allowed to participate in both years, but eligible students may only be reimbursed once.
- Each district will determine how the assessment opportunity will be communicated to students and families (for example, letters to students/families or 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 help the student successfully navigate toward and adapt to an economically viable career.
- Districts may allow other students to participate in their school day administration if they choose (for example, students who have already been reimbursed or home-schooled students who are not eligible for reimbursement). As long as the district is offering the opportunity to grade 11 and grade 12 students during a school day administration, other students may participate at the district's discretion.

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 free/reduced-price meals (FRP). To be eligible, the student must have been identified in student enrollment data submitted to MDE as FRP at some point during the school year in which the college entrance exam was taken.
- MDE may reimburse districts on a prorated basis (if necessary) for students who are not eligible for FRP but are still unable to pay for the exam. Legislation did not provide criteria to determine ability to pay, so districts must determine who falls in the category of unable to pay.
    - A district may not charge a fee to a student who is unable to pay for the college entrance exam.
    - No criterion was provided to determine ability to pay, so districts must determine who is in the unable to pay category.

    - MDE does not know if funds will be available for students unable to pay until reimbursements for students qualifying for FRP are made.

- While a school district may require a student who is not determined by the district as unable to pay and is not eligible for FRP to pay the cost of taking a nationally recognized college entrance exam, these charges may 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 (for example, if a district received reimbursement for a student who took a college entrance exam in grade 11, the district cannot request reimbursement for the same student in grade 12). Districts can use the Student Assessment History Report in Assessment Secure Reports to determine if reimbursement has been previously provided for a student.
- Note: ACT provides an opportunity for students who are eligible for FRP to apply for a fee waiver. FRP students taking the ACT for the first time typically would not need to complete the fee waiver because their district will receive reimbursement for the cost of their assessment.
    - Because MDE reimburses districts for only one assessment per student, the fee waiver process would be most appropriate for a student who is taking the ACT for the second time.
    - If district or school staff are assisting students with fee waiver requests, ensure that laws regarding private student data and FRP status are followed.

Once results are received from the test vendor, districts use MDE's secure Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) website to request reimbursement. Student results must first be received to ensure that the district requests reimbursement for students who actually completed testing. **Info!** Districts are required to keep records for reimbursement for a minimum of two years, as MDE will request these records during a reimbursement audit. Districts should also follow their district's policies and record retention schedules.

- When requesting reimbursements in GRR, districts will use FRP eligibility information (the FRP flag in enrollment data) to make the requests. However, district staff requesting reimbursements do not need detailed information or forms related to a student's FRP information.
- As available funding is based on legislation, districts should enter all requests for reimbursement during the year in which 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 not be reimbursed, but they would be eligible for reimbursement if they tested again in grade 11 or 12.
- To be eligible for reimbursement for the current fiscal year, students must have tested prior to July 1.
- The annual deadline for entering reimbursement requests is in September; detailed information and the date are 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) indicators for grades 10 and 11 MCAs are provided for reading and math on Individual Student Reports (ISRs) and District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR) files for statewide assessments. Goal scores have been established for student CCR indicators to determine whether students are on track to pass a college entrance exam by the end of grade 11.

Assist Students in Exploration and Planning Activities

Districts must also assist students no later than grade 9 in exploring 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)

For MDE, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is an assessment that falls within "national assessments"—a level of the state's system of assessments. The NAEP assessments are standardized, criterion-referenced, and summative assessments administered annually. Data from the NAEP assessments are most useful to state and federal education leaders and researchers when evaluating education policy and programs.

Overview

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative assessment of what students in grades 4, 8, and 12 know and can do in various subjects. Its purpose is to provide a fair and accurate measure of student achievement over time and across the nation. NAEP is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) with the support of MDE.

Currently, NAEP assesses students in six subjects: civics, mathematics, reading, science, U.S. history, and writing. Each NAEP assessment is based on a NAEP Subject Framework, which defines the knowledge and skills students should demonstrate, outlines assessment specifications, and guides question development. These frameworks are developed through a broad consensus process involving subject matter experts, educators, researchers, business leaders, policymakers, and parents/guardians. They are designed to be independent of any state standards and do not inform classroom instruction.

Because NAEP cannot assess every subject and grade level each year, it follows a published assessment schedule. The schedule specifies the operational assessments for each year, meaning those from which results will be publicly reported. The schedule indicates which subjects and grade levels will be assessed and whether the results will be reported at the national or state level. The NAEP Assessment Schedule for the next five years is listed below in Table 4. It is considered tentative and is finalized in the spring before the assessment year

begins. In addition to operational assessments, NAEP may also conduct pilot assessments, field tests, field trials, special studies, or special administrations, depending on research and development needs.

Through *The Nation's Report Card*, NAEP reports on student achievement, as well as on their instructional experiences and school environments. Results are presented for the overall student population and for various demographic groups. However, NAEP is not designed to report results for individual students, classrooms, schools, or districts. NAEP results are used by policymakers, state education departments, researchers, and the media to monitor and compare student achievement at the national and state levels.

Table 4. NAEP Assessment Schedule

Year	National Results	State Results
2026-27		
2027-28	Reading (grades 4, 8, 12) Mathematics (grades 4, 8, 12) Civics (grade 8)	Reading (grades 4, 8, 12) Mathematics (grades 4, 8, 12) Civics (grade 8)
2028-29	Science (grade 8)	Science (grade 8)
2029-30	Reading (grades 4, 8) Mathematics (grades 4, 8)	Reading (grades 4, 8) Mathematics (grades 4, 8)
2030-31	U.S. History (grade 8)	
2031-32	Reading (grades 4, 8, 12) Mathematics (grades 4, 8, 12) Civics (grades 8, 12)	Reading (grades 4, 8 12) Mathematics (grades 4, 8, 12) Civics (grades 8, 12)

Note: This table is a tentative schedule of the operational assessments for the next five years. Additional assessments (such as pilot assessments, field tests, field trials, special studies, and special administrations) may be scheduled as well.

Administration Overview

NAEP is a digitally-based assessment administered to a sample of students across the nation. Schools and students are selected through a carefully designed sampling process to ensure that the results are representative of all students at the state and national levels. Because NAEP is not given to every student or school, the participation of those selected is essential. Their involvement helps provide a clear picture of student achievement and educational progress across the state and nation.

Per federal law, participation in NAEP is voluntary for individual students, schools, and districts. However, under ESSA, states and public school districts that receive Title I funds are required to participate in the NAEP Mathematics and Reading assessments in grades 4 and 8, if selected (refer to Appendix E). While participation is required under Title I assurances, no sanctions or awards are associated with performance on NAEP.

All responses are confidential, and the privacy of participating students in schools is strictly protected. The data collected is used solely for statistical purposes.

NAEP is designed to cause minimal disruption of classroom learning. Each administration session takes about 120 minutes, which includes time for instructions, a digital tutorial, completing the subject-area assessment and a survey questionnaire, and transitions to and from class.

To support accessibility, NAEP offers a wide range of universal design features and accommodations. Each student takes the assessment in only one subject, and no preparation is required. However, schools and teachers should encourage students to do their best.

NAEP 2027 Administration

The NAEP 2027 administration includes a pilot assessment program. The NAEP 2027 assessment window will be from January 25 to March 19, 2027.

The pilot assessment program will administer a pilot NAEP Science assessment to students in grade 8. The pilot assessment is designed to test new questions aligned with the updated NAEP Science Framework. This program also contributes to the ongoing modernization of NAEP. Results will not be publicly released but will be used to inform future NAEP assessments.

NAEP is continuing its efforts to modernize in order to provide a more flexible and authentic assessment experience for students. For NAEP 2027, selected schools will be assigned to one of two administrative models: school device or NAEP device. Schools assigned to the school device model will need to prepare their district-owned devices for the NAEP administration. Administrative model assignments will be made based on the district/school response to the NAEP School Technology Survey, which gathers information about the district's available devices and their compatibility and readiness to run the NAEP Assessment Application (NAEP App).

NAEP Resources

- The eNAEP Download Center (enaep.naep.ed.gov) provides information for preparing school devices, including the minimum technical requirements, detailed instructions for installing the NAEP App, and tools to perform preassessment checks.
- The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) page of MDE's website provides more information about and resources for understanding the NAEP assessments in Minnesota.
- Refer to the NAEP page on the National Center for Educational Statistics website (nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard) for more information:
    - NAEP Assessment Frameworks are blueprints that guide the development of the assessments and determine the subject-specific content and skills to be assessed.
    - Information for Public Schools provides resources for districts, schools, principals, and teachers.
- Refer to The Nation's Report Card (NRC) (nationsreportcard.gov) for NAEP results and data tools.
    - The NAEP Questions Tool contains released questions from past NAEP assessments, with student responses, item statistics, and scoring guides.
    - The Experiences and Opportunities in Education Dashboard displays results from the survey questionnaire, which provides insight into NAEP performance and students' learning opportunities.

Local Testing Time Limitations

Minnesota Statutes place local testing-time limitations on districts (refer to Appendix E). 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 districtwide or schoolwide assessment. The following assessments or types of assessments are **not** included in the limitations:

- Statewide assessments: MCA, MTAS/Alt MCA, WIDA assessments
- International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) exams
- Nationally recognized college entrance exams (ACT and SAT)
- Career interest inventories
- NAEP
- Identification for services, such as special education or English learner programs (WIDA screener)
- Minnesota Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act screeners
- Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment (MnKFA)

For information on the READ Act screening requirements, refer to the READ Act page of MDE's website or contact MDE.READAct@state.mn.us.

For more information on the MnKFA, refer to the Minnesota Kindergarten Fall Assessment (MnKFA) page of MDE's website or contact MnKFA.MDE@state.mn.us.

Districts should use published estimated testing times to determine the time for each test; it is not necessary to track actual times by student. The Achieve organization provides a free Student Assessment Inventory on the Student Assessment Inventory for School Districts page of their website that districts can use to evaluate the assessments students are taking. If a district or school plans to exceed the maximum number of testing hours, it should be specified in their Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) strategic 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 CACR.MDE@state.mn.us for additional information about the CACR requirements.

Chapter 3 — 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. Note: Throughout this manual, the term “district” refers to 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 “Info!” symbols are not used in this chapter to call them out. (Symbols are only used if this chapter contains the only mention of a change.)

Figure 2: Staff Who Have Roles for Testing*

*There may be a variety of other staff who are involved directly or indirectly with testing. Refer to Chapter 7 for more information.

Superintendent/Executive Director Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

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

Superintendent/Executive Director 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 in the following sections. This should be done no later than early fall to ensure these individuals receive the required trainings for their roles.
2. Ensure the Site Verification Coordinator (SVC) has designated these contacts in 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 be designated only 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). The IOwA provides the DAC (and other staff, if needed) with access to 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 district policies and procedures are in place and kept up to date and that information and training on district policies and procedures has been provided to staff.
6. Complete the *Test Security Training* each school year to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, the policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.
7. Confirm the DAC has reviewed applicable MDE training resources and/or attended MDE trainings specific to the administration of statewide assessments each school year.
8. To reinforce 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)/MARSS numbers, and make corrections as needed in the Student Identity Validation Interface.
10. Designate a MARSS Coordinator who will submit student enrollment data to MDE on an ongoing basis throughout test administrations, as needed, to ensure accurate enrollment and test eligibility information.
11. Confirm the DAC will have time to complete Pretest Editing in Test WES.
12. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

Superintendent/Executive Director 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 test vendor or MDE and are being addressed as needed.
3. Confirm the DAC will have time to complete Posttest Editing in Test WES.
4. Confirm the MARSS Coordinator has updated all student enrollment 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.
5. Confirm the DAC or another designated staff person has access to the GRR system and has time to request and confirm reimbursements for college entrance exams for eligible students.
6. Discuss the final assessment results with the DAC as well as district and school administrators.
7. Prepare for questions from local media and constituents about final test and accountability results.
8. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

District and School Assessment Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

The District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) is the district's main contact with MDE, the test vendors, and the School Assessment Coordinators for statewide testing.

> The DAC is ultimately responsible for ensuring the district's test security procedures are communicated and being followed, all required trainings are completed, and all secure materials are accounted for.

The District and School Assessment Coordinator roles and responsibilities are combined because the responsibilities may vary from district to district, and some districts do not assign School Assessment Coordinators. This ensures that all responsibilities are reflected under one role.

- If your district has staff assigned as School Assessment Coordinators, responsibilities may be delegated as applicable within the district.
- If School Assessment Coordinators are not assigned, ensure there is a designated contact at each school for questions, if applicable (for example, some smaller districts or charter schools may have only one contact).
- In addition, some districts designate an EL Coordinator or other EL staff to oversee portions of WIDA assessment administrations. When this occurs, the DAC is responsible for ensuring these staff understand their assigned duties.

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 (following your district policies) to contact the applicable test vendor(s) as soon as possible to report the issue and receive further instructions. While MDE should be contacted for questions related to testing policies and procedures, the test vendors provide the immediate assistance needed for technical issues.

> The DAC should be the person who contacts MDE with policy and procedure questions related to test administration. They can then distribute the information within the district as needed.

District and School Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Establish and implement district test administration and test security policies and procedures (Chapter 5).
    - Confirm there is an up-to-date written District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments on file. If district policies and procedures do not exist, write such a procedure in collaboration with other administrators prior to test administration.
    - Annually review test administration and test security policies detailed in Appendix B of this *Procedures Manual*, the *Test Security Training*, and other applicable resources and guides; incorporate these policies into the district policies and procedures as needed.
    - Determine if information on district policies and procedures will be provided to staff through trainings or through written resources and then provide the trainings and/or written resources.
    - Provide the district policies and procedures to MDE if requested.
2. Establish the district testing calendar within the testing windows specified in the *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.
    - Determine the district testing calendar for WIDA assessments, MCA, and MTAS/Alt MCA (Chapter 6).
    - Publish the district testing calendar no later than Oct. 1; ensure testing dates (by grade and subject) for each school in the district are updated as needed (Chapter 6).
    - Schedule rooms, computer labs, and devices for testing as needed (Chapter 7).
    - Arrange for Test Administrators to administer the tests and assign students to them (Chapter 7).
3. Complete and verify/document trainings completed by all staff involved with testing (Chapter 7).
    - Identify DAC trainings and resources to review and attend MDE trainings.
    - Complete the *Test Security Training* to confirm your understanding of, and intention to implement, the policies and procedures applicable to your role to ensure test security and test score integrity.
    - Provide training to School Assessment Coordinators on district policies and procedures and assign other training resources as needed. As a School Assessment Coordinator, complete or attend any

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

- Collaboratively develop and implement a plan ensuring all staff involved with testing complete the required trainings.
  - Verify that all staff involved with testing complete the *Test Security Training*.
  - Verify that all Test Administrators who will administer WIDA assessments have completed the applicable online WIDA training courses and quizzes in addition to MDE-required trainings.
  - Verify that all Test Administrators who will administer the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA have completed the applicable MDE-required trainings.
  - 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.
- 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.

4. Identify appropriate tests for students and ensure student data sent to test vendors for testing is correct.
   - Collaboratively determine with the MARSS Coordinator that all student data is current and submitted to MDE as needed.
   - In conjunction with the MARSS Coordinator and special education and English learner staff, ensure students receiving special education services and English learners are correctly identified in enrollment data.
   - Identify and manually add any students not included in the precode files who will be testing (for example, homeschooled students), using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES (Chapter 6).
   - 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 assessment (Chapter 9).
   - Determine which college entrance exam will be offered for students in grades 11 and 12 and establish a contract with the applicable test vendor (Chapter 2).
   - Work with the special education and English learner staff to determine which English learners will take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS based on participation guidelines (Chapter 4).
   - Work with the special education and English learner staff to determine which English learners require accommodations for the WIDA assessments as specified in their IEPs or 504 plans.
   - Order required test materials for WIDA assessments (Chapter 7).
   - In coordination with the special education and English learner staff, determine and document any universal supports and/or accommodations needed by individual students for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA (Chapter 4).
   - Work with the special education staff to determine which students will take the MTAS/Alt MCA based on the eligibility requirements (Chapter 4).

- Complete Pretest Editing in Test WES for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA to change test assignments and indicate universal support and accommodation codes as needed (Chapter 7).
- Complete District Options and District Confirmations in Test WES during Pretest Editing to indicate MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA shipping preferences and confirm information for assessments (Chapter 7).
- Communicate information to applicable school staff to ensure that students take the correct assessment (WIDA ACCESS/WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS; MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA) and/or receive the universal supports and/or accommodations required.
- Develop a process for documenting reasons students may not be participating in testing (for example, parent/guardian refusals or medical excuses) and for communicating information to applicable school staff.

5. Prepare testing conditions.
   - Ensure that the applicable staff involved with administering WIDA assessments are set up with user accounts for the WIDA Secure Portal and WIDA AMS.
   - Ensure that the applicable staff involved with administering MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA are set up as users with active accounts in LaunchPad.
   - In collaboration with the Technology Coordinator, use technical resources on the test vendor websites to ensure readiness for WIDA ACCESS and MCA/Alt MCA online testing (Chapter 6). This may include working with special education staff and students to test if an assistive technology device or software is compatible with the vendor's online testing platform.
   - Work with technology staff to prepare for online testing. This includes ensuring all hardware and software requirements are met and equipment is available (for example, headphones, headsets for WIDA ACCESS) (Chapter 7).
   - Plan seating or testing room arrangements for students to ensure independent work and student-to-Test Administrator ratios are followed (Chapter 7).
   - 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 7).
   - Determine where students who finish testing in earlier sessions will go while other students finish testing (Chapter 8).
   - For WIDA ACCESS Online, ensure the following preparations are completed in WIDA AMS (Chapter 8):
     - Verify students are shown as enrolled in the correct school and district when verifying test sessions. For the Writing domain, verify students are shown in the correct test session (either handwriting or keyboarding).
     - Print test session rosters and student test tickets and keep them secure until test administration.
   - For MCA/Alt MCA, ensure universal support and accommodation codes are updated in Pretest Editing in Test WES throughout the testing window as needed.

- For all MCA, MTAS, and Alt MCA testing, ensure the following preparations are completed in ADAM (Chapter 8):
  - When setting up proctor groups, verify students show as enrolled in the correct school and district and that they are eligible for the correct test.
  - Print rosters and/or student test tickets (print cards) and keep them secure until test administration.
- Prepare for administrations using universal supports and/or accommodations, including scheduling for small group and individual administrations and preparing for translated directions (Chapter 4).
- Establish a process for inventorying and distributing secure test materials to each school building if test materials are shipped to the district.
- If test materials are shipped to the schools, notify the School Assessment Coordinators or designated school contact when test materials will be arriving and the quantities to expect.
- Determine staff who will enter student responses from MCA/Alt MCA paper tests, MTAS, and LCI data online (Chapter 8).

6. Maintain security of test content and test materials.
   - Receive secure paper test materials from the test vendors and immediately lock them in a previously identified secure area.
     - If schools are receiving test materials directly from the test vendors, confirm that each school has received test materials and that they are locked in a secure area.
     - Inventory paper test materials, or confirm paper test materials have been inventoried, using the security checklists, and contact the applicable test vendor if there are any discrepancies (Chapter 5).
     - Organize secure test materials remaining at the district, ensuring they are kept secure and not distributed unless needed for test administration.
   - Verify that each school has the paper test materials needed; order additional test materials as needed.
   - Organize secure test materials for online administrations, including student test tickets and scratch paper, and keep them secure (Chapter 8).
   - For WIDA assessments, when applicable, confirm that all students have the appropriate paper test materials (Chapter 7). Ensure that preprinted student information on the labels is accurate and arrange for student information to be filled in (hand-bubbled) on scorable test booklets that do not have individual student labels (Chapter 8).
   - Distribute the applicable WIDA assessment *Test Administrator Scripts* and *Test Administration Manuals* to Test Administrators so they can become familiar with the scripted directions and prepare for test administration.
   - Distribute the applicable MCA *Testing Directions* to Test Administrators so they can become familiar with the scripted directions and prepare for test administration.

- Define the chain of custody for providing secure test materials to Test Administrators.
  - 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, keeping test materials secure between testing sessions, and returning test materials after testing is completed.
  - Record and assign all secure paper test materials on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist. Secure test materials should not be distributed prior to the day of testing (exceptions to this are specified in Chapter 5).
  - Distribute materials to WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators prior to testing to allow for administration preparation and adaptation of materials to meet individual student needs (Chapter 5).
- Provide MTAS/Alt MCA LCI and Data Collection Forms if data/responses will be centrally entered by the district or school prior to the closing of the testing window.

District and School Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities on Testing Days

1. Distribute materials to Test Administrators on the day of testing and ensure secure test materials, including student test tickets and scratch paper, are kept secure between testing sessions according to district procedures.
2. Ensure that WIDA assessment *Test Administrator Scripts* and MCA *Testing Directions* are followed.
3. As the DAC, answer questions from School Assessment Coordinators or designated school contacts and Test Administrators, as needed.
4. Monitor test administration by conducting (or designating trained staff members to conduct) random, unannounced visits to testing rooms within the district to observe staff adherence to state and district policies and procedures and test administration policies and procedures (Chapter 5). Note: This monitoring is in addition to the active monitoring being done by the Test Administrator in the testing room and is meant to simulate the site visits conducted by MDE at a district and school level.
5. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits or audits, as applicable (Chapter 5).
6. Collect information about and document testing irregularities using *Test Administration Reports* (TARs) (Chapter 5).
7. If security violations occur, contact MDE within one business day and document the violation through Assessment Security Records (ASR) in Test WES within two business days (Chapter 5).
8. Monitor testing progress to ensure all students complete testing during the testing window.
9. For WIDA assessments, indicate appropriate test codes in WIDA AMS or on scorable test booklets as needed and/or keep notes for entry during Posttest Editing (Chapter 9).
10. For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, indicate applicable test codes in ADAM as needed and/or keep notes for indication during Posttest Editing (Chapter 9).

District and School Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities After Testing

1. Ensure that designated staff have entered student responses from MCA/Alt MCA paper test books, LCI, and MTAS data online. All information must be entered before the testing windows close in order for the tests to be scored and reported (Chapter 8).
2. Ensure that secure paper test materials, student test 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.
3. Use security checklists to verify receipt of all secure paper test materials from the assigned Test Administrator after testing is completed. Collect copies of the security checklists from each school.
4. For all WIDA assessment scorable test booklets, confirm that there are no additional markings or bubbled information on the test booklets that may affect how the test booklet is scanned and scored (Chapter 8).
5. Arrange for the secure disposal of all test materials not required to be returned, as outlined in the applicable resources and guides. The secure disposal of materials must be completed no more than two business days after the closing of the testing window (Chapter 10).
6. Prepare materials for pickup by the carrier on the designated date(s). Ensure that all boxes containing the secure test materials are in a secure location known to applicable school staff or are returned to the district office.
7. Follow procedures for returning scorable test materials for WIDA assessments by the deadline to ensure student tests are included for Posttest Editing and reporting.
8. Follow procedures for returning secure test materials for all assessments as outlined in the applicable resources.
9. Verify that all returned test materials are received by the test vendors.
10. Document specific circumstances on TARs 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 5).
11. Collect security documents (such as security checklists) from each school. Keep on file at the district for two years from the end of the academic school year in which testing took place (Chapter 5).
12. Review assessment records and resolve discrepancies in Test WES during Posttest Editing, including verifying or indicating test codes. Work with the MARSS Coordinator to resolve any issues in enrollment data submitted to MDE (Chapter 10).
13. Request reimbursement for eligible students for college entrance exams as needed (Chapter 2).
14. Retrieve final assessment results from Secure Reports and prepare for questions from the media, community, and educational partners (Chapter 11).
15. Work with principals to share assessment results (as specified in the District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments), communicate what it means to abide by the embargo, and ensure the constraints for embargoed final assessment results are followed.
16. Distribute Individual Student Reports (ISRs) to parents/guardians by Dec. 1 (Chapter 11).

17. Review district data retention policy and determine a plan for retaining student assessment records (Chapter 11).
18. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

School Principal Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

In conjunction with the DAC, the School Principal's role is to designate the School Assessment Coordinator, if applicable, and other school staff members who will serve as Test Administrators.

School Principal Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Designate a School Assessment Coordinator, if applicable, and a Technology Coordinator for the school. If a School Assessment Coordinator is not assigned, identify a school contact unless you or the DAC is fulfilling that role (for example, some smaller districts or charter schools may have only one contact).
2. Be knowledgeable about proper test administration and test security requirements as outlined in this *Procedures Manual* and other applicable resources and guides.
3. Complete the *Test Security Training* each school year 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 District or School Assessment Coordinator that all staff involved in testing, including Test Administrators, complete the required trainings for administering the tests.
6. To reinforce 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 test vendor or securely disposed of.
8. In conjunction with the Technology Coordinator, ensure that sufficient and adequate computers/devices, headphones/headsets, mice, and/or keyboards are available and that 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 through resources on test vendor websites.
10. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

School Principal 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, audits, and/or investigations.

School Principal Responsibilities After Testing

1. In conjunction with the District or School Assessment Coordinator, ensure that all secure test materials are collected, returned, and/or securely disposed of as required.
2. Discuss the assessment results with the School Assessment Coordinator as well as district administrators and the DAC and determine how results will be shared with staff (as specified in the District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments). In conjunction with the DAC, ensure the constraints for embargoed early and final assessment results are adhered to.
3. Prepare for questions about test results.
4. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

Technology Coordinator 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 also for providing technical support to district staff.

1. Acquire user accounts for LaunchPad (which includes ADAM and LMS access), WIDA Secure Portal, and WIDA AMS from the DAC.
2. Complete the *Test Security Training* each school year 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 test vendor technology trainings and review information on district policies and procedures for testing.
4. Review all technical documentation available on the test vendor websites and prepare computers/devices for testing.
5. Provide technical support/troubleshooting during test administration and contact the test vendor help desk as needed.
6. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

Test Administrators are responsible for maintaining test security during test administration, including actively monitoring test sessions and keeping test materials secure. The following information applies to WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) Test Administrators unless noted below. Requirements for selecting Test Administrators are available under *Selecting Test Administrators* in Chapter 7.

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Complete or attend any required test-specific or district trainings each school year 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 WIDA assessments, complete the applicable online WIDA training courses and quizzes in the WIDA Secure Portal for the tests being administered, along with the required MDE trainings in the Learning Management System (LMS).
- For MCA, complete the required MDE trainings in the LMS.
- Ensure you have received information on and understand district- and school-specific policies and procedures for testing.

2. For WIDA assessments, review the *Test Administrator 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, such as when students are taking an assessment over multiple days or are 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 the District or School Assessment Coordinator, know which students are to be provided with appropriate universal supports and/or accommodations and any related specific test administration procedures.
8. Remove or cover any prohibited materials in the testing room or on student desks. This step can be taken shortly before testing begins.
9. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator 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 test tickets for the students in your test session. Ensure all allowable materials for students (for example, 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 scorable test materials for WIDA ACCESS using a number 2 pencil. Ensure that all hand-bubbled information matches student enrollment data.
7. Record additional test materials received on the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* or applicable district-provided checklist.

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities on Testing Days — During the Test

1. Verify that students are logged in and taking the correct test (meaning the name on the test matches their name and they are not logged in to another student's test).
2. For WIDA ACCESS, verify that the students testing with paper test materials are using the correct grade-level and tier test booklet.
3. Follow the script in the *Test Administrator Scripts* (WIDA ACCESS) and/or applicable *Testing Directions* (MCA) exactly.
4. Follow the district policies and procedures for restricting student access to cell phones and other prohibited devices during testing.
5. Stay in the room and actively monitor students during the entire test session.
6. Know what to do and whom to contact if an emergency or unusual circumstance arises (for example, a student gets sick or 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. Identify students who require a scribe or translated directions or any unusual circumstances for test administration (for example, students requiring a cell phone as a medical monitor) and provide the information to the District or School Assessment Coordinator who will document the information on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).
11. Notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator of any possible security violations as soon as possible.
12. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities on Testing Days — After the Test

1. Follow the guidance and scripted instructions in the Test Administrator Scripts (WIDA ACCESS) and/or applicable Testing Directions (MCA).
2. Collect all student test tickets, scratch paper, and other materials provided during testing (for example, 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 to do so.

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. For all WIDA ACCESS scorable test booklets, confirm that there are no additional markings or bubbled information on the test booklets that may affect how the test booklets are scanned and scored.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Immediately notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator if any test materials are missing.
8. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Complete or attend any required test-specific or district trainings each school year 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 WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA 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 trainings in the Learning Management System (LMS).
    - For MTAS/Alt MCA, complete the applicable required trainings in the LMS.
    - Ensure you have received information on district policies and procedures for testing.
2. Review the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS *Test Administrator Manual* or MTAS/Alt MCA *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 (for example, not reading aloud the question or answer options).
6. For WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA, prepare test materials for administration.
    - Plan for instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives; any materials gathered for testing may remain in the classroom for daily use.

- Plan specific adaptations for each student, as needed, to meet individual student needs; this includes determining the administration mode of the Alt MCA (online, paper, or hybrid) for each student. Reproduction of secure test materials is allowed only for adapting student-facing materials to a student's individual needs (such as enlarging materials or incorporating texture). Secure test materials may not otherwise be reproduced.
- For Alt MCA, confirm students are assigned to the correct proctor groups and have printed test tickets/rosters; keep test tickets secure until test administration and between test sessions, as applicable.

7. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities on Testing Days — Before Students Arrive

1. Keep materials secure until the test session.
2. Ensure that the appropriate test materials are available and ready for the student who is taking the test.
3. If directed by the District or School Assessment Coordinator to do so, use a number 2 pencil to fill in the appropriate information on a student's scorable test booklets for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Ensure that all hand-bubbled information matches student enrollment data exactly.

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator Responsibilities on Testing Days — During the Test

1. Administer each task and item to the student (for Alt MCA, based on the administration mode chosen for the student) and record the score or student response.
2. For Alt MCA, ensure responses are being indicated for every item in the online test by the student and/or the Test Administrator before submitting the test, unless the early stopping rule will be used.
3. Know how to contact the District or School Assessment Coordinator during testing if any test-related issues or questions arise.
4. Know what to do if an emergency or unusual circumstance arises (such as if a student gets sick, the fire alarm goes off, etc.).
5. Document any unusual circumstance and report it to the District or School Assessment Coordinator.
6. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten/WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator 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 WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA (such as enlarged materials or those with texture incorporated), to the District or School Assessment Coordinator and report if any materials are missing.
3. For MTAS/Alt MCA, if directed by District or School Assessment Coordinator to do so, securely dispose of Response Option Cards (no more than two business days after the close of the testing window).
4. For WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA, return instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives to the classroom unless directed to return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator.
5. For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, confirm that there are no additional markings or bubbled information on the scorable test booklets that may affect how they are scanned and scored. Return Student Response Booklets to the District or School Assessment Coordinator to send back for scoring.
6. For MTAS/Alt MCA, enter Learner Characteristic Inventory (LCI) data and MTAS/Alt MCA data/student responses online (for paper administration modes for Alt MCA) or return Data Collection Forms and LCI forms to the District or School Assessment Coordinator if data is entered centrally.
7. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

MARSS Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities for Testing

MARSS Coordinator Responsibilities Before Testing

1. Confirm that all eligible students have unique State Student Identification (SSID) or MARSS numbers so that students are included in assessment precode files and, if authorized, make corrections as needed in the Student Identity Validations Interface.
2. Ensure EL and Special Education designations are up to date and correct for students.
3. Submit student information to MDE on an ongoing basis so the student information is correct and available for the assessment precode files prior to and throughout test administrations.
4. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

MARSS Coordinator Responsibilities After Testing

1. Ensure accurate enrollment of students during the testing windows.
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 or School Assessment Coordinators to resolve discrepancies during Posttest Editing in Test WES, which may require multiple submissions to MDE before the close of the Posttest Editing window.
4. Fully cooperate with MDE representatives conducting site visits, audits, and/or investigations.

Chapter 4 — Universal Supports and Accommodations for Statewide Assessments

Overview

All public school students participate in statewide assessments, and it is important to clarify the role of universal supports and accommodations when considering how students will participate in the English language proficiency accountability assessments (WIDA assessments) and the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA). Universal supports and accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or compromise the integrity of test results. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

A version of this chapter has been created specifically for district staff: The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading). DACs should ensure that staff and teams who have a role in decision-making and/or test administration with universal supports and accommodations have this resource.

If educators or teams (EL, IEP, and/or 504 plan teams) making decisions about universal supports or accommodations have questions that are not specifically addressed in this chapter, email mde.testing@state.mn.us.

The Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division works closely with the Student Access and Opportunity and the Special Education divisions to review these questions and requests about universal supports and accommodations.

Universal Supports and Accommodations Overview

A brief overview of universal supports and accommodations is provided here; additional details are provided in subsequent sections. Applicable teams should consider information from each of the categories when making decisions about how students will participate in statewide assessments.

- **Universal supports** are features available to all students during statewide assessments that tailor the testing experience based on individual needs or preferences. These supports may be provided by the school or embedded in the test. Depending on the student, a universal support may meet a student's needs without an accommodation or may be used in combination with one or more accommodations. Universal supports fall into three categories:
    - **Tools**: Classroom materials or online features used during instruction or assessment.
    - **Administrative considerations:** Adjustments to testing procedures or the testing environment.

- **Accessibility supports:** Features selected by an educator (or team of educators) for individual students or groups of students, such as multilingual learners, who are familiar with the students' characteristics and needs.

Note: Some universal supports require a code to be indicated before testing. These codes are noted in the applicable sections.

- **Accommodations** are changes in the way a test is administered and are meant to ensure equal access to the assessment. Accommodations are only available to students with an IEP or who qualify for a 504 plan, with limited exceptions for injury situations described later in this chapter. All needed accommodations should be documented annually in the IEP or 504 plan prior to testing.

The graphic below illustrates the types of supports that are available for statewide assessments; it also provides a general reference for the number of students who will likely use a given support. For example, more students will use universal supports than accommodations, since all students may be provided universal supports while accommodations are only available and appropriate for a specific group of students. Note: Some universal supports available for statewide assessments may be considered or referred to as accommodations in other district- or school-wide assessments, so the guidance provided here is specific to statewide assessments.

Figure 3: Types of Supports Available for Minnesota Statewide Assessments

Universal supports and accommodations provided during statewide assessments should be familiar to a student through use during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments. In general, universal supports or accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during testing because doing so may negatively affect the student's performance. The decision to provide a universal support or accommodation for the first time during testing should be made carefully by a team that is very familiar with the student's needs; however, practice with the support or accommodation is encouraged whenever possible.

Student resources are available to help students become familiar with the test they will be taking, including the use of universal supports and accommodations. These resources may also help educators with decision-

making. Refer to *Student Resources for Testing* in Chapter 7 or the Student Resources page of MDE's website for specific information for each statewide assessment.

Some universal supports and accommodations that are used during instruction may not be appropriate to use on certain statewide assessments. Educators should consult policies in this manual before determining which, if any, will be provided on statewide assessments. Universal 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.

MDE convenes a committee of educators—the Assessment Accommodations Review Panel (AARP)—to evaluate proposed additions to the universal supports and accommodations discussed in this manual. This review ensures that a student does not use a particular practice that could undermine the integrity of the resulting test score. The committee also considers whether additional practices proposed for individual students should be included as an allowable universal support or accommodation for future statewide assessments. Refer to the *Statewide Testing Advisory Groups Overview* on the District, Schools and Educators Statewide Testing page of MDE's website for more information about this committee (under the Opportunities for Participation expandable heading).

Roles and Responsibilities for Making Support and Accommodation Decisions

Multiple staff members may be involved in the process of selecting, documenting, administering, and evaluating the use of universal supports and accommodations within a district. District staff, including classroom teachers, multilingual and special education teachers, coordinators, directors, and District and School Assessment Coordinators, along with students and families, may all play a role in the decision-making process or be part of the applicable teams (EL, IEP, and/or 504 plan team(s)). Ultimately, the decision to provide universal supports or accommodations for testing should be a collaborative one focused on the strengths and needs of each individual student.

If universal supports or accommodations are used, their effectiveness should be evaluated following test administration. Information from Test Administrators should be gathered about the implementation of universal supports and accommodations. Observations during test administration, interviews with Test Administrators, and conversations with students after testing can provide valuable information to guide ongoing evaluation at the district, school, and student levels. Additional information about decision-makers and their roles is included in the applicable sections below.

To prepare for test administration, District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), and School Assessment Coordinators as applicable, need to develop policies and procedures for how information will be communicated within the school and district to ensure that students receive the appropriate universal supports and accommodations.

- **Info!** Documented process for how information about universal supports and accommodations is shared with educators and staff, including details to ensure educators understand how to make appropriate decisions on how each student will participate prior to testing.
- Some universal supports and accommodations require a code to be indicated in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) for WIDA assessments or in Test WES during Pretest Editing for

MCA/Alt MCA prior to testing, so processes must include how applicable teams or staff are providing their decisions to DACs.

- The use of universal supports or accommodations may affect test scheduling and the need for additional resources (for example, specific test materials or additional staff).
- Specific test administration procedures must be communicated to staff who are administering the tests, and any additional resources or test materials must be provided.
- Processes must be in place to ensure students receive the correct universal supports and/or accommodations at the time of testing.
- Processes should be developed to evaluate the use of supports and accommodations to determine their effectiveness. This information may inform decisions about the continued use of a given support or accommodation or identify areas where Test Administrators need additional training or support.

Considerations for Providing Universal Supports and Accommodations

When considering universal supports and accommodations, keep these key points in mind:

1. How will educators learn about the available universal supports and accommodations?
2. How will educators and teams make decisions about universal supports and accommodations?
3. How will those decisions be communicated to DACs and Test Administrators?
4. How will the team evaluate whether a universal support and/or accommodation was effective?

Timeline for Decision-Making

Any decisions regarding which universal supports and/or accommodations a student will use must be made before the student begins testing. Districts may set timelines for these decisions to be made so that test materials can be ordered in a timely manner and arrangements can be made for test administration. Decisions made after these timelines should still be implemented, however, as long as they are made prior to testing.

Statewide Assessment Participation for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan

The current reauthorization of both the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities participate in the statewide assessments. To uphold these federal laws and their goals of inclusion of all students in academic and English language development standards, instruction, and assessments, there are no participation exemptions from statewide assessments based on disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. IEP or 504 plan teams determine the appropriate manner for students with disabilities to participate in statewide assessments.

When all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, are intentionally included in statewide assessments, assessment results more accurately reflect student learning. Requiring all students to participate:

- Gives districts and schools important information about how their students are doing,
- Helps identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support, and
- Supports continuous improvement of the education districts and schools provide.

Students with disabilities may participate in statewide assessments in several 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 needs. Teams should also document any universal 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 support during the assessment.
- **By taking an alternate assessment if 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 student's IEP.
    - English language proficiency accountability assessments: For English learners (ELs) with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the IEP team, in collaboration with EL staff, may determine that the WIDA Alternate ACCESS is the most appropriate measure of English language proficiency. The *Eligibility Guidance and Decision-Making Support for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS* is available on the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website to assist educators in making decisions for students. This resource includes special considerations for students in grades K-2, as students' abilities may change rapidly during the early elementary years.
    - Standards-based accountability assessments: For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements, the IEP team may determine that the MTAS/Alt MCA is the most appropriate measure of academic skills in one or more subjects in place of the MCA. When making decisions, IEP teams should refer to the *Eligibility Requirements and Decision-Making Tool for Minnesota Alternate Assessments* on the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website.

In the rare instance a student is unable to take the MCA due to lack of access to a testing instrument, email mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance. Use the following information to determine whether a student has access to a testing instrument:

- A student is considered able to access a test if they can view the test materials online or on paper, can hear the test materials through audio using a script in combination with a braille or large print test, or can interact with the online test or test materials with assistive technology.

- MDE does not consider the following situations to be examples of a lack of access to a testing instrument since these scenarios are specifically described in other parts of this *Procedures Manual*:
    - Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities since they can participate in the MTAS/Alt MCA
    - Students who are currently using an accommodation such as braille in daily instruction (regardless of proficiency in use)
    - Students who are eligible for the Medical Excuse (ME) test code

Special Education Deferred Requirements

ELs with disabilities should participate in as many domains of the WIDA assessments as possible. In limited situations, a student's disability may preclude participation in one or more domains of a WIDA assessment. A Special Education Deferred (SPD) code may be used in these circumstances as described in the guidance below.

- The SPD code indicates that an IEP or 504 plan team has determined that the student's disability prevents the student from participating in a specific test domain. For example, the SPD code may be used for the Listening domain for a student who is deaf. The SPD code is a domain-level code; it does not exempt a student from participating in the WIDA assessment.
- Before applying the SPD code, the IEP or 504 plan team must determine that no available accommodation can provide the student with meaningful access to the domain.
- If the EL staff and the IEP or 504 plan team determine that the SPD code is appropriate for more than two domains, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for approval.

> You must contact MDE before applying the SPD test code to more than two domains.

- Application of an SPD code to the Listening or Reading domain may cause the student's Writing and Speaking tests to default to Tier A; however, Tier A may not be the most appropriate tier for the student's remaining domains. Districts may request a Manual Tier Override so the student can test at Tier B/C when appropriate. All Manual Tier Override requests must be approved by MDE. To request a tier override, email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the subject line "Manual Tier Override Request" and include a brief explanation such as, "Student with MARSS/SSID # has an SPD code applied to the Reading domain and needs a Manual Tier Override to access Tier B/C in Writing."
- The WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten integrates test content across multiple tasks and language domains. Because of this integrated design, districts should contact MDE for guidance when a kindergarten student is determined to be unable to participate in any portion of the test due to the student's disability.

Note: MDE provides alternate composite calculations for ELs with an IEP or 504 plan who are unable to participate in one or two domains of a WIDA assessment because of a disability **and** who meet all of the following criteria:

- The student receives a valid score (VS) for at least two domains.
- Any domains without a valid score have a test code of Special Education Deferred (SPD).

Alternate composite calculations are intended to inform reclassification and exit decisions. Information on reclassification and exit for ELs can be found on the English Learner Education page of MDE's website. Questions may be directed to mde.el@state.mn.us.

Statewide Assessments and Multilingual Learners

For the WIDA assessments, participation is required for students identified as English learners (ELs) in enrollment data submitted to MDE. For the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, all students enrolled in the applicable grades, including students identified as ELs, are required to participate.

In this chapter, the broader term of "multilingual learners" refers to students who use or are developing more than one language, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, and students participating in immersion or dual-language programs. While WIDA assessments are administered only to students identified as ELs, many of the considerations for selecting universal supports also apply to this broader group of students.

When determining how multilingual learners will participate in statewide assessments, districts are encouraged to develop individual learning plans that document the universal supports to be provided during testing. Districts are also encouraged to involve parents/guardians in these decisions, and interpreters may be needed to support their full participation. A collaborative dialogue among EL teachers, general education teachers, and families can help determine the most appropriate supports for each student based on the instruction received in the classroom.

Those involved in determining appropriate universal supports for multilingual learners may include:

- The student's bilingual and/or EL teacher(s)
- The EL Program Coordinator
- The student's classroom teacher(s)
- The student's special education case manager, when applicable, along with any related service provider
- The District or School Assessment Coordinator
- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s)
- If the student has a disability, the IEP or 504 plan team should be involved in selecting both universal supports and accommodations. It is important that the IEP or 504 plan team include professionals with training, and preferably expertise, in second language acquisition.

When making decisions about appropriate universal supports for a multilingual learner, the district should consider the following:

- Current English language proficiency level in each language domain
- Literacy and oracy in the student's home language(s)

- Opportunity to learn the content area being assessed
- Primary language of instruction in the content areas
- Experience and length of time in U.S. schools
- Degree of familiarity with using the support(s) during instruction and assessments
- Grade level
- Other school- or district-level data relevant to the student's needs
- Whether the student would benefit from multiple supports
- For multilingual learners with an IEP or 504 plan, the intersection of language- and disability-related needs

Universal Supports and Accommodations for WIDA Assessments

Universal Supports for WIDA Assessments

For WIDA assessments, the primary source of information about available universal supports is WIDA's *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of WIDA's website. While Minnesota uses the term "universal supports," WIDA uses the terms "administrative considerations" and "universal tools" to differentiate supports available to all ELs on the WIDA assessments. Minnesota follows all of WIDA's guidelines for available supports.

The following sections provide state-specific guidance for selected universal supports identified in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual*, along with guidance for additional universal supports MDE allows districts to provide. Links are available below and at the end of each section of universal support types to support chapter navigation.

These supports are divided into the following categories:

- Tools: Classroom materials or online features used during instruction or assessments.
- Administrative considerations: Adjustments to testing procedures or the testing environment.
- Accessibility supports: Features selected by an educator (or team of educators) for individual students or groups of students, such as multilingual learners, who are familiar with the students' characteristics and needs.

Use the information in this manual and WIDA's *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* to determine appropriate supports for students.

Tools—Provided by School

Tools provided by the school include classroom materials that students use during instruction or assessments and other materials that are allowed to be used during testing.

Classroom Materials

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: Classroom materials include materials provided by the school or the student that are typically used in instruction, such as highlighters, pencil grips, or place markers. These materials may be used as needed with paper test materials or paper test materials used with online assessments. Refer to the *Test Coordinator Manual* and the *Test Administrator Manual* in the WIDA Secure Portal for information on materials allowed during WIDA assessment administrations. For any materials not listed in this section or the WIDA resources, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to determine if they may be provided.

When to select: These materials may benefit a student who normally uses these types of supports in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: A student may use classroom materials, such as highlighters, pencil grips, or place markers, as needed with paper tests or paper test materials used with online assessments.

Allowable writing utensils vary by test and/or administration mode:

- For WIDA ACCESS paper test materials (WIDA ACCESS Paper accommodations and WIDA ACCESS Online Writing grades 1-5), a student 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 WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS to be scanned and scored.
- For WIDA ACCESS Online Listening, Reading, and grades 6-12 Writing domains, a student may use either pencils or pens with scratch paper. Note: Scratch paper is not allowed for the Speaking domain.

Music or Noise Buffers

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: Music or 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. The noise buffer or instrumental music can be accessed through headphones or in an individual setting.

When to select: Music or noise buffers may help reduce noise distractions for the student taking the test. Music and noise buffers provided by the school may be used, but only by students who have used them in instructional or other assessment settings.

Notes for administration: Any noise or music that can be heard by others requires the student to test in an individual setting. The student must be able to control the on/off function and volume. Audio players must be school-owned, and the audio must be provided by the school. Note: Noise buffers or instrumental music are provided at an individual level, not to an entire group on the assumption that all will benefit.

Scratch Paper

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Reading, Listening, and Writing domains of WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Description: Schools may provide or allow students to provide scratch paper for paper and online assessments. Specific materials may be used as scratch paper, including blank paper, individual whiteboards, commercially produced graph paper, or student test tickets. Refer to *Materials Allowed during Testing* in Chapter 7 for more information on allowable scratch paper and maintaining security of scratch paper.

When to select: This support may benefit many students, especially for the Writing test.

Notes for administration:

- A student may use scratch paper at their discretion, including folding it in sections themselves, but any direction or strategy for using scratch paper to answer questions must be handled prior to testing; the Test Administrator cannot prompt a student to use scratch paper in any specific manner once testing has begun.
- Students must write their name on any scratch paper so Test Administrators can account for all materials. Scratch paper is considered secure test material and must be collected after each session and securely disposed of within two business days of the testing window closing.
- For WIDA ACCESS, scratch paper is not allowed for the Speaking domain and using it results in the test being invalidated.

Sensory Tools

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: Sensory tools include materials such as fidgets or weighted pads that a student uses, or has access to, during testing.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who uses sensory tools to calm or alert their sensory system in their daily instruction or other assessment settings.

Notes for administration: The use of sensory tools must not be a disruption to other students. Any sensory tools that can be heard by others or could be considered distracting requires the student to test in an individual setting. No test content or writing may be present on the tools.

Back to Universal Supports for WIDA Assessments section

Administrative Considerations—Provided by School

Flexible/Extended Testing Time

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments (all domains, but see notes for administration)

Description: Flexible or extended testing time means that a student requires additional time to complete an assessment that should be considered when scheduling testing. Breaks may also be provided.

Note: For WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, only extended time **within a single day** for one domain is considered a universal support. Extended time for a single domain test across multiple days is considered an accommodation.

When to select: This support may be most helpful for a student who needs extra time to process written text, to write, or to use other accommodations or equipment. Extended time and/or more frequent breaks should be planned for if this is a support or practice typically provided during instruction or other assessments.

Notes for administration: Consideration for a student requiring extended testing time should be given when scheduling testing sessions and planning for testing sessions (for example, planning locations for students to continue testing if they need more time).

For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, extended testing time is embedded in the administration procedures, which allows flexibility based on each student's needs. The assessment is recommended to be administered in one session; however, if needed, the test may be divided into two sessions with no more than two consecutive school days between sessions. If a test administration must be divided into two sessions, use a designated break as the stopping and starting point

For guidance about breaks, refer to *Breaks and Leaving During Testing* in Chapter 8.

Written, Repeated, or Clarified Test Administrator Script

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: For WIDA assessments, the Test Administrator may write out scripted test directions from the *Test Administrator Scripts*. After the scripted directions are read, Test Administrators may also repeat, explain, or clarify the scripted directions that may be confusing to a specific student or group of students.

When to select: This support may benefit students who typically need directions provided verbally or in written form more than once to engage in assessments. Scripted directions may be repeated or clarified as needed, following the guidelines below. For written directions, Test Administrators should consider what is needed by a student; providing too much written information (which may also be repeated verbally, as needed) may be distracting or overwhelming.

Notes for administration: This support only applies to directions and not to test items, including practice items embedded in the test, or test content. Test Administrators should use their professional judgement when rephrasing or clarifying test directions. Careful attention should be given not to provide written, repeated, or

clarified language that is used in the prompts, including folder names and any language that is included in the test items themselves.

Test Administrators may write information specific to the administration of the test on the board or in the room, or they may provide a written copy to students. Examples of allowable information include details about scheduling (for example, “We will stop testing at the end of the class period.”) and what students may do when they are done with testing (for example, “Read a book when you are done testing.”). Test Administrators may also write out any scripted directions from the *Test Administrator Scripts*. Note: If a written copy is provided, it must be treated the same as scratch paper (collected, secured, and disposed of). Refer to *Materials Allowed during Testing* in Chapter 7 for more information on maintaining security of scratch paper. Note: These guidelines for providing written information are specific to Minnesota.

Scripted directions may be repeated at any time during test administration. As needed, scripted directions can be explained or clarified only after the scripted directions are read. The explanation can only clarify the directions to ensure that the meaning of specific words or sentences is accurately understood. The Test Administrator cannot change the meaning of the directions or provide information that would lead or cue the student. This is important, as the use of the *Test Administrator Scripts* ensures that tests are administered the same way for all students across the state and that students receive a score that accurately reflects what they know without any support, guidance, or unauthorized interference.

Test Administrators must not read directions from a student’s screen or test book. If Test Administrators are unsure how to assist a student in a situation that arises, they should follow school procedures for asking for assistance from others (such as the District or School Assessment Coordinator) before proceeding, if possible.

Back to Universal Supports for WIDA Assessments section

Accessibility Supports—Provided by School

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: A student uses an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device to produce speech. These devices are considered the student's voice, including for the Speaking test.

Refer to the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of WIDA's website for additional guidance.

When to select: This support may be provided to a student who normally uses these devices in instruction.

Notes for administration: Any device that can be heard by others requires the student to test in an individual setting. Test Administrators may assist with navigation on the AAC device, such as navigating to a page, as long as the student is the one who chooses the answer from the AAC and this practice is consistent with how the student typically communicates in daily instruction.

Color Overlay

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: A transparent colored sheet that is placed over a page of text or is affixed to a device screen.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who normally uses colored overlays to reduce visual stress when reading.

Notes for administration: None.

Low-Vision Aids

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: A device or tool designed to improve the visual performance of a person with low vision. Examples of low-vision aids are magnifying glasses, electronic magnifiers, cardboard cutouts, and a larger monitor screen size and different resolution for online assessments.

When to select: A student who is accustomed to viewing enlarged text or graphics or navigation buttons may need low-vision aids to view content on paper or online assessments. This support also may meet the needs of a student with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this support should be considered along with other supports, such as accessibility features embedded in the online test (for example, magnifiers) or an accommodation (such as large print paper test books).

Notes for administration: The use of this accessibility support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

For students who require additional support during the administration of the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, the Low Vision Script (LV) accommodation may be appropriate. This accommodation provides additional scripting, specialized graphics, and picture descriptions to support students with low vision. Refer to the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of WIDA's website for more information.

Styluses for Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Online WIDA ACCESS

Description: A stylus may be used by the student to navigate through the online assessment, use tools, and indicate responses.

When to select: A stylus may benefit a student with fine motor needs or print disabilities who normally uses it in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: None.

Templates to Reduce Visual Print Field

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: A material (such as a cardboard cutout) that blocks out part of the screen or test book.

Refer to the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of WIDA's website for information about the line guide tool in the Online WIDA ACCESS.

When to select: This support may help a student focus on one part of a question or test content at a time by blocking out part of the screen or test book. These materials may benefit a student who normally uses them in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: None.

Translated Test Administrator Script (Written, Oral)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12)

Description: The test directions in the *Test Administrator Scripts* may be translated into a language other than English in an oral or written format. Only the test directions may be translated; translations of test items or response options are not allowed. Translations must be made by an interpreter (in-person or recording), not via an app or online platform (such as Google Translate). WIDA provides translations of the test directions in 16

languages as well as American Sign Language (ASL) video translations for the following scripts in the WIDA Secure Portal:

- WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 4-12 Test Administrator Script: All domains
- WIDA ACCESS Online Test Administrator Scripts for Grades 1-3: Listening, Reading, and Speaking domains

Districts may translate the scripted directions into additional languages as needed. Note: Translated directions are not allowed for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS because directions are embedded within the test. Test Administrators may not use a language other than English while administering these assessments.

When to select: This support may benefit students who typically need directions provided in another language.

Notes for administration: Test Administrators should use their professional judgement when translating test directions. Careful attention should be given not to translate any language that is used in the prompts, including folder names and any language that is included in the test items themselves. Extra caution must be taken with the test directions for the grades 1-3 Writing domain, which contain secure test content that cannot be translated.

Written translations of the scripted test directions may be provided to students. Consideration should be given to the student's literacy in that language and the use of written translations as a support in daily instruction.

A district may also create an audio or video recording of the translated test directions for a student to listen to. Because scripted instructions are used throughout the test administration, ensure that the Test Administrator and/or student has a way to access the applicable test directions at the appropriate times.

If the student is using a separate device to listen to/watch the recording during testing, the device must be school-owned. The student must test in an individual setting to ensure that only the recording is accessed; the student must not connect to the Internet or use other applications outside of that which is being used to listen to/watch the recording.

District staff may provide translations if they have sufficient knowledge and experience in the language, as determined by the district. It is recommended that interpreters have formal translation training and skills, whenever possible. If an interpreter outside of the district is needed to provide allowable translations, districts must use a local process to hire a qualified person. Districts arrange for and provide all translations. Interpreters may not be family members. More information on interpreting in educational settings can be found in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages* available on the English Learner Disability Resources page of MDE's website.

All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training*.

- If the interpreter is not a district employee (for example, employed by a regional service cooperative), they must provide a record of their completed training. During test administration, they must be accompanied by a Test Administrator who is employed by the district and has completed all necessary training.

- If the interpreter is a district employee and also the Test Administrator, they must complete the required WIDA and MDE trainings for the assessment, not just the *Test Security Training.*

The use of a device to access any district translated content and/or the use of an interpreter, including the name of the person interpreting, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Voice Feedback Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: All WIDA assessments

Description: Voice feedback devices and whisper phones allow a student to vocalize as they read and work problems. This support also includes a student reading the test out loud in an individual setting.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who normally vocalizes what they read in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: A student may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Administrator, and the Test Administrator cannot provide verbal or nonverbal prompts. This support must be provided in an individual setting.

Back to Universal Supports for WIDA Assessments section

Accommodations for WIDA Assessments

Minnesota follows all guidelines and allows all accommodations recommended by WIDA in the *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of WIDA's website. Districts should consult this resource for information about all available accommodations for WIDA assessments. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us with any questions related to references in WIDA resources to state-specific information.

New! The *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual* for 2026-27 includes a few updates:

- The Manual Control of Item Audio (MC) accommodation no longer applies to WIDA ACCESS Online and will only be applicable to WIDA ACCESS Paper. All students taking WIDA ACCESS Online will select the Play button on each screen to begin playing audio. The audio will no longer play automatically.
- Specific types of external assistive technology (AT) devices and third-party software can now be used as an AT accommodation for all domains of the WIDA ACCESS Online. Examples of AT include voice navigation, eye-tracking tools, and Smyle Mouse.
- A Speech-To-Text (STT) accommodation can be used on the Writing domain of the WIDA ACCESS Online. The specific tools available depend on the student's testing device (Note: this accommodation is only available on Windows devices and Chromebooks).

Note: For both the AT and STT accommodations, districts should refer to the *Configuring Online Assistive Technologies for WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Screener* resource in WIDA AMS for more information.

For WIDA assessments, accommodation codes are indicated in WIDA AMS or on paper test booklets during the testing window. After the testing window, districts can indicate, remove, or change accommodation codes in Test WES during Posttest Editing, as needed.

The following provides information on state-specific accommodations.

Extended Testing of a Test Domain Over Multiple Days

Extended testing of a test domain over multiple days (EM) for WIDA assessments is an extremely rare accommodation. A student who has an IEP or 504 plan indicating that a domain can be completed across multiple days may use this accommodation. **New!** Minnesota no longer requires prior approval from MDE for this accommodation; however, the need for extended testing across multiple days must be documented in the student's IEP or 504 plan.

While a one-on-one administration or use of AT may be factors considered when determining the need for extended testing across multiple days, these supports do not necessarily warrant the use of this accommodation. Additionally, this accommodation cannot be used to accommodate the Test Administrator's schedule or as a precaution in case the student is unable to complete a domain within the scheduled testing time.

Paper Administrations

Paper administrations of the entire WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) are available as an accommodation for ELs with an IEP or 504 plan. Before ordering a paper test for a student, please consider the following:

- Other than the specific requirements for how the Writing domain is administered (grades 1-3 are entirely on paper, grades 4-5 are presented online and handwritten on paper, and grades 6-12 are entirely online), it is not possible to combine administration modes. A student cannot take some domains on paper and some online.
- A student should be included in the decision-making process before selecting a paper administration.
- Paper administrations are also available for ELs who have been enrolled in school in one of the 50 states of the United States or in the District of Columbia for less than a year (first enrolled within 12 months from the first day of the WIDA assessment testing window). The decision to administer the WIDA ACCESS Paper should be based on an individual consideration of the student's familiarity with the technology used in the online testing platform. Note: Some new EL students may be identified as recently arrived English learners (RAELs) for accountability purposes. The RAEL accountability indicator does not affect the determination of which ELs are eligible for WIDA ACCESS Paper.

Approved Accommodations

If IEP or 504 plan teams determine the need for an accommodation not specifically addressed as an accommodation or support for WIDA assessments, email mde.testing@state.mn.us to request an online form to submit the following information for review:

- The student's MARSS/SSID number
- The student's grade and school
- What test and domain(s) this request includes
- A description of the accommodation requested
- The primary and secondary disability categories listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan
- What accommodation(s) is listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan to support this request
- Whether this accommodation is a support the student uses in their daily instruction
- Whether this is the first year this accommodation is being requested for the student

Note: Do not include any other personally identifying information in the request, such as name, initials, or birth date.

The use of an approved accommodation is most beneficial for a student who uses the support during instruction. This accommodation may require the student to test in an individual setting and may require documentation on a TAR.

Supports and Accommodations for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

The following graphic provides a visual reference of the universal supports and accommodations available for the MCA. It is also posted as a standalone document on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading). The sections following the graphic provide detailed descriptions and guidance for universal support and accommodation selection and administration; information for MTAS/Alt MCA is included where applicable.

2026-27 MCA Universal Supports and Accommodations

	Universal Supports General supports available for all students, but some supports may be appropriate only for specific students or groups of students.			Accommodations Only available for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan.
	Tools	**Administrative Considerations**	**Accessibility Supports**	
Provided by School	• Classroom materials (such as highlighters or place markers) • Music or noise buffers • Scratch paper • Sensory tools	• Different time of day • Environment (such as lights and seating) • Flexible testing time * • Individual or small group setting • Written, repeated, or clarified *Testing Directions* *	• Amplification devices • Calculator (handheld), math manipulatives, or an abacus for science and grade 11 math • Color overlays • Low-vision aids • Stylus for devices • Templates to reduce the visual print field • Translated *Testing Directions* in languages other than English not provided by MDE (written, oral, recorded, or signed) *† • Voice feedback devices • Word-to-word translations using dictionaries or programs for math and science *†	• Calculator (handheld), math manipulatives, or an abacus for grades 3-8 math # • Other assistive technology devices #† • Scribe #†
Provided by MDE			• Paper version of math tables for grades 3-8 math (paper test books only) • Paper version of math tables for grade 11 math (paper test books or online test) • Translated *Testing Directions* in Hmong, Spanish, or Somali (written or recorded) *† • Word-to-word translation and glossary using word lists for reading and science * • Word-to-word translations using word lists for math *	• Paper test book (regular print, large print, and braille) # • Script/human reader (including signed interpretation of the script) #†
Embedded in Test	• Answer eliminator • Calculators (math and science) • Formula sheet (math) • Highlighter • Pencil (math) • Protractor (math) • Ruler (math and science) • Scratch pad • Straightedge (math) • White noise		• Answer masking • Captioning on videos for math and science • Color contrast • English glossary for reading and science * • Line reader mask • Magnifier • Online version of math tables for online math (all grades) • Pop-up translations in Hmong, Spanish, and Somali for math #* • Read&Write for science #* • Standard text-to-speech for math and science * • Zoom feature	• Accommodated text-to-speech for math # • Assistive technology online forms for reading and science #† • Read aloud (text-to-speech) for reading #†

*Suggested for multilingual learners #Requires a code to be indicated to MDE by the District Assessment Coordinator †May require documentation on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR)

If there is the need for an accommodation or support not specifically addressed in this table, email mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Universal Supports for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

Universal supports are general supports, available for all students, that tailor the testing experience based on student needs or preferences specific to the testing environment or online features that are allowable within statewide testing. Depending on the student, a universal support may replace their need for an accommodation; universal supports may also be used alongside one or more accommodations. These supports may be provided by the school, provided by MDE, or embedded in the online test, and fall into three categories:

- **Tools:** Classroom materials or online features used during instruction or assessment.
- **Administrative considerations:** Adjustments to testing procedures or the testing environment.
- **Accessibility supports:** Features selected by an educator (or team of educators) for individual students or groups of students, such as multilingual learners, who are familiar with the students' characteristics and needs.

Some universal supports require the DAC to enter a code in Pretest Editing in Test WES for the support to be available for the student; these codes are listed in the sections below, if required. However, regardless of whether a specific code must be documented for MDE, there must be an established process for school staff and District and School Assessment Coordinators to communicate about and provide needed universal supports to students during testing.

In addition, the increasing number of universal supports available for all students, especially online tools and accessibility supports, provides more students access to a wider range of supports that they use in classroom instruction. However, an unintended consequence for students with an IEP or 504 plan is that often only accommodations are documented in the IEP or 504 plan. If a student has an IEP or 504 plan, all needed universal supports should also be documented to ensure they are provided during testing.

Many universal supports and accommodations can be used together, but others cannot. Make sure supports and accommodations are compatible and that the applicable codes are indicated correctly. Detailed information about conflicting codes for Pretest Editing is provided in the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website.

Use the information in the following sections to determine appropriate supports for students. Note: Some universal supports available for statewide assessments may be considered accommodations in other district- or school-wide assessments, so the guidance provided here is specific to statewide assessments.

Links are available in the following table and at the end of each section of universal support types to aid chapter navigation.

Table 5. 2026-27 Summary of Universal Supports on MCAs

Universal Supports	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Suggested for Multilingual Learners	Individual Setting May Be Required	Test Administration Report Required
Tools—Provided by School							
Classroom materials	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Music or noise buffers	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Scratch paper	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Sensory tools	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Tools—Embedded in Test							
Answer eliminator online tool	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Calculator online tools	N/A		✓	✓			
Formula sheet online tool	N/A		✓				
Highlighter online tool	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Pencil online tool	N/A		✓				
Protractor online tool	N/A		✓				
Ruler online tool	N/A		✓	✓			
Scratchpad online tool	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Straightedge online tool	N/A		✓ (Gr. 8 and 11)				
White noise tool	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Administrative Considerations—Provided by School							
Different time of day	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Environment	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Flexible testing time	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Individual or small-group setting	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Written, repeated, or clarified *Testing Directions*	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Accessibility Supports—Provided by School							
Amplification devices	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Universal Supports	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Suggested for Multilingual Learners	Individual Setting May Be Required	Test Administration Report Required
Calculator (handheld), math manipulatives, or abacus for Science and grade 11 Math MCAs	N/A		✓ (Gr. 11)	✓		✓	
Color overlay	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Low-vision aids	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Styluses for devices	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Templates to reduce visual print field	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Translated *Testing Directions* (written, oral, recorded, or signed)	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Voice feedback devices	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Word-to-word translations using dictionaries or programs for math and science	N/A		✓	✓	✓		✓
Accessibility Supports—Provided by MDE							
Paper version of math tables for grades 3-8 math (paper test book only)	N/A		✓				
Paper version of math tables for grade 11 math (paper test book or online test)	N/A		✓				
Translated written or recorded *Testing Directions* in Hmong, Spanish, or Somali	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Word-to-word translations and glossary using word lists for reading and science	N/A	✓		✓	✓		
Word-to-word translations using word lists for math	N/A		✓		✓		
Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test							
Answer masking	N/A	✓	✓	✓			

Universal Supports	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Suggested for Multilingual Learners	Individual Setting May Be Required	Test Administration Report Required
Captioning on videos	N/A		✓	✓			
Color contrast	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
English glossary	N/A	✓		✓	✓		
Line reader mask	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Magnifier	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
Online version of math tables for online math	N/A		✓				
Pop-up translations in Hmong, Spanish, and Somali	HM SP SO		✓		✓		
Read&Write	CR-W CR-S			✓	✓	✓	
Standard text-to-speech	N/A		✓	✓	✓		
Zoom feature	N/A	✓	✓	✓			

MTAS/Alt MCA Universal Supports

Districts are not required to document for MDE which universal supports are provided on the MTAS/Alt MCA. Adapting to student needs is integral to alternate assessments, and the Test Administrator may provide needed supports (for example, using objects, tactile graphics, and counters, or any type of calculator) or adapt test materials (for example, enlarging materials or providing a braille version) as long as the support is not specifically prohibited in the task script. For information on allowable test administration activities, refer to the *MTAS/Alt MCA Task Administration Manual* on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub or Chapter 5 of this *Procedures Manual*.

If the universal supports described below for MCA are also applicable for MTAS/Alt MCA, they are included in the "Allowed for" section of the support description. Specific guidance for universal supports for MTAS/Alt MCA includes music or noise buffers, calculator (handheld) use, signed interpretation of test, translated directions, math tables, and word-to-word translations using dictionaries and programs. However, since adapting to student needs is integral to MTAS/Alt MCA, there may be other supports to consider for MTAS/Alt MCA that are not part of the MCA supports list below; contact mde.testing@state.mn.us with questions.

Tools—Provided by School

Classroom Materials

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Classroom materials include materials provided by the school or the student that are typically used in instruction, such as highlighters, specific writing utensils, pencil grips, or place markers. These materials may be used as needed with paper test materials or paper test materials used with online assessments (such as scratch paper). Refer to *Tools—Embedded in Test* later in this chapter for information about tools embedded in the online MCA and online Alt MCA. The *Testing Directions* on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub contain the specific lists of materials allowed during MCA test administrations. These directions are updated and posted annually before the testing windows open. For any materials not listed in this section or the *Testing Directions*, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to determine if they may be provided.

When to select: These materials may benefit a student who normally uses these types of supports in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: A student may use classroom materials, as needed. For MCA paper test materials, students may use either pencils or pens to mark answers in the paper test book (since district staff will later enter the responses in TestNav).

Music or Noise Buffers

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Music or 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. The noise buffer or instrumental music can be accessed through headphones or in an individual setting. Note: A white noise feature is available for the online MCA; refer to *Tools—Embedded in Test* for more information.

When to select: Music or noise buffers may help reduce noise distractions for the student taking the test. Music and noise buffers provided by the school may be used, but only by a student who has used them in instructional or other assessment settings.

Notes for administration: Any noise or music that can be heard by others requires the student to test in an individual setting. Students must be able to control the on/off function and volume. Audio players must be school-owned, and the audio must be provided by the school. Note: Noise buffers or instrumental music must be considered on an individual student basis, not provided to an entire group on the assumption that all will benefit.

For MTAS/Alt MCA only, headphones and earplugs should only be used to reduce background noise—the student must still be able to hear the Test Administrator's voice. Music and white noise need to be played with an audio player and not provided through headphones. The MTAS/Alt MCA is always administered in an individual, one-on-one setting.

Scratch Paper

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Schools may provide or allow a student to provide scratch paper for paper and online assessments. Specific materials may be used as scratch paper, including blank paper, individual whiteboards, commercially-produced graph paper, or student test tickets. Refer to *Materials Allowed during Testing* in Chapter 7 for more information on allowable scratch paper and maintaining security of scratch paper.

When to select: This support is widely supportive for all students.

Notes for administration:

- A student may draw lattices, diagrams (such as number lines), or charts on scratch paper if they choose, but examples cannot be displayed in the classroom or handed out during testing. A student may use scratch paper at their discretion, including folding it in sections themselves, but any directions or strategies for using scratch paper to answer questions must be handled prior to testing; the Test Administrator cannot prompt a student to use it in any specific manner once testing has begun.
- For MCA paper test books, in addition to scratch paper provided separately to a student, a student may use blank spaces in the test book or the grid paper and formula sheets provided in the math test books to work on items and make notes. If a student removes the grid paper or formula sheets from the test book, they must write their name on the sheets so that the materials can be accounted for and provided on subsequent days of testing, as needed.
- Students must write their name on any scratch paper so Test Administrators can account for all materials. Scratch paper is considered secure test material and must be collected after each session and disposed of within two business days of the testing window closing.

Sensory Tools

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Sensory tools include materials such as fidgets or weighted pads that a student uses, or has access to, during testing.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who uses sensory tools to calm or alert their sensory system in their daily instruction or other assessment settings.

Notes for administration: The use of sensory tools must not be a disruption to other students. Any sensory tools that can be heard by others or could be considered distracting requires the student to test in an individual setting. No test content or writing may be present on the tools.

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Tools—Embedded in Test

Online Tools (MCA)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: Available online tools in TestNav include the following:

- Answer eliminator: Students can use the answer eliminator tool to cross out an answer choice for multiple-choice and multiple-response questions.
- Calculators: Students can use the calculator tools to help them answer questions. The calculators are only available on math and science questions where students are allowed to use calculators. Both Desmos and Texas Instruments (TI) calculators are available.
- Formula sheets: Students can access online, grade-level formula sheets in grades 5-8 and 11 Math MCA.
- Highlighter: Students can use the highlighter tool to highlight words. They can choose the color they wish to use and can also listen to highlighted text.
- Pencil: Students can use the pencil tool to draw or write directly on the screen for all Math MCA questions.
- Protractor: Students can use the protractor tool on specific grade 4 Math MCA questions to measure angles.
- Ruler: Students can use the ruler tool on specific Science MCA and grades 3 and 4 Math MCA questions to measure length.
- Scratchpad: Students can use the scratchpad tool to write or draw notes during the test.
- Straightedge: Students can use the straightedge tool on all questions in grades 8 and 11 Math MCA to create a line of best fit.
- White noise: Students can use the white noise tool to listen to background noise to reduce ambient sound. There are three white noise sounds to choose from: waves, white noise, and wind.

More information about online MCA tools can be found on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. In addition, the SRT educator resources contain important information on how tools and accessibility features in TestNav interact with each other.

Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test* in this chapter for additional information about features embedded in the online test.

Notes for administration: Students must be familiar with online tools prior to test administration. During test administration, Test Administrators are not allowed to remind students of any test-taking or academic strategies (such as using a certain online tool). Help of this sort should be provided prior to testing, such as when the SRTs are used to prepare students for testing. The only times when Test Administrators may provide additional guidance are outlined in the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of the *Testing Directions*. For example, Test Administrators may verbally describe the functionality of a tool if a student cannot move forward, but they must not demonstrate it.

Online Tools (Alt MCA)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: For Alt MCA, all embedded tools and accessibility supports are considered online tools. Available online tools in TestNav include the following:

- Alternate Pointer: Students can use a larger pointer or alternative colored pointer to increase the visibility of the pointer.
- Answer Masker: The Answer Masker accessibility feature lets a student choose which answer choices will show on the screen. This feature may be most beneficial for a student with attention difficulties, print disabilities, and students who are blind or have low vision who use a similar strategy or feature during instruction to visually reduce content. The Test Administrator is allowed to select answer choices to be masked and assist in using this feature.
- Color Contrast: Students can see different colors on the screen background and words in TestNav. This feature may be most beneficial for a student who uses various contrasts between the text and background color on other devices during instruction for any reason including attention difficulties, print disabilities, and certain visual impairments. The Test Administrator is allowed to select the color contrast and assist in using this feature.
- The available color choices are:
    - Black text on White (Default)
    - Black text on Cream
    - Black text on Light Blue
    - Black text on Light Magenta
    - White text on Black
    - Yellow text on Blue
    - Gray text on Green
- Line Reader: Students can use the Line Reader to highlight a row of text. This tool can also help students focus/read test content by moving the tool line-by-line. The Test Administrator is allowed to assist in using this feature.
- Line Reader Mask: Students can use this feature to block out part of the screen using a gray box with a small window. The size of both the gray box and window can be adjusted. This feature helps a student focus on one part of a question or phenomenon at a time by blocking out part of the screen. A student who uses a similar strategy or feature during instruction for any reason including visual processing needs may benefit from this feature. The Test Administrator is allowed to adjust the mask to block out the part of the screen to be masked and assist in using this feature.
- Progress Mode: Test Administrators and students can use Progress Mode to see a student's current position in the test. All passages or phenomena and questions will be listed in the Progress Bar. A dot

will appear below the passage or phenomenon or question, indicating a student's current position in the test. When a response to a question is selected, a smiley face will appear below it in the Progress Bar. Question numbers in the Progress Bar align with the question numbers in the paper test materials and Data Collection Forms. **Info!** When entering student responses from a Data Collection Form, staff should use the Progress Bar to ensure the online question number matches the Data Collection Form and to verify that all items have a response before submitting the test.

- Text-to-speech: Students can use the text-to-speech tool to listen to computer-generated audio. The student or Test Administrator must select "Click to Listen" and then select the parts of the passage, phenomenon, or item to listen to. By selecting any word of the passage, phenomenon, or item, text-to-speech will continue reading aloud until the "Stop" button is selected.
- Zoom: Students can see the entire screen enlarged by using keyboard commands or pinching on touchscreen devices. TestNav supports zoom levels of up to 400%; however, the maximum recommended zoom level is 120% for compatibility with all tools. This feature may be most beneficial for students with low vision who use similar strategies or features during instruction. The user interface is designed to respond to zoom by making the assessment content larger and also collapsing menu systems (much like when the mobile version of a website is accessed). This means that a student who is using zoom within a browser during daily instruction may have a similar experience within TestNav.

More information about online tools can be found on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. In addition, the educator resources on the SRTs page contain important information on how tools and accessibility features in TestNav interact with each other.

Notes for administration: Students must be familiar with online tools prior to test administration. Test Administrators can select if a tool is available to a student from the test settings screen. During test administration, Test Administrators can access the test settings any time during the administration to make changes to the online tools available. For Alt MCA, Test Administrators can assist students in using these online tools during administration but must not use the supports in a way that clues answers for students.

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Administrative Considerations—Provided by School

Different Time of Day

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: The time of day an assessment is administered is changed.

When to select: A student who needs to test at a different time of day than originally scheduled and/or planned for other students may do so for any reason. This may include adjusting test administration if a student does not have necessary aids (such as glasses, hearing aids) when they are to begin testing or has another extenuating circumstance occur (such as medication not taken, traumatic event).

Notes for administration: None.

Environment

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: The assessment is administered in a special setting (for example, certain lighting, acoustics, seating arrangements).

When to select: A student who needs a sensory friendly environment to calm or alert their sensory system or to decrease distractions may benefit from this support. A student may have it provided for any reason as long as test security requirements are followed.

Notes for administration: Refer to *Preparing for Test Administration* in Chapter 7 for additional information and take these needs into account when planning testing logistics (for example, having the student test in an individual setting if the environment would be distracting to other students).

Flexible Testing Time

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Flexible testing time means that a student requires additional time to complete an assessment that should be considered when scheduling testing. Extended testing time is allowed within a day and across multiple days. Breaks may also be provided.

When to select: This support may be most helpful for a student who needs extra time to process written text, to write, or to use other accommodations (including braille tests, ASL interpretation, scribe, or script) or equipment. **Info!** This includes multilingual learners who may need additional time to process the language of the test or to use word-to-word translations and/or English glossaries. Extended time and/or more frequent breaks should be planned for if this is a support or practice typically provided during instruction or other assessments.

Notes for administration: Consideration for a student requiring extended testing time should be given when scheduling testing sessions and planning for testing sessions (for example, planning locations for students to continue testing if they need more time, planning fewer items or more testing sessions for some students).

For guidance about breaks, refer to *Breaks and Leaving During Testing* in Chapter 8.

Individual or Small-Group Setting

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); an individual administration is **required** for all MTAS/Alt MCA administrations.

Description: A student is tested individually or in a small-group setting. MDE does not define "small group" as a specific number of students; this is determined by the district.

When to select: A student may be tested in a different setting than planned for most test administrations as needed to meet specific needs, such as to reduce distractions.

Notes for administration: An individual or small-group setting can be used for any student that would benefit from this smaller testing environment. In addition, an individual or small-group setting may be required for other supports or accommodations and will be specified when required. Consideration for a student requiring an individual or small-group setting should be given when scheduling and planning for testing sessions (for example, planning for staffing to monitor testing rooms).

Written, Repeated, or Clarified Testing Directions

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: For MCA, the Test Administrator may write out scripted directions from the applicable *Testing Directions* (from the *Script to Read to Students*, *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance*, and *Transcript of Student Directions* (for online testing) sections). After the scripted directions are read, Test Administrator may also repeat, explain, or clarify the scripted directions that may be confusing to a specific student or group of students.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who typically needs directions provided verbally or in written form more than one time to engage in assessments. It may also provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. Scripted directions may be repeated or clarified as needed, following the guidelines below. For written directions, Test Administrators should consider what is needed by a student; providing too much written information (which may also be repeated verbally, as needed) may be distracting or overwhelming.

Notes for administration: Test Administrators may write information specific to the administration of the test on the board or in the room, or they may provide a written copy to students. Examples of allowable information include information about scheduling (for example, "We will stop after answering 25 questions" or "We will stop testing at the end of the class period.") and what students may do when they are done with testing (for

example, “Read a book when you are done testing.”). Test Administrators may also write out any scripted information from the *Testing Directions*. If a written copy is provided, it must be treated the same as scratch paper (collected, secured, and disposed of). Refer to *Materials Allowed During Testing* in Chapter 7 for more information on maintaining security of scratch paper.

Scripted directions may be repeated at any time during test administration. As needed, scripted directions can be explained or clarified only after the scripted directions are read. The explanation can only clarify the directions to ensure that the meaning of specific words or sentences is accurately understood. The Test Administrator cannot change the meaning of the directions or provide information that would lead or cue the student. This is important, as the use of the *Testing Directions* ensures that tests are administered the same way for all students across the state and that students receive a score that accurately reflects what they know without any support, guidance, or unauthorized interference.

Test Administrators must not read directions from a student’s screen or test book. The *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of the *Testing Directions* includes information and guidance on how to address student questions during testing and provides some scenarios for student and classroom management. This information is provided to help evaluate what is appropriate to say and do while ensuring that students can demonstrate what they know independently. If Test Administrators are unsure how to assist in a situation that arises, they should follow school procedures for asking for assistance from others (such as the District or School Assessment Coordinator) before proceeding, if possible.

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Accessibility Supports—Provided by School

Amplification Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Student uses an amplification device, including personal hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM systems, or other amplification systems.

When to select: This support may be provided to a student who normally uses these devices in instruction to amplify sounds.

Notes for administration: Any amplification device that can be heard by others requires the student to test in an individual setting.

If the device includes Bluetooth capabilities, the Test Administrator must confirm with the student that the audio is connected only to the testing device if testing online.

Calculator (Handheld), Math Manipulatives, or Abacus for Science MCA, Grade 11 Math MCA, Math MTAS, and Science Alt MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Science MCA and grade 11 Math MCA; MTAS (all grades math); Alt MCA (all grades science)

Description: Student uses a handheld calculator for testing, or a student uses one or more of the following materials in place of or alongside a calculator:

- Math manipulatives such as unifix cubes or base-10 blocks
- An abacus calculation tool

Standard, scientific, or graphing calculators with a talking feature may also be used in an individual setting if the need is documented in the IEP or 504 plan and the calculator policies in Chapter 8 and Appendix B are followed.

When to select: A handheld calculator may be provided to a student who normally uses a handheld calculator in instruction.

A student who may benefit from using math manipulatives is typically identified as having visual disabilities or math-related disabilities, such as dyscalculia, and is a student with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Visual Impairment (VI), or Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD). MDE does not produce a comprehensive list of allowable manipulatives; email mde.testing@state.mn.us for specific questions about providing manipulatives.

For an abacus, a student with blindness, low vision, or documented processing impairments may benefit from the use of an abacus in place of a calculator.

Notes for administration: A handheld calculator, math manipulatives, and abacus are considered universal supports **only** for Science MCA and grade 11 Math MCA due to test administration requirements.

- A handheld calculator in addition to or in place of the online calculators in TestNav may be used as a universal support. Refer to *Accommodations—Provided by School* in this chapter for information for grades 3-8 Math MCA. Refer to Chapter 8 for details about calculator use policies and procedures.
- A student may also use a handheld calculator with paper test materials (if they have an IEP or 504 plan). Refer to *Calculator Use* in Chapter 8 for detailed information about calculator use policies and procedures.
- For math manipulatives or an abacus, the student must test in an individual setting, or in a small-group setting if all students require the same support. There must be separation between students (such as dividers or cubicles) to ensure students cannot view the materials being used by another student. The Test Administrator must be able to actively monitor all students in the small group.
- For math manipulatives, manipulatives can be the same color or different colors, but they must not be grouped or organized by the Test Administrator. Manipulatives that have any numbers or writing on them are not allowed.

For Math MTAS and Science Alt MCA, a four-function calculator or any alternative device or system that the student uses as a calculator may be used on any task. Note: While it is allowed to be used, a calculator is not needed for the Science Alt MCA.

Color Overlay

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: A transparent colored sheet that is placed over a page of text or is affixed to a device screen.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who normally uses colored overlays to reduce visual stress when reading.

Notes for administration: None.

Low-Vision Aids

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: A device or tool designed to improve the visual performance of a person with low vision. Examples of low-vision aids are magnifying glasses, electronic magnifiers, cardboard cutouts, and a larger monitor screen size and different resolution for online assessments.

When to select: A student who is accustomed to viewing enlarged text or graphics or navigation buttons may need low-vision aids to view content on paper or online assessments. This support also may meet the needs of a student with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this support should be considered along with other supports, such as accessibility features embedded in the online test (for example, magnifiers or zoom) or an accommodation (such as large print paper test books).

Notes for administration: The use of this accessibility support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Styluses for Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Online MCA (Reading, Math, Science); online Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: A stylus may be used by the student to navigate through the online assessment, use tools, and indicate responses.

When to select: A stylus may benefit a student with fine motor needs or print disabilities who normally uses it in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: None.

Templates to Reduce Visual Print Field

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: A material (such as a cardboard cutout) that blocks out part of the screen or test book. Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test* in this chapter for information about the line reader mask embedded in the online MCA.

When to select: This support may help a student focus on one part of a question, reading passage, or science phenomenon at a time by blocking out part of the screen or test book. These materials may benefit a student who normally uses them in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: None.

Translated Directions (MCA) (Written, Oral, Recorded, Signed)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The scripted portions of the online and paper *Testing Directions* posted on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub may be translated into a language other than English in an oral (including a recording) or written format. The online and paper versions of the *Testing Directions* are posted annually in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish—refer to *Translated Directions* under *Accessibility Supports—Provided by MDE* in this chapter. Districts may translate the scripted directions into additional languages as needed. Translations must be made by an interpreter (in-person or recorded), not via an app or online platform (such as Google Translate).

Signed interpretation (ASL or signed English) of the *Testing Directions* may be provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Only the scripted *Testing Directions* may be signed for this support. Refer to Appendix B of the *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations expandable heading) for signed interpretation guidelines and detailed administration instructions, including the linguistic rules and conventions of ASL and details on how to interpret specific academic terms for the reading, math, and

science tests. In addition, refer to the *Script/Human Reader (Signed Interpretation of Reading, Math, and Science Scripts)* section below for a description of allowed signed interpretation of test items, passages, and phenomena with a script/human reader (HR) accommodation.

When to select: Oral, recorded, or written translations may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs.

Signed directions are provided for a student who typically accesses instruction through signed interpretation.

Notes for administration: Oral, recorded, or written translated directions may be provided to a group if all the students require it. Otherwise, it must be provided to a student individually. In many cases, it will be helpful to provide the instructions both in English and in an additional language.

No translations of test items or reading passages are allowed. The following information provides requirements for translating the *Testing Directions*:

- 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.
- Written translations of the scripted directions may be provided to students. Consider the student's literacy in that language and the use of written translations as a support in daily instruction.
- A district may also create an audio or video recording of the translated scripted *Testing Directions* and/or transcript of the student directions for a student to listen to. Because scripted instructions are used throughout the test administration, ensure the Test Administrator and/or student has a way to access the applicable scripted instructions at the appropriate times (for example, when nearing the end of the testing session).
    - If the student is using a separate device to listen to/watch the recording during testing, the device must be school owned. The student must test in an individual setting to ensure that only the recording is accessed; they must not connect to the Internet or use other applications outside of that which is being used to listen to/watch the recording.

District staff may provide translations if they have sufficient knowledge and experience in the language, as determined by the district. It is recommended that interpreters have formal translation training and skills, whenever possible. If an interpreter outside of the district is needed to provide allowable translations, districts must use a local process to hire a qualified person. Districts arrange for and provide all translations. Interpreters cannot be family members. More information on interpreting in educational settings can be found in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages* available on the English Learner Disability Resources page of MDE's website.

All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training*.

- If the interpreter is not a district employee (for example, employed by a regional service cooperative), they must provide a record of their completed training. During test administration, they must be accompanied by a Test Administrator who is employed by the district and has completed all trainings.

- If the interpreter is a district employee and the Test Administrator, they must complete all trainings required for their role, not just the *Test Security Training*.

The use of a device to access any district-translated content and/or the use of an interpreter, including the name of the person interpreting, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Note: For online testing, districts may also choose to turn on Spanish translation settings on the student testing device. This should only be used if a student typically uses this feature during instruction. Only the TestNav system text (for example, menus and buttons) is translated. All test content will display in English. If a student's testing device is set to any other language, the TestNav user interface text will default to English.

Translated Directions (MTAS/Alt MCA)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: The Test Administrator may use the student's primary language to focus attention and give direction for how to interact with the task or item. The text in the Task Administration Manual scripts and text on Presentation Pages, Passages, Scenarios, or Phenomena Books, Response Option Cards, or in the online Alt MCA may not be translated except as described below for word-to-word translations. Translations must be made by an interpreter (in person or recording), **not** via an app or online platform (such as Google Translate).

When to select: These translations may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs.

Notes for administration: Full translations of the tasks themselves are not allowed. In many cases, it will be helpful to provide the directions in English and the additional language.

District staff may provide translations if they have sufficient knowledge and experience in the language, as determined by the district. It is recommended that interpreters have formal translation training and skills, whenever possible. If an interpreter outside of the district is needed to provide allowable translations, districts must use a local process to hire a qualified person. Districts arrange for and provide all translations. Interpreters cannot be family members. More information on interpreting in educational settings can be found in the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages* available on the English Learner Disability Resources page of MDE's website.

All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training*.

- If the interpreter is not a district employee, they must provide a record of their completed training. During test administration, they must be accompanied by a Test Administrator who is employed by the district and has completed all necessary training.
- If the interpreter is a district employee and also the Test Administrator, they must complete the required MTAS/Alt MCA trainings in the LMS, not just the *Test Security Training*.

The use of an interpreter, including the name of the person interpreting, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Voice Feedback Devices

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Voice feedback devices and whisper phones allow a student to vocalize as they read and work problems. This support also includes a student reading the test out loud in individual settings.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who normally vocalizes what they read in daily instruction.

Notes for administration: A student may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Administrator, and the Test Administrator cannot provide verbal or nonverbal prompts.

This support must be provided in an individual setting.

Word-to-Word Translations Using Dictionaries or Programs for Math MCA and Science MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math MCA and Science MCA

Description: A commercial word-to-word dictionary containing mathematical and scientific terms in English and in the primary language of a given learner. No definitions or pictures may be provided—only direct translations of the terms—and a commercial dictionary must be used.

- Math and science word-to-word dictionaries are available on the Steinhardt Metropolitan Center website.
- ACT maintains a list of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries that are available commercially.

A word-to-word translation may also be provided to the student using an online translation program. 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.

Note: Word-to-word dictionaries are not allowed for the Reading MCA. Although translated word lists are an available universal support, the words included in these lists come only from the test items—not from the reading passages.

When to select: These materials or tools may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs, who use them during instruction.

Note: When considering a word-to-word dictionary, keep in mind that it 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 students learn in fifth grade as well as words from lower grades). The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards provide the basis for determining appropriate mathematical and scientific terms for each grade level. More information is available in the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards on the Academic Standards (K-12) page of MDE's website.

Notes for administration: The student must use the dictionary or translation program to look up individual terms themselves; Test Administrators cannot translate the terms for the student. When using translation supports, entire test items cannot be looked up in a dual-language dictionary or typed into a translation program.

- A student may be provided with a physical, word-to-word dictionary or printed copy of an electronic dictionary. If a physical copy is used the dictionary must be collected at the end of each test session, and the Test Administrator must verify that no part of any test item was written in it. Following test administration, the dictionary must be securely disposed of if test content was written in it.
- If a word-to-word dictionary is accessed electronically or an online translation program is used:
  - The student must test in an individual setting to ensure only the dictionary/program is used. The Internet and other applications cannot be accessed.
  - TestNav will not allow other programs or applications to run at the same time as the test; therefore, the device used for the translation must be in addition to the testing device. The student must not connect to the Internet or use other applications outside of the program or application that is being used for translation. All devices used by the student must be school-owned devices.
  - If the online translation program has audio support for the term, the student may use it.

The use of a device to translate test content must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Word-to-Word Translations Using Dictionaries or Programs for Math MTAS and Science Alt MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math MTAS and Science Alt MCA

Description: Math and science terms in the tasks, items, or response options may be entered into a translation program or looked up in a dictionary.

A commercial word-to-word dictionary contains mathematical and scientific terms in English and in the primary language of a given learner. No definitions or pictures may be provided—only direct translations of the terms—and a commercial dictionary must be used.

- Math and science word-to-word dictionaries are available on the Steinhardt Metropolitan Center website.
- ACT maintains a list of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries that are available commercially.

When looking at online translation 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.

When to select: These materials or tools may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs, who use them during instruction.

Note: When considering a word-to-word dictionary, keep in mind that it 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 students 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. More information is available in the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards posted on the Academic Standards (K-12) page of MDE's website.

Notes for administration: The student may enter/look up the term or may request the Test Administrator to enter it/look it up. Note that only individual terms may be entered or looked up, not the entire test item.

The use of a device to translate test content must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Accessibility Supports—Provided by MDE

Paper Version of Math Tables for Grades 3-8 Math MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Grades 3-8 Math MCA (paper test books only)

Description: Students use multiplication or hundreds tables provided by MDE in place of or alongside a calculator while taking the paper Math MCA. Only paper versions of these math tables posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub may be provided during testing.

Note: The use of a paper version of the math tables is only available for students in grades 3-8 who are already testing using a paper test book, which is considered an accommodation for students with an IEP or 504 plan. Using paper math tables with the online grades 3-8 Math MCAs will result in the test being invalidated.

Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test* in this chapter for more information on the online version of the math tables in the online MCA.

When to select: A student with visual processing or spatial perception needs or a documented and persistent calculation disability (for example, dyscalculia) may find this accommodation beneficial. Ensure the student is familiar with these formats and/or uses them during instruction.

Notes for administration: Instructions for using paper versions of the multiplication and hundreds tables are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page.

These materials are only allowed with a paper test book because the online assessment is adaptive, which makes it difficult for the Test Administrator to verify when a student is taking items that do not allow students to use a calculator. Because the use of these materials on these items would invalidate what is being assessed, the student is required to test on paper.

- The student must use a paper test book and only use the math tables on the segments where calculators are allowed.
- If a student uses the same table(s) for instruction and testing, Test Administrators must ensure that they do not have any additional writing on them before testing. If they do contain any writing, a clean copy must be provided.
- The tables must be collected at the end of each test session and kept as a secure material, as the student may have written parts of test items on them. Following test administration, the tables must be securely disposed of.
- The student must test in an individual or small-group setting (if all students require the same support). There must be adequate space or visual barriers between students (such as dividers or cubicles) to ensure students cannot view the materials being used by another student. The Test Administrator must be able to actively monitor all students in the small group.

Since the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section in this chapter.

Paper Version of Math Tables for Grade 11 Math MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Grade 11 Math MCA (paper test book or online test)

Description: Students use a paper version of multiplication or hundreds table provided by MDE in place of or alongside a calculator while taking the paper or online grade 11 Math MCA. Only paper versions of these math tables posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub may be provided during testing.

Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test* in this chapter for more information on the online version of the math tables in the online MCA.

When to select: A student with visual processing or spatial perception needs or a documented and persistent calculation disability (for example, dyscalculia) may find this support beneficial. Ensure the student is familiar with these formats and/or uses them during instruction.

Notes for administration: Instructions for using paper versions of the multiplication and hundreds tables are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page.

A student may test online or use paper test materials (for a student with an IEP or 504 plan) when using this support because a calculator is allowed on the entire grade 11 Math MCA.

If the student uses the same table(s) for instruction and testing, Test Administrators must ensure that they do not have any additional writing on them before testing. If they contain any writing, a clean copy must be provided.

The tables must be collected at the end of each test session and kept as a secure material, as the student may have written parts of test items on them. Following test administration, the tables must be securely disposed of.

Paper Version of Math Tables for Math MTAS

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math MTAS (all grades)

Description: Students use a paper version of the multiplication or hundreds table provided by MDE or a school-created table or number line in place of or alongside a calculator while taking the Math MTAS. Paper versions of these math tables posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub may be provided during testing. These tables may be modified as needed to meet student needs (for example, providing only a portion of the table, enlarging, or adding texture). Test Administrators must ensure that tables or number lines created by the school do not clue answers for students.

When to select: A student with visual processing or spatial perception needs or a documented and persistent calculation disability (for example, dyscalculia) may find this support beneficial. Ensure the student is familiar with these formats and/or uses them during instruction.

Notes for administration: Instructions for using paper versions of the multiplication and hundreds tables are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page.

If the student uses the same table(s) or number line(s) for instruction and testing, Test Administrators must ensure that they do not have any additional writing on them before testing. If they contain any writing, a clean copy must be provided.

The tables and/or number lines must be collected at the end of each test session and kept as a secure material, as the student may have written parts of test items on them. Following test administration, the tables or number lines must be securely disposed of.

Translated Testing Directions in Hmong, Somali, or Spanish (Written or Recorded)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The scripted portions of the online and paper *Testing Directions* are posted annually in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Recorded translated *Testing Directions* are available on this page in addition to the written version that may be read aloud by the Test Administrator.

Districts may translate the scripted directions into additional languages as needed and provide an audio/visual recording—refer to *Translated Directions* under *Accessibility Supports—Provided by School* in this chapter.

When to select: These translations may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs.

Notes for administration: In many cases, it will be helpful to provide the instructions both in English and in the additional language.

Translated directions read aloud by the Test Administrator may be provided in a small group if all the students require it. Otherwise, it must be provided to a student individually.

The recorded translated directions may be provided in a small group if all the students require it, and the Test Administrator must play the recording. Otherwise, it must be provided to a student individually following these requirements:

- The device used for the recording must be school-owned. If the student is testing online, a second device to play the recording is required.
- The Internet or applications beyond the recording cannot be accessed.

A quick guide for using these recordings is available on the Test Administration Resources page.

The use of the written translated directions, including the name of the person providing the translation, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Word-to-Word Translation and Glossary Using Word Lists for Reading and Science

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Reading and Science MCA

Description: Translated and glossed word lists may help students understand unfamiliar words in test items. This support may help students better comprehend test questions and answer choices by reducing confusion or misunderstanding caused by ambiguous or low frequency academic vocabulary.

Glossed word lists provide concise, English-language definitions of academic terms.

These academic terms are also translated in the following languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Oromo, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The lists must be printed versions of the current-year lists on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Note: For the Reading MCA, words included on the lists are from test items only.

Translated and glossed word lists are not intended as a replacement for dictionaries or other resources. The words selected for these lists represent academic vocabulary frequently found in grade-appropriate instruction and texts; however, the lists are not exhaustive, and students may still encounter unfamiliar terms in the test. In addition, these lists are intended only for the purpose of providing this support during testing and are not intended to be used for direct instruction or isolated study. Information on appropriate uses of translated and glossed word lists as a resource for curriculum and lesson planning are available in the *Guidance for Using Reading and Science Translated and Glossed Word Lists* on the Student Tools and Supports page.

When to select: Translated and glossed word lists may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. Translated word lists provide direct one-to-one translations of terms in a student's target language; as a result, they will be most beneficial for multilingual learners who are literate in the target language and have encountered the translated terms during instruction. Glossed word lists may be beneficial to any student who typically receives classroom support with vocabulary development.

Notes for administration: Instructions for using and printing the lists are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page.

The list may be provided in conjunction with the online test (with or without other supports) or with paper test materials (for a student with an IEP or 504 plan).

If a student uses these translated word lists during instruction, Test Administrators must ensure that the list does not have any additional writing on it before it is used for testing. Students must write their names on their list. Each list must be collected at the end of each test session and kept secure, as the student may have written parts of test items on it. Following test administration, the lists must be securely disposed of following the district's procedures. However, if a Test Administrator confirms there is no writing on the list, a student could continue to use it during regular instruction.

All translations and glosses were carefully developed to ensure the items are still measuring what is being assessed. District staff may not modify these lists, add new terms, or create their own lists for use on the Reading or Science MCAs. In addition, districts may not translate these lists into languages not available on the

Minnesota Assessment Hub. If a student needs word-to-word support in a different language, districts can consider allowing a commercial word-to-word dual-language dictionary or online translation tool, provided the student is familiar with using that support during regular instruction; these supports are described previously in this section.

Word-to-Word Translation Using Word Lists for Math

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math MCA

Description: Translated word lists may allow students to access the meaning of unfamiliar words in test items. Academic terms and direction words are translated in the following languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Oromo, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The lists must be printed versions of the current-year lists on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. These lists are intended only for the purpose of providing this support during testing and are not intended as the basis for curriculum or instruction.

When to select: Translated word lists may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. Translated word lists provide direct one-to-one translations of terms in a student's target language(s); as a result, they will be most beneficial for multilingual learners who are literate in the target language(s) and have encountered the translated terms during instruction.

Notes for administration: Instructions for using and printing the lists are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page.

The list may be provided in conjunction with the online test (with or without other supports, including the pop-up translations) or with paper test materials (for a student with an IEP or 504 plan).

If a student uses these translated word lists during instruction, Test Administrators must ensure that the list does not have any additional writing on it before it is used for testing. Students must write their name on their list. Each list must be collected at the end of each test session and kept as a secure material, as the student may have written parts of test items on it. Following test administration, the lists must be securely disposed of following the district's procedures. However, if a Test Administrator confirms there is no writing on the list, a student could continue to use it during regular instruction.

The translations provided in these lists were carefully developed to ensure the items are still measuring what is being assessed. District staff may not modify these lists, add new terms, or create their own lists for use on the Math MCA. In addition, districts may not translate these lists into languages not available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub. If a student needs word-to-word support in a different language, districts can consider allowing a commercial word-to-word dual-language dictionary or online translation tool, provided the student is familiar with using that support during regular instruction; these supports are described previously in this section.

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test

The following accessibility features are available for students to use in TestNav when taking the online MCAs. To review what these features look like and determine which students they may be more appropriate for, refer to the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) on the Minnesota Assessment Hub. The SRT educator resources contain important information on how tools and accessibility features in TestNav interact with each other.

Notes for administration: **These notes are applicable to all accessibility features so are not repeated under each feature below.**

Students must practice and become familiar with accessibility features prior to test administration. During test administration, Test Administrators are not allowed to remind students of any test-taking or academic strategies (such as using a certain online tool). Help of this sort should be provided prior to testing, such as when the SRTs are used to prepare students for testing. The only times when Test Administrators may provide additional guidance are outlined in the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of the *Testing Directions*. For example, Test Administrators may verbally describe the functionality of a tool if a student cannot move forward, but they must not demonstrate it.

Answer Masking

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The answer masking accessibility feature lets a student choose which answer choices will show on the screen. It is available only for multiple-choice and multiple-response questions.

When to select: This feature may be most beneficial for a student with attention difficulties, print disabilities, and certain visual impairments who use a similar strategy or feature during instruction to visually reduce content.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Captioning on Videos in Math and Science MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Math and Science)

Description: Animated videos in the online Math and Science MCA contain captioning. **New!** The online grades 5 and 7 Math MCA now contain animated videos.

When to select: This feature may be most beneficial for a student who uses captioning during instruction.

Notes for administration: To access closed captioning in videos, students must select the gear or the Closed Captions (CC) button, and then select English to turn it on. Students can customize the appearance of closed captions by selecting Settings. Once closed captioning is turned on, it will remain on for all subsequent videos.

Color Contrast

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The color contrast tool lets a student change the color of the screen and words in TestNav. The available color choices are:

- Black on White (Default)
- Black on Cream
- Black on Light Blue
- Black on Light Magenta
- White on Black
- Yellow on Blue
- Gray on Green

When to select: This feature may be most beneficial for a student who uses various contrasts between the text and background color on other devices during instruction for any reason, including attention difficulties, print disabilities, and certain visual impairments.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

English Glossary for Reading and Science MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Reading and Science MCA

Description: The English glossary feature provides concise definitions or explanations of terms in English. The words selected for glossing represent academic vocabulary frequently found in grade-appropriate instruction and texts; however, the lists are not exhaustive, and students may still encounter unfamiliar terms in the test. Words that have been glossed are underlined. When selected, a pop-up window with the definition appears with an audio option. For the Reading MCA, the glossary feature is available on the test items, not the reading passages.

When to select: English glossaries may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners (ELs), former ELs, or students in immersion or dual-language programs. Additionally, English glossaries may be beneficial to any student who typically receives classroom support with vocabulary development.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Line Reader Mask

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The line reader mask accessibility feature blocks out part of the screen using a gray box with a small window. The size of both the gray box and window can be adjusted.

When to select: This feature helps a student focus on one part of a question, reading passage, or science phenomenon at a time by blocking out part of the screen. A student who uses a similar strategy or feature during instruction for any reason, including visual processing needs, may benefit from this feature.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Magnifier

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: The magnifier accessibility feature lets a student make a specific part of the screen larger by dragging a magnified box over it.

When to select: This feature may be most beneficial for a student who uses a similar feature during instruction to magnify a specific part of the screen.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Online Version of Math Tables

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math MCA (all grades)

Description: Students can access online versions of multiplication or hundreds tables in place of or alongside a calculator on all grades of the Math MCA. For grades 3-8, tables are only available in segments where a calculator is also allowed.

When to select: A student with visual processing or spatial perception needs or a documented and persistent calculation disability (for example, dyscalculia) may find this support beneficial. Ensure the student is familiar with these formats and/or uses them during instruction.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Pop-Up Translations in Hmong, Spanish, and Somali for Math MCA

Code: HM (Hmong), SO (Somali), or SP (Spanish)

Allowed for: Math MCA

Description: The pop-up translation accessibility feature provides translations for academic terms and direction words. 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.

When to select: These translations may provide support to multilingual learners, including English learners, former English learners, or students in immersion or dual-language programs.

Notes for administration: The Hmong (HM), Somali (SO), and Spanish (SP) online pop-up translation codes cannot be used together. Translated word lists may be used in conjunction with pop-up translations in the online test. Refer to the *Word-to-Word Translation Using Word Lists for Math* section above for more information.

Read&Write for Science MCA

Code: CR-W or CR-S

Allowed for: Science MCA

Description: **Info!** The Read&Write TestNav extension allows students to use either word prediction (CR-W) or speech-to-text and word prediction (CR-S and CR-W) to complete constructed-response items for science.

When to select: This support may benefit a student who uses speech-to-text writing supports in their classroom instruction. Students with processing-related needs, print disabilities, and writing disabilities may find this support helpful. Multilingual learners may also benefit from this support. Ensure the student is familiar with this support prior to testing.

Notes for administration: This extension is only used for constructed-response items, of which there are only a few per test. Note: Capitalization, spelling, and punctuation are not considered as part of the scoring of constructed-response items.

Students must test in an individual setting if using both the speech-to-text and word prediction features of Read&Write so that other students cannot hear what is being spoken or read aloud. Students testing with only the word prediction feature of Read&Write (CR-W) are not required to test in an individual setting.

- For MCA, the AT-S code cannot be used with either Read&Write code (CR-W or CR-S) as screen readers are not compatible with this TestNav extension.
- Since the extension is used in the online test, the CR-W and CR-S codes cannot be indicated with any codes for paper materials (12, 18, BC, BU).
- In Posttest Editing and reporting, the code appears as CR; CR-W and CR-S are used only during Pretest Editing to set up the applicable Read&Write feature(s).

Standard Text-to-Speech for Math and Science MCA

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Math and Science MCA

Description: The standard text-to-speech accessibility feature provides computer-generated audio, and a student can select the parts of the item they want to listen to.

When to select: Standard text-to-speech may be beneficial for a student with reading-related, vision, and visual processing needs. A student who uses this feature during daily instruction may benefit from this support.

Standard text-to-speech may also be beneficial for multilingual learners whose listening proficiency may be higher than their reading proficiency.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Zoom Feature

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: A student can use the zoom accessibility feature to make the entire screen larger by using keyboard commands or pinching on touchscreen devices. TestNav supports zoom levels of up to 400%; however, MDE recommends the maximum zoom level to be 120% for compatibility with all tools.

When to select: This feature may be most beneficial for a student with low vision who uses a similar strategy or feature during instruction. The user interface is designed to respond to zoom by making the assessment content larger and collapses the menu systems (much like when the mobile version of a website is accessed). This means that a student who is instructionally using zoom within a browser may have a similar experience within TestNav.

Notes for administration: No additional notes other than what is specified at the beginning of this section.

Back to Summary of Universal Supports table

Accommodations for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

Accommodations are changes in the way a test is administered and are meant to ensure equal access to the assessment. Accommodations are only available to students with an IEP or who qualify for a 504 plan, and all needed accommodations must be documented annually in the IEP or 504 plan prior to testing. For more information about documenting accommodations in IEPs or 504 plans, refer to the contacts listed at the front of this manual.

Use the information in the following sections to determine appropriate accommodations for students; the accommodations are divided into three categories: provided by the school, provided by MDE, or embedded in the online test. All applicable guidelines for staff are included in the *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading).

Links are available in the following table and at the end of each section of accommodation types to aid chapter navigation.

Table 6. 2026-27 Summary of Accommodations on Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

Accommodations	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Individual Setting May Be Required	Data Entry Required	Test Administration Report Required
Accommodations – Provided by School							
Approved accommodation	AA	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Calculator (handheld), math manipulatives, or abacus for grades 3-8 Math MCA	HC		✓			✓	
Other assistive technology devices	AT-O	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Scribe	SC	✓	✓	✓	✓	With paper tests only	✓
Accommodations – Provided by MDE							
Paper test book (regular print)	12	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Paper test book (large print)	18 or 24	✓ (18 pt. only)	✓	✓ (18 pt. only)		✓	
Paper test book (braille)	BC or BU	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Accommodations	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Individual Setting May Be Required	Data Entry Required	Test Administration Report Required
Script/human reader (reading)	HR	✓				With paper tests only	✓
Script/human reader (math)	HR		✓			✓	✓
Script/human reader (science)	HR			✓		With paper tests only	✓
Script/human reader (signed interpretation)	HR	✓	✓	✓		With paper tests only	✓
Accommodations – Embedded in Test							
Accommodated text-to-speech for math	MC		✓				
Assistive technology online forms	AT-N or AT-S	✓		✓	✓		✓
Read aloud (text-to-speech) for reading	RA	✓			✓		✓

MDE recognizes that some IEP or 504 teams may identify something as an accommodation on the student's IEP or 504 plan that MDE considers a universal support for statewide assessments. IEP and 504 plan teams may also consider accommodations or supports for the MCA that are not specifically addressed in this manual, yet may be appropriate for a particular student and assessment; refer to the *Approved Accommodation* section below for more information on requesting approval for the use of a unique accommodation or support.

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, even if they do not have an IEP or 504 plan (for example, a student with a broken arm having the scribe accommodation, or a student with a concussion requiring a paper test book). Refer to the information below or email mde.testing@state.mn.us to verify if an accommodation is allowed. In these instances, the medical documentation must be kept with the *Test Administration Report* (TAR) that documents the use of an accommodation. When possible, practice with the accommodation should take place before test administration.

Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations

In order to be scored, student responses in MCA paper test books must be entered online by district or school staff in a Data Entry form in TestNav during the testing window. Student responses in MCA paper test books will not be scanned and scored when they are returned to Pearson; only student responses entered online are scored. Students cannot enter their own responses into TestNav. For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed for entering student responses from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing windows.

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. The *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub includes specific guidance for data entry of specific item types.

Entering Data for MTAS and Student Responses for Alt MCA

Student responses from the Reading and Science Alt MCA must be entered online in TestNav during the testing window, regardless of how the test is administered (online, hybrid, or paper mode). Districts determine who will enter this information and must ensure enough time is planned to complete data entry before the end of the testing window. **New!** Data for the Math MTAS must be entered online in TestNav during the testing window in order to be scored for reporting. For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed for entering data and student responses from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. Refer to the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* posted on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub for guidance.

MTAS/Alt MCA Accommodations

Districts are not required to document for MDE which accommodations are provided for the MTAS/Alt MCA; however, the assistive technology online forms for Alt MCA require codes to be indicated. Accommodating student needs is integral to alternate assessments, and the Test Administrator may provide needed supports (for example, objects, tactile graphics, counters, or any type of calculator) or adapt test materials (for example, enlarging materials or providing a braille version) as long as the support is not specifically prohibited in the task script. For information on allowable test administration activities, refer to the *MTAS/Alt MCA Task Administration Manual* posted on the Test Administration Resources page and/or Chapter 5 of this *Procedures Manual*.

Note: Specific guidance for accommodations for MTAS/Alt MCA in this section includes assistive technology, braille test materials, signed interpretation of test materials, and assistive technology online forms.

Accommodation Codes

Most MCA accommodations require the DAC to enter a code in Pretest Editing in Test WES. School staff and District and School Assessment Coordinators need to ensure there is a process in place to communicate about and provide needed accommodations to students during testing. Note: Verify that students have an IEP or 504 plan in submitted student enrollment data (unless an accommodation is being provided in an injury situation).

Many universal supports and accommodations can be used together, but others cannot. Make sure universal supports and accommodations are compatible and that the applicable codes are indicated correctly. Detailed information about conflicting codes for Pretest Editing is provided in the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website.

- For MTAS, codes are not indicated, as described previously.
- For Alt MCA, the assistive technology online forms require the applicable code to be indicated for an AT test form to be available.
- For MCA, accommodation codes are indicated, removed, or changed in Test WES during Pretest Editing throughout the testing windows. **Info!** Districts must contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us if any accommodation codes need to be corrected in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

Accommodations—Provided by School

Approved Accommodation

Code: AA. Note: The code is only required to be indicated for MCA.

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science), MTAS (Math), Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: If IEP or 504 plan teams determine the need for an accommodation not specifically addressed as an accommodation or support in this chapter, email mde.testing@state.mn.us to request an online form to submit the following information for MDE to review:

- The student's MARSS/SSID number
- The student's grade and school
- What test(s) and subject(s) this request includes
- A description of the accommodation requested
- The primary and secondary disability categories listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan
- What accommodation(s) is listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan to support this request
- Whether this accommodation is a support the student uses in their daily instruction
- Whether this is the first year this accommodation is being requested for the student

Note: Do not include any personally identifying information in the request, such as name, initials, or birth date.

Approval by MDE is also required for the following student needs for testing:

- Use of student-owned AT
- Signed interpretation of the text-to-speech in an online test
- A read-aloud accommodation for the Reading MCA

When to select: The use of an approved accommodation is most beneficial for a student who uses the support during instruction.

Notes for administration:

- Districts must only indicate the AA code and proceed with the use of the accommodation if they have been granted approval to do so by MDE.
- This accommodation may require the student to test in an individual setting and will require documentation on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Calculator (Handheld), Math Manipulatives, or Abacus for Grades 3-8 Math MCA

Code: HC

Allowed for: Grades 3-8 Math MCA

Description: A student who requires a handheld calculator, math manipulatives (such as unifix cubes or base-10 blocks), or an abacus calculation tool for testing (rather than the online calculator available in TestNav) must use paper test materials, follow the calculator use policies in Chapter 8 and Appendix B, and only use the calculator/manipulatives/abacus for segments where calculators are allowed.

Standard, scientific, or graphing calculators with a talking feature may also be used in an individual setting if the need is documented in the IEP or 504 plan and the calculator policies in Chapter 8 and Appendix B are followed.

When to select: A handheld calculator may be provided to a student who normally uses a handheld calculator in instruction and requires it instead of the online calculator available in TestNav.

A student who may benefit from using math manipulatives is typically identified as a student with visual disabilities or math-related disabilities, such as dyscalculia, and is a student with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Visual Impairment (VI), or Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD). MDE does not produce a comprehensive list of allowable manipulatives; email mde.testing@state.mn.us for specific questions about providing manipulatives.

For an abacus, a student with blindness, low vision, or documented processing impairments may benefit from the use of an abacus in place of a calculator.

Use of this accommodation must be determined by the IEP or 504 team rather than student or administrator preference.

Notes for administration: A handheld calculator, math manipulatives, or an abacus are considered accommodations only for grades 3-8 Math MCA. This is due to the fact that the online assessment is adaptive, which makes it difficult for the Test Administrator to verify when a student is taking non-calculator allowed items. Because the use of a handheld calculator on these items would invalidate what is being assessed, the student is required to test on paper.

- The student is only permitted to use the handheld calculator, math manipulatives, or an abacus on the segments where calculators are allowed.
- For math manipulatives or an abacus, the student must test in an individual setting, or a small-group setting if all students require the same support. There must be separation between students (such as dividers or cubicles) to ensure students cannot view the materials being used by another student. The Test Administrator must be able to actively monitor all students in the small group.

- For math manipulatives, manipulatives can be the same color or different colors, but they must not be grouped or organized by the Test Administrator. Manipulatives that have any numbers or writing on them are not allowed.

Since the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- A 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline; after this date, the test book must be ordered as an additional order in ADAM.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates the use of any of these supports (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 the January deadline.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates the use of any of these supports (HC) and script/human reader (HR), only the HR is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates HC, HR, and 12, only the HR code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline.

Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Provided by School* in this chapter for information for Science MCA, grade 11 Math MCA, Math MTAS, and Science Alt MCA.

Other Assistive Technology Devices

Code: AT-O. Note: The code is only required to be indicated for MCA.

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science); MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Technology that is used to maintain or improve access for a student with disabilities. This code (AT-O) is used to document other assistive technology (AT) devices used. For Reading and Science MCA and Alt MCA, there are specific codes to indicate the use of the AT online forms (AT-N and AT-S) that interact directly with AT; refer to the *Assistive Technology Online Forms* section below for additional information. Note: The use of amplification devices, including personal hearing aids, FM systems, or other amplification systems, do not require the use of the AT-O code. Refer to the *Amplification Device*s section above for more information.

Questions on the use of AT for a student, including a specific device or software, must be sent to MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us. In addition, districts must contact MDE to request approval for the use of a student-owned device. If MDE approves the use of a specific device/software and/or student-owned device, districts must indicate the approved accommodation (AA) code in addition to the AT-O code.

For MCA, the following are the approved uses of other AT:

- 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 and that the required type of calculator is used (four-function, scientific, or graphing). The device cannot be used in conjunction with the online grades 3-8 Math MCA—only with paper test materials. For Science MCA or grade 11 Math MCA, the device could be used in conjunction with the online test or paper test materials.
- Use of an electronic notetaker for braille to store information with the use of a braille keyboard and/or standard keyboard is allowed. Use of audio features on an electronic notetaker is allowable if the IEP or 504 plan specifies it. If the audio feature is used, the device must be used in an individual setting to play back text the student has entered. The Test Administrator 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 passages or test items. Internet access must be turned off, and any notes must be deleted following each test session.
- Use of an augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device is allowed for students to produce speech and is considered the student's voice. Any device that can be heard by others requires the student to test in an individual setting. Test Administrators may assist with navigation on the AAC device, such as navigating to a page, as long as the student is the one who chooses the answer from the AAC and this practice is consistent with how the student typically communicates in daily instruction.

When to select: AT is most beneficial for a student who uses it during instruction.

Notes for administration: Failure to comply with all conditions above may result in a test invalidation. For online Reading and Science MCA and Alt MCA, the specific AT online form must be used if the device is able to interact directly with the test; refer to the *Assistive Technology Online Forms* section below for more information. For all other online testing, the device used for the AT must be in addition to the device used for testing. TestNav will not allow other programs or applications to run at the same time as the test, which means a student may need to use two tablets or a tablet and a computer. For paper tests, or with the scribe accommodation, students may use AT to indicate responses.

If the device has memory-storing functionality, it must be treated the same as memory-enabled calculators, and Test Administrators are required to check memory-enabled devices 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 Administrators must invoke the temporary disabling feature, if available, at the beginning of each test session, including monitoring to ensure it remains disabled, and can return it to normal functionality at the end of each test session. Note: Clearing the memory will delete stored programs or applications. Students should be told prior to test day to save all data and programs on a device that is not being used for the test.

The use of a device to record test content, including the name of the person deleting the test content, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Scribe

Code: SC

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: District staff help a student complete testing in instances when visual or motor difficulties, including injuries, prevent the student from indicating their own responses.

- Scribes for online tests will navigate through the test, access text-to-speech and other tools (as requested by the student), and enter all test item responses provided directly into the online test.
- Scribes for paper tests will indicate the responses provided by the student in the paper test book.

An audio recording may be used by the student to record and edit answers for paper test materials if the student is unable to mark their answers or uses similar strategies in instruction. Audio recordings cannot be used with the online MCA because each item must have an answer entered to move forward in the test.

When to select: A student with significant motor or processing difficulties may benefit from this accommodation. 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.

Notes for administration: This accommodation must be provided in an individual setting to not disrupt other students who are testing.

Scribes cannot read aloud student responses or any part of the test, and they must be impartial and experienced in transcription. The student must also be given the opportunity to review their responses. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff.

All scribes must complete the required trainings for MCA Test Administrators 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 *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

If the student is testing using a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter. Note: Entering student responses online from paper test books is not considered a scribe accommodation. For example, if the student uses a large print test book, they indicate their responses directly in the test book. The student responses must be entered online by district staff to be scored, which is not considered a scribe accommodation.

If audio recording is used, the device must be school-owned; the Internet or applications beyond the recording function cannot be accessed. Any recordings must be deleted after each test session; therefore, the student should finish all items associated with a passage or phenomenon before stopping testing for the day. The use of a device to record test content, including the name of the person deleting the test content, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Back to Summary of Accommodations table

Accommodations—Provided by MDE

Paper Test Book (Regular Print)

Code: 12

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: A 12-point regular print test book for Reading, Math, and Science MCAs may be used by any student with an IEP or 504 plan whose disability prevents them from accessing the content on a computer or device. A separate passages or phenomena book is provided automatically with the Reading or Science MCA paper test book to make it easier for students to access passages or phenomena information alongside the items included in the test book. Students must answer all items in the test book.

When to select: Use of this accommodation must be determined by the IEP or 504 team rather than student or administrator preference.

In some cases, a student with an injury that prevents them from testing online (for example, 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. Refer to the *Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes for administration: Since the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- A 12-point regular print test book will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline; after this date, the test book must be ordered as an additional order in ADAM.
- Paper test book codes (12, 18, 24 (math only), BC, or BU) cannot be used together.
- For Math MCA, if a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates a 12-point regular print test book (12) and script/human reader accommodation (HR), only the HR code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline. For Reading and Science MCA, both codes need to be indicated if a student requires the paper test book and the script.
- For Math MCA, if a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates 12-point regular print test book (12) and handheld calculator or math manipulatives/tables/abacus (HC) for math, only one code can be indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when either code is indicated by the January deadline.
- For Math MCA, if a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates a 12, HR, and HC for math, only the HR code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book is automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline.
- With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed.

Paper Test Book (Large Print)

Code: 18 or 24

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: A large print test book has an increased font size. Large print test books are available in 18-point (reading, math, and science) and 24-point (math only) fonts.

The 24-point large print test book is not available for the MCA-IV series (Reading and Science MCA-IV). Instead, the 18-point large print test book format has been improved to maximize the layout and clarity of the content on an 8.5” x 11” page size, to make the materials more manageable for students. Note: The 18-point and 24-point test books for math are provided on a 13” x 17” page size. A separate large print passages or phenomena book is provided automatically with the Reading or Science MCA paper test book to make it easier for students to access passages or phenomena information alongside the items included in the test book. Students must answer all items in the test book.

When to select: This accommodation is beneficial for a student with low vision who needs an increased font size to see the test items and typically accesses instruction through similar materials, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team. The use of this accommodation may be considered along with other supports, such as low-vision aids (for example, magnifying glasses).

In addition, the online test may also be considered to determine if it meets an individual student’s needs due to the following features available in TestNav:

- TestNav supports zoom levels of up to 400%; however, MDE recommends the maximum zoom level to be 120% for compatibility with all tools. The user interface is designed to respond to zoom by making the assessment content larger and collapsing menu systems (much like when the mobile version of a website is accessed). This means that a student who is instructionally using zoom within a browser may have a similar experience within TestNav.
- A student can also connect an external display to a laptop (provided the laptop is configured to display to the screen while the laptop is closed). This means that a student could take an assessment and use a 27 inch or larger display or even connect to a projector provided the device supports this. TestNav does not block external display access; it does block access to multiple displays at one time.
- With the addition of the AT online forms, students can utilize third party tools that offer screen magnification. Students who require very high levels of zoom can use the software to enlarge content to meet their needs and combine the zoom with panning which allows the user to control what parts of the screen appear on the display at any given time.

Notes for administration: Since the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- The applicable test book will be automatically shipped if the code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order in ADAM.

- Paper test book codes (12, 18, 24 (math only), BC, or BU) cannot be used together.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates 18 or 24 and handheld calculator or math manipulatives/tables/abacus (HC) for math, only one code can be indicated in Pretest Editing; the 18 or 24 code should be indicated to ensure the correct test book is sent.
- With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed.

Paper Test Book (Braille – MCA)

Code: BC or BU

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: A braille version of the test book is available to any student who is blind or has low vision and is competent in the braille system, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team. The Unified English Braille (UEB) format is used for all braille test materials. For Reading MCA, UEB Contracted (BC) and UEB Uncontracted (BU) are available. For Math and Science MCAs, UEB with Nemeth Contracted (BC) and UEB with Nemeth Uncontracted (BU) are available. Contracted braille uses the same letters, punctuation, and numbers as uncontracted, but adds abbreviations, contractions, and other short forms of words.

A separate passages or phenomena book is provided automatically with the Reading or Science MCA paper test book to make it easier for students to access passages or phenomena information alongside the items included in the test book. Students must answer all items in the test book.

When to select: This accommodation is provided for a student who is blind or has low vision and typically uses braille to access instruction through similar materials, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team.

Notes for administration: *Braille Test Administration Notes* are provided along with the braille test books for the Test Administrator to reference during test administration. A Test Administrator administering a braille test should be provided access to the *Braille Test Administration Notes* and the corresponding test books up to five business days prior to the scheduled administration. Test Administrators must complete all trainings required for their role prior to accessing the test materials, and they must keep the test materials secure as they prepare for testing. The *Braille Test Administration Notes* include the *Script to Read to Students* section of the *Testing Directions: Paper* to allow the scripted instructions to be tailored to the braille administration, as needed, and for ease of administration. Test Administrators will still need to refer to the *Testing Directions* for the other sections.

A student may use the braille test materials with the Reading and Science MCA AT online forms. Many students need the extra support of braille materials or tactile graphics for more complicated test content like graphs, images, and charts. The braille paper test book and AT online forms can be paired together as they contain the same content.

A student taking a braille test may need more time to test than print readers, and this should be considered when scheduling test administration. 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
- Dictated to a scribe by the student (SC)
- Using AT (such as a typewriter, word processor, braille writer, electronic notetaker, or slate) (AT-O)

If needed during testing, the Test Administrator may provide verbal descriptions, use a place marker (for example, a physical object to indicate the start of an item or graphic), remind the student how to navigate to the correct page or segment/section in the test book, and remind the student how to record answers in general, but cannot provide assistance on the test content.

Since the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- Each year, the code will default to the BC code in Pretest Editing; districts must change the code to BU if a student requires uncontracted materials. The applicable braille test book will be automatically shipped if the code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline; after this date, it must be ordered as an additional order in ADAM.
- A student may use the braille test materials (BC or BU) with the Reading and Science MCA AT online forms (AT-N or AT-S). Districts must indicate braille test materials (BC or BU) along with the applicable AT code (AT-N or AT-S) for the correct online test to be available for the student. The braille kit will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline. Note: for Reading, the use of the AT screen reader form requires approval from MDE. Refer to the *Assistive Technology Online Forms* section below for more information.
- Paper test book codes (12, 18, 24 (math only), BC, or BU) cannot be used together.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates BC or BU and handheld calculator or math manipulatives/tables/abacus (HC) for math, only the applicable braille code should be indicated in Pretest Editing to ensure the correct test materials are sent.
- With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed.
- In Posttest Editing and reporting, the accommodation code appears as BR for the use of all braille materials; BC and BU are used only during Pretest Editing for ordering the test materials.

Paper Test Materials (Braille – Alt MCA)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: Reading and Science Alt MCA

Description: Braille versions of the Reading and Science Alt MCA Presentation Pages, Phenomena Books, Passages Books, and Response Option Cards are available in UEB Uncontracted Math/Science (Science Alt MCA) and UEB Uncontracted (Reading Alt MCA) formats to any student who is blind or has low vision and is competent in the braille system, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team.

When to select: This accommodation is provided for a student who is blind or has low vision and typically uses braille to access instruction through similar materials, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team.

Notes for administration: *Braille Test Administration Notes* are provided along with the braille test materials for the Test Administrator to reference during test administration. Alt MCA braille materials can **only** be ordered in additional orders in ADAM.

- A student taking a braille test may need more time to test than print readers, and this should be considered when scheduling testing.
- If needed during testing, the Test Administrator may provide verbal descriptions, use a place marker (for example, a physical object to indicate the start of an item or graphic), and remind the student how to navigate to the correct page or section in the test materials, but the test administration policies detailed in the Task Administration Manual must be followed.
- Since the student is testing using paper test materials, district staff must enter all student responses online in TestNav within the testing window in order for the test to be scored.
- A student may use the braille test materials with the Reading and Science Alt MCA AT online forms. Many students need the extra support of braille materials or tactile graphics for more complicated test content like graphs, images, and charts. The braille paper test materials and AT online forms can be paired together as they contain the same content.

Note: Braille versions of test materials are only available for the Alt MCAs. For Math MTAS, a braille version may be created at the district.

Script/Human Reader (Reading)

Code: HR (Note: If a paper test book will be used for the Reading MCA, the applicable code—12, 18, BC, or BU—must also be indicated.) Only indicated once approved by MDE.

Allowed for: Reading MCA

Description: Read-aloud accommodations (script/human reader, text-to-speech, or AT online form for screen readers) are available on the Reading MCA for eligible students. With these accommodations, the reading passages and test items are read to the student. For the HR accommodation, the Test Administrator reads from the script while the student responds directly in the online test or paper test book. The script is for use by the Test Administrator only.

For the Reading MCA, the HR accommodation can be used in conjunction with the paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille test book) or with the online test (including the AT non-screen reader online form).

When to select: Read-aloud accommodations are an approved accommodation for a small number of students who meet one of these criteria. **Info!** These criteria were updated to include deafblindness and clarify the use of sign language interpretation based on feedback from DHH Specialists in the field.

- Students with documented deafblindness, blindness, or low vision that severely limits or prevents them from accessing printed text and who have not yet learned braille.

- Students with documented deafblindness, deafness, or who are hard of hearing and rely on sign language interpretation to access printed text.
- Students with documented deafblindness, blindness, or low vision who use a screen reader in their daily instruction.
- If the IEP or 504 plan requires read-aloud support, consider if the student needs this support from a human reader or if the text-to-speech in the online test can provide it. Refer to the *Read Aloud (Text-to-Speech) for Reading* section below for more information about the RA accommodation that provides text-to-speech.

Notes for administration: The use of the HR accommodation for reading requires approval by MDE; request approval by emailing mde.testing@state.mn.us. Districts must provide documentation that describes how the student meets the eligibility criteria outlined above. Requests for the use of read-aloud accommodations must be submitted three days prior to the deadline for submitting additional orders in ADAM if a script and/or paper test materials must be ordered. If approved, the HR code will be indicated by MDE during Pretest Editing; more details are provided in the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* on the MDE website. Districts must indicate paper test materials (12, 18, BC, or BU) during Pretest Editing if the student requires a paper accommodation with the use of the script.

- This accommodation requires the student to test in an individual setting and documentation on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).
- If the student is testing in a paper test book, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

The script is the only source Test Administrators may use to read the test to the student. Reading any test content from the test book or online test is not allowed and will require the test to be invalidated. In addition, a security violation must be reported through Assessment Security Records (ASR) if the test is read from any other source. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff.

Test Administrators must complete all trainings required for their role prior to test administration.

There is only one version of the script, and it is used for both paper and online administrations.

- For administration of the script in conjunction with the online test (including the AT non-screen reader online form), the Test Administrator reads from the script while the student enters responses directly into the online test. The HR code must be indicated to ensure the correct test is assigned; if not set up correctly, the student's online test will not match the script.

For administration of the script with regular print, large print, or braille test books, the student enters responses into the test book. Refer to the braille accommodation above for alternate ways for the student to respond (for example, a scribe or braille writer). Since the student is testing on paper, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- HR cannot be used with the AT online form for screen readers (AT-S) as it is expected that the screen reader is providing the read-aloud support.
- The script will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline. Paper test book codes must be indicated separately if the student will be testing using a paper test book.
- After the January deadline, the script and test book (if the student is not testing online) must be ordered as additional orders in ADAM, if the use of the script is approved by MDE. Note: If ordered by the district without prior approval, the script will be removed from the additional order.

Script/Human Reader (Math)

Code: HR

Allowed for: Math MCA

Description: The Test Administrator reads from the script while the student responds directly into the paper test book. The script is for use by the Test Administrator only.

Because the online math test is adaptive and the test items presented vary by student, the HR accommodation must be administered with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille test book).

When to select: This accommodation may be beneficial for a student with reading-related disabilities. If not used regularly during instruction and/or the student does not know the content that the items are assessing, this accommodation is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments.

The script requires Test Administrators to read all the text for labels, graphs, and charts, which may be beneficial only for a limited number of students (for example, those who may require language or visual processing supports). Cognitive overload may occur if a student is presented with too much visual and aural information simultaneously, resulting in the student being unable to process the information.

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 Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) on the Minnesota Assessment Hub to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech.

Use of this accommodation must be determined by the IEP or 504 team rather than student or administrator preference.

Notes for administration: The script is the only source Test Administrators may use to read the test to the student. Reading any test content from the test book is not allowed and will require the test to be invalidated. In addition, a security violation must be reported through Assessment Security Records (ASR) if the test is read from any other source. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff.

Test Administrators must complete all trainings required for their role prior to test administration.

Since the student is testing on paper, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script/human reader (HR) cannot be used together.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates HR and either 12 or HC (handheld calculator or math manipulatives/tables/abacus), only the HR code is indicated; a 12-point test book and a script are automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline. However, large print or braille test book codes must be indicated separately.
- If a student's IEP or 504 plan indicates 12, HR, and HC, only the HR code is indicated in Pretest Editing; a 12-point test book and a script are automatically sent when the script is indicated by the January deadline.
- With all paper math test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed.

Script/Human Reader (Science)

Code: HR (Note: If a paper test book will be used for Science MCA, the applicable code—12, 18, BC, or BU— must also be indicated.)

Allowed for: Science MCA

Description: The Test Administrator reads from the script while the student responds directly in the online test or paper test book. Scripted language provides a comprehensive read-aloud experience for students. The read-aloud support provided by the script and text-to-speech are equivalent. The script is for use by the Test Administrator only.

For Science MCA, the HR accommodation can be used in conjunction with the paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille test book) or with the online test (including the AT non-screen reader online form).

When to select: This accommodation may be beneficial for a student with reading-related disabilities. If not used regularly during instruction and/or the student does not know the content that the items are assessing, this accommodation is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. 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.

Notes for administration: The script is the only source Test Administrators may use to read the test to the student. Reading any test content from the test book is not allowed and will require the test to be invalidated. In addition, a security violation must be reported through Assessment Security Records (ASR) if the test is read from any other source. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff.

Test Administrators must complete the required trainings for their role prior to test administration.

There is only one version of the script, and it is used for both paper and online administrations.

- For administration of the script in conjunction with the online test (including the AT non-screen reader online form), the Test Administrator reads from the script while the student enters responses directly into the online test. The HR code must be indicated to ensure the correct test is assigned (along with AT-N, if applicable); if not set up correctly, the student's online test will not match the script.
- For administration of the script with regular print, large print, or braille test books, the student enters responses into the test book. Refer to the braille accommodation above for alternate ways for the student to respond (for example, a scribe or braille writer). Since the student is testing on paper, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Notes:

- HR cannot be used with the AT online form for screen readers (AT-S) as it is expected that the screen reader is providing the read-aloud support.
- The script will be automatically shipped if this code is indicated in Pretest Editing by the January deadline. Paper test book codes must be indicated separately if the student will be testing using a paper test book.
- After the January deadline, the script and test book (if the student is not testing online) must be ordered as additional orders in ADAM.

Script/Human Reader (Signed Interpretation of Reading, Math, and Science Scripts)

Code: HR (Note: If a paper test book will be used for the Reading or Science MCA, the applicable code—12, 18, BC, or BU—must also be indicated.)

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, and Science)

Description: Signed interpretation (ASL or signed English) of the Reading, Math, and Science MCA script may be provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who will be using the script/human reader accommodation. The script must be used by the interpreter for the signed interpretation in conjunction with the corresponding paper test book or online test.

There is also an option for the interpreter to provide the content directly from the text-to-speech in the student's online test if this is typically how the interpretation is provided in instruction. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us to obtain approval to use this option and for additional instructions. If MDE approves this accommodation for science, districts must indicate the approved accommodation (AA) code in addition to the HR code. For math, only the AA code should be indicated, as indicating HR for math would generate a data entry test; the script must then be ordered in additional orders in ADAM. For reading, refer to the *Read Aloud (Text-to-Speech) for Reading* section below for details about requesting read-aloud accommodations; this request must specify the need for signed interpretation of the text-to-speech in the student's online test.

When to select: This support is provided for a student who typically accesses instruction through signed interpretation and requires the HR accommodation, as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team.

Notes for 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 answers to items. In cases where signs give clues to the answer, interpreters must use fingerspelling for those words. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff, including the linguistic rules and conventions of ASL and details on how to interpret specific academic terms.

To prepare for testing, the interpreter should be provided access to the script up to five business days prior to the scheduled test administration. During this preparation time, interpreters must keep test materials secure. All interpreters must complete the *Test Security Training* prior to accessing test materials, and the use of an interpreter, including the name of the person interpreting, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

- If the interpreter is not a district employee (for example, employed by a regional service cooperative), they must provide a record of their completed training. During test administration, they must be accompanied by a Test Administrator who is employed by the district and has completed all necessary training.
- If the interpreter is a district employee and also the Test Administrator, they must complete the required trainings for MCA Test Administrators, not just the *Test Security Training*, prior to accessing the test materials.
- If the student is testing on paper, district staff must enter all student responses online within the testing window in order for the test to be scored. Refer to the *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* section earlier in this chapter.

Signed Interpretation of Test (MTAS/Alt MCA)

Code: N/A

Allowed for: MTAS (Math); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Signed interpretation (ASL or signed English) of any content that is intended to be provided or read to a student, including the scripts, reading passages, phenomena, and scenarios may be provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

When to select: This support is provided for a student who typically accesses instruction through signed interpretation.

Notes for administration: In cases where signs give clues to the answer, interpreters must use fingerspelling for those words. The *Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments* on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the Universal Supports and Accommodations Resources expandable heading) includes detailed administration instructions for staff, including the linguistic rules and conventions of ASL and details on how to interpret specific academic terms.

If the interpreter is not the Test Administrator, ensure the interpreter is provided access to the MTAS/Alt MCA test materials up to five business days prior to test administration for review; during this preparation time, interpreters must keep test materials secure. The interpreter is required to complete the *Test Security Training*; the other required trainings for MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators in the LMS are also recommended so the interpreter is familiar with how the test is administered.

The use of an interpreter, including the name of the person interpreting, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Back to Summary of Accommodations table

Accommodations—Embedded in Test

Accommodated Text-to-Speech for Math

Code: MC

Allowed for: Math MCA

Description: Accommodated text-to-speech provides computer-generated audio for labels, graphs, and charts along with text that highlights how the text-to-speech is being read aloud within these (for example, "From left to right, the figure is labeled…") in addition to the audio that is provided for standard text-to-speech; the student can select the parts of the item they want to listen to.

When to select: Each individual student's needs must be taken into account when determining which version of text-to-speech will be the most beneficial for them. If not used regularly during instruction and/or the student does not know the content that the items are assessing, this accommodation is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments.

Because accommodated text-to-speech also provides audio for all the labels, graphs, and charts, it may be beneficial only for a limited number of students (for example, those who may require language or visual processing supports). Cognitive overload may occur if a student is presented with too much visual and aural information simultaneously, resulting in the student being unable to process the information.

The default for most students should be the standard text-to-speech, which is a universal support on the Math MCA. Refer to the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) on the Minnesota Assessment Hub to hear examples of both types of text-to-speech.

Notes for administration:

- Accommodated text-to-speech (MC) and script/human reader (HR) cannot be used together.
- MC is not available with paper test books (12, 18, 24, BC, or BU).

Assistive Technology Online Forms

Code: AT-S or AT-N (AT-S for Reading can only be indicated once approved by MDE.)

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Science); Alt MCA (Reading, Science)

Description: Separate TestNav forms–one for screen readers (AT-S) and one for non-screen readers (AT-N)–allow assistive technology (AT) to interact directly with the test in order to maintain or improve access for a student with disabilities. Note: For Reading MCA, AT-S can only be indicated once approved by MDE, as a screen reader provides read-aloud support for both the reading passages and test items. Refer to the *Read Aloud (Text to Speech) for Reading* section below for more information.

Prior to administration, it is important to verify the AT will work with TestNav by checking its compatibility with a sample AT test. **New!** The District or School Assessment Coordinator will need access to the Training Administrations in ADAM to create a proctor group for a sample test administration. They will then provide a test ticket to the teacher and student, who can use it to log in to TestNav and confirm whether the AT is compatible and/or works as expected.

Even if a student is using AT with known TestNav compatibility, the AT should still be tested, and the student should have the opportunity to practice using their AT on the sample test. Instructions for testing the AT with a TestNav sample form–which includes examples of AT that are compatible, may be compatible, or are known to be incompatible–are available on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Any questions on the use of AT for a student, including a specific device or software, should be sent to MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us.

In addition, districts must contact MDE to request approval for the use of a student-owned device. If MDE approves, districts must indicate the approved accommodation (AA) code along with the AT-S or AT-N code.

When to select: AT is most beneficial for a student who uses these features during instruction. Some examples of ways students might engage with the AT forms are using screen readers to access information, giving responses with a head mouse or switch, using magnification, or using a refreshable braille device.

Notes for administration: To allow other programs or applications to run at the same time as the test, these forms are published at a different security level. As a result, it must be administered in an individual setting to ensure that the student is only accessing the AT to complete testing and not accessing other features or programs. Failure to comply may result in a test invalidation. Note: The AT online form for screen readers limits item types and online tools to those that are keyboard operable and supported with screen readers.

A student may use the braille test materials with either AT online form as they contain the same content. Many students need the extra support of braille materials or tactile graphics, when applicable, for more complicated test content like graphs, images, and charts. For MCA, districts must indicate the applicable braille accommodation code (BC or BU) if braille materials are used. In addition, the Alt MCAs have Visual Descriptions and Response Option Cards that come in the braille test materials kits or can be ordered separately in additional orders. These supports can also be used with the Reading and Science Alt MCA AT online forms.

If the device has memory-storing functionality, it must be treated the same as memory-enabled calculators, and Test Administrators are required to check memory-enabled devices 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. If Test Administrators use the temporary disabling feature, if available, at the beginning of each test session, they must monitor to ensure it remains disabled and can return it to normal functionality at the end of each test session. Note: Since clearing the memory will delete all stored programs or applications, students should be told prior to test day to save this data on a device not being used for the test.

The use of a device to record test content, including the name of the person who will delete the test content on the device, must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Notes:

- For Alt MCA, the AT-N and AT-S codes are the only supports that require a code to be indicated in Pretest Editing in Test WES to be available for the student.
- For Science MCA, the AT-S code cannot be used with either Read&Write code (CR-W or CR-S) as screen readers are not compatible with this TestNav extension.
- The AT-S code cannot be used with the script/human reader (HR) code as it is expected that the screen reader is providing the read-aloud support.
- AT-N and AT-S cannot be used together.
- For Reading MCA, the AT-S code can only be indicated once approved by MDE.

Read Aloud (Text-to-Speech) for Reading

Code: RA. Only indicated once approved by MDE.

Allowed for: Reading MCA

Description: Read-aloud accommodations (script/human reader, text-to-speech, or assistive technology online form for screen readers) are available for the Reading MCA. With these accommodations, the reading passages and test items are read to the student. For the read-aloud (text-to-speech) (RA) accommodation, an online fixed form is available to provide this support via text-to-speech for a select group of students who meet specific eligibility requirements; this accommodation must be approved by MDE.

When to select: Read-aloud accommodations are an approved accommodation for a small number of students who meet one of these criteria. **Info!** These criteria were updated to include deafblindness and clarify the use of sign language interpretation based on feedback from DHH Specialists in the field.

- Students with documented deafblindness, blindness, or low vision that severely limits or prevents them from accessing printed text and who have not yet learned braille.
- Students with documented deafblindness, deafness, or who are hard of hearing and rely on sign language interpretation to access printed text.
- Students with documented deafblindness, blindness, or low vision who use a screen reader in their daily instruction.

If the IEP or 504 plan requires read-aloud support, consider if the student needs this support from a human reader or if the text-to-speech in the online test can provide it. Refer to the *Script/Human Reader (Reading)* section earlier in this chapter for more information about providing read-aloud support via the human reader/script (HR) accommodation. In addition, read-aloud support may be provided through signed interpretation of the text-to-speech. Refer to the *Script/Human Reader (Signed Interpretation of Reading, Math, and Science Scripts)* section above for additional information.

Notes for administration: The use of the RA accommodation requires approval by MDE; request approval by emailing mde.testing@state.mn.us. Districts must provide documentation that describes how the student meets the eligibility criteria outlined above. Requests for the use of read-aloud accommodations must be submitted three days prior to the deadline for submitting additional orders in ADAM if a script and/or paper test materials must be ordered. If approved, the RA code will be indicated by MDE in Test WES; more details are provided in the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website.

This accommodation requires the student to test in an individual setting and documentation on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Notes:

- RA cannot be indicated with either AT online form (AT-N or AT-S) as these AT forms do not support text-to-speech.

Back to Summary of Accommodations table

Chapter 5 — Responsible and Ethical Practices to Maintain Test Security and Test Score Integrity

Overview

This chapter discusses the responsible and ethical practices to use when administering Minnesota's statewide assessments and interpreting and using the results. These practices are critical for maintaining test security and test score integrity. These practices apply to anyone involved with any aspect of test administration or the use of test results. Refer to Appendix D for definitions of key test security and test score integrity terminology. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

Under Minnesota Statutes and per federal requirements that arise from Peer Review (refer to Appendix E), MDE is responsible for maintaining the security and integrity of Minnesota's statewide assessments. MDE develops many policies based on these requirements, as well as adapting information from general principles of test interpretation and use from the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (developed by the American Educational Research Association [AERA], the American Psychological Association [APA], and the National Council on Measurement in Education [NCME] [2014]) and from the *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement* by the NCME (1995).

The *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* define **test security** as "protection of the content of a test from unauthorized release or use, to protect the integrity of the test scores so they are valid for their intended use." Test developers, Test Administrators, and test-takers are all responsible for protecting the test security of statewide assessments. If test security is not maintained, the integrity of results may be compromised, which can lead to reporting results that do not accurately represent student performance. One of the most significant consequences related to this is school and district staff making decisions about curriculum and instruction based on potentially misleading results. Refer to Chapter 11 for information on appropriate uses of statewide assessments results.

A primary goal of Minnesota's statewide assessments is to be able to measure student learning of the WIDA English Language Development Standards and the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The principles discussed in this chapter provide guidance for ensuring that practices related to the administration of statewide assessments, and the interpretation and use of statewide assessment results, support this goal.

- **Part I** provides the general principles of responsible assessment practice. These requirements are the professional standards for all involved in the assessment process and should be referred to when determining which practices are appropriate and which practices are unprofessional, unethical, and/or inappropriate.
- **Part II** has specific examples of ethical and unethical practices in the administration of statewide assessments.
- **Part III** has specific examples of appropriate and inappropriate interpretations and uses of statewide assessment results. More details are provided in Chapter 11.

- **Part IV** addresses test security for statewide 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 the security documentation required.
- **Part V** 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: Professionally Responsible Assessment Practices

When considering the administration of statewide assessments and interpretation or use of assessment results, each district will use the following standards for determining which practices are appropriate and which practices are unprofessional, unethical, and/or inappropriate.

Because of the complex nature of statewide 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.

All districts and individuals who are involved in any aspect of testing must:

- Maintain security of test materials and test content before, during, and after the administration of the assessment.
- Avoid any actions or conditions in the preparation, administration, submission, and return of test materials that might invalidate the results and their interpretation and use.
- 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 what they know and can do.

Those who are involved with test administration must:

- Review applicable resources and guides prior to testing to understand the procedures needed to administer the assessments, including using universal supports and accommodations, and to maintain test security and integrity.
- Ensure all students enrolled in a grade in which assessments are given are provided the opportunity to participate in the appropriate assessment(s).
- Identify the need for, provide, and document the use of universal 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 assessment administration.
- Avoid any practice that permits staff without the necessary knowledge and training to administer statewide assessments.

Those who interpret, use, and communicate assessment results must:

- Avoid making—and actively discourage others from making—inaccurate reports, claims, interpretations, or statements that can lead to false or misleading conclusions about assessment results.
- Avoid any practice that provides an interpretation or suggests a use of assessment results that conflicts with the purpose(s) of the assessment, limitations of the assessment, and/or other factors affecting the results.
- Avoid using statewide assessment results as a single source of data to make educational decisions.
- Communicate assessment results in an understandable manner to community and educational partners, including providing proper interpretations and clarifications of likely misinterpretations. These communications should provide context for statewide assessment results, which should be interpreted along with other available data from the district, school, or classroom.
- Avoid any practice that supports the use of assessment results in unethical or inappropriate ways 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 or use assessment results.
- Report any apparent misuse of assessment results to those responsible for the assessment process in the school, district, and/or state.
- Avoid any practice that puts personally identifiable or other private information at risk or violates confidentiality.
- Consider how to share student results in a way that serves the needs of the students while also protecting their rights and privacy.
- Abide by the embargo requirements when accessing or sharing early or final assessment results before results are released publicly.

Part II: Practices in Preparation and Administration of Statewide Assessments

The examples of ethical and unethical practices below illustrate the standards and principles of professionally responsible practices in the administration of statewide assessments. An unethical assessment practice is anything that would jeopardize test score integrity. District and school staff are expected to follow ethical behaviors and practices for statewide assessments to best prepare their students to demonstrate what they know.

Ethical Behavior and Practice for Statewide Assessments

Preparation

- Prepare students to participate in Minnesota's statewide assessments by aligning curriculum and instruction to the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards and the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

Since the assessments are aligned to these standards, MDE recommends providing instruction aligned to the depth and breadth of the standards and implementing multiple formative checks of student understanding throughout the year.

- Make changes in instruction that enhance student skills, learning, and achievement based on student performance on classroom, school, and district assessments.
- As appropriate, determine which student resources will be used to prepare students for testing. This decision may vary by school, grade, or student and may be based on students' familiarity and experience with testing. The district may determine that no student resources are required.
- Encourage parents/guardians 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 expectation that they will act with honesty and integrity during test administration.
- Establish a testing calendar and post it to the district's website, articulating a testing schedule that falls within the state-designated testing windows and provides sufficient time for students to complete the assessments, including planning for makeup days, and update the calendar as needed.
- Annually review and update the *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments,* using the current year's template.
- Prepare technology for online testing by downloading or updating applicable test vendor applications for online testing and by reviewing the technology requirements for hardware and software involved in testing.
- Consider communicating information to students and families about the use and value of assessment results in the school and district.

Administration

- Everyone involved in test administration in the district is expected to:
    - Annually complete MDE-required trainings and any district-required trainings, based on their roles in test administration and prior to the administration of the applicable assessment.
    - Be knowledgeable about state- and district-specific policies and procedures for test administration.
    - 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).
    - Follow the district-determined testing calendar, provided it does not conflict with the state testing windows.
    - Administer all tests in strict accordance with the instructions contained in this *Procedures Manual* as well as in other applicable resources and guides.
    - Follow security policies and procedures for distributing and returning secure test materials and accounting for all secure test materials before, during, and after testing.

- District and School Assessment Coordinators are expected to:
  - Provide adequate and appropriate staffing for testing rooms, ensure all staff present in testing rooms have completed required trainings each school year prior to the administration of the applicable assessment, and retain the required training documentation.
  - 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 (meaning supporting documentation is completed and/or test codes are indicated).
  - Work with special education and English learner staff to confirm which students should receive universal supports and/or accommodations and ensure staff administering the assessment are familiar with the applicable guidelines and requirements for providing those supports and accommodations.
  - Account for all secure test materials, and store them in a locked, secure location throughout the testing process when they are not being used for administration.
  - Inform Test Administrators when test materials are available to prepare and review.
  - Return all used and unused secure test materials to the test vendor as specified in the applicable instructions and report any missing test materials to the test vendor.
  - Promptly contact MDE to report any test security violations.
- WIDA ACCESS and MCA Test Administrators are expected to:
  - Provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do independently, without any unauthorized support, guidance, or interference during test administration.
  - Verify that the correct tests and universal supports and/or accommodations are provided to students.
  - Make sure all procedures related to allowable and prohibited materials are followed during test administration.

    Follow all requirements outlined in the applicable directions (*Test Administrator Scripts* for WIDA ACCESS and *Testing Directions* for MCA) and use only the scripted directions and guidance in those documents to assist students during test administration.
  - Actively monitor students during all test sessions:
    - Circulate frequently 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, such as signs of cheating or accessing prohibited devices.
    - Ensure students who have finished their tests during the testing session are engaged in allowable activities that do not distract other students who are still testing.

- WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators are expected to:
    - Administer the tasks and items as scripted, in an individual setting, only reading aloud applicable portions as specified in the *Test Administrator Script* (for WIDA assessments) or Task Administration Manual (for MTAS/Alt MCA).
    - Be familiar with the test materials prior to test administration.
    - Score tasks solely based on student performance during the administration of the task, as applicable.
    - For WIDA Alternate ACCESS and MTAS/Alt MCA:
        - Use instructional supports, objects, and manipulatives as appropriate for a given student unless prohibited in the task script.
        - Allow the use of assistive technology (AT) devices to meet student needs.
        - Refocus and repeat information as needed.
        - For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, adapt the test booklet to meet student needs by cutting it apart and presenting the graphics in another format. Note: The WIDA Alternate ACCESS Student Response Booklet must be scanned for scoring and therefore cannot be altered in any way.
        - For MTAS/Alt MCA, 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. It also includes making decisions about the Alt MCA administration mode that will best meet student needs (online, paper, or hybrid).
- Ensure scribes are recording student responses in the online test or paper test materials exactly as provided. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information about the scribe accommodation.
- Ensure staff entering student responses from MCA paper test books enter student responses online exactly as written and before the end of the applicable testing window.
- Ensure staff entering MTAS scores or Alt MCA student responses online enter data exactly as recorded, during test administration and/or before the end of the testing window.

Unethical Behavior and Practice for Statewide Assessments

Educators and any staff involved in any aspect of test administration must **not** engage in any of the following behaviors or practices. If MDE is made aware of educators or staff engaging in unethical behavior or practices, MDE may provide information to the Office of the Inspector General and 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

The following list highlights some of the actions that would constitute unethical preparation or administration:

- Limiting curricula and instruction based on the test specifications rather than developing instructional objectives based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards or the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.
    - While test specifications for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA provide information on the way the academic standards will be assessed and in what proportions, they should not be used as the basis for curriculum and instruction. Instead, test specifications are guides intended to provide test developers with information about how each test will be constructed. The test specifications outline the essential features of the test design to provide consistency and transparency across test forms for the life of each assessment.
    - Some concepts in the Minnesota K-12 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 K-12 Academic Standards.
- Limiting instruction on reading, math, or science terminology based on the translated and/or glossed word lists for the MCA. These lists are provided as universal supports that students may use during testing, as needed, and are not intended to be used as the basis for instruction. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information about using these word lists.
- Encouraging IEP teams to make assessment decisions based on anything other than student needs. This includes assessing a student with an alternate assessment even though the student does not meet the participation guidelines or eligibility requirements.
- Excluding students from the assessments by actively encouraging parents/guardians or students to refuse testing. This includes communication that directly discourages participation as well as activities that may indirectly discourage participation (for example, offering activities or instruction that students do not want to miss during planned test administration times).
- Restricting or denying access to allowed universal supports and/or accommodations that a student uses during instruction and/or that are indicated in their IEP or 504 plan.
- Failing to provide proper training to all individuals who have any involvement in testing.
- Allowing any test materials to be left unsecured at any time, including but not limited to:
    - Leaving secure test materials in an unlocked location.
    - Failing to account for, return, or dispose of secure test materials as instructed.
    - Removing secure test materials from school grounds, unless permitted for specific circumstances (such as administering a test to a homebound student or returning materials to the district office).

Unethical Preparation and Administration (continued)

- Copying, reproducing, retaining, or using any portion of any secure test materials in any manner inconsistent with test security policies and procedures, including but not limited to:
  - Capturing and/or sharing in any manner any secure test content before, during, or after test administration.
  - Reproducing or distributing any portions of reading passages, test items, science phenomena, writing prompts, or student responses from an actual assessment, either verbatim or by paraphrasing, for use in instructional planning, classroom assessments, or for any other purpose.
  - Making a copy of a test, giving students access to test content prior to testing, making answer keys, or preparing a study guide based on the items in a particular test.
  - Knowingly allowing a student to violate test security, including by retaining secure test materials, making a copy of or capturing secure test content, sharing answers with other students, or sharing test content in any manner.
  - Allowing a parent/guardian, community member, member of the media, or any other person who is not authorized by their role to view secure test materials and/or receive a copy of any secure test content.
- Deviating from the prescribed administration procedures specified in this manual as well as other applicable resources and guides in order to assist student performance.
- Leaving prohibited materials on testing room walls or student desks. Refer to *Materials Not Allowed During Testing* in Chapter 7.
- Assigning testing personnel to a room where a family member or relative is being tested. Refer to *Selecting Test Administrators* in Chapter 7.
- Allowing students to use materials or resources that are not allowed during test administration, as noted in this manual and/or in the applicable test administration resources.
- Failing to prevent students from accessing prohibited devices at any time during test administration unless explicitly allowed as an accommodation or another approved exception.
- Viewing or reading test items for any reason except as allowed for an accommodation or universal support, when entering student responses online, or when required for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS/Alt MCA.
- Reading aloud the passages, questions, and/or answer options of a reading assessment for any student, with the exception of students taking the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and Alt MCA, or as an approved read-aloud accommodation for eligible students taking the Reading MCA.
- Offering 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 *Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues* in Chapter 8.

Unethical Preparation and Administration (continued)

- Logging in to a student's online test for any reason, including but not limited to viewing test content, preparing for test administration, verifying technology, or creating a "fake" student for any reason. The only exception is if the district decides that staff will log students in initially (such as for younger students) as described in *General Test Administration Considerations* in Chapter 8.
- Reviewing or changing student responses during test administration or when entering student responses, including but not limited to:
  - Suggesting that a student reconsider an answer already given.
  - Coaching students during testing or influencing, altering, or interfering with student responses in any way, including telling/showing students the correct responses or allowing them to discuss answers among themselves.
  - Scoring student responses in MCA paper test books before entering student responses online.
  - 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.
  - Changing student responses in an online assessment or intentionally changing student responses from MCA paper test books or scores/responses for MTAS/Alt MCA when entering them online.
- Failing or refusing to cooperate with MDE at any point during test administration or MDE audits, monitoring, or investigations.
- Engaging in any of the following as a WIDA ACCESS or MCA Test Administrator:
  - Failing to provide proper directions to students, as specified in the applicable directions.
  - Leaving the room unattended or under the supervision of untrained staff at any time.
  - 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.
  - Engaging in behavior that is potentially distracting to test-takers.
  - Failing to actively monitor students, including:
    - Remaining in one place for more than a few minutes if unable to observe all students.
    - Engaging in any other tasks unrelated to active monitoring, such as grading papers, checking email, performing other work, or reading material unrelated to administering the test.
    - Using cell phones or other prohibited devices for purposes other than alerting others if assistance is needed.
    - Allowing students to access a cell phone or other prohibited device.
  - For grades 1-3 WIDA ACCESS administrations, copying, duplicating, or retaining any portion of the secure *Test Administrator Scripts*; these *Test Administrator Scripts* contain secure materials for use only by the Test Administrator. Note: Grades 4-12 scripts are not secure.

Unethical Preparation and Administration (continued)

- Engaging in any of the following activities during a WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS administration:
  - Changing the content of a task.
  - Administering the test in a language other than English.
  - For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, repeating Listening or Speaking tasks more than once.
  - Leading a student to the correct answer (such as by using voice inflection unless underlined in the script for emphasis, strategically placing cards, or providing explanations or performance-based incentives).
  - Providing feedback to a student that a response is correct or incorrect.
  - Using instructional supports or naming answer options when those actions are prohibited in the script.
  - 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.
  - Copying, duplicating, or retaining any portion of the *Test Administrator Scripts,* as they contain secure materials for use only by the Test Administrator.
- Engaging in any of the following activities during an MTAS/Alt MCA administration:
  - Changing the content of a task or item.
  - Starting an MTAS task with the score 2 script.
  - Re-administering an MTAS task for a score of 3 after presenting a score 2 script.
  - Leading a student to the correct answer (such as by using voice inflection, strategically placing Response Option Cards, or providing explanations or performance-based incentives).
  - Providing feedback to a student that a response is correct or incorrect.
  - Using objects/manipulatives when those actions are prohibited in the script.
  - 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.
  - Intentionally skipping tasks, items, or portions of the test. All tasks and items must be administered and are designed to be administered in order.
  - Copying, duplicating, or retaining any portion of the Task Administration Manual. While student-facing materials for MTAS/Alt MCA can be adapted for the student as needed, the Task Administration Manual contains secure materials for use only by the Test Administrator.
- Participating in, directing, aiding, counseling, assisting, encouraging, or failing to report any of the acts prohibited in this section.

Part III: Practices in the Use and Interpretation of Statewide Assessment 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 statewide assessment results.

Ethical Behavior and Practice

The following list highlights some of the actions that would constitute ethical behavior and practice in the use and interpretation of statewide assessment results:

- Using summary statewide assessment data as one of multiple data points to:
  - Monitor progress toward English language proficiency, as described by the WIDA ELD Standards.
  - Evaluate student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.
- Using the results of statewide assessments as only one part of a body of evidence when making educational decisions about individuals.
  - Minnesota Statutes allow schools and districts to use student performance on a standards-based accountability assessment as one of multiple criteria to determine grade promotion or retention (refer to Appendix E).
  - In addition, schools or districts may use a high school student's performance on a standards-based accountability 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. Note that the statutes specifically provide 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.
  - However, as final assessment results for standards-based accountability assessments are not available before final grades would be determined, early results can be shared for instructional purposes but must be indicated as early results (which are embargoed). In addition, if placing early high school MCA scores on the transcript for placement purposes when applying to a Minnesota state college or university, ensure they are noted as early results; refer to Chapter 11 for more information on using embargoed early assessment results and using results for placement purposes.
  - Note: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.305, subdivision 2 is specific to standards-based accountability assessments. For WIDA assessments, individual student scores are used to inform EL reclassification and exiting decisions and the amount and scope of EL services offered.
- Using statewide assessment results as one piece of evidence in a system of assessments. Use the results in context with other district and school information to identify strengths and gaps in the curriculum and to improve future instruction.
- Providing teachers and counselors with information and resources they need to accurately interpret the results of statewide assessments and using them within an array of information and data about student learning.

- Communicating the assessment results to appropriate audiences in an honest, clear, and understandable manner, which includes providing an accurate interpretation of results and explanations for common misinterpretations.
- Adhering to expectations of embargoed data use; refer to Chapter 11 for more information on using embargoed assessment results.

Unethical Behavior and Practice

The following list highlights some of the actions that would constitute unethical behavior and practice in the use and interpretation of statewide assessment results:

- Assigning students to assessments in order to maximize success on accountability measures rather than optimizing appropriateness of the assessment for the student.
- Basing decisions such as retention, promotion, or placement into certain programs (such as enrichment or remediation) solely on the results of statewide assessments. (Note: Results from the WIDA assessments are designed to be used for EL reclassification and exiting decisions.)
- Knowingly using results of statewide assessments to provide a misleading picture of the district or school's educational programs, instruction, or student population.
- Failing to report misuses of assessment results to those responsible for the assessment process in the school, district, or state.
- Deliberately hiding information or providing false/misleading interpretations that imply an erroneously positive (or negative) and inaccurate picture of any individual, school, or district.
- Revealing the test scores of one student to another student or to others not directly involved with the education of that student.
- Sharing summary data in a manner that violates district data privacy protection rules for student data (for example, sharing results involving a small number of students make it possible to identify individual students based on demographic information and other factors).
- Sharing embargoed early or final assessment results in a public forum or with individuals who should not have access to the information prior to public release.
- Using statewide assessment results in a manner that conflicts with the purposes of the assessment.

Incentives

Per Minnesota Statutes (refer to Appendix E), districts may use a student's performance on a statewide assessment as one of multiple criteria to determine grade promotion or retention; they may also use a high school student's performance as a percentage of the student's final grade in a course or place a student's assessment score on the student's transcript. Keep in mind that while incorporating performance into a final course grade may incentivize some students to participate in statewide assessments, it may also discourage others.

Although it is permissible for the district to offer testing incentives, it is preferable to have incentives tied to student participation as opposed to student performance because it is important to encourage all students to

participate, regardless of performance, as results are used for a variety of purposes. For example, statewide assessment results can be used by educators to help evaluate how the applicable standards have been incorporated into their curriculum and instruction. Assessment results can also be used to help inform state and local decisions regarding where resources are most needed.

If districts choose to provide incentives only to a select group of students (such as only to high performers), the district must be able to explain the rationale to other students and parents/guardians, and districts must distribute such incentives in such a way that student privacy is protected. MDE will refer any calls received regarding the district's policy to the DAC.

Note: MDE does not have a policy against monetary incentives for student participation or performance in statewide assessments, but MDE discourages the practice. Statewide assessments are 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.

Part IV: Test Security

Statewide assessments require a high level of test security. MDE's policies and procedures around test security are applicable to all statewide assessments and are based on state statutes, federal rules and statutes, and best practices. Based on the U.S. Department of Education's (USDoE) emphasis on test security in its Peer Review requirements and on recommendations by Minnesota's National Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), MDE continually evaluates and implements policies and procedures to maintain a valid and reliable assessment system. The following sections describe policies and procedures districts are required to implement to maintain test security, prevent security violations, and report and document security violations when they occur.

Why Is Test Security Important?

Test security refers to policies and procedures designed to protect test content and ensure the integrity of test scores. Developing and maintaining a secure system of statewide test administration serves to:

- Give educators confidence that the information they receive on student learning is valid and reliable for their use in investigating and evaluating decisions around standards implementation.
- Protect the significant financial investment necessary to develop and maintain a statewide assessment system.

In everyday terms, test security helps ensure assessment results are accurate and reliable and answers the question, "Can I trust that this assessment result allows me to draw accurate conclusions based on it?"

Administering assessments in a secure and standardized manner is critical because it helps ensure that all students who participate in statewide assessments can demonstrate what they know. It also ensures that the results can be interpreted and used in appropriate ways. If test security is not maintained, the integrity of results may be compromised, which can lead to reporting results that do not accurately represent student performance. One of the most significant consequences related to this is school and district staff making decisions about curriculum and instruction based on potentially misleading results. Refer to Chapter 11 for information on appropriate uses of statewide assessments results.

Defining Security Violations Reported to MDE

A **security violation** is any action that jeopardizes the security of test content, gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students, and/or jeopardizes the integrity of test results. Other violations reported to MDE include actions that violate student data privacy (during test administration and/or reporting of results) or jeopardize the release of assessment results (for example, not abiding by the embargo and releasing test results before they are made public).

A violation may be committed by various individuals and/or precipitated by a number of events. The unethical behavior and practice sections of this chapter provide some examples of security violations.

MDE's *Test Security Procedures* located in Appendix B describe MDE's responsibilities and the applicable steps taken to investigate and resolve all alleged security violations on a statewide basis. Refer to the *Assessment Security Records* section later in this chapter for information on reporting security violations to MDE.

Required District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments

Each school district must have written District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments that communicate 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 are provided. This procedure is kept on file at the district, and it is not required to be posted on the district website. Information from the procedure is then provided to district and school staff annually; refer to *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Training* in Chapter 7 for additional information. The prior year procedure should be kept on file until replaced by the current year's version. MDE recommends that DACs save and/or share the procedure so it is accessible to others (such as if a DAC leaves a district and a new DAC is hired).

The *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Requirements* in Appendix B contains a list of the specific topics that at a minimum must be addressed, including a comprehensive list of the policies and procedures that each district must determine. MDE strongly recommends using the sample *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Template* available on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub to ensure all requirements are addressed completely; however, a district can create their own procedure. Districts that have used the template tend to receive fewer recommended changes or required actions during MDE's review of their district policies and procedures. **New!** A new requirement for 2026-27 has been added to the topics listed in Appendix B and the template: The district's process for ensuring staff are

aware of the available universal supports and accommodations when making decisions about appropriate supports for students.

- All statewide assessments administered in the district must be reflected in the procedures. If procedures vary by assessment, this must be noted when applicable.
- If policies vary by school, districts must specify the policies by school 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 (such as 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 policies and procedures from a sampling of districts. Refer to *Part V: Monitoring and Audits* later in this chapter.

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.

- Per Minnesota Statutes, all test content is nonpublic data and is therefore considered secure. The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) identifies test content under Minnesota Statutes and also discusses criminal, civil, and administrative penalties for data violations (refer to Appendix E).
- Secure test content includes, but is not limited to, reading passages and titles; science phenomena and titles; all components of test items in online assessments, test books, scripts, and any other paper test materials; and student responses.
- Student test tickets used to sign in to online tests or enter data from a paper test are secure because they provide access to tests and contain private student data. Session rosters printed from test vendor systems must be kept secure as well, as they contain information on accessing online tests and student information.
- Student scratch paper (including materials that may be used as scratch paper, such as formula sheets or translated word lists) is secure once used because students may write test items on it.

Maintaining Security of Test Content and Test Materials

Districts must 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, and materials should not be stored in a locked room or cabinet that many staff can access. 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 and those who inventory materials, and they should document their completion of the *Test Security Checklist*.
- For most test administrations, Test Administrators and other school staff may not have access to secure test materials until the day tests are administered to students. The instances in which secure test materials are allowed to be accessed prior to the day of testing are described in detail below. In all cases, test materials must be kept secure as staff prepare for testing, and staff must ensure that students do not have access to the test materials prior to or after test administration.
    - Test Administrators administering a braille test should be provided with access to the test materials up to five business days prior to the scheduled administration.
    - A sign language interpreter administering a script accommodation for WIDA ACCESS or MCA should be provided with access to the script up to five business days prior to the scheduled administration. Similarly, a sign language interpreter for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS/Alt MCA (if not the Test Administrator) should be provided with access to the test materials up to five business days prior to the scheduled administration.
    - For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators need to have access to test materials beforehand (including the *Test Administrator Script*) to prepare for administration. For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators also need to prepare for any individual student needs (enlarging material, finding instructional supports, etc.). Similarly, Test Administrators for WIDA ACCESS Online grades 1-3 and WIDA ACCESS Paper grades 1-12 need to review the secure *Test Administrator Scripts* to be prepared for administration. There is no designated timeframe for when Test Administrators may have access to test materials prior to testing, but it is recommended to provide access at least five business days prior to the scheduled administration.
    - For MTAS/Alt MCA, Test Administrators need to have access to all test materials beforehand to prepare for test administration and any individual student needs (enlarging material, finding objects/manipulatives, etc.). There is no designated timeframe for when Test Administrators should have access to test materials prior to testing, but it is recommended to provide access at least five business days prior to the scheduled administration.

    Because individual administrations of WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS/Alt MCA require preparation, test materials must be available to Test Administrators ahead of administration. Test Administrators must keep these materials secure when not actively preparing for testing.

    - Consideration should be given to the amount of time staff may need to appropriately prepare for test administration; whenever possible, allow consecutive hours of work time. For example, it is best practice to provide interpreters with three consecutive hours of preparation time rather than three one-hour preparation sessions over multiple days.
- During test administration, Test Administrators are not allowed to read, review, discuss, or copy any test content for use in instructional planning, classroom assessments, or for any other purpose.

- Students are not allowed to disclose or discuss test items or answer options after test administration.
    - Each district determines its policy on whether staff can discuss the test administration experience with students. If this is discussed, staff cannot ask students about specific items.
    - If students ask about a specific item following testing, remind them that items are secure and not to be discussed. Refer to *What Help Test Administrators Can Give Students* in Chapter 8 for guidance.
- No one may reproduce or copy any part of any test or script, whether written or in audio, paper, or electronic format, without authorization from MDE. Reproduction of secure test materials is a security violation and a violation of state statute and federal copyright protections. Note: Materials for alternate assessments are exceptions as they may be reproduced or copied as needed to meet student needs.
- No one may alter student responses during or after test administration.

All secure test materials must be returned to the test vendor by the dates specified in the *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub or securely disposed of following testing (no more than two business days after the close of the testing window) as instructed in Chapter 10 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. Student resources are available on test vendor websites, and the media can photograph or televise those resources when communicating with the public about statewide testing.

Security Checklists

Secure test materials contain security numbers that are used for tracking by districts and the test vendors. To maintain security of test materials, districts track them from their receipt until their return using the security checklists provided. If there are any discrepancies between the security checklists and secure test materials received, notify the test vendor 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 upon receipt and record the name of the Test Administrator who received and returned the 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 numbers for their assigned paper test materials. It can also be used to document secure materials that may be used for multiple students (such as a science script). The school makes a copy for its files and sends the original to the DAC once testing is completed. For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, districts may also create their own checklist; refer to *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 the checklists to test vendors or MDE unless requested.

Refer to *Missing Secure Test Materials* in Chapter 10 for information on actions required if secure test materials are missing at any point while in possession of the district or school (whether identified at the district/school or by the test vendor after materials are returned).

Test Security Information for Students

MDE expects that all students will follow all state and district policies and procedures 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 expectation 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 (for example, through student handbooks, district and school websites, or newsletters).

In addition, students view the following code of conduct information at the beginning of the MCA online test and in the MCA 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.

Although agreeing to a code of conduct may not deter the small number of students who are determined to cheat, it is an effective method for communicating the expectations for behavior and conduct that support academic integrity.

Test Security Documentation for Statewide Assessments

This section describes the documentation that districts are required to complete and retain for test security purposes. The duration for documentation retention is two years, which allows districts to respond to investigations of possible test security violations for the previous and current school year (for example, a security violation discovered later needs to be reported for a prior school year, or 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.

MDE has developed systems where district staff or members of the public can report a potential security violation, and each system has an intended purpose and user.

- A ***Test Administration Report*** (TAR) should be completed by DACs to document test misadministrations, invalidations, and special circumstances.
- An **Assessment Security Record** (ASR) should be completed by DACs to report a test security violation or data violation to MDE.
- The **Test Security Tip Line** is designed for educators, families, students, and community members to report suspected incidents of cheating or other improper or unethical behavior on statewide assessments to MDE.

MDE annually updates and posts irregularities documents to outline common testing irregularities, misadministrations, or procedural errors that may require action by the district, MDE, and/or testing vendors. The purpose of irregularities documents is to support DACs with a starting point for determining the appropriate documentation system for a testing irregularity or misadministration.

- The *WIDA Assessment Irregularities* is available on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website.
- The *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* is available on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

If the irregularities documents do not address the particular situation and more assistance is needed, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us and MDE will assist DACs in determining the appropriate course of action.

Test Administration Report

Not all misadministrations, special circumstances (such as documentation of some universal supports and accommodations), and reasons for invalidations need to be reported to MDE. MDE only receives reports of such cases when test security is violated, which is described in more detail later in this chapter. *Test Administration Reports* (TARs) are used to record this type of information but are not submitted to MDE. Districts may create their own version of this form to more efficiently collect information from staff or schools (such as collecting information electronically), but they must ensure that student data privacy is maintained. A sample TAR is located in Appendix A.

Documentation on this report may help answer questions from district staff, parents/guardians, and the media about what occurred during testing when student results become available. MDE encourages DACs to annually review information documented on TARs to determine what unusual or special situations or misadministrations have occurred during statewide testing and develop action plans to minimize cases in future administrations. The information from the TARs can be used as a historical log, providing important content for district test administration trainings. Since special testing situations are documented on TARs, they can be used prior to testing to remind DACs of specific test needs, such as student universal supports or accommodations.

Figure 4: Why the TAR is Helpful

Why the TAR is Helpful

- Documents non-standard situations that happen during testing
- Helps answer questions that may come up when results are available
- Provides some insight into areas where more training may be needed

The following are examples of situations that should be documented on the TAR. Some are misadministrations and some are special circumstances:

- A student is administered the incorrect assessment or universal support/accommodation.
- There is a misadministration during testing, which refers to any actions that vary from the policies and procedures specified in guides and resources (for example, Student A signs in to Student B's test).

- A student's test is invalidated for any reason (for example, a student's action that affected the validity of the student's test, such as using a prohibited device).
- A student needs a universal support or accommodation that requires specific documentation on the TAR. This includes, but is not limited to, word-to-word translations using dictionaries or online programs and approved AT devices. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional details on the universal supports and accommodations that require documentation on the TAR.
- The district uses a translator to translate the test directions in the grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS *Test Administrator Scripts* or MCA *Testing Directions* to an English learner.
- The district uses a sign language interpreter to sign the test directions in the *Test Administrator Scripts* or *Testing Directions* or to sign the script to a student.

Districts may also choose to document any students who refuse to test 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, the DAC should have access to the information collected at the school. **Districts do not submit TARs to MDE or test vendors** unless requested for audits or monitoring conducted by MDE.

Assessment Security Records

Assessment Security Records (ASRs) in Test WES are used by DACs to report security violations and data violations to MDE. Security violations involve actions that jeopardize the integrity of test results and/or give an unfair advantage to a student or group of students. Data violations include data privacy issues related to testing (including leaving student results unsecured) or not abiding by the embargo for early or final assessment results.

ASRs allow for communication, as well as recordkeeping, between the district and MDE for test security, monitoring, and audits. More information about MDE's use of ASRs to communicate monitoring and audit findings is detailed later in this chapter.

If there is a possible test security violation, the DAC must take the following steps:

1. **Immediately** collect and document information about the potential test security violation. Collecting this information must include a way for staff to confidentially report information in case they feel the need to maintain privacy.
    - MDE recommends each DAC check with the appropriate district personnel to find out the 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. Additionally, there may be situations where the DAC may need other resources to assist with completing the investigation. Guidance from MDE is included in the *Test Security Investigation Guide* in Appendix B.
2. **No later than one business day** after the security violation occurs, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us with the information collected in Step 1. This information helps MDE provide guidance on any specific

next steps related to the situation. It can also help to escalate support or follow up if required for the situation.

3. If instructed to do so by MDE, submit an Assessment Security Record (ASR) in Test WES **within two business days of the security violation**.
    - The DAC is responsible for coordinating the collection of required documentation and uploading it in Test WES. Note that each ASR must include all documentation specific to the incident, even if similar information was provided as part of a different ASR for the district.
    - If investigation into the incident is still taking place, additional documentation can be submitted at a later time.
    - Refer to the *Submitting Assessment Security Records in Test WES* document on the Test WES page of MDE's website for detailed information on the documentation required and instructions for submitting ASRs.
4. Review the email update from the Test Security and Data Integrity (TSDI) team of the Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division. After the TSDI team reviews an ASR submission, they will communicate if any additional investigation or documentation is required. This communication typically occurs in **3-4 business days**.

If MDE determines the incident merits a formal investigation, then a formal investigation will be conducted to gather more information about the alleged test security violation. Refer to *MDE Test Security Procedures* in Appendix B for more information.

In all cases, communication will be sent to the DAC when the ASR is closed. It is the district's responsibility to communicate any security findings to others in their organization.

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 ASRs are available in Test WES, districts can determine whether to keep any paper versions of documentation.

Note: While all security violations must be reported to MDE, some violations may be 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, an ASR is still required in these instances to document and investigate these situations.

Having a security violation is not necessarily a reflection on the quality of your training or procedures. Security violations can happen in any district!

Test Security Tip Line

Educators, families, students, and community members can report suspected incidents of cheating or other improper or unethical behavior on statewide assessments to MDE; these reports can be made by using the online Test Security Tip Line, sending an email, or calling MDE. Depending upon the nature of each report and the amount of information provided, MDE will follow up first with the submitter to gather additional information; it is helpful for the submitter to include their name and contact information for this purpose only. The submitter may still choose to remain anonymous, even if contact information is provided, and the submitter's identity will remain non-public at all times.

Links to the Test Security Tip Line are available on the following Statewide Testing pages of MDE's website:

- The Districts, Schools and Educators Statewide Testing page of MDE's website
- The Students and Families Student Participation page of MDE's website

To submit a report via email, email mde.testing@state.mn.us.

- 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 doing so, however, individuals are encouraged to first raise their concerns about test security with their DAC or the district's administration or legal counsel.

Districts must inform staff about the 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 to staff (for example, staff handbook, district training, staff websites, or newsletters). Districts may refer other individuals to the tip line as needed; however, districts are not required to provide specific notification of it to students and families.

Note: Minnesota Statutes require MDE to provide a way for the public to review and report online testing disruptions that have occurred, such as a technical issue that impacted testing (refer to Appendix E). The Testing Disruptions Tracking System is available on the Statewide Testing page of MDE's website (under the Reporting Testing Administration Concerns expandable header) along with the tip line. Districts and schools should **not** use the system to seek assistance for resolving issues; instead, districts and schools must contact the appropriate test vendor directly when needing time-sensitive assistance with technical issues impacting testing.

Part V: Monitoring and Audits

Monitoring and audits are an important part of verifying administration practices in districts and schools, and both districts and MDE have responsibilities to monitor test administrations. These checks provide a feedback loop for improving MDE's trainings and resources as well as districts' administration of statewide assessments. The ultimate goal of MDE monitoring and audits is to ensure the validity of student results. 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 well as any other data in possession of the school as part of monitoring or audits.

In addition, MDE conducts a number of data validation processes in which MDE contacts districts to provide more documentation related to specific requirements or procedures such as low participation in statewide assessments and the use of specific test codes or accommodations. Depending on the process, MDE may send an email directly to the DAC or create an ASR to document follow-up information.

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 and other staff. This monitoring is in addition to the active monitoring being done by the Test Administrator in the testing room, and it is meant to simulate the site visits conducted by MDE at a district and school level. This requirement applies to both WIDA ACCESS and MCA administrations. Similar observations can be conducted for other aspects of test administration such as inventorying and organizing secure test materials, distributing test materials on the day of testing, and preparing technology for online testing. Districts can use the *Minnesota Statewide Assessments Monitoring List* in Appendix C or develop their own list as long as it includes all of the components provided in Appendix C. It is up to the district to determine how many schools and testing rooms to observe.

Districts must conduct monitoring visits within their district for both WIDA ACCESS and MCA administrations.

Monitoring of individual administrations is not required, but districts should consider including them in applicable portions of their monitoring.

District Inter-Rater Reliability Monitoring for WIDA ACCESS Paper Speaking Tests

Students who take the WIDA ACCESS Paper (grades 1-12) Speaking test have their spoken responses scored by the Test Administrator. As a result, districts must develop a process for documenting 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 any given 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 paper Speaking test (refer to Chapter 7 for details). 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. Note: Because this recording is 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.

More guidance on inter-rater reliability, including a rater reliability calculator, is available on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website (under Member/State Pages 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 Policies and Procedures

Annually, MDE will request and review copies of district policies and procedures from a sampling of districts, as detailed in *Required District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments* earlier in this chapter. The rubric 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 through the ASR system to the DAC about the district's policies and procedures, including 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 a WIDA ACCESS or MCA monitoring visit. The request for training documentation will be included in the follow-up letter sent to the DAC after the monitoring visit.

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. The role listed needs to identify each staff member's test administration role (for example, Test Administrator, technology staff, access to secure materials, assisting in testing room), not their job title (for example, teacher, counselor). Refer to *Training Documentation* in Chapter 7 for detailed information.

After receiving the training documentation, MDE will provide feedback through the ASR system to the DAC about the documentation and training process, including any recommended changes or required actions.

MDE Review of Medical Excuse Documentation

Annually, MDE will request copies of the documentation kept when the Medical Excuse (ME) test code is indicated, including the documentation provided by a licensed medical professional indicating why the student could not test.

This review is conducted on a random sample of schools, and it examines the decision-making process the district used to indicate the ME test code and the supporting documentation. Refer to Chapter 9 for ME test code criteria. In order to confirm that the rationale used for determining whether to use the ME test code was appropriate, information about the process will need to be provided along with all related documentation. The rubric MDE will use to evaluate ME documentation is included in Appendix C.

Note: This documentation, when retained by the school district, is considered an educational record under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (45 C.F.R. 160.103 (2)(i)(ii); 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99) and is classified as private data per federal and state law. As such, MDE may review the documentation to ensure all privacy requirements are met.

After receiving the documentation, MDE will provide feedback through the ASR system to the DAC regarding the ME documentation and process followed within the district.

MDE Site Visits

MDE conducts site visits throughout the year for various purposes. All 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 requirements 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 a WIDA ACCESS or MCA test administration
- Auditing an MTAS/Alt MCA test administration

New! Field audits for WIDA Alternate ACCESS will be piloted in 2026-27 with a small number of schools. More information will be provided if selected.

Schools are expected to allow MDE to conduct site visits. Any school that refuses access to MDE's staff person or does not cooperate with or respond to requests for information will be selected for a required site visit the following year.

While a DAC cannot request that MDE visit a specific school for a monitoring visit or audit, the DAC may choose to do their own district monitoring if there is concern about a school's procedures. If there is a test security concern or they observe a violation during their monitoring, the DAC should contact mde.testing@state.mn.us and submit the violation through the ASR system, if advised by MDE.

MDE Monitoring of Schools for WIDA ACCESS and MCA

MDE representatives visit schools to monitor WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) and MCA test sessions as part of an overall strategy to improve the administration of statewide assessments and to verify that test security requirements are followed. MDE uses the information gathered from these monitoring visits 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 through random selection.

The *Minnesota Statewide Assessments Monitoring List* in Appendix C outlines the areas that MDE monitors will observe or information they will request during site visits for either assessment. There were no additions to the monitoring list this year.

In order for MDE to observe schools on testing days, testing calendars for each grade and subject must be posted on the district's website and must be kept current throughout the school year, per state and federal statutes (refer to Appendix E). MDE may follow up with the DAC to confirm that testing calendars are up to date. Refer to Chapter 6 for additional information about posting testing calendars.

During monitoring visits, a monitor will arrive unannounced at the school office and request to meet with and interview the District or School Assessment Coordinator. The monitor will stay on site until at least one test session is observed and the interview has been completed; depending on the test administration schedule, they may stay on site for a full day of testing. The monitor is there only to observe, not to participate in administration of the test or to clarify MDE policies or procedures.

Note: Since the monitor may not be meeting with the DAC, 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. For WIDA ACCESS site visits, if the administration is coordinated by EL staff, DACs should ensure that EL staff members are prepared to answer the interview questions provided in Appendix C and/or coordinate with other school staff.

Ensure staff at the school are prepared to speak to the questions asked during a monitoring visit.

Following the monitoring visit, the DAC will receive communication from MDE through the ASR system. This communication will include feedback about the visit and any potential concerns raised by the monitoring visit. If there are concerns, the DAC will need to submit appropriate documentation as requested by MDE. Communication may also include recommendations from MDE and requests for training documentation, as described under *MDE Review of Training Documentation* earlier in this chapter.

MTAS/Alt MCA Field Audits

Each year, MDE employs Field Auditors to observe MTAS/Alt MCA administrations in selected schools. The primary purpose of MTAS/Alt MCA field audits is to gather evidence to evaluate the validity and reliability of the assessment. Since the Test Administrator scores MTAS tasks and may record student responses on the Alt MCA (depending on the administration mode), it is critical that the Test Administrator is properly trained in MTAS/Alt MCA administration and scoring and is able to apply the training consistently when assessing each student. These trainings also aim to promote consistency in the administration of the MTAS/Alt MCA across the state.

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

- A previous audit found non-adjacent score discrepancies or differences in recording student responses for one or more Test Administrators. Note: A non-adjacent score occurs when the Test Administrator assigns a score to an MTAS task that differs by more than one point from the score assigned by the Field

Auditor. For MTAS field test and Alt MCA items, this means the Test Administrator records a student response that is different than the response recorded by the Field Auditor.

- A previous audit found one or more MTAS/Alt MCA misadministrations.
- A previous audit found that a 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.
- Field test items were not administered.
- Other concerns 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.testing@state.mn.us 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 for that year.

Ahead of the testing window, MDE notifies the DAC, Superintendent, and Special Education Director of the school(s) selected for an MTAS/Alt MCA audit within the district.

- The DAC must provide the schedule of MTAS/Alt MCA administrations at the selected schools, following the instructions and timeline in the communication from MDE. If the DAC does not provide the schedule 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 required field audit.
- If their sites are selected, DACs will be notified by Field Auditors of the dates and times of their visits. If not selected for a visit, DACs will be notified by Field Auditors of this decision.

The MTAS/Alt MCA Field Audit Checklists and Test Administrator Questionnaires in Appendix C outline the areas the Field Auditors will observe and the questions they will ask Test Administrators. Following the audit, the DAC will receive communication from MDE that includes any concerns raised by the Field Auditor and indicates if any scoring changes were required; it may also include recommendations from MDE. This communication 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 6 — Overview of Test Administration

Overview

This chapter includes general information related to test administration, such as testing windows, district testing calendars, and student demographic data collection. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

Important Dates

The *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub has a chronological list of responsibilities, arranged by assessment and date, which District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) must be aware of and follow during the current school year.

Which Assessment Students Will Take

Before test administration, districts must determine which assessments each student will take, and if applicable, identify any needed universal supports and/or accommodations. Specific requirements must be followed when determining which students should be assessed with an alternate assessment (WIDA Alternate ACCESS or MTAS/Alt MCA); refer to Chapter 2 for details. Information about universal supports and accommodations is outlined in Chapter 4.

The decision regarding which assessment to administer must be made before a student starts any assessment for the year, but the assessment may be adjusted in the following circumstances:

- If the incorrect assessment is administered due to a misadministration (for example, the student was supposed to take the MTAS/Alt MCA, but the Test Administrator administered the MCA), the correct assessment should be administered to the student. If the misadministration is discovered after the testing window has closed, contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us for next steps.
- Students must take the assessment indicated in their IEP or 504 plan (if applicable). If a student begins testing and the district thinks an incorrect decision was made as to which assessment and/or which mode (online or paper) to administer, the specific assessment determines what actions can be taken:
    - For WIDA assessments, the student must finish the test they started. The district may re-evaluate the assessment decision for future administrations.
    - For MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA, the student cannot take another test for that specific subject, and the subject that was started may either be finished or scored as is. The decision regarding which assessment to administer for any remaining subjects can be reconsidered only in conjunction with the IEP or 504 plan team.
- If a student changes school districts and the new district determines a different assessment is appropriate, the new district should administer the assessment documented in the student's current IEP or 504 plan.

Note: If a student has two test records for the same subject and is receiving special education services, the alternate assessment becomes the test used for final reporting purposes (for example, MTAS/Alt MCA is used instead of MCA).

Establishment of Testing Windows

Minnesota Statutes charge MDE with establishing a uniform testing calendar each year (refer to Appendix E). Testing calendars are posted on the Districts, Schools and Educators Statewide Testing page of MDE's website (under the Testing Calendars expandable heading). Several factors are evaluated when establishing the testing windows, including test security and the impact on scoring, reporting, and accountability calculation timelines. MDE keeps the 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 also balancing test security and the timelines for reporting data. Each district then sets their own testing calendar within the state-designated testing windows. Decisions about the testing calendar should be made based on the needs of the school and student population, including any cultural or religious factors (such as Ramadan) that could impact testing.

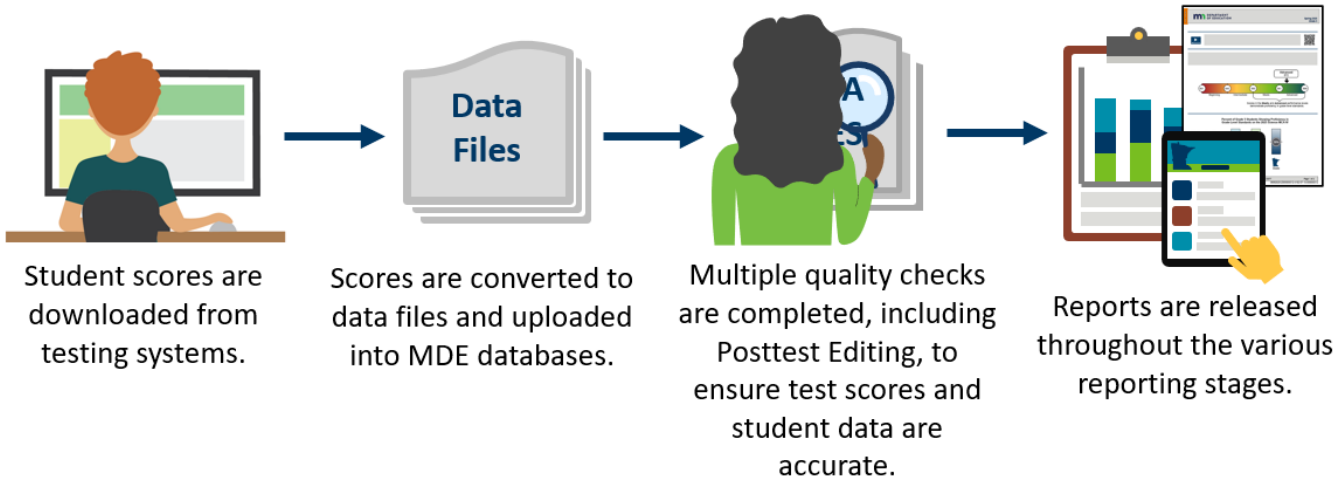
MDE determines the testing windows based on the following:

- The testing window for the WIDA assessments is scheduled before the testing windows for the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA to ensure districts have sufficient time and resources to administer all statewide assessments.
    - With this schedule, the testing windows overlap for only a few weeks, minimizing the impact on students, staff, and the capacity to administer online tests.
    - For consistency from year to year, the testing windows follow the same relative dates.
- MDE provides a Posttest Editing window after all testing windows have closed in order for districts to ensure the most accurate information is reflected on final reports. This window allows districts the opportunity to verify that all students who were expected to participate in a test have a test record connected to their enrollment record. The testing windows need to end early enough in May so that the data is available for Posttest Editing while district staff—especially staff contracted to work only during the school year—are available to make the edits.
- For the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, the testing windows vary by subject and test for the following reasons:
    - The Science MCA testing window is one week longer than the Reading and Math MCA testing window. The Science MCA is taken in only three grades, and less time is needed by MDE and the test vendor to prepare the science data for scoring and quality control procedures before Posttest Editing. Additional time is needed to prepare the reading and math data for Posttest Editing.
    - The testing window for Reading and Science Alt MCAs and Math MTAS ends at the same time as the Reading and Math MCAs. Ending these assessments at the same time allows the necessary data to be available for Posttest Editing.
- Final assessment data is available to districts in the summer. This allows districts time to review their data for use in curriculum and instructional decision-making for the following year. Note: An exception to this timeline typically occurs after the first operational administration of a new series of assessments, when standard setting must occur. "Standard setting" is the process of setting performance levels after

the initial administration of a new assessment; refer to *Building a Test* in Appendix B for additional information. For example, standard setting took place in summer 2026 following the first administration of the Reading MCA-IV and Reading Alt MCA.

- Minnesota Statutes require final accountability results to be released by Sept. 1 annually, and all reporting steps for assessment and accountability must be completed by then (refer to Appendix E). Note: In standard setting years, accountability results must be released by Oct. 1 (for standards-based accountability assessments) and Nov. 1 (for English language proficiency accountability assessments).

Figure 5: Steps Before MDE Provides Final Results



Extension of Testing Windows

MDE expects districts to schedule test administrations early enough in the testing window to ensure all students have the opportunity to complete testing and for data entry to be completed in time (for applicable assessments). Administering assessments earlier in the testing window allows for the final week(s) to be used for makeup testing and data entry, as needed. 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 test administration. The length of the testing window and the flexibility each district has in determining their testing calendar mitigates the need for MDE to extend the testing window; requests to do so for individual students, schools, or districts will not be granted. This also includes requests from schools or districts that experience adverse weather conditions or technical difficulties at the local level that may interrupt testing.

- Districts that elect to schedule assessments on the last week of the testing window must have a contingency plan (such as an alternative site or scheduling testing after hours to ensure all students have the opportunity to complete testing) should they experience technical issues in a building.
- If the state were to experience a systemic failure of a test due to widespread issues, such as test vendor delivery failure affecting the entire state, MDE may consider extending the testing window at its sole discretion. Such rare extensions could affect the dates for other events that occur after the testing window, such as Posttest Editing and the release of test results.

District Testing Calendar

To increase transparency on assessments, both Minnesota Statutes and ESSA have requirements for a comprehensive district testing calendar (refer to Appendix E). Districts must post testing calendar information (listed below) on the district website and update it in a timely manner when any changes occur; each district decides which staff member(s) are responsible for determining and updating the testing calendar. This information may also be posted on individual school website(s), if the district chooses, in addition to the district website. The testing calendar must be posted by districts at least one week prior to any eligible assessments being administered but no later than Oct. 1.

Districts choose how to provide the information (for example, as separate links or documents) and its format (for example, in a chart or calendar format). While it is acceptable to provide links to the information, rather than including all of the information in one location on the district website, districts need to ensure 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 the locations of testing dates on each school's website can be provided. Examples of what a testing calendar can look like are found in Appendix B.

On the testing calendar, districts must:

- Provide information about all assessments to be administered and their subject/domain, which includes both statewide assessments and any local assessments. Schools and districts determine what constitutes a local districtwide assessment; generally, if most students within a grade are being given the same assessment, it should be included on the testing calendar.
- Provide the purpose for each assessment. 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 7. Districts may develop their own language or adapt this language as needed.

Table 7. Examples of Purposes and Rationales of Statewide Assessments

Assessment	Purpose	Rationale and Source
MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	To measure student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards	Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.302 and ESSA, 20 USC 6301 Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v)
WIDA Assessments	To measure English learners' progress toward English language proficiency based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework	Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 124D.59, subdivision 2(a) and ESSA, 20 USC 6301 Section 1111 (b)(2)(G)
College Entrance Exams (ACT and/or SAT)	To provide Minnesota students with information related to career and college readiness	Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 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 Chapter 7. This *Procedures Manual* is updated each school year and released in the fall; however, it is not available in time to inform decisions for the district's new testing calendar. Districts should use the previous year's *Procedures Manual* and adjust, if needed, once the updated manual is available.
    - While not a requirement, districts may consider including the amount of time spent preparing students for test administration and the overall instructional time spent on testing. This information can help put the actual amount of time spent on testing in perspective for parents/guardians and other community and educational partners.
    - For local district/school assessments, include information about how these assessments fit within the requirements of local testing time limitations (refer to Chapter 2).
- Post the specific dates when most students will be testing for each grade and subject at each school within the district. Note: The actual test administration dates must be posted, not just the dates of the state-designated testing window.
    - For WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12), dates for each domain must be posted even when there is only one, or very few, English learner(s) in the school.
    - For individually administered assessments (WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS/Alt MCA), the specific date range that each assessment will be administered within the state-designated testing window must be indicated.
    - **Info!** By Oct. 1, districts may include their best estimates for test administration if specific dates have not yet been finalized. Specific testing schedules by grade and subject must be updated as changes are identified, but no later than Jan. 1.
- Include the timeline and format for disseminating assessment results.
    - Depending on the district's process for providing final assessment results, this could include a link to the Minnesota Report Card on MDE's website for school and district results, or information on how results are provided through the district's student/family portal.
    - Information about how Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are provided to families must be included.
    - If the district provides early results from a test vendor's system, this process should be included as well.
    - In the fall, the general process for disseminating results may be included even if reporting dates have not yet been provided by MDE. Once provided by MDE, specific reporting dates can be added.
    - Districts may check the previous year's district policies and procedures to see how assessment results have been disseminated in the past.

While testing calendars must be posted to the district website no later than Oct. 1 each year, they should be verified and updated (especially specific testing schedules by grade and subject) by Jan. 1 each year. If a change needs to be made to the testing schedule, updates must be made as soon as possible. MDE reviews testing calendars and will communicate directly with the DAC if MDE determines that the testing calendar is not available or is incomplete.

Figure 6: District Testing Calendar Requirements

Please remember these requirements for posting testing calendars. This is required by state and federal legislation and provides transparent information for families, schools, and MDE.

Testing calendars must be:

- Posted to the district website by Oct. 1 (updated as needed and verified by Jan. 1)
- Accessible to those outside of the district

Testing calendars must include:

- Specific dates for administering each assessment (by school, grade, and subject/domain)
- The amount of time students will spend testing
- How results will be provided

MDE does not require the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to be publicly posted as part of the testing calendar. This is because NAEP is given to a sample of schools, this sample is considered secure data, and schools are not required to publicly announce they were selected to participate. In addition, NAEP has a separate requirement to notify parents/guardians, which provides transparency about the testing that will be taking place.

If a district wishes to include NAEP on the calendar, then MDE highly recommends that only general information be included on the district calendar, and that the specific schools or grades within their district that were actually selected to participate in NAEP not be listed. For example, the statement could be: “NAEP will be administered from Jan. 26 to March 19 at selected sites in grades 4, 8, and/or 12.” For NAEP, districts are not required to post the information required for the other statewide assessments.

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 devices for online testing.

For WIDA ACCESS, the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS) is the website where district and school users sign in to manage test sessions for online testing. Online tests are delivered to students using the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application. Technology Coordinators can find an overview of WIDA ACCESS technology requirements on the Technology page of WIDA’s website. A number of important resources for Technology Coordinators are also available on the WIDA AMS website. On the login page, select the “documents” link to open the Training Materials page. Next, select the button labeled “Show Documents” to access downloadable resources, including the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide*, a *Site Technology Readiness Checklist for Deploying WIDA Online Assessments*, *Tech Bulletins*, supported system requirements, training webinars, and more.

New! For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, ADAM is the new platform (replacing PearsonAccess Next) where district and school users create and manage proctor groups for testing. Online tests are delivered to students using the TestNav application, and all data/student responses for paper tests, including for MTAS and the LCI, are entered in TestNav. Supported system requirements and technology resources are updated annually on the Technology page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Pearson provides training for technology staff annually prior to testing and posts a recorded version in the Learning Management System (LMS).

MDE provides technology reminders, updates, and resources to District Technology Coordinators 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 ensure their schools are ready for online testing prior to the beginning of test administration.

Overview of Student Demographics and Data Collection

Throughout the testing and reporting processes, Minnesota uses demographic information submitted in enrollment data to MDE. Correct demographic data is necessary for accurate reporting, and districts and schools have opportunities to edit incorrect student data used for test administration, final reporting, and accountability calculations. It is important to ensure that any updates in enrollment information are fully submitted to MDE.

MDE requires that a particular MARSS or State Student Identification (SSID) number be held by just one student. MDE's Student Identity Validations Interface is used by authorized staff (often the District 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. Note: If a student is dual-enrolled, districts should communicate with each other at the start of the school year to ensure that the same MARSS/SSID number is being used for the student in all active enrollment records.

In an effort to help improve the collection of required educational data from Minnesota school districts, MDE has been transitioning student-level data submission to Ed-Fi technology.

- For the 2026-27 school year, districts that have not yet certified to report using Ed-Fi only must continue dual reporting by submitting both MARSS A/B files and Ed-Fi syncs until they are certified for Ed-Fi only reporting. Both MARSS A/B files and Ed-Fi syncs are validated through MARSS WES on MDE's website.
- MARSS A/B files continue to be used as the primary source of student demographics for all assessments (unless the district is Ed-Fi certified), and MARSS Coordinators can use available comparison reports to compare the data submitted through MARSS A/B files and synced with Ed-Fi.

Additional information is available on the Ed-Fi page of MDE's website. For questions about Ed-Fi, contact ed-fi.mde@state.mn.us. For questions about MARSS submissions, contact marss@state.mn.us.

Collaboration with the District MARSS Coordinator is very important to make sure student data is correct.

The student demographic information used for statewide testing and reporting is pulled directly from district enrollment data submitted to MDE. Receiving correct student data from the district is critical for accurate test administration, reporting, and accountability calculations.

Student Precode Data

"Precode" refers to the data files with student information for testing that MDE sends to test vendors. Information in precode data includes:

- District and school numbers and DAC information from MDE-ORG
- Enrollment and demographic data from MARSS
- Assessment eligibility, accommodations, and certain universal supports from Test WES

It is important that any changes to these components be promptly updated in their appropriate systems in order for testing to run smoothly.

Demographic fields included in precode data*:

- District Number, District Type
- School Number
- Grade
- Last Name
- First Name
- Middle Name
- Birth Date
- MARSS/SSID Number
- MARSS Local Use Data (an optional field that districts may use for internal student identification purposes; MDE does not assign or track this number)

Demographic fields affecting precode selection for assessment eligibility and school enrollment:

- English Learner Status
- Special Education Status
- State Aid Category
- Status End Date

*Districts can enter a student's preferred name in Test WES for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA administrations until preferred name is available to be submitted to MDE through Ed-Fi. A preferred name can be added to change how the student's name appears for test administration. More information and instructions for entering a preferred name are included in the *Test WES Precode User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website. Although preferred names cannot be included in precode files for WIDA assessments, they can be manually added in WIDA AMS. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for more information.

Precode Files

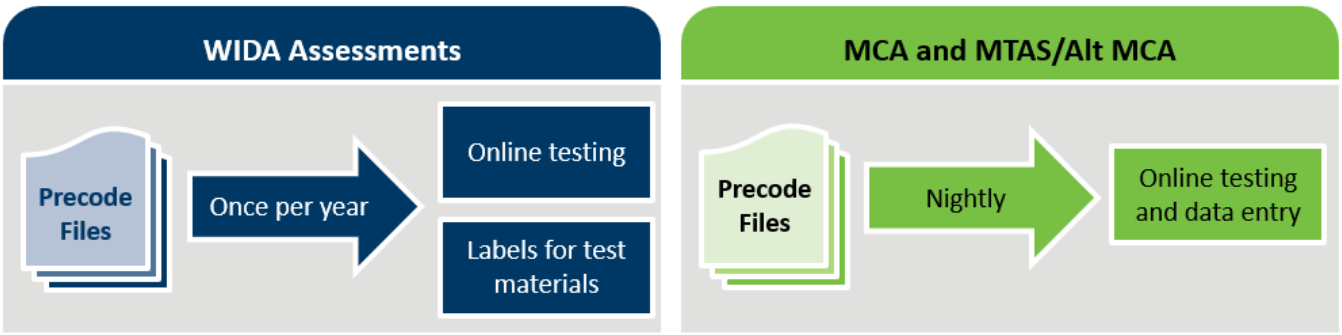
For WIDA assessments, a precode file is sent to DRC in mid-December. This file includes all students in grades K-12 identified as English learners (ELs) in student enrollment data and is used to load student records into WIDA AMS for online testing and to create student labels for paper test materials.

The WIDA precode file is sent only **once** each year. The deadline to submit student enrollment updates is the day before MDE sends the precode data to DRC. Refer to *Important Dates for Test Administration* for the specific deadline. The WIDA precode file is occasionally sent to DRC before a MARSS reporting deadline; collaborate with your MARSS Coordinator to ensure student enrollment data is accurate.

Any student who is newly enrolled or identified as an EL after the precode file is sent must be manually added to WIDA AMS when the system opens in January.

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, precode files with student enrollment information for students in grades 3-12 are sent nightly to Pearson throughout the school year to load into LaunchPad and ADAM, beginning when Pretest Editing opens until the day before the end of the testing windows (refer to the *Important Dates for Test Administration* for the specific dates). Figure 7 illustrates the key differences between the precode file processes for each statewide assessment.

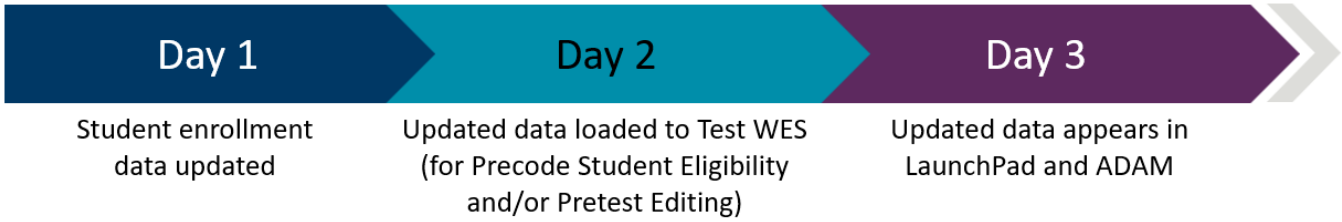
Figure 7: When Precode Files are Sent to Test Vendors



In order for student data to be loaded into LaunchPad/ADAM, any student enrollment updates must be submitted in MARSS Web Edit System (MARSS WES) at least two business days in advance of online testing or data entry. Once student enrollment data 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 (such as changing schools) or Pretest Editing (such as editing test assignments or supports/accommodations) 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 ADAM the following business day. Note: Changes made in Test WES over the weekend will be included in the precode file sent on Monday night.

If a student is no longer enrolled with a school, it is important that this update be reflected in submitted enrollment data. Timely enrollment updates reduce Test WES errors and increase the accuracy of your school's assessment participation data.

Figure 8: Process for Updating Enrollment Information for Test Records



Many districts use a Student Information System (SIS) to view and manage student data. Keep in mind that this data in the district's system is not necessarily the same information that has been uploaded to MDE to run through the MARSS WES. If there are discrepancies, use available comparison reports to compare the data submitted through MARSS A/B files and synced with Ed-Fi, as Ed-Fi data is synced directly from the district student information system. Additional information is available on the Ed-Fi page of the MDE website. Contact ed-fi.mde@state.mn.us for support.

Note: Districts that work with a Regional Management Information Center (RMIC) or other service provider to submit their enrollment data may need to provide their data earlier than the precode dates listed in the *Important Dates for Test Administration*. Districts should verify dates and timelines with their provider.

Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES

Test WES is used throughout the year by DACs and other district staff for activities related to data editing and other essential assessment tasks. One of these activities, Precode Student Eligibility, is described here. The other Test WES activities are described in other chapters based on when they take place throughout the year:

- Completing Pretest Editing (Chapter 7)
- Selecting District Options and completing District Confirmations (Chapter 7)
- Reviewing and submitting security violations through Assessment Security Records (ASRs) (Chapter 5)
- Completing Posttest Editing (Chapter 10)

Districts may use Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES to investigate why students are not included in the precode files sent to Pearson for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA. Note: For WIDA assessments, a precode file is sent only once annually to WIDA and DRC; therefore, WIDA assessments do not appear in Precode Student Eligibility. Precode Student Eligibility is also used to manually add students who wish to test with MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA but who will not be included in enrollment data (such as home-schooled or shared-time students), or to change where a dual-enrolled student will test, if needed. Precode Student Eligibility is used most when setting up for and during test administration.

Refer to the *Test WES Precode User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website for additional information.

Valid Score Rules

"Valid score rules" are the rules for determining how many items need to be answered to report a score for a student's test. The rules for determining valid scores vary by test.

WIDA Assessment Valid Score Rules

For WIDA assessments, the criteria outlined in Table 8 are used to determine whether the student attempted the domain and is eligible to receive a Valid Score (VS). If attemptedness criteria are not met, a Not Attempted (NA) test code is reported. Note: There are practice items at the beginning of each domain test. Practice items are not scored and therefore do not count toward meeting the attemptedness criteria. Refer to Chapter 9 for additional information about test codes.

Table 8. WIDA Assessment Domain Attemptedness Criteria

Domain	Minimum Criteria for "Attempting" the Domain
Listening	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Online: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Paper: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA Alternate ACCESS: A student response or non-response is recorded for one scored item.
Reading	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Online: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Paper: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA Alternate ACCESS: A student response or non-response is recorded for one scored item.
Speaking	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Online: The Record button was clicked for one task. WIDA ACCESS Paper: One task has been scored on the score sheet. WIDA Alternate ACCESS: A student response or non-response is recorded for one scored item.
Writing	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: A student response is recorded for one scored item. WIDA ACCESS Online (keyboarded): A visible key stroke is captured for one scored item (for example, a letter, a symbol). Note: Space bar and returns do not count as keystrokes. WIDA ACCESS Online (handwritten): A mark is made in the response space in the booklet. WIDA ACCESS Paper: A mark is made in the response space in the booklet. WIDA Alternate ACCESS: A student response or non-response is recorded for one scored item.

Refer to Table 9 below for information on determining composite scores for WIDA assessments.

Table 9. Determining Overall Composite Test Codes for WIDA Assessments

Domain Scores	Overall Composite Test Code
All domains have valid scores, and no domains were invalidated.	Valid Score (VS) is assigned for the overall composite score.
One to three domains have valid scores or were invalidated (INV)*.	Not Complete (NC) is assigned for the overall composite score.
No domain was attempted.	Not Attempted (NA) is assigned for the overall composite score.
All domains have the same test code (for example, Absent (ABS) or Declined (DEC)).	The test code is assigned for the overall composite score.
All domains have a test code, but not all domains have the same code.	Not Attempted (NA) is assigned for the overall composite score if no domain has a Valid Score (VS) and no domain was invalidated (INV)*.

*INV typically applies only to domains that were attempted. If an INV is applied to a domain that was not attempted, the domain is considered the same as Not Attempted (NA).

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Valid Score Rules

For MCA, students must respond to 90 percent of items to receive a Valid Score (VS). Students responding to one or more items but fewer than 90 percent receive a Not Complete (NC). Students who start a test but do not respond to any items receive a Not Attempted (NA).

For Math MTAS, the Test Administrator must enter scores for every operational task in order to receive a VS. Note: “Operational” means that the task counts toward the student’s score. When scores are submitted for at least one operational task but not all operational tasks, the student receives an NC. If no scores are submitted for operational tasks, the student receives an NA.

For the Reading and Science Alt MCAs, the following valid score rules apply:

- Valid Score (VS): Responses, including No Response (NR), submitted for all operational items.
- Valid Score – Early Stopping Rule (VS-ES): Responses of NR submitted for the first six items and no other items completed. This specific test administration procedure is an option for a small percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who have no observable way to communicate responses to participate in assessments. Refer to *Early Stopping Rule for Alt MCA* in Chapter 8 for additional information.
- Not Complete (NC): Responses submitted for at least one operational item but not all operational items and the early stopping rule is not implemented. Note: This includes responses of NR submitted for less than or greater than the first six items.
- Not Attempted (NA): No responses submitted for any operational items.

Chapter 7 — Before Test Administration

Overview

This chapter contains information on policies and procedures related to planning and preparing for the administration of statewide assessments, including testing schedules, secure test materials and other allowed and prohibited materials, preparation of testing rooms, selection of Test Administrators, student resources, and training requirements for all staff involved in the administration of statewide assessments. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

Scheduling Requirements and Estimated Test Administration Times

This section provides information for districts on scheduling test administrations, including estimated test administration times for each test and subject. All assessments must be administered within the applicable testing windows and follow any requirements outlined in this section. MDE statewide testing calendars for the current year and next two years are available on the Statewide Testing page of MDE's website (under the Testing Calendars header). Specific dates for the current testing windows for each assessment are located in the *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Districts are expected to schedule and plan for both initial testing dates and makeup testing dates. Districts are legislatively required to post testing schedules on the district's website, as discussed in Chapter 6, and must be updated as necessary.

Districts set their own schedules for testing, and MDE asks that they prioritize the best interests of students when doing so. MDE expects districts to schedule test administrations early enough in the testing window to ensure all students have the opportunity to complete testing and for data entry to be completed for applicable assessments. Administering the entire test or multiple domains on one day may work well for scheduling, but it may not support student needs. In addition, due to the length of the testing windows, there may be holidays or religious observances that districts may need to consider when planning testing dates. Since each Minnesota district is uniquely structured, there is no one-size-fits-all way to schedule statewide tests. DACs can use the information in this chapter to inform their planning, but they may also want to check with School Assessment Coordinators and Test Administrators to find out what has worked well for scheduling in their district in the past.

It is important to keep in mind the different requirements for each test when scheduling. For example, one subject of the MCA can be administered over multiple days, but a domain for WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) must be completed in one sitting. The following sections include detailed information on the scheduling requirements. Refer to Appendix B for examples of district testing calendars.

Scheduling WIDA Assessment Administrations

Districts administer the WIDA assessments (WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA ACCESS, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS) during the state-designated testing window. The district testing schedule can be set separately for each school, grade, and domain (as applicable for the test) as needed. Refer to the *Test Coordinator Manual* and the *Test Administrator Manual* in the WIDA Secure Portal for more information on scheduling and test administration.

Note: If an IEP or 504 plan team determines that a student may need more than one day to complete a WIDA ACCESS domain, more than two sessions to complete the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, or more than two days to complete a WIDA Alternate ACCESS domain, the district may schedule additional sessions using the Extended Testing of a Test Domain Over Multiple Days (EM) accommodation. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional guidance. **New!** Districts no longer need to request MDE approval for the use of the EM accommodation for WIDA assessments.

If a student is unable to complete their test during the scheduled timeframe due to an unexpected circumstance, the student may finish on another day. The Test Administrator must notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator so the situation can be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR). Documenting these instances helps districts identify patterns and evaluate whether scheduling practices or guidance should be adjusted in future administrations. Refer to Chapter 5 for more information about TARs and Appendix A for a sample TAR form.

Scheduling WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten Administrations

The WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten is administered in an individual setting. While the entire assessment takes an average of 45 minutes per student, the actual time will vary; students at lower proficiency levels may be done in as little as 15 minutes, while students at higher proficiency levels may need up to an hour. Note: This average time does not include breaks during the test administration session, which may be appropriate for kindergarten students.

It is recommended that the WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten be administered in one session. If needed, the test may be divided into two sessions with no more than two consecutive school days between sessions. When dividing sessions, use a designated break as the stopping and starting point.

Scheduling WIDA ACCESS Administrations

- For the WIDA ACCESS Online (grades 1-12), the Listening and Reading domains must be administered first (preferably starting with Listening), followed by the Speaking and Writing domains (in either order). When students finish the Listening and Reading domains, the online testing platform automatically evaluates their performance to assign them to the appropriate tier for the Speaking and Writing domains. Students are placed into one of three tiers for Speaking (Pre-A, A, or B/C) and one of two tiers for Writing (A or B/C).
- For the WIDA ACCESS Paper (grades 1-12), the domains can be administered in any order. The Speaking domain must be administered in an individual setting.

- For WIDA ACCESS Paper and Online (grades 1-12), each domain must be scheduled in a separate testing session and completed in one sitting; the domain 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 (for example, before a lunch break or at the end of the school day).

> For WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12), schedule each domain to be completed in one sitting.

- 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. Districts must also include students who require extended testing time within a day (which is a universal support available to all students) in their planning.
    - In cases of illness, emergency, or technology-related issues that cannot be resolved by the test vendor, students may finish the domain another day. Refer to *Breaks and Leaving During Testing* in Chapter 8 for additional information.
    - Refer to *What Help Test Administrators Can Give Students* in Chapter 8 for guidance on students who are making slow or no progress in a domain.
- Makeup test sessions can be scheduled any day after the initial administration days but must be completed before the end of the testing window.
- Different domains cannot be administered in the same space at the same time. For example, Listening cannot be administered in the same testing room where Speaking is being administered. 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 WIDA ACCESS Online Speaking tier Pre-A, the grades 1-3 Writing domains, and the WIDA ACCESS Paper Speaking domain are exceptions; they cannot be administered with students in different grade-level clusters/tiers.
- **Info!** WIDA ACCESS Online and WIDA ACCESS Paper cannot be administered in the same space at the same time. The administration procedures differ significantly between the two formats. WIDA ACCESS Paper includes an individually administered Speaking domain and a Listening domain that requires audio to be played aloud through speakers. In addition, the test scripts for WIDA ACCESS Online and WIDA ACCESS Paper contain different directions that Test Administrators must follow exactly. Administering both formats in the same space could create confusion for students and interfere with the administration of the assessments.

Tables 10 and 11 provide the total test administration time for the WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12). Total test administration times take into account the time needed for Test Administrators to answer student questions and provide test materials or test directions and/or for students to sign in to the test.

The test administrations are designed to take no more time than indicated below, and data from WIDA suggests that students working productively will finish in these relative timeframes. Since WIDA ACCESS is a language proficiency test rather than an academic content test, spending more than WIDA's estimated test administration time on a domain will generally not increase a student's score. However, Test Administrators may use their professional judgement to extend more time for a student, while taking into consideration how productively the student is working.

Table 10. Estimated Test Administration Times for WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-12

Test	Total Test Administration
Listening	65 minutes
Reading	60 minutes
Speaking	50 minutes
Writing	70-90 minutes

Table 11. Estimated Test Administration Times for WIDA ACCESS Paper Grades 1-12

Test	Total Test Administration
Listening	60 minutes
Reading	70 minutes
Speaking	45 minutes
Grade 1 Writing Tier A	40 minutes
Grades 2-12 Writing Tier A	75 minutes
Grades 1-12 Writing Tier B/C	80 minutes

Scheduling WIDA Alternate ACCESS Administrations

The WIDA Alternate ACCESS domain tests can be administered in any order and are not timed. Due to the adaptive nature of the test and the unique abilities and behaviors of students, actual test times can vary widely. The different domain tests can be administered on different days, with no minimum or maximum break between the administrations. If needed and the testing schedule allows, students can stop within a domain and resume testing on a different day.

Pay close attention to the student throughout the test and consider resuming at a different time or day if the student is not responding as expected. Be aware that a student who is having difficulty engaging with the assessment is unlikely to fully demonstrate their linguistic abilities.

Table 12 lists the approximate WIDA Alternate ACCESS test administration times. They include the time that may be needed to set up the testing space, prepare the students for test administration, and distribute test materials.

Table 12. Estimated Test Administration Times for WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Test	Total Test Administration
Listening	30 minutes
Reading	30 minutes
Speaking	30 minutes
Writing	30 minutes

Scheduling MCA Administrations

Districts administer the Reading, Math, and Science MCAs during the state-designated testing windows. The district can set a separate testing schedule for each school and grade as needed.

- To maintain test security, it is best practice to schedule and administer one subject on the same day(s) in a school for the majority of the students (in a given grade) before administering the next subject. In addition, students completing multiple MCA subjects should have these tests administered on different days (for example, it is not advisable to have a grade 8 student complete the Reading, Math, and Science MCAs in one day).
- For high school science, test administration can be scheduled based on coursework completion (meaning 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).
- For schools or districts that have a block schedule, testing can be scheduled based on the time of year students complete the applicable coursework (for example, students who completed math early in the school year can take the Math MCA at the beginning of the testing window, while students completing math later in the school year 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. In order to maintain test security, the makeup test session should typically occur after the initial test administration occurred in the school. There may be exceptions when a test needs to be administered early (for example, a student is moving out of the district), but the majority of makeup 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 Administrators should be aware of any differences in administration or directions (such as 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 IEP or 504 plans. If administered together, Test Administrators must understand that both versions of the *Testing Directions* (online and paper) need to be used, and they must be familiar with the differences in administration.

The MCAs are not timed. 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 complete their test and cannot be in the testing room on subsequent days. Refer to *What Students May Do After They Complete a Test* in Chapter 8 for more information.

Scheduling MCA Online Test Administrations

Districts have flexibility in how online MCA administrations are scheduled, and students are not required to exit the test at the same place as other students, such as on the same item or group of questions (Reading and Math MCAs) or section (Science MCA).

- Once students go on to the next group of questions (Reading and Math MCAs) or section (Science MCA), or exit the test for more than 20 minutes, they cannot go back to items completed previously.
    - Students must answer each item before they can go to the next item, but they can review their previous answers in the current group of questions/section before going to the next group of questions/section.
    - At the end of the test, students can only review items within the current group of questions/section that they have taken during that test session (meaning students cannot review all items in the test).
- Test Administrators use scripted language in the *Testing Directions: Online* to alert students prior to the end of the testing session so they have time to review their answers before exiting.

One option for all subjects is to schedule test sessions based on time, using the tables that appear later in this section. Note: Students may exit at any time within a reading passage or science phenomenon, as each item is shown with its associated passage or phenomenon. However, it is best practice for test administration and test security for students to finish all items associated with a passage or phenomenon before exiting so they do not need to reread it when they resume testing. (This practice does not apply to the Math MCA, as each question is independent and students may stop anywhere within a group of items and resume testing on another day.) Test Administrators may remind students to finish the items for a passage or phenomenon they are working on before exiting.

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**, there are several groups of passages with associated items. If a district is testing over multiple days, students should exit on the last item in a group of questions (which also corresponds to the end of a reading passage). Keep in mind that the Reading MCA is adaptive, so the number and length of passages each student receives will vary. For example, in grade 5, Student A may have two passages in a group and Student B may have three passages in a group, but both will have finished a group when they complete item 28.
- For **Math MCA**, the number of items should be used for scheduling. A single number (such as item 25) or range of numbers (such as between items 25-30) may be used for planning where to stop testing.
- For **Science MCA**, there are two sections in the test. 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 (as each half of the test is roughly equal in length). Scheduling by item number does not work for the Science MCA because in each section the item numbers start over and vary by grade and form.

Table 13. Scheduling to Ensure Students Finish in the Same Number of Days

Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA
Schedule by the number of items and the end of a group of questions	Schedule by the number of items (either a single item number or a range of numbers)	Schedule by section (cannot schedule by item number because item numbers start over in each section)

Districts may also consider setting both specific times and 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: Keep in mind that some students may not be able to complete all the items planned for the session, so districts need to have a plan in place to address this situation (such as having students finish the items in a different testing location or, on the next day of testing, having students resume where they left off).

Information about estimated times is provided to DACs in this manual for scheduling purposes. For Test Administrators, the tables included in the *Testing Directions* include the number of items by group/section so Test Administrators have the information needed to know when to stop testing for the session, based on the considerations described previously in this section.

- The **Number of Groups of Items/Sections** and **Approximate Number of Items** columns are provided to give a general sense of the length of the test. The number of items represents the total number of items on the test, including operational items (which count toward the student's score) and field test items (which do not count toward the student's score).
    - The Testing Directions posted on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub are updated annually and include the final number of items by group/section, as this information is not available when the Procedures Manual is published.
    - Keep in mind that the length of time needed to read passages and/or complete items varies by student. This may be especially true for the adaptive Reading and Math MCAs, where the item difficulty level also varies by student.
- The **Typical Range for Scheduling** column provides the amount of time it took for 50-75 percent of students to complete testing, rounded up to the nearest half hour. The time includes both the student review of directions and student work time. It does not include the time needed for students to sign in to the test or for Test Administrators to provide scripted directions from the *Testing Directions: Online* and answer questions from students.
    - The typical range for scheduling times are based on data that showed how long Minnesota students spent completing the test.
    - Since the time ranges account for the time needed for up to 75 percent of students to complete testing, districts must account for and/or have plans in place for students who need additional time.
    - **New!** For the Reading MCA, data from the new Reading MCA-IV in 2025-26 indicated that there was no change in the testing times from the Reading MCA-III for grades 3-8. The testing time did decrease from 1.5-2 hours to 1-1.5 hours for only the grade 10 Reading MCA. Note: Data from

accommodated forms (AT and Read Aloud) was not used to determine the average testing time as the number of items, item types, and test administration procedures differ from the main online form.

- The **Estimated Time to Impact Performance** column provides information related to student performance and the amount of time spent testing. Based on past administration data, average scale scores increased as time spent testing increased, up to the times listed below. Beyond this point, the average scale scores leveled out. This data is provided to give additional context for discussions with district and school staff for general scheduling purposes.
  - While students should be allowed sufficient time to complete testing without pressure to finish, scheduling hours beyond the estimated time to impact performance may not increase performance for most students.
  - **New!** For the Reading MCA, the estimated time to impact performance is within the typical range for scheduling for all grades.
  - For the Math MCA, the estimated time to impact performance is higher than the typical range; this means that while students are typically taking less time to complete the test, scheduling additional time for testing and encouraging students ahead of test administration to take their time may positively impact student performance.
  - For the Science MCA, the estimated time to impact performance is within the typical range for scheduling for grade 5. For grade 8 and high school, the estimated time to impact performance is higher than the typical range. Like the Math MCA, encouraging students ahead of test administration to take their time may positively impact student performance.
- 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 Testing Time Reports and/or feedback from staff), those times should not be replaced with the information provided in this manual without careful consideration.
  - Annually, following test administration, Testing Time Reports are posted for DACs in ADAM under Report Assets. These reports are available at the district level and provide cumulative testing time information by student. The time (in seconds) indicates the total time a student spent on both test content and non-scorable items (for example, student directions, section end, or start of section pages).
  - These reports are intended to be used in conjunction with information provided by MDE so that districts can plan for future administrations by confirming the amount of time students tested, or to identify trends by grade or subject across the district. The data provided in these reports is not meant to be used to make decisions about individual students.

Info! The estimated test administration times tables below are separated by subject. The information in the Reading MCA table is based on data from the 2025-26 administration, the Math MCA table is based on data from the 2021-22 administration, and the Science MCA table is based on data from the 2024-25 administration; these tables will be revised in future years only when there are significant test design changes or other circumstances. The Typical Range for Scheduling and Estimated Time to Impact Performance columns in Table 14 were updated after the first operational administration of the new Reading MCA in 2025-26.

Table 14. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Reading MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Groups of Items	Approximate Number of Items	Typical Range for Scheduling	Estimated Time to Impact Performance
Grades 3-5 Reading MCA	4	50	1.5-2 hours	Up to 2 hours
Grades 6-8 Reading MCA	4	50	1.5-2 hours	Up to 2 hours
Grade 10 Reading MCA	4	50	1-1.5 hours	Up to 1.5 hours

Table 15. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Math MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Groups of Items	Approximate Number of Items	Typical Range for Scheduling	Estimated Time to Impact Performance
Grades 3-8 Math MCA	4	50	1.5-2 hours	Up to 2.5 hours
Grade 11 Math MCA	5	55	1.5 hours	Up to 2 hours

Table 16. Estimated Test Administration Times for Online Science MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Sections	Approximate Number of Items	Typical Range for Scheduling	Estimated Time to Impact Performance
Grade 5 Science MCA	2	60	1.5-2 hours	Up to 2 hours
Grade 8 Science MCA	2	60	1-1.5 hours	Up to 2 hours
High School Science MCA	2	70	1-1.5 hours	Up to 2 hours

Scheduling MCA Paper Test Administrations

When scheduling paper test administrations, ensure sufficient time is scheduled for staff to enter the student responses online after the student has completed testing and before the end of the testing window. Failure to enter student responses online before the testing window closes will result in a delay or inability to correct assessment errors during Posttest Editing. Student responses in MCA paper test books are **not** scanned and scored when they are returned to Pearson; only student responses entered online are scored.

> Pearson does not scan or score paper MCAs, so plan for time to enter student responses online during the testing window for tests to be scored.

For students using paper test materials, testing can be scheduled by segment (Math MCA) or section (Reading and Science MCAs) or by time. If a student will not complete a segment/section during the testing session, scripted instructions for ending the test are included in the *Testing Directions: Paper*. Estimated test administration times are provided below to help with scheduling. For Test Administrators, the tables in the *Testing Directions* will include the number of items by segment/section. The Total Test Administration Time provides an estimate of the length of student work time. It does not include the time needed for Test Administrators to provide scripted directions from the *Testing Directions: Paper* and answer student questions.

Note: Since testing time data is not available for paper administrations, each district should consider its own information and experience when scheduling testing.

Table 17. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Reading MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Sections	Approximate Number of Items	Total Test Administration Time
Grades 3-5 Reading MCA	2	40	1-2.5 hours
Grades 6-8 Reading MCA	2	40	1-2.5 hours
Grade 10 Reading MCA	2	40	1-2.5 hours

Table 18. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Math MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Segments	Approximate Number of Items	Total Test Administration Time
Grades 3-8 Math MCA	4	50	1-2.5 hours
Grade 11 Math MCA	4	55	1-2 hours

Table 19. Estimated Test Administration Times for Paper Science MCA

Grade and Test	Number of Sections	Approximate Number of Items	Total Test Administration Time
Grade 5 Science MCA	2	45	1.5-2.5 hours
Grade 8 Science MCA	2	45	1.5-2.5 hours
High School Science MCA	2	55	1.5-2.5 hours

Scheduling MTAS and Alternate MCA Administrations

When scheduling MTAS/Alt MCA test administrations, ensure sufficient time is scheduled for staff to enter MTAS data or Alt MCA student responses online (for paper administrations) after the student has completed testing and before the end of the testing window. The one-on-one administration requirement must also be carefully considered when scheduling testing. Test administration times for MTAS and Alt MCA will vary for each student. For additional information, refer to Chapter 2.

Table 20. Estimated Test Administration Times for MTAS/Alt MCA

Subject and Test	Number of Tasks/Items	Estimated Time
Reading Alt MCA	45 items	60-90 minutes
Math MTAS	9 tasks and 18 items	40-60 minutes
Science Alt MCA	45 items	60-90 minutes

New! Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data must be entered in TestNav (formerly PearsonAccess Next) prior to entering MTAS data or Alt MCA student responses or Alt MCA online or hybrid testing. All MTAS/Alt MCA data and student responses must be entered in TestNav before the end of the testing window. LCI data may be entered up to two weeks before the test window opens in preparation for administration, as well as throughout the entire testing window. For Alt MCA, the LCI data must be entered before the administration of an online or hybrid administration as student responses will be entered in TestNav during the administration of the assessment. If the LCI data is not entered prior to logging in to TestNav for MTAS/Alt MCA data entry or testing, the Test Administrator or student will not be able to access the test. Refer to Chapter 2 for more information about the LCI.

LCI and Data Collection Forms should not be returned to Pearson for data entry and scoring; only data and student responses entered online are scored. These forms **must** be kept on file by the district for one year following test administration. Note that the MTAS/Alt MCA testing window for all subjects is the same as the Reading and Math MCA testing window, so while the Science MCA testing window ends one week later, the Science Alt MCA window ends at the same time as the Reading and Math Alt MCAs.

Pearson does not scan MTAS/Alt MCA materials or forms, so plan for time to enter data or student responses online during the testing window for tests to be scored.

Remember that the Science Alt MCA window ends at the same time as the Reading and Math MCAs.

Materials Ordering Window in WIDA AMS for WIDA Assessments

Districts order initial test materials in WIDA AMS during the Materials Ordering window, which occurs from late November to mid-December. To complete their order, districts indicate the following information by school:

- The number of kindergarten students. Note: The Low Vision (LV) accommodation for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten is not available in the initial materials order. It must be ordered separately during the additional materials ordering window by contacting DRC Customer Service.
- The number of WIDA Alternate ACCESS students by grade cluster
- The number of WIDA ACCESS Online students by grade cluster
  - Students in grades 1-3 use WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Test Booklets to view prompts and handwrite responses. Students in grades 4-5 use WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklets to handwrite responses while viewing prompts online. These printed materials will be sent automatically for the number of WIDA ACCESS Online students indicated for these grade clusters.
  - While a keyboarding option is available for the grade cluster 4-5 Writing test, handwriting is the default response mode in Minnesota. More information can be found in Chapter 8 under *Test Administration Considerations for WIDA ACCESS*.
- The number of WIDA ACCESS Paper students by grade cluster and tier for eligible students who will be taking all four domains on paper only

- WIDA ACCESS Paper test materials can be ordered either as an accommodation for students with IEPs or 504 plans or as a support for eligible students enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year.
- Do **not** order WIDA ACCESS Paper test materials for WIDA ACCESS Online testers in grades 1-5. Refer to *Test Administration Considerations for WIDA ACCESS* in Chapter 8 for additional information.

- The number of large print and braille test booklets by grade cluster and tier or format for eligible students

To prepare for the December deadline, ensure the following actions are completed to support accurate materials ordering.

- Work with English learner (EL) staff and the MARSS Coordinator to verify and finalize student counts.
- Collaborate with EL and special education staff to finalize decisions about which students will participate in WIDA ACCESS Paper and WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

If initial material ordering information is not indicated by the deadline, districts will not automatically receive test materials for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, WIDA ACCESS Paper, or the WIDA ACCESS Online grades 1-5 Writing. In this case, an additional order needs to be placed for the necessary test materials.

The amount of test materials you receive for the WIDA assessments is based on what you enter in WIDA AMS.

WIDA ACCESS Online for grades 1-5 uses paper materials for the Writing test. You will automatically receive these materials for the number of online testers you enter.

Test Materials for WIDA Assessments

Test materials are automatically sent based on the information the district has indicated during Materials Ordering in WIDA AMS. Tables 21-24 describe the test materials available for each WIDA assessment. Note: Any materials that include test content are nonpublic data and considered secure materials.

Table 21. Test Materials Available for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten

Test Materials	Description
Test Administrator Script	Test Administrators use this script and follow it exactly throughout test administration.
Storybook	Test Administrators read this with students and refer to the pictures and graphic organizers as they ask students questions.
Cards	Test Administrators hold onto the cards during test administration and place them in front of students as directed in the script.

Test Materials	Description
WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten Student Response Booklet	Test Administrators record scores for student responses in this booklet throughout the test. Students use this booklet to record their own responses for the Writing portions of the test.
Low Vision (LV) Accommodation Kit (accommodation)	This kit includes a *Test Administrator Script* with additional picture descriptions and supplemental cards with modified graphics for students with low vision. Note: This kit can only be ordered during the Additional Materials Ordering window by contacting DRC Customer Service.

Table 22. Test Materials Available for WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Test Materials	Description
Test Administrator Script	Test Administrators use this script and follow it exactly throughout test administration.
WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Booklet	This nonscorable test booklet contains the pictures and prompts presented to students for the Listening, Reading, and Speaking domain tests. This is a reusable item.
WIDA Alternate ACCESS Student Response Booklet	This scorable test booklet contains space to note details about the test administration and to mark scores for the Listening, Reading, and Speaking domain tests. For the Writing domain test, it contains the pictures, prompts, and response space. It also includes the Individual Characteristics Questionnaire (ICQ).

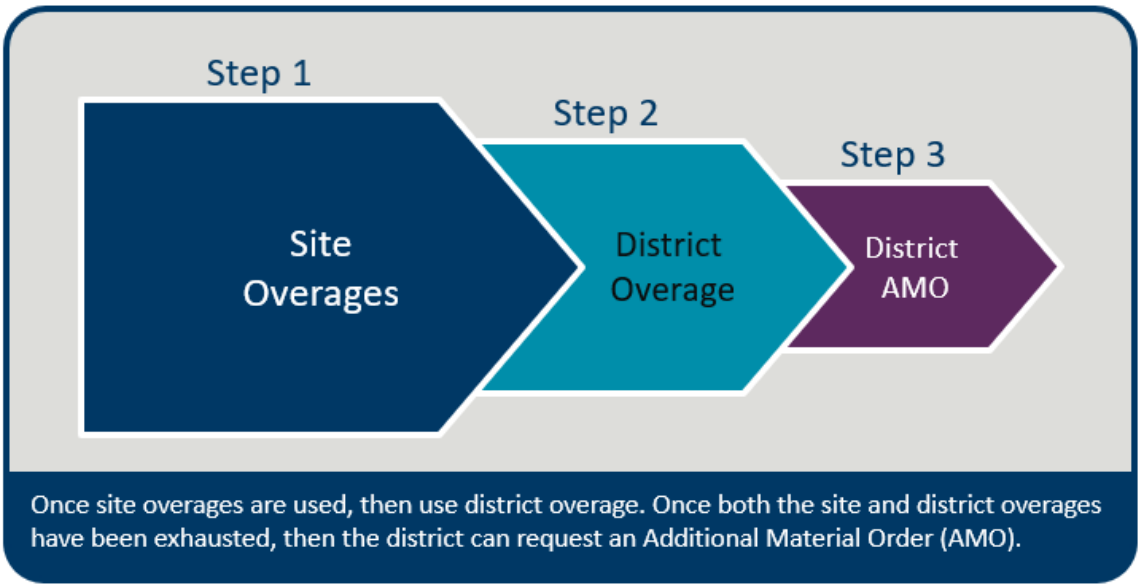
Table 23. Test Materials Available for WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-12

Test Materials	Description
Test Administrator Script	Test Administrators use this script and follow it exactly throughout test administration. The following are available: • Grade 1 (secure material) • Grades 2-3 (secure material) • Grades 4-12 (not secure material)
WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklet	This scorable test booklet contains the pictures and prompts presented to students during the Writing domain test as well as space for students to handwrite their responses. The Writing Test Booklet is different than the WIDA ACCESS Paper Test Booklet. All students in grades 1-3 take the WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test using the printed Writing Test Booklets. The following are available: • Grade 1, Tier A • Grade 1, Tier B/C • Grades 2-3, Tier A • Grades 2-3, Tier B/C
WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklet	This scorable test booklet contains space for students to handwrite their responses to the Writing test prompts presented in the online test. These booklets are needed for students who are handwriting their responses (which is the default response mode for grades 4-5 in Minnesota) instead of keyboarding. The WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklet is different than the WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklet. Note: WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklets for grades 6-8 and 9-12 are only available to order during the additional orders window because the default response mode is keyboarding for these grade-level clusters in Minnesota. Having students handwrite their responses is a student-based decision at these grade levels. The following are available: • Grades 4-5, Tier A • Grades 4-5, Tier B/C • Grades 6-8, Tier A • Grades 6-8, Tier B/C • Grades 9-12, Tier A • Grades 9-12, Tier B/C

Table 24. Test Materials Available for WIDA ACCESS Paper Grades 1-12

Test Materials	Description
Test Administrator Script	Test Administrators use this script and follow it exactly throughout test administration.
WIDA ACCESS Paper Speaking Test Booklet	This nonscorable test booklet contains the pictures and prompts students see during the Speaking test. Students do not write in this booklet, and it is a reusable item.
WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklet	This scorable test booklet is used by students to record their responses to the Listening, Reading, and Writing tests. This booklet must be labeled, distributed to students during test administration, collected, verified as having been completed correctly and completely, and returned for central scoring. Note: Test Administrators also record student scores for the Speaking test on the Speaking Test Scoring Sheet in this test booklet.
Listening and Speaking CD	Streaming audio for the WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening and Speaking domains is available in WIDA AMS. DACs can grant streaming audio permissions to Test Administrators in WIDA AMS. Districts that are unable to use streaming audio, or prefer to use physical media, may order CDs containing the audio recordings during the Additional Materials Ordering window.
Large Print Test Materials Kit (accommodation)	Large print test materials are printed in 18-point font for students who require this accommodation. Student responses recorded on large print materials must be transcribed into a regular print test booklet for scoring.
Braille Test Materials Kit (accommodation)	Each braille test kit contains an embossed test booklet, a test booklet for transcription, a combined *Test Administrator Script* with all administrative materials, a Speaking test booklet, transcriber's notes, and a CD of audio files for the Listening and Speaking domains. The embossed test booklet contains tactile graphics, labels, and picture descriptions. Each braille test kit includes sample items for the specified grade-level cluster and braille code. Note: WIDA ACCESS Braille audio materials will continue to be provided on CD only. DACs should confirm availability of CD players in rooms where WIDA ACCESS Braille is administered.
Human Reader Accommodation Script (accommodation)	For the in-person human reader accommodation, the *Human Reader Accommodation Script* replaces the *Test Administrator Script* for each WIDA ACCESS Paper domain test for which the accommodation is required. It also replaces the CD when used for the Listening and/or Speaking domains. It must be ordered by contacting DRC during the additional orders window.

All test materials requested during the Materials Ordering window will be shipped to the district. The initial test materials shipment automatically includes a standard overage for both the district and individual schools to help ensure sufficient quantities are available. Districts should not manually add extra quantities when completing the initial materials order. Note: An automatic overage is not provided for initial order quantities under 10.



DACs should verify all available inventory and coordinate the exchange of unused materials between sites as needed. Once all available overages are exhausted, DACs can request additional test materials during the Additional Materials Ordering window in WIDA AMS. The dates for this window are listed in the *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

To reduce waste and control shipping costs, the WIDA Consortium requires member states to limit additional materials orders. Districts should consolidate their needs and attempt to place **only one additional materials order** per year. MDE may follow up with DACs when a district submits multiple additional materials orders to confirm that local overages were inventoried and that WIDA's ordering protocols were followed. Note: Materials available exclusively through the additional materials ordering process (such as the *Human Reader Accommodation Script*) do not count toward this restriction.

To manage test materials effectively, DACs should consider implementing the following best practices:

- **Inventory materials immediately:** As soon as the initial shipment arrives, inventory all materials to identify any potential shortages.
- **Verify accuracy:** Confirm that correct materials are provided to the appropriate school sites, paying close attention to specialized materials required for students taking WIDA ACCESS Paper or WIDA Alternate ACCESS.
- **Balance inventories:** Throughout the testing window, transfer unused materials between sites to cover needs before placing an additional materials order.
- **Centralize unused stock:** When a school finishes testing, instruct staff to return only their used materials to DRC. Collect and save all unused materials for the district's central overage supply.
- **Consolidate ordering:** Combine all remaining school needs into a single, comprehensive district-level additional materials order. Do not allow School Assessment Coordinators to place additional orders independently in WIDA AMS.

Pretest Editing for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

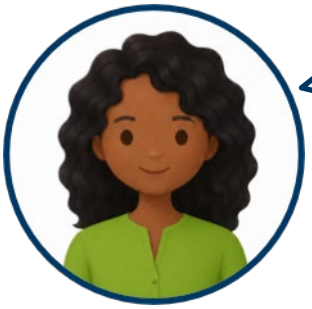
Pretest Editing in Test WES allows districts to verify or enter information for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA so that 1) students are indicated in precode for the correct assessment (with or without the appropriate universal supports and/or accommodations) and 2) the appropriate MCA paper test materials or MTAS/Alt MCA test materials are automatically included in the initial shipment of test materials to the district or schools by Pearson (if indicated by the January deadline).

The following tasks are completed during Pretest Editing by district staff:

- **Confirm student test assignment(s) in Test WES:** Each student has been assigned an MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA test in reading, math, and science (when applicable) based on their grade level and past assessments. Any students with an MTAS/Alt MCA test assignment by the January deadline will have MTAS/Alt MCA test materials automatically sent for them (unless otherwise indicated in District Options; more information below). Districts can change a student's test assignment as appropriate in Test WES; districts cannot change this in ADAM.
- **Indicate student universal supports and accommodations in Test WES:** Select the universal supports and accommodations individual students will need during testing for the MCAs and the Reading and Science Alt MCAs. Ensure students who are assigned accommodations have IEPs or 504 plans indicated in enrollment data. Note: Districts are not required to document for MDE which accommodations are provided on MTAS/Alt MCA; however, the assistive technology online forms for the Reading and Science Alt MCAs require a code to be indicated in Pretest Editing; refer to Chapter 4 for detailed information. Codes can be entered or removed as needed throughout the testing windows, but this must be done at least one business day before testing. Districts can change a student's universal supports and accommodation codes as appropriate in Test WES; districts cannot change these in ADAM.

Needed paper test materials will automatically be sent if the applicable test assignments and/or accommodation codes are indicated by the January deadline. Note: Any changes made after this deadline will require placing an order for paper test materials in ADAM (for example, ordering MTAS/Alt MCA kits or MCA paper test books).

Pretest Editing continues until the day before the last day of the testing windows so that districts can continue to update student enrollment and eligibility information to send to ADAM. Refer to the *Test WES Pretest Editing User Guide* on the Test WES page of MDE's website for additional information. The *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub includes the dates and deadlines for Pretest Editing.



The amount of materials you receive for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA is based on what you enter in Pretest Editing in Test WES by the January deadline.

After that deadline, you can still make changes in Pretest Editing, but you also need to order any corresponding paper test materials in ADAM.

District Options and District Confirmations

Districts provide information to MDE by indicating their District Options and District Confirmations in Test WES. The deadlines for completing each of these are indicated on the applicable screens in Test WES and are included in the *Important Dates for Test Administration*.

- **District options for test materials shipment:** Districts have options for the delivery location for the initial shipment of MCA paper and MTAS/Alt MCA test materials—individual schools or the district (default is shipping to the district). This selection applies to both MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA.
- **District options for MTAS/Alt MCA test materials:** Districts may choose to receive MTAS/Alt MCA test materials automatically based on students assigned to the MTAS/Alt MCA by the January deadline or if they want to order materials separately in additional orders in ADAM to reduce the number of MTAS/Alt MCA materials being sent (default is to send materials automatically). Refer to *Test Materials for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA* below for more information.
- **District options for paper copies of student results labels and Individual Student Reports (ISRs):** Districts indicate whether they want to receive printed ISR labels to place in cumulative folders (default is no) and/or paper copies of ISRs to send home to families (default is yes). Electronic versions of both the student results labels and ISRs are also available in ADAM and can be printed by the district.
- **District options for reports shipment:** **New!** Districts have options for the delivery location for the shipment of final paper ISRs and/or results labels, if indicated—individual schools or the district (default is shipping to the district). This selection applies to all MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA reports.

District Confirmations

- **District confirmation of ISR delivery:** Minnesota requires confirmation from districts that ISRs from the previous year's statewide assessment administrations have been delivered to families. DACs must confirm that their district provided the ISRs (electronically or paper copies) to families by Dec. 1. **Info!** When results are delayed due to standard setting, efforts should be made to provide the results to parents/guardians as close to Dec. 1 as possible. There is also flexibility in this requirement for 2026 results, with all ISRs delivered in late September.
- **District confirmation of alternate assessment eligibility:** IEP teams must verify each year that students meet the participation criteria/eligibility requirements for alternate assessments, and DACs must confirm that all students selected to take the WIDA Alternate ACCESS and/or MTAS/Alt MCA will meet the requirements at the time of testing.
- **District confirmation of supports and accommodations:** DACs must confirm that all policies and procedures were followed to ensure that students receive the universal supports or accommodations that they require during testing for all statewide assessments.
- **District confirmation of training:** DACs must confirm that all staff with any role in test administration, including the DAC, completed required trainings before testing.
- **District confirmation of Posttest Editing:** If no edits were needed for the district, DACs must complete the confirmation by the close of Posttest Editing. If edits have been made, DACs can also complete this confirmation to let MDE know that all Posttest Editing is complete.

Test Materials for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

Initial Test Materials Shipment

For MCA testing, some universal supports and accommodations are built into the online assessment (such as color contrast or answer masking) or are part of the test administration (such as the use of a scribe), while other accommodations 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.

In order to receive MCA paper test materials in the initial test materials shipment, districts must indicate the applicable codes during Pretest Editing in Test WES by the January deadline (refer to the *Important Dates for Test Administration*). Note: All students using paper test materials as an accommodation for MCA respond directly in their paper test books. District staff must enter student responses in a Data Entry form in TestNav before the end of the testing window; no separate answer documents are used. Pearson does not scan or score any MCA paper test books.

Table 25 outlines the test materials available for MCA. Note: Any materials that include test content are nonpublic data and considered secure materials.

Table 25. MCA Paper Test Materials Available for Accommodations

Test Materials	Description	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA
Regular print test book	Test book printed in 12-point font	✓	✓	✓
18-pt large print test book	Test book printed in 18-point font	✓	✓	✓
24-pt large print test book	Test book printed in 24-point font	N/A	✓	N/A
Braille test book	Test book provided in Unified English Braille (UEB) format, available in both contracted and uncontracted formats	✓	✓	✓
Phenomena book	Test material containing science phenomena, allowing students to access information in the phenomena alongside test items. Provided with all paper test books. Available in 12-point, 18-point, and braille depending on the type of test book indicated.	N/A	N/A	✓
Passages book	Test material containing reading passages, allowing students to access information from the reading passages alongside test items. Provided with all paper test books. Available in 12-point, 18-point, and braille depending on the type of test book indicated.	✓	N/A	N/A
Script	The script is used by the Test Administrator to read the test to the student. For the Math MCA, the script must be used in conjunction with a paper test book as the script cannot be created to align with the adaptive online test. For the Reading and Science MCA, the script can be used in conjunction with paper test books, the non-screen reader AT online forms, the online script form for science, or the online read-aloud form for reading.	✓	✓	✓

Note: For the Reading MCA, an online read-aloud test form is available to provide a read-aloud accommodation via text-to-speech for a select group of students who meet specific eligibility requirements; **Info!** this accommodation must be approved by MDE. Read-aloud support can also be provided by a human reader via the human reader/script accommodation. The script can then be used with this online read-aloud fixed-form test or

the paper test books for students who require a paper accommodation. With the read-aloud accommodations, both the items and reading passages are read aloud. More information on these accommodations, the eligibility requirements, and the MDE-approval process is provided in Chapter 4.

For MTAS/Alt MCA, student information is sent in precode files to Pearson's LaunchPad and ADAM platforms if the MTAS/Alt MCA test assignment is indicated during Pretest Editing. In order to receive MTAS/Alt MCA materials in the initial test materials shipment, districts must change the test assignment during Pretest Editing in Test WES by the January deadline (refer to the *Important Dates for Test Administration*). All MTAS materials are paper-based. The Alt MCAs may be administered online, on paper, or in hybrid (any combination of online and paper) modes to meet student needs, and there are additional test materials available to order to support Alt MCA administrations. Note: Paper test materials will be sent for all students assigned the Alt MCA regardless of which administration mode will be used so that Test Administrators have paper test materials available if they determine the administration mode needs to be changed during the test.

The following information lists the MTAS/Alt MCA assessments by grade, which affects what materials are available and can be provided:

- Grades 3, 4, 6, and 7: Math MTAS and Reading Alt MCA
- Grades 5 and 8: Math MTAS, Reading Alt MCA, and Science Alt MCA
- Grade 10: Reading Alt MCA
- Grade 11: Math MTAS
- High School: Science Alt MCA

Since MTAS/Alt MCA materials can be used for more than one student, districts may choose (under District Options in Test WES) to order MTAS/Alt MCA materials in additional orders rather than receiving them automatically. This may be helpful if the district has historically received more materials than needed.

Table 26: MTAS/Alt MCA Test Materials Available

Test Materials	Description	Materials Available
Kit for Test Administration	These materials are provided as a kit for test administration if MTAS/Alt MCA is indicated by the deadline for the initial test materials shipment. One kit can be used for more than one student in the same grade. **New!** Materials are sent out separately for each grade indicated (in previous years, kits were separated by subject and grade). • The Task Administration Manual contains administration information and the task scripts for the Test Administrator. • For Math MTAS, the Test Administrator uses the Presentation Pages and Response Option Cards to administer the tasks to the students. • For Reading and Science Alt MCAs (paper and hybrid administrations) and Math MTAS field test tasks, Test Administrators use the Presentation Pages and a separate Passages, Scenarios, or Phenomena Book to administer tasks to the students. Response Option Cards are not provided in the kit. • **New!** Data Collection Forms and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) forms are included as separate materials in each kit and are no longer included as perforated pages in the Task Administration Manual. Online fillable PDF forms can still be accessed on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Note: A copy of paper test materials is provided automatically for all Alt MCA administrations, even if the assessment will be administered online.	Initial orders and additional orders (as a kit)
Alt MCA Braille Kit	Braille versions of the Reading and Science Alt MCA Presentation Pages, Phenomena or Passages Book, and Response Option Cards in uncontracted UEB (Reading Alt MCA) or uncontracted UEB Math/Science format (Science Alt MCA)	Additional orders only
Visual Descriptions	The Visual Descriptions provide a script for Test Administrators to read to students to provide descriptions of visuals used in Alt MCA paper test materials or the online test and Math MTAS field test tasks.	Additional orders only
Alt MCA Response Options Cards	Response Option Cards for Reading and Science Alt MCA can be ordered in additional orders for students who need these materials to indicate responses instead of responding online or on the Presentation Pages directly.	Additional orders only

Additional Orders

Once the January deadline for the initial test materials shipment has passed, the DAC must order any MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA paper test materials during the additional orders windows in ADAM. These testing materials would be for new students who enroll in the district or for students who did not have an accommodation or MTAS/Alt MCA test assignment indicated by the January deadline.

> Indicating a paper accommodation or changing a test assignment in Pretest Editing does not automatically generate a test materials order in ADAM.

In order for test materials to arrive in time for test administration, districts have until noon on the last Tuesday of the testing windows to place any additional orders. The *Important Dates for Test Administration* includes the additional orders window for each assessment. Note: Ordering braille materials before the end of the additional orders window is recommended in the event that additional braille materials need to be created.

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 (such as in a part of the library where students and staff can walk by). If rooms that are not fully enclosed (for example, rooms connected by common areas, walls that do not fully reach the ceiling) need to be used for testing, contact MDE for guidance. Rooms must be as enclosed and as soundproof as possible, and procedures for limiting external noises that may impact testing must be in place (for example, if testing in a room with a retractable wall, ensure that students on the other side of the wall are considerate of the test administration).
- If testing in a large room, ensure the room can be set up to maintain test security or plan for additional Test Administrators to be present; refer to *Seating Arrangements* below.
- For online administrations:
  - Tests may be administered in a computer lab or a regular classroom.
  - Only district-owned computers or devices can be used for student online testing. Because of technology preparation and test security concerns, 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.
    - If a student logs into a test from a district-owned device without a Test Administrator present, the test must be invalidated. Refer to Chapter 8 of this manual for more information.
    - If a student-owned device is used for student online testing, the test must be invalidated.
    - For the rare situation where a student may need to use a student-owned device for a specific accommodation need (such as assistive technology), the district must contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us to request approval.

    - Ensure students have enough space on a writing surface for their testing device and any related materials (such as scratch paper). For the grades 4-5 WIDA ACCESS Writing domain, students must also 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 (such as calculators or math manipulatives).
- For individual administrations (WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, or MTAS/Alt MCA, or for an accommodation, if needed), the test may be administered in a classroom or other room where instruction is provided. However, other students are not allowed in the room while the test is being administered. The use of any student-owned assistive technology devices must be approved by MDE. Ensure there is enough space to accommodate all applicable test materials.
- Testing in a room that has an active security camera is allowed; however, test security is to be considered, and the following steps are best practices:
    - Turn off or disable the ability to control remotely (and therefore zoom in or focus on test content).
    - Prior to testing, ensure that no content from any screen is visible on the video, and cover the camera, if permissible.
    - If these steps cannot be taken due to the functionality of a camera, discuss options for reducing the risk of a security violation (for example, 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 students taking the test or trained staff administering the test are allowed to be in the room; other students, staff, or visitors are not permitted to enter or be in the room while testing is in progress. The exceptions to this are:
    - Monitors who are required to observe test administration (such as the DAC conducting observations in the district, an MDE monitor during a site visit).
    - Students who finish testing in the current testing session; although these students may remain in the room, other students who have completed testing previously cannot. Refer to *What Students May Do After They Complete a Test* in Chapter 8.
- Take appropriate actions to reduce noise, such as limiting the use of alarms (except emergency alarms), bells, and announcements, and schedule testing around planned emergency drills.
- The doors of each testing room are to be closed during test administration. Post signs on the doors stating “Testing—Do Not Enter” or “Testing—Do Not Disturb.”
- **Info!** It is a district decision whether to allow late arrivals into the testing room, have a separate room for late arrivals, or have late arrivals test on a makeup testing day. If late arrivals are allowed to enter the testing room, districts will need to consider how to provide the testing directions to the late arrival

while other students have started testing to minimize disruptions, including having an additional Test Administrator in the room to continue actively monitoring the students testing.

Seating Arrangements

- All efforts should be made to have at least one Test Administrator for every 30 students. Choosing 30 as the number of students is meant to reflect a typical classroom size. Additional Test Administrators or other precautions, such as privacy screens or extra spacing, should be considered if more students than the typical classroom size are being tested and/or the testing room is not conducive for active monitoring. The 30:1 ratio helps ensure that staff can successfully monitor the room.
    - While WIDA recommends smaller group sizes for WIDA ACCESS Online (grades 1-12) Listening and Reading administrations (no more than 15 students), MDE allows larger group sizes with appropriate monitoring and consideration given for the best interest of students.
    - In the interest of maintaining test security and reducing incidents of plagiarism, including the use of generative AI, MDE requires districts to follow WIDA's recommendations for group sizes for Writing (no more than 15 students per Test Administrator) and Speaking (no more than 5 students per Test Administrator). These ratios must be maintained if there are multiple groups in the same room. For example, if there are 30 students in the room for Writing, there must be at least two Test Administrators monitoring students. Note: Students taking the Speaking Tier Pre-A must be tested in an individual setting.
    - MDE recommends keeping WIDA ACCESS Speaking groups as small as possible to:
        - Ensure students have plenty of space in the testing room so they can listen and speak without distraction from other students.
        - Provide enough space so that microphones do not pick up sounds from other students who are testing nearby.
        - Make students feel more comfortable in the testing environment and reduce any perceived pressure to finish quickly.
- Students who are testing should have enough space between each other to ensure they work independently. The potential for student cheating can be minimized by creating seating arrangements where students cannot easily see each other's tests.
    - Separate devices as much as possible, and stagger seating to limit what students can see on other monitors.
    - Spread students around the computer lab or classroom to the extent possible.
    - For the WIDA ACCESS Speaking domain, ensure there is enough space between students so that each student's headset is recording only their speech.
    - If students are testing at tables and not individual desks, ensure that there is adequate space between each student.
    - Regardless of where a student is located in the testing room, ensure that there is enough space between students and consider what students are able to view from different vantage points. Students should not be able to view the test content presented to students seated in front of them.

- When considering how to space students around the room, ensure that the Test Administrator can see all students in a direct view or plan for additional staff to monitor testing. In addition, there should be enough space between students so that the Test Administrator can walk around all students for active monitoring.

- If space is limited and students can potentially see other screens or test materials, consider the following in addition to actively monitoring to ensure students are working independently:
  - Use commercial privacy screens or something similar (for example, taping cardboard to the sides of devices so that it extends out from the front of the screen) or create a barrier.
  - Assign additional Test Administrators.

Materials Allowed During Testing

Refer to the applicable *Testing Directions* for specific lists of materials allowed during MCA test administrations. Information about when to provide materials to Test Administrators is found in Chapter 8. Detailed information for WIDA ACCESS is included below as applicable. Materials may be provided by the school or student, unless otherwise specified.

- **Calculators:** When allowed, handheld calculators may be supplied by the school, or students may use their own. Handheld calculators are not allowed on the online grades 3-8 Math MCA. Refer to the *Calculator Use* section in Chapter 8 for more details on calculators.
- **Pencils or Pens:** Allowable pencils and pens vary by test and/or administration mode:
  - For paper WIDA ACCESS test materials (WIDA ACCESS Paper test booklets and WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklets), 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 WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS to be scanned and scored.
  - For WIDA ACCESS Listening, Reading, and Writing domains and for MCA online testing, students may use either pencils or pens with scratch paper.
  - For MCA paper test materials, students may use either pencils or pens to mark answers in the paper test book (since district staff will later enter the responses in TestNav).
- **Wired headphones:** Headphones may be supplied by the school, or students may use their own.
  - For online WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12):
    - Headphones are required for the Reading, Listening, and Writing domains.
    - Headsets with built-in microphones are required for the Speaking domain. Districts need to ensure they have enough headsets with microphones to administer the Speaking domain. For more information on headsets for WIDA ACCESS, refer to the *WIDA ACCESS Headset Specifications* in the WIDA Secure Portal.
  - For online MCA:
    - Headphones are required for all subjects because text-to-speech and the white noise accessibility feature are available for all students throughout the test (for Reading, text-to-

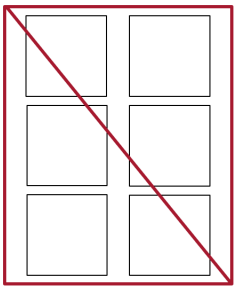
speech is available for student directions only). The Reading and Science MCAs also include the English glossary support, which is available automatically and has an audio option.

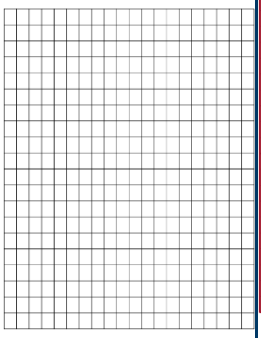
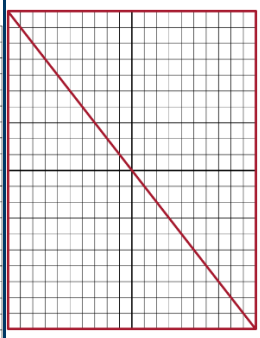
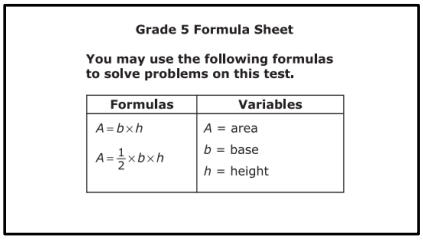
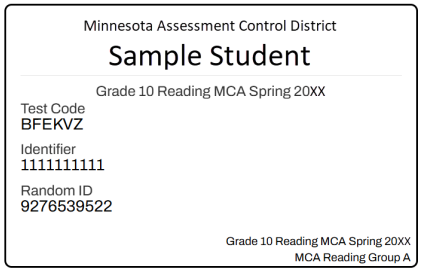
  - For online Alt MCA:
    - Headphones are allowed for the online Alt MCA if the student is using text-to-speech as a read-aloud support. However, the decision to use headphones should be based on individual student needs and independence in engaging with the online test form. Since it is an individual administration, headphones are not required.
  - 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 during testing. MDE understands this policy can lead to some logistical challenges for districts, but it is consistent with policies in states across the nation and for national tests; it also comes directly from recommendations by nationally recognized test security experts. Note: There are exceptions for amplification devices, including personal hearing aids, or assistive technology that use Bluetooth capabilities. Refer to the *Universal Supports for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA* section in Chapter 4 for more information.
  - Some newer models of wired headphones also include Bluetooth capabilities, which are not allowed for statewide assessments.

- **Mouse and external or wired keyboard:** A wired and external mouse and keyboard are recommended to ensure a successful testing experience; an external keyboard is required for WIDA ACCESS. Note: If multiple students are using a wireless or Bluetooth mouse and keyboard, there may be increased interference in signals in a confined area. Districts should use their existing experience with wired and wireless equipment in non-testing situations to determine what to use during testing. Refer to requirements on the applicable test vendor websites for detailed information.
- **Paper copies of math formula sheets:** Schools may provide all grades 5-8 and grade 11 students taking the Math MCA with paper versions of the current year's formula sheets that are posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. A formula sheet is also available in the online test for all students in grades 5-8 and grade 11.
- **Paper copies of math tables:** Schools may provide paper versions of the multiplication or hundreds tables to students taking the paper Math MCA. Paper versions of these tables are posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Math tables are also available in the online test for all students. Note: Math tables may only be used in test segments that allow the use of a calculator. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information.
- **Paper copies of translated or translated and glossed word lists:** Schools may provide paper versions of the translated word lists (Math MCA) and translated word lists with glossary definitions (Reading and Science MCAs) that are posted on the Student Tools and Supports page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information on which students may benefit from this support.
- **Stickers:** Stickers are included in test materials shipments for MCA paper test materials and are used by students to seal the test book segments/sections after completion. If a district runs out of stickers, tape can be used instead. Note: District staff must break the sealed segments/sections in order to enter student responses online after testing. Segments/sections do not need to be resealed after data entry.

- **Scratch paper:** Schools may provide or allow scratch paper for the Reading, Listening, and Writing domains of WIDA ACCESS and for all MCA subjects. Scratch paper is **not** allowed for the Speaking domain of WIDA ACCESS. Table 27 provides guidelines for allowable scratch paper.
    - Students may draw lattices, diagrams (such as number lines), or charts 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, including folding it in sections themselves, but any direction or strategy for using scratch paper to answer questions must be handled prior to testing. Test Administrators cannot prompt students to use it in any specific manner once testing has begun.
    - For paper MCAs, students may use blank spaces in the test books to work on items and make notes. For the paper Math MCA, students can also use the grid paper and/or formula sheets provided in the test book. If students remove the grid paper or formula sheets, they must write their names on the sheets so the materials can be accounted for and provided on subsequent days of testing, as needed. In addition, scratch paper as described in the bullet point above can be provided.
    - Students must write their name on scratch paper, and Test Administrators 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 two business days after the close of the testing window). Requiring students to write their names on their scratch paper allows the Test Administrator to ensure they have accounted for scratch paper from all students and also allows the scratch paper to be reused on a subsequent day of testing, if the district chooses.

Table 27. Scratch Paper Guidelines

Allowable Scratch Paper	Guidelines	Examples
Blank paper	Lined 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 into sections. Sticky notes are also allowed, but they must be provided as a pad and not strategically pre-arranged by the Test Administrator.	Not Allowed: 
Individual white- or blackboards	Must be blank before and after administration Must **not** contain pre-printed numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes	N/A

Allowable Scratch Paper	Guidelines	Examples
Commercially produced graph paper	Must **not** contain numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes	Allowed:  Not Allowed: 
Paper copies of math formula sheets	May be used if providing the current-year version from the Minnesota Assessment Hub to students	Allowed (example):  **Grade 5 Formula Sheet** **You may use the following formulas to solve problems on this test.** Formulas: $A = b \times h$; $A = \frac{1}{2} \times b \times h$ Variables: A = area; b = base; h = height
Student test tickets	May be used	Allowed (example):  Minnesota Assessment Control District Sample Student Grade 10 Reading MCA Spring 20XX Test Code BFEKVZ Identifier 1111111111 Random ID 9276539522 Grade 10 Reading MCA Spring 20XX MCA Reading Group A

- **Other materials:** Depending on district policies, students may have water bottles, gum, snacks, etc., out during testing; in addition, any materials for universal supports (such as highlighters, sensory tools) or accommodations are allowed as specified in Chapter 4.

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; some students may also use additional materials as supports or accommodations (refer to Chapter 4). Unless the material is allowed according to one of these resources, students should put it away 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 textbooks or calculator manuals, are not permitted (refer to Chapter 4 for a limited exception for word-to-word dual-language dictionaries).
- Students are not allowed to use or access cell phones, smartwatches, smart glasses, or any other device that can send, receive, and/or capture information 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. Refer to C*ell Phone and Other Prohibited Personal Device Policy* in Chapter 8 for more information.
- For WIDA ACCESS, use of scratch paper is not allowed for the Speaking domain. Based on guidance from WIDA, this is prohibited because writing a draft of spoken responses may compromise the validity of that domain; the test is meant to measure students' ability to naturally respond to questions in English like they would when conversing with others in a classroom setting. The purpose is to measure students' abilities to spontaneously retrieve, organize, and produce their *existing* knowledge of a given topic in English in a real-world setting where they would not be scripting out what they want to say.
- For WIDA assessments, cover or remove all materials in the testing room or on student desks that pertain to explicit language instruction or the language expectations of an academic content area. This includes any materials related to language forms or features as described in the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition on WIDA's website. Even though a student's content knowledge is not part of the language proficiency scoring, all materials that relate to the language expectations of an academic content area must be covered or removed.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, cover or remove all academic or instructional posters and graphics in the testing room or on student desks, including those involving strategy techniques or methods. This also includes academic or instructional information not related to the subject being tested (for example, science information must be covered even if reading is being tested).
- For all assessments, MDE does not have a list of materials that can remain visible to students during testing. If there are any doubts about a specific item or material, MDE recommends covering or removing it. 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 phenomenon; likewise, information on a math concept may provide information that could be used to answer a science item.

Defining Staff Involved in Test Administration

All staff involved in test administration in any manner must complete **all** trainings for their role, as specified under *Training* later in this chapter. It is a security violation if untrained staff are 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, the following types of roles:

- **Staff directly involved in test administration**: District and School Assessment Coordinators, WIDA assessment, MCA, or MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators, interpreters, translators, scribes, paraprofessionals, staff receiving or organizing test materials, and technology staff, including any individuals contracted at the district for technology support

- **Staff indirectly involved with test administration**: Individuals in leadership roles (such as principals, superintendents) and custodial and support staff if they have keys, and therefore access, to secure test materials

Selecting Test Administrators

All students must be assigned to a Test Administrator who will administer the test, monitor the students, and maintain test security throughout test administration (refer to Chapter 3 for Test Administrator roles and responsibilities). Test Administrators must annually complete **all** required trainings for their role, as specified under *Training* later in this chapter. Students cannot be left unsupervised at any time during testing.

Only trained district and school staff involved in testing are allowed in the room during testing.

- In addition to Test Administrators, any individuals in the room during test administration, such as paraprofessionals, must complete required trainings each school year, including the *Test Security Training*. Specific training requirements for staff involved in the administration of some universal supports and accommodations are included in the notes for administration in Chapter 4.
- Non-school personnel cannot be present in the testing room. However, they are allowed to be involved with testing in other capacities (for example, volunteers assisting as hall monitors) if they are directly supervised by school personnel. They must also complete the *Test Security Training*.
- Student teachers are allowed to be in the testing room during test administration because they are involved in daily instruction of students. They must complete required trainings for their role. However, student teachers cannot be the sole Test Administrator unless they hold a substitute teacher license, as substitute teachers are allowed to be Test Administrators as specified below.
- A parent/guardian or relative cannot be involved with their student's testing or be in the same room during testing at any time. For this policy, relatives are defined as children, stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, siblings, in-laws, spouses, and persons under guardianship.
- Although trained by MDE, an MDE monitor conducting a site visit cannot be the sole adult in the room during testing; a trained district or school staff member must be present at all times during testing, including during site visits.

Test Administrators for WIDA Assessments

For WIDA assessments, Test Administrators should be selected using the criteria indicated below. Note: Even when a licensed teacher is required, the Test Administrator does not need to have EL licensure or be an EL teacher.

- For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, Test Administrators must be licensed teachers. It is strongly recommended that the Test Administrator is trained in second language acquisition because this background supports the scoring of the domains that the Test Administrator is required to do.

- For WIDA ACCESS:
  - For WIDA ACCESS Online, the Test Administrator should be selected from the highest possible ranking from the list below. If a school has exhausted the availability of staff 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
  - For WIDA ACCESS Paper:
    - Speaking domain: The Test Administrator must be a licensed teacher. It is strongly recommended that the Test Administrator for the Speaking domain is trained in second language acquisition because this background supports the scoring of the domain that the Test Administrator is required to do.
    - All other domains: The Test Administrator may be selected using the ranked criteria above.
- For the WIDA Alternate ACCESS, MDE strongly recommends that the Test Administrator is someone who works with the student during instruction, is familiar with the student's response mode, and is someone with whom the student feels comfortable. If possible, it is best if the person who is familiar with the student is also a licensed teacher who is trained in second language acquisition because this background supports the scoring of the domains that the Test Administrator is required to do. In addition, typically only one Test Administrator administers the entire test.

Note: Districts are expected to maintain regular English learner services throughout the testing window. For additional information, refer to the *Guidance on English Learner Instruction during ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Testing* on the English Learner Education page of MDE's website.

Test Administrators for MCA

Test Administrators should be selected from the highest possible ranking from the list below. If a school has exhausted the availability of staff 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/Alt MCA

For MTAS/Alt MCA, MDE strongly recommends that the Test Administrator is someone who works with the student during instruction, is familiar with the student's response mode, and is someone with whom the student feels comfortable. If this is not possible, Test Administrators may be any district employee who has completed the required MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator trainings in that academic year.

Communication about Test Administration

Districts are required to meet specific testing calendar requirements to provide information to students and families about all district testing, including statewide testing (refer to Chapter 6). This includes providing information about parent/guardian options for refusing testing when requested, as well as providing access to the refusal form (refer to Chapter 9). To encourage participation, districts should consider communicating information to students and families about the use and value of assessment results in the school and district, and how statewide assessments fit into the district's system of assessments. The Students and Families Statewide Testing page of MDE's website includes information that may be provided to parents/guardians and students.

Student Resources for Testing

Districts must ensure that all students are familiar with the test they will take. 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. MDE does not specify which resources must be used. It is also recommended to have the Test Administrator use the student resources to ensure that they are familiar with the student's test experience, especially if they will be administering an accommodation or alternate assessment.

> All students must be familiar with the test they will take. Each district determines which resources are used.

For WIDA ACCESS, districts can use the resources on the Preparing for ACCESS Testing page of WIDA's website.

- The following are additional recommendations for resources for WIDA ACCESS Online administrations:
  - For students who are new to taking the WIDA ACCESS Online, the test demo and test practice are recommended.
    - The **test demo** is available for three grade-level clusters (grades 1-3, 4-5, and 6-12) to show students how to navigate different features of the test. It is recommended that students watch the test demo before taking the test practice.
    - The **test practice** can be used to help students become familiar with the WIDA ACCESS test format. The test practice can also be used to familiarize students with accommodations that are embedded in the test (such as repeat item audio and extended speaking response time). Note: The test practice contains items that are simple and not representative of the item difficulty a student will experience on the actual test.

- For students who have experience taking the WIDA ACCESS Online, the **sample items** are recommended. These items can be used to help students become familiar with the content and grade-level appropriate language development expectations, and they are representative of the item difficulty they will experience on the actual test. It may be helpful to review WIDA ACCESS score reports from the previous year and focus on domains where additional support may be needed.

- For students who will be testing using braille test materials, sample items and sample item user guides are available for download. In addition, each braille test kit includes sample items for the specified grade-level cluster and braille code.
- For all students, ensure they are familiar with how they will complete the Writing domain, as the response mode varies by grade band. Refer to *Test Administration Considerations for WIDA ACCESS* in Chapter 8 for more information.
- For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, there is a *Quick Start Guide* available for educators. It is recommended that the sample items be reviewed with students.

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, student resources are available on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. To be prepared for statewide assessments, students need to be familiar with the test format and types of items, rather than the content, since they prepare for the content through daily instruction based on the academic standards. If students are comfortable with the format of the test they will be taking, then they are better prepared to demonstrate what they know and can do during testing.

Paper and online versions of the SRTs are updated regularly, along with educator resources to provide guidance and tips for educators using the SRTs with their students.

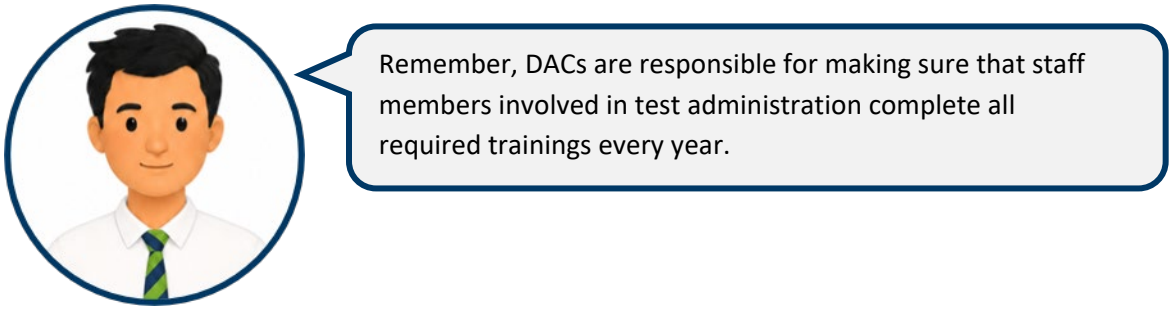
- For the online MCA SRTs, students select their grade level to review instructional videos and then practice navigating within the test, using available tools, and indicating answers for each item type. In addition, separate SRT resources for specific test supports and accommodations are available.
- For the paper MCA SRTs, students use the SRT that matches the paper test materials they will use to take the MCA. This will help them become familiar with the look and feel of the paper test materials, as well as how to indicate answers for each item type. Available paper SRTs include 12-point regular print and 18- and 24-point large print for Math MCA, 12-point regular print and 18-point large print for Reading and Science MCAs, and scripts for all three subjects. Braille versions of the paper MCA SRTs can be ordered from Pearson.
- For the Alt MCA SRTs, online demonstration forms are available to help Test Administrators and students become familiar with the online test. In addition, paper versions of all test administration materials are available for hybrid or paper administrations. Braille versions of the paper Alt MCA SRTs can be ordered from Pearson.
- Calculators, math tables, and formula sheets are also available on the Student Tools and Supports page so students can practice using these tools outside of the SRTs.

For the Alt MCA SRTs, sample Task Administration Manuals, Data Collection Forms, Presentation Pages, Passages and Phenomena Books, Visual Descriptions, and Response Option Cards are available to prepare both Test Administrators and students for test administration. Released Math MTAS questions are available to help Test

Administrators and students become familiar with the format of this test. Sample materials are also available for items being field tested for the upcoming Math Alt MCA. All of these resources can be found on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page (under the MTAS and Additional Alt MCA Resources expandable heading).

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 school year** prior to testing. This applies to new staff members associated with test administration and staff members who have been involved in previous statewide test administrations. 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 administering tests; it also includes helping to organize secure test materials, having keys (and therefore access) to areas where secure test materials are stored, preparing technology, or being present in the room during testing (for example, 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.

MDE recommends that staff who have access only to the test results also complete the *Test Security Training*, as it covers educational data privacy laws and maintaining the integrity of the test results.

Each district determines their own timelines for when training must be completed. While staff, like Test Administrators, must be trained before they administer and monitor tests, consider other test administration tasks that may occur earlier, such as handling secure materials or preparing technology. In addition, some students may be testing earlier (for example, for WIDA assessments or earlier scheduled testing for a given grade), in which case earlier training would be needed in advance of when staff will 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 test vendor systems.

- The Learning Management System (LMS) contains trainings provided by MDE and Pearson. **New!** Staff must have a LaunchPad account to log in to the LMS.
- The WIDA Secure Portal provides access to required training courses for WIDA assessments, available under Assessment Training. DACs (or other designated staff) must provide Test Administrators with logins and passwords for the WIDA Secure Portal to complete trainings.
- Training completions can also be tracked annually through the test vendors' systems.
- In the LMS, DACs and users with the Assessment Administrator (AA) user role in LaunchPad can track training completions. The LMS can also be used to mark trainings completed as a group.
- In the WIDA Secure Portal, District and School Assessment Coordinators can track training completions. Note: Only a record of training completion (which is based on passing the certification quiz) is shown; the specific modules completed are not available.

Training Documentation

Districts must have documentation showing that each staff member involved in testing completed their required trainings, and each district decides what this documentation looks like (for example, training completion records from test vendor systems, electronic documents, sign-in sheets with signatures, signed documents). However, the documentation must show completion for individual staff members; summary statements (such as, 30 staff members were trained) are not allowed. If the documentation is completed electronically (for example, collected in an online form), it must show which individual staff members completed each training.

- While compiling a list of names into an internal spreadsheet is a valuable tool for a district to track training logistics, that spreadsheet itself does not constitute proof of completion, and individual completions must be documented.
- Training documentation must include the title of the training(s) and the date the training(s) were completed. For example, if a sign-in sheet is used, the sheet must indicate the training(s) completed (such as the *Test Security Training* and district policies and procedures) as well as the date(s) of the training(s).
- To ensure staff have completed all required trainings for their roles and to help track training documentation, districts should consider developing a list that identifies individual roles and the training required. Training documentation must include proof of completion for required trainings and proof that staff received information or training on district-specific policies and procedures.

As noted in the *Document Retention Policy for Districts* in Appendix B, documentation of completed trainings 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.

- Training documentation for all required trainings, including documentation of how staff members received training on the district-specific policies and procedures and when, must be provided as part of the Assessment Security Record (ASR) submission for each staff member who is involved with a security violation.
- DACs need to certify in Test WES during Posttest Editing that all staff have completed required trainings.
- Annually, MDE will request and review training documentation from a sampling of schools. Refer to *Monitoring and Audits* in Chapter 5.

A *Sample Group Training Documentation* template is located in Appendix A.

Test Security Training

All staff involved in testing are required to complete the *Test Security Training* each school year. This training provides details on test security policies and procedures, and it includes the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*, which staff are also required to sign each school year to affirm that they understand their responsibilities related to test security and are committed to fulfilling them as required by their role in testing.

Districts have three options for how staff will complete the *Test Security Training*:

- Have staff individually complete the training online
- Present the training in a group setting and have attendees sign the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*
- Have staff review the Test Security Checklist and sign the Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure

The district may use any combination of these options as long as all staff are trained and documentation of each individual staff member's completed trainings is maintained.

While some staff may feel that the content of the *Test Security Training* is not relevant to them, especially if they only have keys and access to test materials, MDE requires that the training and signing of the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* be completed each school year so all involved staff have an understanding of test security and data integrity and why it matters. Security violations are often unintentional, resulting from a lack of awareness, and the training is intended to give staff a broad sense of what is and is not allowed.

Staff Complete the Training Online

The *Test Security Training* is available as a course in the Learning Management System (LMS). For documentation, DACs and staff with the AA user role can track training completion by staff using the available LMS reports. No other documentation is required for training completion.

Present the Training to Staff in a Group Setting

Districts may present the training in a group setting by navigating through the required content and/or video trainings for all staff present. In order to ensure that staff are able to read and agree to the requirements outlined in the training, a copy of the *Test Security Checklist*, which includes the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*, must be provided for each attendee to sign. Districts may choose the method that works best to

ensure that all staff have the ability to review the requirements outlined in the *Test Security Checklist*. This includes, but is not limited to, the following options:

- Printing a copy of the *Test Security Checklist* for each staff member or sharing one copy of the *Test Security Checklist* with a separate sheet attached for signatures.
- Copying the *Test Security Checklist* into an online form to track completion electronically. This is acceptable as long as the entire checklist (including the *Assurance*) is included and matches the current-year version posted to the Minnesota Assessment Hub exactly. If the district adds any additional information, it must be clearly noted as district-specific content. If the checklist is completed electronically, the documentation must show which individual staff members completed it and dates.

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 (such as along with district policies and procedures training), the *Test Security Training* must be used and cannot be replaced by a district training.

Staff Complete the Test Security Checklist

Districts may provide the paper *Test Security Checklist*, which includes the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure*, to staff who would not otherwise be accessing the LMS or attending other trainings. For staff who need information available in a language other than English, the *Test Security Checklist* is also available in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Districts may also copy the *Test Security Checklist* into an online form to track completion electronically. This is acceptable as long as the requirements outlined in the section above are met.

Summary of Test Security Training Documentation Requirements

Table 28 provides a summary of the documentation DACs are required to maintain for the *Test Security Training*.

Table 28. Test Security Training Documentation Summary

Mode of Test Security Training	Documentation Required
Staff Completed Training Online	• Track completion through the LMS reports
Presented to Staff in Group Setting	• Documentation of who attended (for example, sign-in sheet with each participant's full name, role in testing, and signature)* • Signed paper *Assurance* for each staff member, signature sheet of group copy of the *Checklist*,* or electronic documentation of individual completions for each staff member (via an online form) • Refer to the *Sample Group Training Documentation* in Appendix A.
Staff Completed the Checklist	• Paper copies of completed *Test Security Checklists** or electronic documentation of individual completions for each staff member (via online form)

*Electronic copies of the paper documents are also allowed.

If presented to staff as a group training, paper copies (or an electronic copy of the paper document) showing the staff members present (such as sign-in sheets with signatures) and the *Assurance* that staff signed (using the option determined by the district) must be kept on file in case of a security violation. Keeping the copies signed by staff is required, even though DACs and users with the AA role can mark trainings completed as a group in the LMS for staff who completed a paper checklist. While this LMS functionality may allow districts better tracking of training completion, it does not capture the level of detail needed for a possible MDE investigation.

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Training

While the *Test Security Training* addresses MDE policies and procedures, each DAC has a responsibility to develop additional policies and procedures for test administration that must be communicated to staff and followed. DACs are also expected to annually review and update their district policies and procedures to reflect current expectations for test security practices. Refer to *Required District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments* in Chapter 5 for further information. Each district determines how this information will be communicated to staff as appropriate for their role; for example, this may be through a district or school training or in writing (as an email, handout, etc.). For WIDA assessments, district policies and procedures information or training must be provided to applicable staff before those administrations, in addition to policies and procedures information or training that will be provided to staff later for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA.

Test-Specific Trainings

There are test-specific trainings required for Test Administrators for the WIDA assessments, MCAs, and MTAS/Alt MCA. These test-specific trainings must be completed each school year as outlined below in Table 29 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 training once each school year. DACs may also require other staff members, such as School Assessment Coordinators or administrators, to complete any of these trainings to become familiar with the requirements for the staff in their buildings. In the LMS, all trainings are posted as individual courses and are assigned tags by role in test administration for Learners to access the required courses for their role(s).

If there are additional staff members in the testing room, such as paraprofessionals, the district must determine if test-specific trainings other than the *Test Security Training* are required. 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 Administrator and may be assisting with the administration of the test, the applicable test-specific training should be completed.

For WIDA assessments, trainings must be completed individually in the WIDA Secure Portal to ensure that the certification quiz and any scoring practice are completed by each Test Administrator. For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, test-specific trainings may be completed individually within the LMS or in a group training, as determined by the district. If completed in a group training, all documentation requirements outlined previously must be followed and staff must complete all required parts. For example, if some Test Administrators will be monitoring both paper and online administrations, both components of the *Administering the MCA* training must be completed and documentation must specify all training components completed by each staff member.

WIDA Assessment Test Administrators

All Test Administrators are required to complete the applicable courses (or modules within courses) and pass the **current-year certification quizzes** in online WIDA trainings prior to administering any WIDA assessments.

Updated training courses are released annually, and the current-year versions must be completed. Courses that include WIDA Screener are released in July, and the remaining courses are typically released on Sept. 1.

- From the WIDA Secure Portal, Test Administrators find and enroll in the applicable course(s).
- The courses are launched in Canvas, the learning management system used by WIDA. Required courses/modules are listed in Table 29, but other courses/modules may be required by the district.
- Note: The certification quizzes include multiple steps to document completion of training requirements. All steps in the certification quiz must be fulfilled in order for the course to show as completed.

MDE-required trainings in the LMS must also be completed once each school year. Test Administrators who are giving more than one type of WIDA assessment (for example, administering both WIDA ACCESS Online and Paper) are required to complete multiple WIDA trainings, but they only need to complete any MDE-required trainings in the LMS once each school year. Refer to Table 29 for training requirements for WIDA assessments.

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators, specific courses for each assessment are provided in the LMS. Note: For the MCA, the required *Administering the MCA* course includes three options based on the format of the test being administered: administering online assessments only, administering paper assessments only, or administering both paper and online assessments. Test Administrators must select the option that best fits their role, as determined by the District or School Assessment Coordinator. Refer to Table 29 for training requirements for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators.

Additional Training Resources for Staff

In addition to required trainings, optional trainings are available related to specific test administration tasks (such as managing proctor groups and entering data/student responses) along with others related to specific responsibilities (such as handling secure test materials and understanding universal supports and accommodations) that DACs can require staff to complete as needed.

Training Resources for District Assessment Coordinators

In addition to the resources listed above, MDE and test vendors offer training opportunities specifically for DACs throughout the year. The weekly *Assessment Update* email newsletter provides detailed information on trainings as they are offered or available.

For new DACs, a series of trainings are provided throughout the year, including a *New DAC Orientation* in the fall. These trainings, which are posted in the LMS, include information on scheduling testing, training requirements, monitoring and audits, district policies and procedures, and student precode files. MDE also offers monthly Q&A sessions throughout the school year as additional support for DACs. The *MDE District Assessment Coordinator Trainings and Q&A Sessions* document outlines the training opportunities provided by

MDE and is located on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable heading).

It is the responsibility of new and experienced DACs to review applicable MDE training resources and attend MDE trainings specific to test security and test administration each school year. The following are required in order for DACs to be considered trained:

- Review the *Assessment Update* newsletters; these newsletters are also posted on the Assessment Update page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.
- Review the current version of this *Procedures Manual.*
  - New DACs should review the entire manual.
  - Experienced DACs should minimally review new or clarified information and review complete chapters as needed.
- Complete the *Test Security Training* in the LMS.
  - Note: If the district hires a new DAC (or another person working closely with testing in a similar position) over the summer when MDE online trainings have been removed for updating, MDE recommends using the *Test Security 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 *MDE DAC Test Administration Training*. MDE tracks completion of the training through the LMS.

As part of the staff training certification in Test WES, DACs must certify that they completed all required DAC trainings and reviewed all required resources. If there is a security violation, training documentation will be requested by MDE.

Though not required, MDE recommends that DACs review trainings required for other staff for all statewide assessments 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 test vendors to create training materials for the district or to provide to district staff to view or read.

Summary of Training Requirements

Table 29 outlines the MDE-required trainings discussed in this section that must be completed each school year. Districts may require that staff complete other trainings, or staff may be required to complete trainings for multiple roles (for example, if they are administering both the WIDA ACCESS and MCA). Email mde.testing@state.mn.us for an electronic version of this table that can be customized if needed.

Table 29. Annual Training Requirements for Statewide Assessments

Role	Training Requirements
District Assessment Coordinator	• Review *Procedures Manual* • Review weekly *Assessment Update* newsletters • *Test Security Training* • *MDE DAC Test Administration Training* (live session or recording)
School Assessment Coordinator	• *Test Security Training* • Other district-required trainings • District-specific policies and procedures training/information
Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Administrators[1]	• *Test Security Training* • District-specific policies and procedures training/information

WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten Test Administrator	• *WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: Administration and Scoring* course
	  ○ All modules
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

WIDA ACCESS Online Test Administrator	• *WIDA ACCESS Online: Administration* course[2]
	  ○ Module 1: *Introduction*
	  ○ All content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks*
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	  ○ *Active Monitoring for Statewide Assessments*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

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

[2] The *WIDA ACCESS Online: Administration* and *WIDA ACCESS Paper: Administration* courses include numerous pages that explain tasks typically completed by District or School Assessment Coordinators. Only Module 1, *Introduction* (all content) and all content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks* are required by MDE for Test Administrators. These pages address all domains and grade clusters of the WIDA ACCESS and cover all of the content required to pass the certification quiz.

Role	Training Requirements

WIDA ACCESS Paper Test Administrator	• *WIDA ACCESS Paper: Administration* course[2]
	  ○ Module 1: *Introduction*
	  ○ All content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks*
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• *Speaking for Grades 1-5: Scoring WIDA ACCESS Paper* course and/or *Speaking for Grades 6-12: Scoring WIDA ACCESS Paper* course
	  ○ All modules (including recommended practice)
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	  ○ *Active Monitoring for Statewide Assessments*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

WIDA ACCESS Braille Test Administrator	• *WIDA ACCESS Braille: Administration* course
	  ○ All modules
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• *WIDA ACCESS Paper: Administration* course[2]
	  ○ Module 1: *Introduction*
	  ○ All content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks*
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• *Speaking for Grades 1-5: Scoring WIDA Screener and WIDA ACCESS Braille* course and/or *Speaking for Grades 6-12: Scoring WIDA Screener and WIDA ACCESS Braille* course
	  ○ All modules (including recommended practice)
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	  ○ *Active Monitoring for Statewide Assessments*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

[2] The *WIDA ACCESS Online: Administration* and *WIDA ACCESS Paper: Administration* courses include numerous pages that explain tasks typically completed by District or School Assessment Coordinators. Only Module 1, *Introduction* (all content) and all content marked with a star symbol on the *Training Tasks* are required by MDE for Test Administrators. These pages address all domains and grade clusters of the WIDA ACCESS and cover all of the content required to pass the certification quiz.

Role	Training Requirements

WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrator	• *WIDA Alternate ACCESS: Administration and Scoring* course
	  ○ All modules
	  ○ Pass the certification quiz
	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

MCA Test Administrator	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	  ○ *Active Monitoring for Statewide Assessments*
	  ○ *Administering the MCA*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrator	• In the Learning Management System (LMS):
	  ○ *Test Security Training*
	  ○ *MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administration Overview*
	  ○ *MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administration and Scoring Practice*
	• District-specific policies and procedures training/information

Chapter 8 — Test Administration

Overview

This chapter contains information on the policies and procedures related to administering statewide assessments. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

- For detailed information on administering the WIDA assessments, refer to the *WIDA ACCESS Checklist* on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website (under Member/State Pages dropdown menu at the top of the page) and the *Test Coordinator Manual* and *Test Administrator Manual* in the WIDA Secure Portal.
- For detailed information on administering the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, refer to the resources on the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Note: All statewide assessments must be administered in person by district staff. There are no remote online administration options available for any assessments.

Tracking Secure Test Materials Provided to Students

Each district determines its own procedures for keeping test materials secure for all assessments and must document the necessary steps in their district's policies and procedures (refer to Chapter 5 for additional information). Any staff member who has access to secure test materials must complete the *Test Security Training* annually. Refer to Chapter 7 for more information.

Secure test materials for online tests include student test 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). Additionally, for MCA, all paper materials provided to students (including math formula sheets, math tables, or translated/glossed word lists) must be treated as secure materials after testing has begun since students may have used them as scratch paper.

- Student test tickets and any materials used as scratch paper must contain the student's name and must be collected at the end of each testing session before students leave the testing room. Requiring students to write their names on these materials allows the Test Administrator to ensure that they have accounted for scratch paper and other materials from all students. It also allows the materials to be reused on subsequent days of testing if the district chooses.
- Testing may be scheduled over multiple days, and these materials must be kept secure between testing sessions, following the district's policies (for example, Test Administrators secure materials in a locked drawer or cabinet or return materials to the District or School Assessment Coordinator between sessions).

Districts also must consider how student test tickets are provided to staff, especially if electronic copies are shared. Since student test tickets provide access to secure test content and include private student data, districts should first consider their district policies for how private student data is shared and whether sharing electronically is allowed. If sharing electronically is allowed, districts should consider additional measures if they:

- Send student test tickets via email. In this case, districts should consider including reminders to staff that test tickets are secure materials, should be accessed only by authorized staff for test administration or data entry, and should then be deleted following test administration.
- Save student test tickets as electronic files in a secure shared folder to which multiple staff have access. Districts should consider limiting who has access to the folder, if possible, and ensure test tickets are deleted following test administration.

Student test tickets and login information should not be emailed to MDE, as they contain personally identifiable information. If contacting MDE via email for a test administration situation or a security violation, only student MARSS/SSID numbers should be provided.

Districts must keep paper test materials secure at all times and track them from receipt until they are returned to the respective test vendor. 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 materials. District and School Assessment Coordinators and Test Administrators can use the *Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist* (available in Appendix A) to assign materials to students.

Districts should ensure that all applicable test materials (such as student test tickets, paper test books, and scratch paper) have been organized by the Test Administrator for each student at least one day before test administration. Be sure to maintain security by following all test security procedures outlined in the district policies and procedures throughout administration.

Note: For alternate assessments and some accommodations, test materials should be provided further in advance to prepare for testing; refer to the *Maintaining Security of Test Content and Test Materials* section in Chapter 5 for more information.

Verifying and Correcting Student Information for Testing

It is crucial for districts to verify that the student information (including name, grade, MARSS/SSID, and the district and school information) loaded into the test vendor systems is accurate prior to testing. This information appears in online tests and is preprinted on student labels for WIDA ACCESS test booklets. Never allow a student to take an online test assigned to another student; never provide a student with a WIDA ACCESS Paper booklet that has another student's label on it. This will result in test scores being attributed to the wrong student.

WIDA Assessment Administrations

In December, MDE sends a single precode file containing English learner (EL) enrollment information to DRC. This information appears in WIDA AMS and is also preprinted on student labels for test booklets. After this initial precode file is sent, districts must add newly enrolled or newly identified ELs directly into WIDA AMS. When adding students, ensure all student information entered matches student enrollment data **exactly.** Although WIDA AMS does not require all fields to be completed when adding a student, ensuring that the correct MARSS/SSID number, date of birth, middle name, District Student ID number (MARSS local use number, if used in the district), and gender information are entered will help decrease discrepancies in Test WES during Posttest Editing. Prior to testing and throughout the testing window, District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) should verify that all ELs are loaded into WIDA AMS.

For any WIDA assessment with scorable test booklets, 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 must be corrected in WIDA AMS. Any changes to student information in WIDA AMS will override information from the preprinted label.

If a student needs to test but did not receive a preprinted label, a District/School label must be used, and the student's demographic information must be indicated on the test booklet with a number 2 pencil. Careful attention must be paid to ensure student information is indicated accurately. Both the front and back of the test booklet contain several student demographic information fields, but not all fields are required. For Minnesota, only the following student information is required, and this Minnesota-specific guidance replaces the information provided by WIDA and DRC. Ensure the information indicated matches student enrollment data:

- 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/SSID number) including all leading zeroes
- Optional: District Student ID Number (MARSS local use number

If a student did not receive a preprinted label, the information needs to be indicated on the test booklet in pencil. Ensure all student information matches student enrollment data **exactly**.

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. For student information (such as last name or district name) that is longer than the space allotted on the test booklet, indicate as much of the information as can fit in the field.

For all WIDA ACCESS scorable test booklets, confirm that there are no additional markings or incorrectly bubbled information. Accidental markings and/or incorrect bubbling by students can affect how the test booklet is scanned and scored (for example, if the incorrect grade is bubbled, the student's test may not be scored correctly). Only test booklets with Pre-ID or District/School labels are processed by DRC. Missing labels and incomplete or inaccurate student information can result in late or missing student scores.

The WIDA Alternate ACCESS contains an Individual Characteristics Questionnaire (ICQ). ICQ information is reported on the individual student report to help educators make EL reclassification decisions. The ICQ is available on the WIDA website for education teams to complete collaboratively prior to their testing window. MDE recommends that the entire ICQ be completed for each student participating in the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Administrations

For online testing and data entry, DACs must verify that each student is rostered for the subject and test expected.

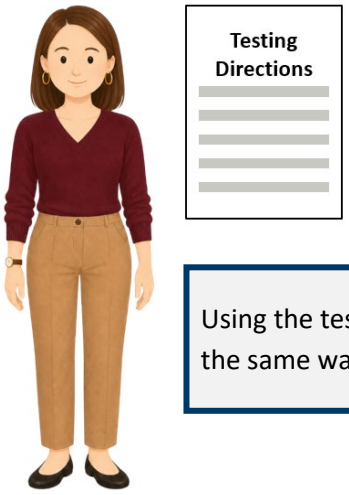
- MDE sends student information to Pearson in nightly precode files. Districts cannot manually add students or edit student information directly in LaunchPad and ADAM. If changes are needed, districts must submit updated student enrollment information to MDE or make updates using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES (refer to Chapter 6 for more information).
- Student information submitted in enrollment data to MDE will typically be reflected in LaunchPad and ADAM in two business days; students manually updated in Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES will typically be visible the next business day.
- It is recommended that districts confirm that all students who will test are listed in the administration and appropriate proctor group at least 1-2 days before testing.

Many districts use a Student Information System (SIS) to view and manage student data. Keep in mind that the data in the district's SIS is not necessarily the same information that has been uploaded to MDE to run through the MARSS Web Edit System (MARSS WES). If there are discrepancies, use available comparison reports to cross-check the data submitted through MARSS A/B files and synced with Ed-Fi, as Ed-Fi data is synced directly from the district's SIS.

Additional information is available on the Ed-Fi page of MDE's website. For questions about Ed-Fi, contact ed-fi.mde@state.mn.us. For questions about MARSS submissions, contact marss@state.mn.us.

Directions During Testing

For assessment results to reflect what Minnesota students know and can do, the administration of the statewide tests should be as standardized as possible among schools within districts and among districts throughout the state. For this reason, all Test Administrators must be familiar with and use the applicable directions throughout test administration, especially scripted instructions that must be read to students. While this section provides an overview of the directions for each test, refer to *What Help Test Administrators Can Give Students* later in this chapter for more information on their use during testing.



Using the testing directions ensures that tests are administered the same way for all students across the state.

WIDA Assessments

For WIDA assessments, the scripted instructions for students and guidance for Test Administrators are provided in the *Test Administrator Scripts*. The applicable *Test Administrator Scripts* are automatically included in the initial test materials shipment and may be ordered through additional orders in WIDA AMS as needed. The grades 4-12 *Test Administrator Script* is also available in the WIDA Secure Portal. These scripted instructions must be read to students for every test administration.

The *Test Administrator Scripts* are considered secure materials for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA ACCESS Paper, WIDA ACCESS Online grades 1-3, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS because some test content is included in the scripts. Test Administrators must keep these scripts secure when preparing for and throughout test administration and return them with secure test materials.

The *Test Administrator Script* for WIDA ACCESS Online grades 4-12 is not secure as it contains only general guidance by domain and includes no test content. Districts may choose to allow Test Administrators to access the grades 4-12 *Test Administrator Script* electronically during test sessions rather than using a printed copy. If accessed on an electronic device, Test Administrators must follow MDE and district policies regarding device use during testing (for example, not checking email or using the device for other work during testing).

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

The MCA *Testing Directions* have two key components: 1) scripted instructions for Test Administrators to provide to students and 2) information that Test Administrators use to guide and support students. These components are described in more detail in the following sections. MTAS/Alt MCA 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 MTAS/Alt MCA Task Administration Manual.

Testing Directions for MCA

There are two versions of the MCA *Testing Directions*: *Testing Directions: Online* for online administrations and *Testing Directions: Paper* for paper administrations.

The *Testing Directions* contain no test content and are not secure. They are updated annually and posted on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Both versions of the *Testing Directions* are also posted in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish in both written and recorded audio formats, which allows Test Administrators to provide translated directions to students as a universal support; however, only the portions read aloud to students are translated. Refer to Chapter 4 for more information on translated *Testing Directions*.

In addition to being posted on the Minnesota Assessment Hub, the *Testing Directions: Paper* are also included along with the initial test materials shipment (if paper test materials are sent) and are available in additional orders. Likewise, the *Testing Directions: Online* are available in additional orders (at a quantity of one copy per every 30 students).

There are two sections of the *Testing Directions* that must be provided to Test Administrators and used for every test administration: *Script to Read to Students* and *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance.* For online administrations, the transcript of the student directions must also be provided so that Test Administrators can repeat any of those scripted instructions as needed. These sections must be provided in their entirety, and no

portion of the scripted instructions can be removed. Districts may work with Test Administrators prior to testing to determine what will be said for the open portions that districts fill in (such as details on how testing is scheduled). This information can be communicated to Test Administrators through training or entered in the blank fields available in the versions posted online before the directions are provided to Test Administrators.

> All Test Administrators must use the *Script to Read to Students* and *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* sections for every test administration. For online administrations, Test Administrators must also have the transcript of the student directions available.

Districts are not required to provide the other sections of the *Testing Directions* to Test Administrators. Districts can decide which other reference information they will provide (such as portions of the *Test Administrator Checklist* or *Detailed Information* sections) and how they will present it (for example, as information in a district training on policies and procedures or as a physical checklist).

Districts may also allow Test Administrators to access the *Testing Directions* electronically during test sessions rather than using a printed copy. If accessed on an electronic device, Test Administrators must follow MDE and district policies regarding device use (such as not checking email or using the device for other work during testing).

Student Directions for MCA

For the online MCA, students review directions when they first sign in to their test. Text-to-speech directions are available for all subjects. The *Testing Directions: Online* contain a transcript of the student directions. Test Administrators may use this transcript to repeat directions to students as needed, as they are not allowed to 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*.

Calculator Use

All MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA test items can be solved in a variety of ways, and therefore calculators are not required; however, they may be used to answer items when a calculator is allowed. General guidelines on calculator use, allowable and prohibited handheld calculators, and the handheld calculator memory clearing policy are available in Appendix B, which can be provided to staff as needed. Students must be familiar with any calculator they will be using prior to test administration.

Calculator Use with Online MCAs

This section addresses the use of calculators on the online Math and Science MCAs. When a calculator is allowed, Texas Instruments (TI) and Desmos online calculators are available in TestNav. For the Math MCA, a hundreds chart and multiplication table are also available in addition to the calculators when calculator use is allowed. Refer to Table 30 for information on the types of online calculators available. For more information about Desmos calculators, refer to the Student Tools and Supports page on the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

- For the online grades 3-8 Math MCA, calculator and non-calculator items are divided into different groups, and the online calculators are available only in groups where a calculator is allowed. Students can **only** use the online calculators provided in TestNav. Use of a handheld calculator by a student on these online assessments invalidates the assessment. If a student's IEP or 504 plan states that a handheld calculator must be used as an accommodation, the student must take a paper test (refer to Chapter 4 for more information).
- For the online grade 11 Math MCA, a calculator can be used for the entire test since there are no non-calculator items. Online calculators are available in TestNav, and a handheld calculator may be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.
- For the online Science MCA, only a few items may ask the student to complete simple mathematical computations. Online calculators are available in TestNav for these items, and any type of handheld calculator may be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.

Note: Refer to Appendix B for allowable/prohibited handheld calculator requirements and memory-clearing procedures.

Table 30. Calculator Use for Online Assessments

Test	Type of Online Calculator in TestNav	Can Handheld Be Used?	Notes
Online Grades 3-8 Math MCA	• Grades 3-5: Basic (TI-108™ and Desmos Four-Function) • Grades 6-7: Scientific (TI-30XS™ and Desmos Scientific) • Grade 8: Graphing (TI-84 Plus CE™ and Desmos Graphing)	No	The online calculators and online math tables are available in TestNav when calculator use is allowed. If an IEP or 504 plan states that a handheld calculator or paper versions of math tables must be used, a paper test must be used.
Online Grade 11 Math MCA	Graphing (TI-84 Plus CE™ and Desmos Graphing)	Yes	The online calculators and online math tables are available in TestNav throughout the entire test. A handheld graphing calculator can be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.
Online Science MCA	Basic (TI-108™ and Desmos Four-Function)	Yes	The online calculators in TestNav are available for items that may ask the student to complete simple mathematical computations. Any type of handheld calculator can be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.

Calculator Use with Paper MCAs and MTAS/Alt MCA

This section addresses using a calculator with paper Math and Science MCAs, Math MTAS, and Science Alt MCA.

- For paper grades 3-8 Math MCA, a handheld calculator and printed math tables are allowed except for the non-calculator segment (Segment 1). Any student who does not follow directions and uses a calculator or math table for any items in Segment 1 will have their test invalidated because the assessment no longer measures what was intended.
- For paper grade 11 Math MCA, a handheld calculator and printed math tables are allowed in all segments of the test since there are no non-calculator segments.
- For paper Science MCA, some items may ask the student to complete simple mathematical calculations, and a handheld calculator may be used for these items. Even though only a few items may require a calculator, students may have their handheld calculator available for the duration of the test.

Table 31 outlines the handheld calculator type(s) that may be used by grade for paper MCAs. For the Math MCA, using a more advanced calculator than the one specified provides assistance that invalidates what is being assessed and requires the test to be invalidated. Using a less advanced calculator than the one specified is allowed but not recommended, as students would not have access to additional functions available on the advanced calculator. For the Science MCA, any handheld calculator that meets the allowable requirements may be used. Because only simple mathematical computations are required, using a more or less advanced calculator does not invalidate what is being assessed.

Table 31. Calculator Type Allowed for Paper MCAs

Test	Type of Calculator Allowed
Paper Grades 3-5 Math MCA	Basic or four-function
Paper Grades 6-7 Math MCA	Scientific
Paper Grades 8 and 11 Math MCA	Graphing
Paper Science MCA	Any (a basic or four-function calculator is all that is necessary; however, scientific or graphing calculators are also allowed)

For Math MTAS and Science Alt MCA, four-function calculators or any alternative device or system that the student uses as a proxy calculator may be used on any task or item. A calculator is not needed for the Science Alt MCA, so online calculators are not available on the test; however, a handheld calculator can be used with this online test if desired. Some examples of alternative devices or systems include:

- Assistive technology devices
- Math manipulatives
- Multiplication and hundreds tables
- Number line
- Number grid with smaller ranges of numbers than a hundreds table
- Abacus

General Test Administration Considerations

General Test Administration Procedures

Ensuring Students Are Ready

While each district determines their testing schedule within the testing window, there should be an established process to ensure that students are fully prepared to test. This means that students are not only provided any accommodations or supports that they require, but that they also have any necessary aids (such as glasses or

hearing aids) when they are to begin testing. If a student does not have required aids and/or has another extenuating circumstance arise (such as medication not taken, traumatic event), testing should be rescheduled. It is preferable to test a student on a makeup day rather than to proceed with testing in these situations.

Tracking the Students and Adults in Testing Rooms

Districts must have a process to track every individual who is present in each testing room during all test sessions (including initial administrations and makeup sessions). This includes all students, Test Administrator(s), and any other adults who enter the room. While a district may have a policy that no adults other than the Test Administrator is to enter the room, they need to account for the possibility of it occurring.

Refer to the template in Appendix A for an example of the required documentation. This process must be outlined within the *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments* document that each district creates and maintains, and it must be kept on file at the district for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place, as it may be requested by MDE at any time.

Student Identification

A student must be known to the Test Administrator in order to test. When students are unfamiliar to the Test Administrator (for example, Test Administrators for online schools), the Test Administrator must identify the student based upon a method determined by the district, such as a student picture ID, to ensure each student is taking the correct test.

Determining Sign-In Process

Districts must decide the process for signing students into the online tests. Some districts may have students sign themselves in, while others may sign students in before their arrival at the computer lab or testing room. If Test Administrators are signing students in for the MCA, they must not go past the “Welcome” screen. Note: Alt MCA Test Administrators are allowed to navigate past the “Welcome” screen to ensure all test settings are indicated appropriately and to prepare for the test administration. Decisions will likely be based on the age of the students and their experience with the computers or devices they are using. If students are signing in themselves, Test Administrators must ensure they distribute the correct test tickets to students and that each student verifies they are signing in with the correct information. Once signed in, students should verify that their name appears and must start or resume the test themselves so that test content is not seen by Test Administrators. Test tickets must be collected after each test session.

Students signing in with the wrong test ticket is a common misadministration. This is a key reminder to include in your district training.

Test Administration Considerations for WIDA ACCESS

For WIDA ACCESS Online grades 1-12, student information sent in the MDE precode file automatically places students into generic test sessions in WIDA AMS based on grade cluster and domain. Note: WIDA AMS refers to test sessions as registrations. These terms are interchangeable. For clarity, the *Procedures Manual* will continue to refer to them as test sessions. Districts do not need to edit the test sessions unless a student needs to be moved to a different session. However, districts may want to consider removing students from the generic sessions if they will not be testing online (for example, students taking the WIDA Alternate ACCESS or WIDA ACCESS Paper or students who will not be testing due to a parent/guardian refusal) and placing them in a "Not Testing Online" session. This helps ensure that these students do not log in to an online test session and may facilitate more accurate tracking of students' online test statuses.

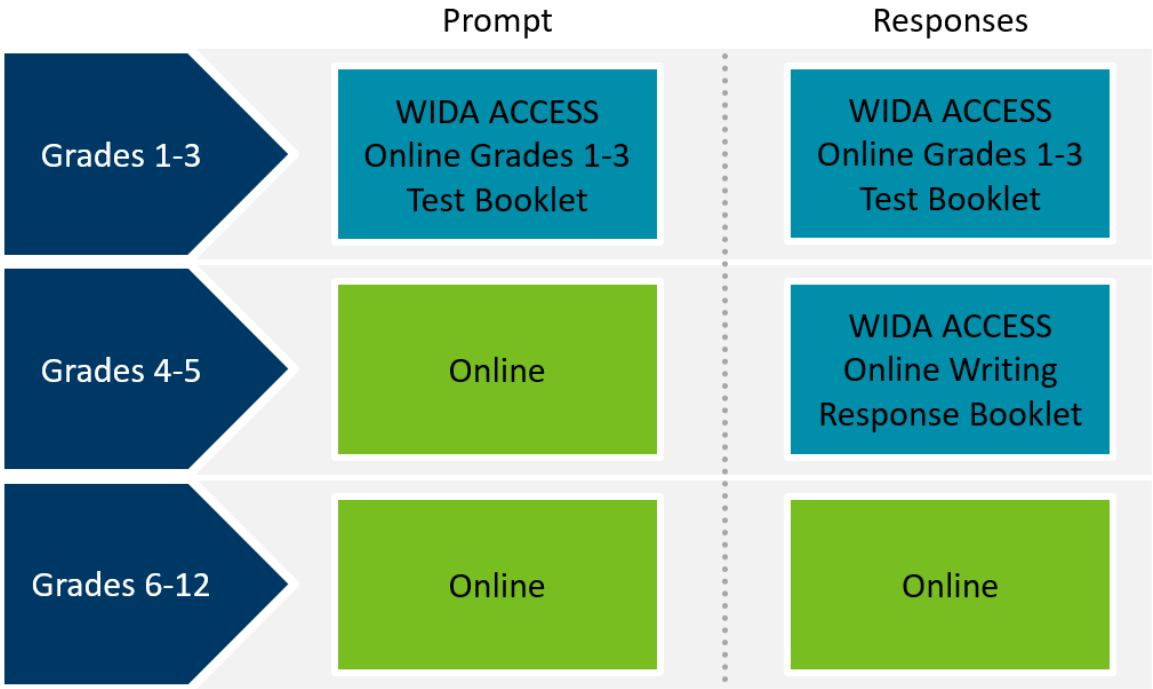
Student rosters for test sessions may be printed and provided to Test Administrators. Student test tickets contain student login information and are provided for each domain; these tickets must be printed and given to students to sign in to each test (or for staff to sign students in, depending on the district process). Printed test tickets contain private student information and provide access to the online tests and therefore must be kept secure. If districts choose to create their own sessions, it is especially important to select the correct response method (handwriting or keyboarding) when creating sessions for the Writing domain. See the *Writing Domain Considerations* section below for more information about selecting handwriting or keyboarding.

Writing Domain Considerations

While the WIDA ACCESS Online is primarily administered to students on a testing device, the Writing domain test is administered as follows:

- The WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test for students in grades 1-3 is administered entirely on paper. Students will read prompts and write their responses in the WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklet. There is no option to complete this test online.
- The WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test for students in grades 4-5 presents prompts to students online, but, by default, students respond in the WIDA ACCESS Online 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. This decision must be made on an individual student basis, in conjunction with the student, and prior to testing.
- The WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test for students in grades 6-12 is entirely online, and students will keyboard their responses.
    - Students in grades 6-12 who are inexperienced, unfamiliar, or uncomfortable with keyboarding may handwrite their responses in a WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklet. This decision must be made on an individual student basis, in conjunction with the student, prior to testing.
    - Students in grades 6-12 who need to handwrite their responses must be moved to a handwriting test session in WIDA AMS prior to testing.

Figure 9: Default Writing Modes for the WIDA ACCESS Online



Before beginning any WIDA ACCESS Online Writing for students in grades 4-12, verify that students are assigned to the session in WIDA AMS that aligns with their response mode. In addition, the Test Administrator must ensure that each student is familiar with how they will provide their responses.

A common misadministration occurs when students in grades 4-5 are not provided the WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklets or do not know how to provide their responses because they are viewing the prompts online. The grades 4-12 *Test Administrator Script* includes instructions for Test Administrators to ensure the test is administered correctly.

Note: The WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklet and the WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklet (for students in grades 4-12) are different than the scorable test booklets used for the WIDA ACCESS Paper. Ensure that students who are handwriting their responses in a WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test session are not using WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklets.

The WIDA ACCESS Online Writing test features a notepad tool within the test platform that functions as scratch paper. Anything typed in the notepad will not be captured or scored. Ensure that students enter their final responses into the main response field or write them in the applicable WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklet or WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklet.

WIDA ACCESS Paper Administration Considerations

Paper administrations of the entire WIDA ACCESS test are available as an accommodation for ELs with an IEP or 504 plan (refer to Chapter 4). WIDA ACCESS Paper administrations are also available as a support for ELs who have been enrolled in school in one of the 50 states of the United States or in the District of Columbia for less than a year (first enrolled within 12 months from the first day of the WIDA assessment testing window). For these students, the decision to administer WIDA ACCESS Paper should be based on consideration of the individual student's familiarity with the technology used in the online testing platform.

Before ordering a paper test for an eligible student who meets this criterion, please consider the following:

- Other than the provisions for the Writing domain test noted above and braille below, it is not possible to combine administration modes. Students cannot take some domains on paper and other domains online.
    - **Info!** For WIDA ACCESS Braille, a mixed-mode administration (for example, administering one domain in braille and another domain online) will result in a student receiving multiple partial Individual Student Reports (ISRs), one corresponding to each mode used. This is because WIDA ACCESS Braille tests will continue to use legacy scoring scales, and the resulting ISRs will reflect the 2012 PLDs until new braille materials aligned to the 2020 Edition are released.
- Students should be included in the decision-making process before selecting a paper administration.

New! For paper administrations, Test Administrators will stream the Listening and Speaking audio tracks from the WIDA ACCESS Paper Audio application in WIDA AMS. Test Administrators who use the streaming audio must disable all notifications on their device to avoid disrupting the test. CDs containing the audio recordings can be ordered during the Additional Material Ordering window and are required for the braille version of the assessment. WIDA ACCESS Braille administrations must continue to use CD-based audio, and Test Administrators must ensure CD players are available and functioning. Audio equipment must be treated as secure testing materials and monitored throughout the test session.

Note: Some new EL students may be identified as recently arrived English learners (RAELs) for accountability purposes. The RAEL accountability indicator does not affect which ELs are eligible for a paper administration. Refer to the *Recently Arrived English Learners (RAEL)/Newcomers* section of Chapter 9 for more information.

After Hours Testing

For test security purposes, districts should administer tests to students within limited weekday hours (6 a.m.-5 p.m.). If the district needs to test students outside of these hours/days, the DAC must contact mde.testing@state.mn.us at least three business days prior to the day of testing and provide the rationale for the extended hours, along with the dates and times of the planned test administrations. MDE will review the rationale and determine if an exception is allowed. If testing occurs outside of these hours, MDE will follow up with the DAC. Student tests may be invalidated if the DAC cannot confirm the situation where testing occurred.

Other Considerations

The WIDA ACCESS Listening test allows students to pause and resume the test session. When this happens, students can replay a listening prompt; however, students should use this functionality only in rare instances (such as a disruption in the room that prevented the student from hearing a prompt), **not** 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.

Test Administration Considerations for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

New! For **MCA online testing**, proctor groups are created and managed in ADAM by District and School Assessment Coordinators. Note: ADAM refers to test sessions as proctor groups. These terms are interchangeable. For clarity, the *Procedures Manual* will continue to refer to them as test sessions.

In addition, there are certain online accommodated forms available (such as the assistive technology online forms or read aloud forms) that require codes to be applied in Test WES for the specific online test form to be available. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information. More details are also found in the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* posted on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

For **MCA paper testing**, students write their answers in their paper test book (unless they require the scribe accommodation). Once the student has completed their test, district staff must enter the student responses from the paper test book into TestNav during the testing window in order for the test to be scored and reported. Note: Only student responses that are entered online are scored. Refer to *Data Entry for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA* later in this chapter for more information.

The **Reading and Science Alt MCAs** can be administered in an online, paper, or hybrid (any combination of online and paper) mode to meet student needs. In addition, assistive technology (AT) online forms are available to allow AT to interact directly with the online test in TestNav; codes need to be applied in Test WES in order for the specific online test form to be available. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional information. Proctor groups (also referred to as test sessions) are created and managed in ADAM by District and School Assessment Coordinators or other staff as assigned (including printing test tickets for online testing or data entry).

New! For the **Math MTAS**, proctor groups will now also be created and managed in ADAM in order for staff to enter MTAS data in TestNav. Detailed instructions for creating and managing proctor groups for MTAS/Alt MCA are located in the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

New! Districts must also now enter **Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI)** data in TestNav before entering MTAS data or Alt MCA student responses or administering the Alt MCA in an online or hybrid mode. MTAS/Alt MCA tests in TestNav will only be accessible for data entry or testing after the LCI data has been submitted. Refer to *Data Entry for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA* later in this chapter for more information.

After Hours Testing

For test security purposes, access to TestNav is limited. Throughout the testing windows, students can only log in to their tests between 6 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays. **New!** Staff can also only enter student responses or data between 6 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays. This limit in TestNav applies to all tests, including paper MCA, paper Alt MCA, MTAS, and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data entry. If the district needs to test students or enter student responses or data outside of these hours, the DAC must contact mde.testing@state.mn.us at least three business days prior to the day of testing and provide the rationale for the extended hours, along with the dates and times of the planned test administrations or data entry. MDE will review the rationale and determine if an exception is allowed.

Early Stopping Rule for Alt MCA

There is a very small percentage of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who have no consistent, observable system of expressive communication to convey responses to allow participation in assessments. For the Reading and Science Alt MCAs only, the early stopping rule can be applied so these students do not have to take the entire test. Students who are eligible to use the early stopping rule are students who:

- Use gestures (for example, waving, nodding, and shaking head), eye gaze, pointing, and/or vocalizations to communicate intentionally but do not yet use symbols or sign language.
- Communicate primarily through cries, facial expressions, changes in muscle tone, etc., but do not yet use symbols or sign language.

After indicating No Response (or NR) for the first three items on the test, the Test Administrator must decide whether the student will continue testing after a break or try testing on another day. Then, the Test Administrator will administer the next three items on the test. If the student has NR indicated after the administration of the first six items, testing should be stopped. The Test Administrator will record NR for the first six items in TestNav, move to the end of the test to answer the three Test Administrator Survey Questions, and then submit the test with the remainder of the items not having a response indicated. Note: While there is a reminder under item six in the Data Collection Form about using the early stopping rule if NRs are indicated for the first six items, there is no reminder in the online test. Additional details are included in the Task Administration Manual, and information on applying the early stopping rule in TestNav is addressed in the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Note: This rule is applicable to a small number of Alt MCA administrations. The early stopping rule should not be applied based on a student's behavior, frustration level, English proficiency, or knowledge of the content. The test can be paused as appropriate.

The early stopping rule should not be applied based on a student's behavior, frustration level, English proficiency, or knowledge of the content. The test can be paused as appropriate.

An early stopping rule is not available for the Math MTAS, and the test must be completed to receive a valid score. Applying the early stopping rule for the Alt MCA results in a valid score. Refer to Chapter 6 for more information.

Cell Phone and Other Prohibited Personal Device Policy

Policy for Students

Students must not use or access cell phones, wearable technology, or any other devices during testing, including during breaks or when they finish testing for the day. “Wearable technology” is defined as devices that may be worn on a student’s body that can electronically send, receive, or capture information (for example, smartwatches, fitness trackers, Bluetooth headphones, smart glasses). Note: The only exceptions to this policy are the use of approved, supported devices (such as assistive technology) for taking the online test or if the device is used as a medical monitor (see below for details).

District and School Assessment Coordinators must develop and train staff on district/school-specific cell phone/device policies and procedures. Test Administrators, in turn, must understand how to implement these policies and procedures 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. MDE does not have a specific list of all prohibited devices. For questions on device or technology use, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Note: Even if a device has a “school mode” meant to limit device functionality, this mode may not work the same across all types of technology. If a student is wearing a device that is in school mode, the district must investigate to confirm that this mode prevents any risks to test security.

Remember to make sure Test Administrators know what kinds of wearable technology to look for on testing days.

Wearable technology includes:

- Cell phones
- Audio devices
- Smartwatches
- Smart glasses
- Fitness trackers
- Other devices that can send/receive information

Districts must implement policies and procedures restricting student access to cell phones and other devices during testing in order to maintain test security and prevent disruptions for other students. Examples of district procedures include collecting cell phones and wearable technology, verifying phones and devices are turned off, or requiring students to store and turn off phones and other devices so they are inaccessible during test administration. While districts may allow teachers to determine their own classroom cell phone policies for instruction, no teacher has the authority to allow a student to access a cell phone during statewide assessments.

- Students wearing Bluetooth headphones, including wired headphones that have Bluetooth capability, is a common misadministration. Ensure a process is in place to prevent students from wearing Bluetooth headphones before they start testing, while they are testing, and after they have exited or submitted their test but are still in the testing room. This may require turning off the Bluetooth functionality on wired headphones.

- Due to rising plagiarism, including responses generated by artificial intelligence (AI), there is increased concern related to the WIDA ACCESS Speaking and Writing tests. Ensure Test Administrators provide continuous active monitoring to prevent plagiarism on these tests.

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 (such as a ringtone or vibration) on a device kept in a backpack or pocket, the district procedure may be that the student hand it directly to the Test Administrator 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 doubt about whether 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 may not be used in the testing room. If the student has exited or submitted the test and accesses a cell phone or other prohibited device, the district will need to take further action to determine if test security or the integrity of other students' tests were violated. The student's completed test is not invalidated in this case because the test itself was not affected.

The test code for invalidations due to cell phone or device access is INV-D for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA and INV for the affected domain(s) of a WIDA assessment. If cell phone or device access occurs on a WIDA assessment, all previous domains taken in the same sitting need to be invalidated. For any statewide assessment, a test invalidation must be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) and kept on file at the district. If a test is invalidated, the student's test score is not included in individual or summarized data—the INV test code will appear instead. The district will need to follow the policies and procedures they have developed for students accessing their devices during testing. This may involve verifying whether or not test security has been violated by checking pictures and messages or determining which applications the student accessed during the testing (the *Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide* in Appendix B may be used for guidance). If there was a security violation (for example, the student used the cell phone to take a picture of the test), information must also be submitted through Assessment Security Records (ASR) for further investigation by MDE.

The only exceptions to this policy are the use of supported, approved devices (such as assistive technology) for taking the online test or if the device is used as a medical monitor.

- Personal hearing aids and other amplification systems are allowed. If the device includes Bluetooth capabilities, the Test Administrator must confirm that the audio is connected only to the testing device if testing online. If the amplification can be heard by others, the student must take the assessment in an individual setting.
- **Info!** If a student wears prescription smart glasses, the Test Administrator must ensure that the camera(s) on the frame of the glasses are covered and turned off, if possible. Audio recording features that can be uploaded on a device later must also be turned off.
- If a supported device is used to take the test (for example, to access a word-to-word online dual-language dictionary or an approved AT device), it cannot be used for any other purpose during testing, including during breaks, and must be turned off or put away after the student has completed testing.
- If a device is used as a medical monitor, this must be officially documented in the student's IEP, 504 plan, or health plan. This information should be communicated to the Test Administrator prior to the

test session to ensure the special circumstance for testing is known and carried out, including information about how the student must retain the device and how they will need to access it. If testing in a group, the student must notify the Test Administrator before accessing the device, and the Test Administrator must ensure the device is not accessed for other purposes.

- If this need for the medical device is not already documented in the student's IEP, 504 plan, or health plan, then documentation from a medical professional must be provided in order for the student to retain their device during testing.
- This information must be included on a TAR and reference the necessity of the medical device as indicated in the documentation that was reviewed. An example could be, "As noted in the student's IEP, student X requires that their cell phone be used as a medical monitor [and any description needed about the specific student's use of the device]."

Policy for Test Administrators and Staff

To allow Test Administrators to continue active monitoring with the least disruption, districts may permit Test Administrators to use their cell phones, wearable technology, or other electronic devices to alert other staff of issues (for example, sick student in the room, technical issues). If an issue arises, communication options could include a phone call, email, text, or instant message, or hanging a sign outside the door, depending on the district's procedures. Devices can also be used to access the WIDA ACCESS *Test Administrator Scripts* or MCA *Testing Directions* electronically. Note: Test Administrators may never look at, photograph, or communicate test content when assisting with a technical issue (refer to *Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues* below).

Test Administrators may not check email or work on their devices, and cell phones and wearable technology should be silenced to reduce disruptions. If a district chooses to allow Test Administrators to use devices for contacting other staff during testing or accessing directions, the district must place particular emphasis on proper and improper device use when they communicate district policies and procedures for testing.

Staff, such as the DAC or Technology Coordinator, who may be going between rooms or helping troubleshoot technical issues may also use devices to contact the test vendor's help desk; however, they should step out of the room to make calls, if possible, to minimize disruptions. Note: Students must not be left unsupervised while testing is in progress.

Monitoring Test Administration

A critical component of successful test administration is having Test Administrators actively monitor students at all times. "Active monitoring" means carefully observing student behavior and ensuring students are working independently, making progress on their tests and test security policies and procedures are upheld.

Active monitoring may look different depending on the type of testing room and the number of students testing. For example, in a small computer lab or classroom with a small group of students, Test Administrators may be able to stay in the front of the room and monitor all students. However, in a large computer lab or classroom, they will need to circulate around the room. Walking around the testing room discourages prohibited behavior and makes Test Administrators available to answer allowable questions and respond to unexpected situations.

Depending on the setting, more than one Test Administrator may be needed to ensure appropriate and effective active monitoring. Efforts should be made to have at least one Test Administrator for every 30 students for most assessments (smaller group sizes are needed for WIDA ACCESS Speaking and Writing); refer to Chapter 7 for more information. Additional Test Administrators or other precautions should be considered if more students than the typical classroom size are testing and/or the testing room is not a conducive setting for active monitoring by a single staff member.

Test Administrators must actively monitor students throughout the entire test administration, even if students have been successfully testing for a period of time and do not have any questions. Examples of prohibited Test Administrator activities include planning lessons, grading papers, working online, reading a book or newspaper, or talking casually with other staff.

While the Test Administrator may need to check online test status on the computer (depending on the district's policies and procedures), or stop to answer a student's question, the primary focus must remain on actively monitoring students who are testing, even when test administration or technical issues arise. Students must be monitored by trained staff at all times and cannot be left unsupervised or with untrained staff during testing. Districts must have a plan for providing assistance to Test Administrators (such as by calling on additional trained staff) when issues arise so active monitoring can continue. If a student answers any test items while a Test Administrator is not present, that student's test is at risk of being invalidated.

Active monitoring is an essential role of a Test Administrator. The goal of active monitoring is to reduce test security violations and increase opportunities for students to show what they know.

What Help Test Administrators Can Give Students

Table 32 reflects policies for grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS and MCA administrations. Using the guidance from the applicable *Test Administrator Script* (WIDA ACCESS) or *Testing Directions* (MCA), including providing scripted instructions, is required to ensure the standardization of statewide test administrations and must be used to address questions and provide reminders before, during, and near the end of the testing session. Note: Different types of supports may be allowed for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA Alternate ACCESS, and MTAS/Alt MCA; refer to resources specific to each test for detailed guidance.

Table 32. What Help Test Administrators Can Give

Type of Assistance	Administration Guidelines
Providing written information	Information specific to the test administration can be communicated to students by writing it on the board, displaying it in the room, or providing a written copy. Examples of allowable information include information about scheduling (such as "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 (such as "Read a book when you are done testing"). • For WIDA ACCESS, these guidelines for providing written information are specific to Minnesota.

Type of Assistance	Administration Guidelines
	• For MCA only, scripted information from the *Script to Read to Students* and the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* sections, as well as the transcript of student directions (for online tests), may be written out or displayed. Information in these sections that is not scripted (such as general encouragement) may not be written out or displayed. However, Test Administrators should consider what students need, as providing too much written information may be distracting or overwhelming.
Repeating or clarifying directions	The scripted instructions in the *Test Administrator Script* or *Testing Directions* can be repeated, explained, or clarified any time during test administration after the scripted directions are provided as written. Any explanation can only clarify the directions to ensure that the meaning of specific words or sentences is accurately understood. The meaning of the directions cannot be changed or include information that would lead or cue the student. • For WIDA ACCESS, practice items embedded in the test and test content cannot be clarified or explained. Careful attention should be given to avoid providing repeated or clarified language that is used in the prompts, including the folder names and test items. • For MCA online administrations, if students need any of the student directions from the beginning of their online test repeated, Test Administrators must use the transcript included in the *Testing Directions: Online* and not read from the student's screen. • For MCA paper administrations, Test Administrators may repeat any student directions included in the *Testing Directions: Paper*; Test Administrators must not read directions from the student's test book. If the Test Administrator 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 must not point out specific items or provide any other instructions that may lead the student to change or reconsider their answers.
Assistance with the test	Students must be familiar with how to answer the different types of items for the test they are taking, how to use the online tools and accessibility features, and how to navigate through the online test. • For WIDA ACCESS, Test Administrators may provide assistance with testing equipment (such as adjusting audio volume or a headset) if needed, provided other students are not disrupted. They may also remind students how to navigate to the next item. • For MCA, Test Administrators may provide additional guidance for the situations outlined in the *Answering Questions and Providing Assistance* section of the *Testing Directions*. During testing, Test Administrators must **not**: • Define or pronounce a word within a test item or discuss/give an opinion on a test item. • Give any indication that there may be a different approach or answer or help students with answers to items in any way.

Type of Assistance	Administration Guidelines
	• Remind students of any test-taking or academic strategies (such as using scratch paper or a certain online tool). Help of this sort should be provided prior to testing, such as when the applicable student resources are used to prepare students for testing. • Demonstrate how to answer a specific test item type. Verbally describing the functionality of an item type is allowed if a student cannot move forward. • Assist the student with the test content in any way. Guidance related to student and classroom management scenarios are provided in the *Test Administrator Script* or *Testing Directions* to help evaluate what is appropriate to say and do for situations not directly related to test content.
Pacing and monitoring student progress	Guidance for pacing and monitoring student progress during testing varies by test. For WIDA ACCESS, if a student is making slow or no progress in a domain, Test Administrators should use appropriate prompts or encouragement so the student can progress through the domain, as outlined in the *Test Administrator Manual*. • The Test Administrator should monitor student progress and be proactive in assisting students if they are having difficulty progressing. • If a student pauses for a long time (one or two minutes) during the test, and it is clear that the student is not simply listening to the test audio, the Test Administrator should prompt the student to provide a response and move on. • Remind Test Administrators that WIDA ACCESS is a language proficiency assessment rather than an academic content assessment, and that spending more than WIDA's estimated administration time on a domain will generally not increase a student's score. For MCA, Test Administrators 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. • If a Test Administrator notices that a student is moving quickly through their test, they may 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 comparable to offering support that guides the student to change their answers. • If a student is not making progress, Test Administrators may provide redirection or encouragement to keep them on task. However, if the student is not making progress after encouragement, instruct the student to exit the test. After the test session, the Test Administrator should discuss with the District or School Assessment Coordinator how the student should proceed in future testing (for example, scheduling a makeup session or not having the student finish if they are not progressing after continued attempts).

Type of Assistance	Administration Guidelines
	• If a student has gone beyond the number of items or the section planned for that day's testing, the Test Administrator may use scripted instructions to remind students where to stop. • Similarly, if a student cannot complete the number of items or the section planned for the testing session or is not progressing through the test, the Test Administrator may use scripted instructions to direct the student to stop testing. • Test Administrators must follow the district policies and procedures regarding what to do when students finish early or need extra time. While Test Administrators may observe student tests to verify where students are in terms of how testing is scheduled (such as verifying how many items students have completed or 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.
After testing	Following testing, Test Administrators or other staff must not ask students about specific test items. If students ask about a specific item following testing, they should be reminded that items are secure and cannot be discussed. For MCA, if all testing is complete for the grade and subject in the school, Test Administrators or other staff may provide additional instruction on the general academic standards assessed. However, targeted instruction as a result of student questions is not allowed if any students still need to complete testing. In any case, a Test Administrator or other staff must not address or solve any specific test item.

Reporting Suspected Item and Translation Errors and Technical Issues

All items on statewide assessments go through numerous educator reviews, as well as reviews at MDE and at the test vendors, before being placed on a test. However, there may be times when a student feels that there is no correct answer, a translation is incorrect, or they have a technology issue with an item. In order to maintain test security, MDE requires that a specific process be followed to report this to MDE.

If a student points out a test item that appears to have an error, the Test Administrator should note the following information but never look at, photograph, or communicate information about the test content:

- Grade
- Subject/domain
- Item number*
- Section number (Science MCA only)*
- Student MARSS/SSID number
- How the test was accessed (such as type of device and operating system)

*Item and section numbers are located at the top of the screen in TestNav.

After collecting this information, the Test Administrator should instruct the student to continue the test. This same process should be followed if a student points out a translation that appears to be incorrect in translated and/or glossed word lists or pop-up translations. Following the test session and within two business days, the Test Administrator should notify the District or School Assessment Coordinator about any test items or translations that were reported by a student to have an error.

If a technical issue occurs and a student receives an error message in an online test, the Test Administrator 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. The Test Administrator should provide information to the District or School Assessment Coordinator (and/or district technology staff, depending on the district's procedure) following the test session.

> Reports of potential issues must be made to MDE within two business days of the test session. When contacting MDE, include only the student's MARSS/SSID number. Do not include any item content, including images or descriptions.

For all suspected item/translation errors, the DAC must contact MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us or the test vendor help desk within two business days and provide the information collected so the issue can be investigated. For all technical issues, the DAC or District Technology Coordinator must contact the test vendor help desk and provide this information. Note: When reporting potential issues via email, include only the student's MARSS/SSID number and no other student information. In addition, the content of the item itself should never be referenced, captured as an image, emailed within the school or district, or sent in a communication to MDE or the test vendor, as doing so is a test security violation.

If an issue with test content is reported for the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA, MDE will verify that the item contains a correct answer and is functioning as expected. Historically, items of concern have been found to have a single correct answer, with functionality performing as expected. In the rare circumstance that an issue is discovered, MDE has processes in place to update student scores and notify districts. For the WIDA assessments, WIDA and DRC follow their own processes for any reports. However, while these reports are important to provide to MDE, districts should feel confident that the rigorous processes used to develop statewide assessments result in high-quality test content.

Misadministrations Occurring During Test Administration

If a Test Administrator or student creates a non-standard situation during test administration (referred to as a misadministration), the student's test may still be scored if it 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 integrity of any student's test is compromised or if a student was not allowed an opportunity to independently demonstrate what they know and can do. Misadministrations and invalidations must be documented on a TAR; security violations must be submitted through Assessment Security Records (ASR) in Test WES. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance on which form to use to document a misadministration and always contact MDE prior to submitting a violation as an ASR. Note: When contacting MDE, include only the student's MARSS/SSID number and no other identifiable information.

Always contact MDE for guidance prior to submitting a possible security violation as an ASR.

MDE provides two documents outlining situations or misadministrations that may occur during testing that would require action by the district, MDE, and/or the applicable test vendor. While not exhaustive lists, these documents provide examples of possible test administration situations or misadministrations and the likely outcomes. In some cases, these documents will instruct DACs to provide detailed information about the issue that occurred and the affected student(s) to MDE or the test vendor. Both documents are updated annually before the applicable testing window:

- *WIDA Assessment Irregularities* on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website (under Member/State Pages dropdown menu at the top of the page)
- *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub

Breaks and Leaving During Testing

Test Administrators (or other staff) must continue to actively monitor students during any breaks to ensure that students do not discuss the test and that materials are not accessed. In all cases where students leave the room, secure materials, including test tickets and scratch paper, must be left in the testing room.

- Whenever students leave the testing room during online testing, they should exit the test, cover the test content in some way to ensure it is not visible (for example, close the laptop, turn off the monitor, turn over the device), or pause the test (WIDA ACCESS Online only) unless an emergency prevents them from doing so. For paper test materials, students should close their test books.
- Ideally, only one student should be allowed to leave the room at a time. If more than one student leaves the room, there must be a plan in place for additional staff to monitor students both inside and outside the room. If multiple testing rooms are being used, there must be a procedure to coordinate and/or supervise students on break from different rooms. Any prolonged absences or repeated requests for breaks must be investigated for a potential test security violation.
- If the entire group must leave because of an emergency (such as a fire alarm or a school safety issue), it is important to follow all safety procedures and exit as quickly as possible. The Test Administrator should close and lock the door when leaving, if possible, to maintain test security. Test Administrators must continue to monitor students to ensure they do not discuss the test during their time away from the testing room.

Policies and procedures for breaks during test administration vary by test:

- For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, designated, optional breaks are scripted into the *Test Administrator Script* and *Score Sheet*.
- For WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12), breaks are only allowed between domains unless a student has an IEP or 504 plan that documents the need for more frequent breaks.

- For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, allow students to take brief breaks as needed.
- For MCA, at approximately 30-minute intervals (or on a schedule determined by the district), students may be allowed a short break.
- For MTAS/Alt MCA, breaks during testing may be provided as needed. However, a task or item for which a student has already supplied a response cannot be re-administered, so a task or item should be finished before taking a break or ending a test session.

If students leave the test session and are unable to return:

- For WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12), since students are to finish the domain within a sitting, districts must have a plan in place for the student to finish the domain later that day.
    - In cases of illness or emergency, students may complete the started domain in a makeup session on another day; when resuming, students cannot return to any previously completed items.
    - For the rare case when an individual student is not able to complete the domain on the same day for any other reason, the student may still finish on another day. However, Test Administrators must contact the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that it can be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR); this allows District and School Assessment Coordinators to better track how often the situation arises so guidance around scheduling and monitoring student progress can be provided as needed within the district.
- For online MCA, students will resume testing during a makeup session. Students cannot review previously completed items if more than 20 minutes have passed.
- For online and hybrid Alt MCA administrations, there is no 20-minute limit for review because this assessment is individually administered and monitored by the Test Administrator, who can ensure that students do not go back to previous items; this also allows Test Administrators to go back to confirm student response entry for paper test administrations.
- For paper administration of the MCA, students will resume testing during a makeup session. Students may complete a started segment or section, but Test Administrators should remind students that they cannot go back to previously completed items. Note: For reading and science, students may need to review the passage or phenomenon associated with applicable remaining items again.

If technical issues lead to a break in a testing session:

- For WIDA ACCESS Online (grades 1-12), students should resume testing the domain within the same day if the issues are resolved. If the issues cannot be resolved by the test vendor within the same day, the students may resume the domain during a makeup session, but they cannot return to previously completed items.
- 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 group or section. However, if issues are not resolved within 20 minutes, students cannot review previously completed items but can complete the remainder of the test. TestNav functionality ensures that no test items are skipped.

If a student does not return for the remainder of the test window:

- For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the items the student completed in the test booklet will be scored when the test booklet is returned to DRC.
- For WIDA ACCESS Online (grades 1-12), all complete and partially complete domains will be scored.
- For online MCA and Alt MCA, the items the student has completed will be scored.
- For paper MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, the responses to the items the student completed must be entered online by district staff during the testing window for scoring.

Defective or Damaged Test Materials

If a paper test booklet/book is defective, obtain another one (ensuring it does not also contain the defect) and give the new test booklet/book to the student. Defective, torn, and damaged secure test booklets/books must be returned to the test vendor, following their instructions. If the security number is illegible or the secure test material has been destroyed, use the security checklist to identify the material and report the security number of the affected material to the test vendor.

If a paper test booklet/book is damaged by bodily fluids (such as vomit or blood), the student's responses must be transferred to a new test booklet (WIDA assessments) or entered online (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA) if possible. If the answers cannot be entered or transferred, the student may retake part or all of the assessment in a new test booklet/book. The damaged test materials must be securely disposed of (for example, shredded or incinerated), and the security number of the destroyed test materials reported to the test vendor. The incident, including the name of the staff person transcribing the responses, must be included on a TAR.

What Students May Do After They Complete a Test

After completing the WIDA ACCESS or MCA, 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 an after-testing procedure before testing begins.

If students stay in the testing room, disruptions for other students must be kept to a minimum. Students who have completed testing may read a paper book, work on activities on paper that are not related to the domain or subject(s) being tested (such as word searches, drawings, or coloring sheets), or sit quietly.

- Students may read a paper book, even if reading is being tested, but textbooks for any subject(s) being tested in the room are not allowed.
- Student test materials (such as scratch paper and test tickets) must be collected before students work on other activities. The district determines if other paper activities completed by students after they are done testing need to be collected as well.
- If multiple subjects are being tested in the same room (which may happen during a makeup session), the materials students can use must be taken into consideration.
- Cell phones, wearable technology, and other devices cannot be used at any time, even if the student has completed testing and 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. Students remaining in the testing room 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 to finish their test. In addition, it may be difficult for students who have finished testing to remain quiet.
- Have additional access to test content. This increases the risk for test security violations and invalidations due to cheating (for example, a student who is not testing sees test content and provides an answer to a student who is still testing) or prohibited device usage.

MDE understands that these policies can lead to some scheduling and logistical challenges for districts, but these test security policies and procedures are consistent with those in states across the nation and come directly from recommendations by nationally recognized test security experts.

Make a plan for students who have finished testing in previous test sessions since they are not allowed to be in the room on future testing days.

Data Entry for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

MCA Data Entry

Pearson does not score paper test materials. Therefore, in order for those tests to be scored, district staff must enter student responses from paper test materials online for the Reading, Math, and Science MCAs. This response entry is done in a Data Entry test in Pearson's TestNav system. Data entry must be completed during the testing window.

For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed for entry of student responses during the hours of 6 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. Instructions for data entry are located in the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

MTAS/Alt MCA Learner Characteristics Inventory and Data/Student Response Entry

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data is required to be submitted once annually for every student taking the MTAS/Alt MCA. LCI data must be entered in TestNav before any MTAS/Alt MCA data and student responses can be entered and prior to taking the Alt MCA in an online or hybrid mode. While LCI data entry opens two weeks prior to the start of the MTAS/Alt MCA testing window, the MTAS/Alt MCA cannot be administered until the testing window opens.

New! Data from MTAS must now be entered online in TestNav (previously was entered in PearsonAccess Next) during the testing window in order to be scored. Student responses from the Alt MCAs must also be entered online in TestNav during the testing window regardless of how the test was administered (online, paper, or hybrid mode). Note: Math MTAS is administered in a paper mode only.

For test security purposes, TestNav can only be accessed for entry of student responses or data during the hours of 6 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays throughout the testing window. Note that the Science Alt MCA testing window ends with the Reading Alt MCA and Math MTAS testing window (not with the Science MCA testing window) and responses must be entered by the close of this testing window. Refer to the *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* for more information on entering student responses and data in TestNav.

New! LCI and Data Collection Forms are included as separate materials in each grade level MTAS/Alt MCA materials kit and are no longer included as perforated sheets within the Task Administration Manual. Districts can make copies of these forms to distribute to Test Administrators as needed. Fillable PDF versions of these forms can still be accessed on the Test Administration Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

LCI and Data Collection Forms are not returned to the test vendor. Instead, these forms are kept on file in a secure location at the school or district for one year after entering data online in case there are any questions about this data.

Make sure that student responses in MCA paper test books, MTAS data, and Alt MCA student responses are entered online in TestNav. Entering them online is the **only** way these tests are scored.

Chapter 9 — 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 statewide assessments.

- Questions about some of the information referenced in this chapter (for example, enrollment data or 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.
- Some of these circumstances may require a test code to be indicated; this information is provided at the end of this chapter.

The information provided in this chapter is meant to provide transparency and guidance for student participation requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (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.

Use this chapter as guidance to answer your **"I have a student who…"** questions.

Districts must have a process in place for communicating information to applicable school staff about students who will not be participating in testing due to any of the circumstances or situations outlined in this chapter.

Finally, another important consideration related to the information in this chapter is the need for collaboration and communication with the MARSS Coordinator about students in specific situations, as enrollment start and end dates, English learner and Special Education indicators, and/or State Aid Categories may all affect a student's participation.

Student Participation

ESSA and Minnesota Statutes require that students be assessed annually in reading, math, and science (refer to Appendix E). Likewise, all English learners (ELs) must be assessed annually in English language proficiency (refer to Appendix E). Districts must attempt to test all students who are enrolled at any time during the applicable testing window.

Specific enrollment criteria are used to determine if and how students are included for accountability indicators and assessment participation:

- **Accountability indicators:** Students must meet specific accountability enrollment requirements for inclusion in accountability indicator calculations, including being enrolled on the first day of the testing window. Other enrollment requirements include being enrolled for half an academic year and being enrolled by Dec. 15. Refer to *North Star Business Rules–Support* posted on the Accountability Indicators page of MDE's website for more information and detailed specifications for each indicator.
- **Assessment participation:** The state is expected to test 95 percent of students with federally-approved statewide reading, math, and science assessments and 100 percent of English learners in English language proficiency assessments (refer to Appendix E). This information is required to be reported annually to the U.S. Department of Education and is part of the Minnesota Report Card. Assessment participation is not included as part of North Star Accountability calculations. While there are no specific requirements for districts and schools, the overall state participation rate is a requirement of federal waivers (such as alternate assessment cap waivers), which may affect districts. Assessment participation is reported on the Minnesota Report Card.

Regardless of how participation is determined, all students are expected to participate in statewide assessments to provide valuable data on student learning of the applicable standards. Testing is scheduled by the district and can occur throughout the testing window. Districts must account for any students enrolled on the first day of the testing window who did not test by indicating the applicable test code.

Districts must attempt to test all students who are enrolled at any time during the applicable testing window.

The remainder of this chapter provides guidance on various student participation scenarios, the appropriate use of test codes, and the cost of assessments for nonpublic and home-schooled students. It also outlines guidance for special circumstances that may impact student participation in statewide assessments.

Special Circumstances Guidance

504 Plans

Students with a 504 plan must take the applicable statewide assessments. Refer to Chapter 4 and the Section 504 page of MDE's website for information on accommodations.

Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs), Alternative Learning Programs (ALPs), and Contract Alternative Program (Private)

School Classifications 41, 42, and 43 provide educational alternatives for certain students. All students at these sites must take the applicable statewide assessments. If students enrolled at these sites are dual-enrolled at another site, refer also to *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students* below.

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 statewide assessments unless they have been medically excused. Refer to the *Medical Excuse* section of this chapter for detailed information, including the list of criteria that must be met.

If a student is dual-enrolled in a care and treatment program and another district (such as their resident district), it is important for both sites to collaborate to make sure the student is tested. Determining who will test the student may be related to how educational services are provided.

Determining a Student's Grade Level

The grade indicated in student enrollment data on the first day of the testing window determines the assessment a student must take. If the student changes grade after the first day of the testing window, only the assessments for the initial grade are required. For example, if a student is in grade 10 at the beginning of the testing window, the student must take the grade 10 Reading MCA. If the student earns enough credits to be promoted to grade 11 at a later point in the testing window, they are not required to take the grade 11 Math MCA. As long as there is an assessment record that matches the enrolled grade on the first day of the testing window, no other assessments are required. Work with your MARSS Coordinator, as needed, to determine which students may be changing grades at the beginning of the testing window, especially if the timing corresponds to the start of a new semester or trimester.

There may be situations where the student's grade in Test WES or the test vendor's system is incorrect because inaccurate enrollment data was submitted to MDE.

- For WIDA assessments, make grade changes in the WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS). When applicable, apply the student's preprinted label to the appropriate grade-level scorable test booklet. If the preprinted grade is wrong, the change in WIDA AMS will override it. If a scorable test booklet must be hand-bubbled, ensure the correct grade is indicated so that the test is scored correctly. Do not use hand-bubbling to indicate changes on a scorable test booklet that already has a preprinted label. Only changes made in WIDA AMS will override information on the preprinted label. Grade changes must also be corrected in student enrollment data.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, work with your MARSS Coordinator to make grade changes in your district student enrollment data and submit it to MDE at least two business days prior to testing or data entry. Grade changes cannot be made in LaunchPad or ADAM. The grade must be correct in ADAM 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 updated in student enrollment data.

In the unusual circumstance in which 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), 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. Refer to *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students* below for more detailed information about students enrolled in more than one grade.

Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students

The term "dual-enrolled" indicates that a student is taking classes at two sites and at least one of them is an Area Learning Center (ALC) or Alternative Learning Program (ALP). A concurrent-enrolled student attends two sites part-time. The typical dual-enrolled student is enrolled in a traditional middle or high school full-time and an ALC or ALP for additional courses. For concurrent-enrolled students, the concurrent sites may be a traditional middle or high school and an ALC or ALP, two traditional schools, or an ALC and an ALP. It is important for both sites where a student is enrolled to collaborate to make sure that dual-enrolled and concurrent-enrolled students are tested.

- For WIDA assessments, dual-enrolled students will be sent for precode for only one of the schools and districts. The schools and/or districts will need to collaborate to ensure the student is only tested once. Because the precode file is sent only once annually, the student's information must be added manually into WIDA AMS if the other site will test the student.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, a dual-enrolled student's information will be sent for precode for only one of the schools, which means that only one school and/or district will have the student's information sent for online testing or data entry. Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES can be used to change the school sent in precode. Refer to the *Test WES Precode User Guide* posted on the Test WES page of MDE's website for more information.

The student's test results, including results in test vendor 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. Though one school is selected for precode, both schools are responsible for ensuring the student tests. It is important for the two DACs to work together to determine when and where the student will test.
- **For dual-enrolled students who are in different grades at each school:** Student information is sent for precode for only one school, and 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 enrollment data so they match and only one school will test the student (review the previous bullet and *Determining a Student's Grade Level* above for additional 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 enrollment data.
    - For WIDA assessments, 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 (for example, grade 8 and grade 9), the student completes both assessments, and the student must be manually added to WIDA AMS for the grade not sent in precode.
    - For online MCA/Alt MCA, one school will test the student in the grade indicated in enrollment data. Once testing is completed, the second school will change the student's grade and school in Precode Student Eligibility. Once the updated student information appears in LaunchPad and ADAM, the second school will test the student in the grade it has indicated in enrollment data.

- For data entry of MCA/Alt 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 enrollment data. Once data entry is complete, the second school will change the student's grade and school in Precode Student Eligibility. When the updated student information appears in LaunchPad and ADAM, the second school can enter the responses/scores online for the grade it has indicated in enrollment data.

In the case where students participate in the MTAS/Alt MCA or WIDA assessments, the district that administers the assessment must also report the student as receiving special education services and/or EL in enrollment data or the test will be invalidated.

English Learners

For testing purposes, English learners (ELs) are students designated as EL in student enrollment data submitted to MDE. They are required to take the applicable statewide assessments, even if their parents/guardians have refused EL services.

- When EL services are provided, the MARSS Coordinator enters a valid EL Start Date. If the parents/guardians refuse EL services, no EL Start Date is entered in the enrollment data. In both situations, the student is designated as EL and a WIDA assessment record is expected.
- If the parents/guardians also refuse testing, the DEC (Declined) test code is indicated in WIDA AMS during the testing window. Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information.
- An EL who enrolls at any time during the WIDA assessments testing window should participate in a WIDA assessment. Minnesota Standardized English Learner Procedures on the English Learner Education page of MDE's website require districts to complete the EL identification process within two weeks for students who enroll after the school year begins. Refer to *Moving Into or Out of the District During Testing* later in this chapter for additional information.
- If a student is incorrectly identified as an EL (for example, a student was reclassified and exited EL services in the previous school year, but their enrollment data was not updated before the beginning of the current school year), updated enrollment data must be submitted to indicate the student is no longer an EL. In these cases only, the student is not required to take a WIDA assessment. Contact marss@state.mn.us for questions on updating the student's information.

Contact mde.el@state.mn.us or refer to the English Learner Education page of MDE's website for questions about EL identification or reclassification and exit decisions.

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 a neighboring state) are indicated in enrollment data using the State Aid Category of 14 or 52. These students are not expected to participate in statewide 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 statewide assessments. If the expelled student is unable to participate, districts will indicate the ABS (Absent) test code in Test WES during Posttest Editing. Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on indicating the ABS code.

Foreign Exchange Students (MARSS State Aid Category = 2)

Although foreign exchange students are enrolled full-time in a public school, their participation in the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA is generally optional (see below for exceptions). If a foreign exchange student will not participate, no action is needed. The student's record will appear in ADAM, but no test record will be expected if the State Aid Category is indicated correctly in enrollment data. 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 is designated as EL in enrollment data, they must participate in the WIDA assessments.

Note: Optional participation only applies to foreign exchange students categorized in enrollment data as State Aid Category 2. If a district indicates any other State Aid Category for a foreign exchange student, they are required to participate in applicable assessments. For questions on how to report foreign exchange students in enrollment data, contact marss@state.mn.us.

GED Students

GED students are not expected to participate in statewide 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 attend school in person. Educational services are provided as appropriate, given the circumstances of the student, and they must take the applicable statewide assessments.

Homebound students are expected to test online, with a district staff member physically present, unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan that requires paper test materials or an alternate assessment. District-owned devices must be used, the Test Administrator must complete all required trainings, and the student should test where the educational services are provided. (Note: If educational services are provided virtually, arrangements must be made to test in person.) All security and test administration procedures must be followed, even when administering tests in settings outside of the school (for example, in the student's home or a public library), and testing and data entry (if applicable) must occur within the respective testing window.

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 statewide assessments.

Home-Schooled Students

Home-schooled students are not public-school students. Therefore, they are not required to participate in the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA, no matter which or how many courses or classes they are taking in a public school. However, if the student has an enrollment record and is not designated as a shared-time student (State Aid Category = 16, 17, or 18), then the student cannot be considered home-schooled and must participate; refer to *Shared-Time Students* later in this chapter for additional information.

Home-schooled students who wish to participate in the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA are charged a fee (refer to *Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students* at the end of this chapter for additional information), and the test must be administered by public school staff. Note: Districts are encouraged to work with home-schooled students who wish to test, but ultimately this is a district decision. In order to test a home-schooled student, the student must be manually added to precode files using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES and designated with the Home-Schooled Student enrollment code. If a home-schooled student does test, the student's test will not be included in test results summary information.

Note: Home-schooled students are not allowed to participate in WIDA assessments. If these students are designated as English learners (EL) in enrollment data submitted to MDE and are receiving EL services from a public school district, they must be indicated as shared-time students and EL in enrollment data. Refer to *Shared-Time Students* in this chapter for additional information.

Incarcerated Students at Correctional Facilities

School Classification 70 includes students placed in a correctional program but still enrolled in a public school district; these students are required to participate in the applicable statewide 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. Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on indicating the ABS code.

Independent Study Students

Students participating in independent study programs are required to participate in the applicable statewide assessments during the testing window for the grade indicated in enrollment data.

Individualized Education Program

Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) must take the applicable statewide assessments. Refer to Chapter 4 and the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website for information on universal supports, accommodations, and participation.

Note: If a student is identified in enrollment data as receiving special education services, but services are terminated at some point later in the school year, the student will continue to be indicated as receiving services (SPED = Y) in Test WES and for final reporting, even if the status is updated in enrollment data. Once a student is identified as SPED in enrollment data, the SPED identification remains for the entire school year.

Intermediate Districts

Students enrolled in intermediate districts are required to participate in the applicable statewide assessments. A student enrolled in an intermediate school district is typically dual-enrolled and both districts are responsible for ensuring the student tests. If there is a question about which district will test the student, it is important for the two districts to work together to determine where the student will be assessed. This may involve moving the student's test record from one district to the other in Test WES (refer to *Dual-Enrolled Students or Concurrent-Enrolled Students* earlier in this chapter for additional information).

Medical Excuse

There may be circumstances when a student cannot be assessed 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. If a student is unable to take the test because of a medical emergency, the district indicates the Medical Excuse (ME) test code for the student.

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 cannot be provided to assess the student. Unlike a medical emergency, an ongoing *medical condition* 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 statewide assessments unless the criteria for medical excuse apply.

Criteria for Medical Excuse

In order to use the ME test code, all of the following criteria must be met, verified, and documented:

- 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 or remainder (if the student has not started testing) of the testing window.
- The student's medical emergency and incapacity 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 license, stating the underlying medical emergency exists.
- Districts do not need to request approval from MDE to use the ME test code.

Note: The medical emergency does not have to last for the entire testing window. The ME code may be applied for a portion of the window if the student has not started testing when the medical emergency occurs. For example, if the district has scheduled testing for mid-April, but the student's medical emergency occurred at the end of March and will be in place until mid-May, the ME code could be applied as long as all the criteria listed above are met. 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 some of the test. The district may indicate on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) that the student was unable to finish the test due to the medical emergency.

Table 33. Examples of Medical Excuse Situations

May Qualify for Medical Excuse with Documentation	Does Not Qualify for Medical Excuse
Student has been admitted to a hospital or treatment facility for the duration of the testing window and is prohibited from appropriately testing	Pregnancy (unless complications meet the criteria of a medical excuse)
Terminal illness or undergoing chemotherapy	Short term or minor illness
Traumatic brain injury	A broken limb (but universal supports or accommodations may be applicable)
Comatose	A significant injury and/or illness for a family member or legal guardian

Note: The medical excuse would only apply for one school year.

Documentation for Medical Excuse

Districts must keep documentation when this test code is used, and MDE requires that it include:

- Documentation from a licensed medical professional indicating why a student coded with a medical excuse could not have tested. A sample documentation form that can be provided to the medical professional is available in Appendix A. If the district or the medical professional prefers to use their own form, it must include all the information requested in the sample form.
- Documentation of the district decision on why the test code was necessary and why the test could not be administered with other supports or accommodations. The sample form in Appendix A includes additional information the district completes as part of the documentation.

MDE highly recommends districts use the *Sample Medical Excuse Documentation Form* found in Appendix A. Districts must keep all documentation on file (including any forms completed by the medical professional and supporting documentation used in the district to verify the criteria have been met) for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place.

Each year after Posttest Editing, MDE will request copies of ME documentation from a sample of schools that used this test code. Refer to *MDE Review of Medical Excuse Documentation* in Chapter 5 for additional information.

Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on indicating the ME code.

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 into a new district during a testing window and has not tested in their former district, the new district should administer the test to the student.

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.

If a student moves from another state and was administered the other state's English language proficiency and/or standards-based accountability assessments, the student must be tested again in Minnesota if they are enrolled on the first day of the applicable testing window. Note: If they enroll after the first day of the testing window but before the testing window closes, the district should still consider administering the WIDA assessment, as these scores inform the amount and scope of EL services to be provided to a student as well as reclassification and exiting decisions.

Students Moving Prior to Testing

For students who move out of your district before the testing window opens:

- WIDA assessments: No action is required for online testing. Securely dispose of the preprinted labels. If labels have already been affixed to the scorable test booklets, return them to DRC with the Do Not Process labels affixed over them.
- MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA: No action required. **Info!** If the student has not yet been added to a proctor group in ADAM, the student's test eligibility will be removed from ADAM after updated enrollment data is submitted indicating that the student is no longer enrolled in the district. If the student has been added to a proctor group in ADAM, the new district will need to follow the steps in the *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* document on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

For students who move out of the district after the first day of the testing window but before the test is administered, indicate the NE (Not Enrolled) test code during Posttest Editing. The NE code will be validated against enrollment data.

Students Completing Part of Assessments

For WIDA ACCESS Online, if a student takes one or more domains in one district and transfers to another district, the new district will administer any remaining domains. For WIDA ACCESS Paper and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the previous district provides the page number where testing stopped to the new district. The student completes the rest of the test in a new scorable booklet provided by the new district, and both districts are responsible for returning their respective scorable booklets to DRC.

Completing the Student Transfer Form in WIDA AMS allows the student to finish testing at the new district and helps ensure that complete test results are provided in early student-level result files. The DACs at each district must collaborate to ensure the student does not retake a completed domain. Detailed instructions for these situations are available in the *WIDA Assessment Irregularities* document posted on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website (under the Manuals, Guides and Test Materials expandable heading).

For MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA, if a student moves to a new district and the test has already been started or completed, or if the student has already been placed into a proctor group but hasn't started testing, the student's test will not automatically move. The *ADAM Online Testing and Data Entry User Guide* on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub provides instructions for showing student tests that have been started or completed at a different district or school; districts can use this information to determine next steps Note: Updated enrollment data submitted to MDE is reflected in ADAM two business days after submission.

Refer to the *MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Irregularities* document posted on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub for detailed instructions for these situations.

Nonpublic Schools (Private Schools)

Nonpublic/private schools are not required to participate in the Statewide assessments but may choose to participate at a cost (refer to *Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students* at the end of this chapter). Details for nonpublic/private school participation in statewide assessments are available in the *Nonpublic School Participation in Statewide Assessments* document available on the District Resources page of MDE's website (under the District Assessment Coordinator Resources expandable heading).

If a nonpublic/private school chooses to administer any of the statewide assessments, they must follow all test administration and security policies and procedures outlined in this *Procedures Manual* and related resources; this includes 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 enrollment data 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. These students are not expected to participate in statewide assessments and will not be included in Posttest Editing.

Online Schools (Virtual Schools)

Students taking classes in a supplemental online program are expected to test with their "home" or resident district or charter school. These students are not considered dual-enrolled, as their enrollment record is held and submitted to MDE by the resident district or charter school only.

Students enrolled full-time in online schools (School Classification 46), including those attending online programs within districts, must participate in the applicable statewide assessments. Only district-owned computers/devices can be used for online tests; student-owned computers/devices are not permitted. All security and test administration procedures must be followed even when administering tests in settings outside of a school, and all applicable testing windows must be honored.

It is the responsibility of the online school (or the district to which the online program belongs) to administer the test to these students following all required procedures.

- 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 administer the test to these students. Ultimately, the online school is responsible for having their students take the test, and it is up to the resident district to determine if they will accommodate these requests.
- In any situation where students are participating 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.
- If an online school has reached an agreement with another district, the online school must contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for procedures on administering tests across districts; the DAC of the other district must be copied on the email.
- **Info!** There are cases in which a student is taking a course online with a different district, based on arrangements made between districts. In these unique cases, the student is not reported in enrollment data for the district where they are completing the coursework. The district reporting the student in enrollment data is responsible for testing the student, unless they reach an agreement for administering the test across districts.

Open Enrollment/Parent Choice Program Students

Districts that enroll students through the open enrollment process should treat those students as if they are district residents, which means the students must participate in applicable statewide assessments. The accepting district becomes the *de facto* resident district for open-enrolled students.

Note: Students who reside in another state but attend a Minnesota public school are expected to test (State Aid Category = 15).

Physical Limitations (Temporary)

Sometimes students encounter circumstances immediately before or during testing (for example, a broken arm or concussion) that make it impossible to take a test as usually administered. If such a special circumstance requires the student to have an accommodation (for example, a scribe is needed for a student who breaks their arm, paper test materials are required due to concussion restrictions), the student may use the accommodation (refer to *Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations* in Chapter 4 for additional information). Districts should document this circumstance on a TAR.

Postsecondary Enrollment Options Students

Full-time Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) students are public school students who attend a postsecondary institution **full time** during testing. These students are reported as PSEO in enrollment data. Districts are responsible for administering the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA to these students if they are present when testing is scheduled. If the student is not present, their record will appear in ADAM, 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 (for example, 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 participate if not present. However, depending on when the next period of enrollment (such as the semester) begins, students may be considered enrolled at the school on the first day of the testing window and would be expected to test.

In some special cases, districts pay the college directly, and PSEO is not indicated in enrollment data. This creates a discrepancy in Posttest Editing if the student did not participate in testing, 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* posted on the Test WES page of MDE's website. Two days prior to the close of Posttest Editing is the deadline for submitting information on these PSEO students.

Students who are part-time PSEO in enrollment data must participate in the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA.

Note: Whether a student participates full-time or part-time in PSEO, they must participate in the WIDA assessments if they are designated as EL in enrollment data.

Recently Arrived English Learners (RAEL)/Newcomers

Recently arrived English learner (RAEL) is an identification used for accountability purposes. A RAEL is an English learner (EL) who first enrolled in a U.S. school (in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia) on or after April 15 of the previous school year. Note: A student can only be identified as RAEL one time.

Students identified as RAEL are required to participate in all applicable statewide assessments during their first year of enrollment, and their results are included in test results summary information. Note: English learners who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year may take the WIDA ACCESS Paper. Refer to the *Test Administration Considerations for WIDA ACCESS* section in Chapter 8 for more information.

For all newcomers or students with emerging language proficiency, it is important to carefully attend to the overall testing experience. Teachers should encourage these students to do their best while also acknowledging the difficulty of taking an assessment that is not in their primary language. It is also helpful to explain the purpose of MCA testing to these students, as it may be very different from standardized testing practices in their home countries. This includes an emphasis on the appropriate uses of individual results and a clear message that MCA scores will not impact a student's eligibility to graduate. Additionally, Test Administrators should consider using universal supports, such as a small group setting, to make the test experience less stressful.

Contact mde.el@state.mn.us for questions on RAEL identification and mde.essa@state.mn.us for accountability questions for students identified as RAEL.

Refusal by Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians may refuse to allow their student(s) to participate in statewide assessments.

- A parent/guardian refusal must be submitted to the district in writing before testing, and MDE requires that parent/guardian refusals be documented annually. Parent/guardian refusal documentation must be kept on file for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. Electronic signatures are acceptable, if allowed by the district.
- In compliance with Minnesota Statutes, 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 (refer to Appendix E). The *Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information* is available on the Student Participation page of MDE's website. Note: Only minor updates were made to the form for the 2026-27 school year.
    - 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.
    - Each district determines what specific documentation they require for parent/guardian refusals, and they may require additional/other documentation than the form provided by MDE. Even 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 MDE's form for their documentation (for example, to request additional information or add district-specific dates), MDE's logo must be removed, and it must have the district's name on it, clearly identifying it as the district's form. However, MDE's version of the form must still be posted on the district website and included in the student handbook.
- In order for parents/guardians to make fully informed decisions regarding their student's participation in statewide assessments, districts must provide complete and transparent information when asked by parents/guardians if they can refuse testing; when requested, this information must be provided in a timely manner. However, districts are **not** required to send out specific communications regarding parent/guardian refusals. If a district does choose to communicate this information, they should consider including information on how the district uses the information from statewide assessments and the value it provides.
- For students whose parents/guardians refused testing, the school is not required to provide alternative educational opportunities while other students are testing.

While a district may set and communicate a timeline within their district for when they would like parent/guardian refusals to be received, districts must make every attempt to honor a parent/guardian refusal if it is received before the student begins testing. Districts must have a process in place for communicating information to applicable school staff about students who will not be participating in testing due to a parent/guardian refusal. If a student has started or completed the test at the time the parent/guardian refusal is received (or if the refusal was not communicated within the school before the student started testing), 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 a TAR that the parent/guardian's request for refusal could not be

honored. The district will determine with the parent/guardian if the automatically generated student report will be provided to the parent/guardian.

The school is required by state and federal law to ensure participation by all eligible students in statewide accountability assessments. A student not participating in the statewide assessments may still be included in some accountability calculations, which has implications at the school and district level for support and recognition opportunities.

Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on indicating test codes for parent/guardian refusals: DEC (WIDA assessments) and REF-P (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA).

Refusal by Student

Districts may require students who are unwilling to participate to provide written refusal documentation for statewide 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 a TAR, but districts may choose to document the circumstances of the student refusals 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 may choose to indicate on a TAR that the student refused to finish the test in case there are questions, but documentation is not required.

If students who are 18 years old or older refuse testing, it should be documented as a student refusal. Students should not complete the parent/guardian refusal form, which has language specific to parents/guardians and is intended to be completed by them (even for students aged 18 and older). As with all student refusals, districts determine what documentation they require.

The expectation is that students will participate in testing. Test codes exist for documentation purposes and do not imply MDE condones the behavior. Districts are to address student refusals according to district policy.

Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on indicating test codes for student refusals: DEC (WIDA assessments) and REF-S (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA).

Retained or Accelerated Students

Students who have been retained are required to participate in the applicable statewide assessments for the grade indicated in enrollment data, even though they may have taken the same grade assessment the previous year. For example, if a student participated in the grade 7 Reading and Math MCAs and is then retained in grade 7, the student will take the grade 7 Reading and Math MCAs again the next year, regardless of performance the previous year.

Similarly, students who are taking accelerated courses are required to participate in the applicable statewide assessments for the grade indicated in enrollment data. For example, if a student is enrolled in grade 7 but is taking a grade 8 math course, they still participate in the grade 7 Math MCA.

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 MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA. If shared-time students will not participate, no action is needed. No test record will be expected if the State Aid Category is correctly indicated in enrollment data. If shared-time students do want to take the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA, they must be manually added using Precode Student Eligibility in Test WES with the Home-Schooled Student enrollment code. More information is available in the *Test WES Precode User Guide* posted on the Test WES page of MDE's website. Since their participation is not required, there is a cost if shared-time students participate. See *Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students* at the end of this chapter. If a shared-time student does test, the student's test will not be included in test results summary information.

Shared-time students who are designated as English learners (EL) in enrollment data submitted to MDE and receive EL services from a public school must take a WIDA assessment. These students must be indicated as shared-time in enrollment data. There is no cost for testing because these students are required to participate.

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.

Students at these sites must participate in the applicable statewide assessments, with the IEP team determining the assessment for which each student is eligible.

If a student is dual-enrolled at one of these sites and another district (such as their resident district), it is important for both sites to collaborate to make sure the student is tested. Determining who will test the student may be related to how educational services are provided.

Suspended Students

Suspended students who are enrolled in the district are required to participate in the applicable statewide assessments. If the student is unable to take the test, the district indicates the ABS (Absent) test code in Test WES during Posttest Editing.

Refer to *Test Codes* at the end of this chapter for more information on the ABS test code.

Transition Programs

Students enrolled in transition programs must participate in the applicable statewide assessments required for their grade.

While a district's student information system may indicate a transition program student as being in grade 12+, for assessment purposes this is considered the same as grade 12 and is scored and reported accordingly. All students in grades K-12 who are identified as EL in their student enrollment data must participate in a WIDA assessment annually, regardless of a student's age or disability.

Tribally Controlled Schools

Tribally Controlled Schools administer the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) assessment and will not be included in Minnesota's accountability system unless they receive a waiver from BIE to administer a Minnesota statewide assessment. If a Tribally Controlled School wishes to administer the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA instead of the BIE assessment, they must contact mde.testing@state.mn.us no later than Nov. 1 annually to request a waiver.

Test Codes

Test codes are used to describe a student's testing status for a given administration year, and the test codes assigned to students who are enrolled on the first day of the testing window determine how they are counted for participation. While test codes document the reasons why students did not participate in the statewide assessment, they are also used to represent whether students received valid scores, did not complete enough items to receive a valid score, or had their scores invalidated. Districts must account for all students who were enrolled on the first day of the applicable testing window but did not take an assessment by the end of the window by indicating the applicable test code.

- For WIDA assessments, four test codes are available in WIDA AMS and on the scorable test booklets during the testing window: Absent (ABS), Invalid (INV), Declined (DEC; used for both parent and student refusal), and Special Education Deferred (SPD). Because the WIDA assessments are designed for the multi-state WIDA Consortium, some Minnesota-specific test codes can only be indicated during Posttest Editing in Test WES. Not Enrolled (NE) and Medical Excuse (ME) are Minnesota-specific test codes and can only be indicated in Posttest Editing.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, test codes for invalidations, refusals, and medical excuse may be entered in ADAM during the testing windows. During Posttest Editing in Test WES, all test codes may be entered. **Info!** In Pearson's ADAM platform, test codes are referred to as "accountability codes."
    - Since blank assessment records cannot be added during Posttest Editing for high school science, any Refusal (REF-P or REF-S) or Medical Excuse (ME) test codes must be indicated in ADAM during the testing window. Since Absent (ABS) and Not Enrolled (NE) test codes cannot be entered in ADAM, the test must be submitted during the testing window and then the applicable test code can be added during Posttest Editing.
- Test codes may be part of public data requests made to MDE and are available in public data files on MDE's website, which means that districts and schools should be prepared to provide information about the decision-making process used regarding test codes.

The close of Posttest Editing is the deadline for entering test codes.

Note: Extenuating Circumstances (EXC-N, not attempted, and EXC-A, attempted) test codes were available for spring 2020 and spring 2021 test administrations due to COVID-19. These EXC test codes are reserved for use in unique circumstances and are not available for selection.

Absent (ABS)

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 participate. ABS cannot be indicated if the student took any part of the test. ABS can be indicated during the testing window for WIDA assessments but only during Posttest Editing for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA.

Declines (DEC) and Refusals (REF-P and REF-S)

For WIDA assessments, both parent/guardian and student refusals of testing are indicated with the same test code (DEC for Declined). For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, there are two different codes based on whether the parent or student is refusing testing (REF-P for parent/guardian refusals and REF-S for student refusals). Declines/refusals can only be indicated if the student has not yet started the test; refer to information earlier in this chapter for details related to parent/guardian and student refusals. Declines/refusals can be indicated during the testing window or during Posttest Editing.

Invalidations (INV)

A student's test may be invalidated due to a security violation, irregularity, or misadministration that compromises the integrity of the student's test. For WIDA assessments, one code (INV) is used for all invalidations. There are three different codes listed below for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA invalidations. All invalidations can be indicated during the testing window or during Posttest Editing. In addition, some invalidations are automatically applied at the end of Posttest Editing based on data validations. Refer to *Validation Against Enrollment and Assessment Records* in Chapter 10 for more information.

All invalidations must be documented on a TAR. If an invalidation was the result of a security violation, the violation must be reported to MDE through Assessment Security Records in Test WES.

Invalidations can be indicated only 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 during the testing window. It is not possible to invalidate a test in this situation once the testing window has closed.

MDE has the authority to require student tests to be invalidated if student or staff actions created a situation that compromised the validity of one or more students' tests.

Invalidation Due to Student Action (INV-S)

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, INV-S is indicated if a student engages in inappropriate activity or behavior during testing that affects the validity of the student's test. Inappropriate activity or behavior by students includes but is not limited to: copying from another student, using prohibited aids such as notes, and having prohibited

materials out during testing (such as a calculator or textbook), even if not used. Note: Accessing or using cell phones or other prohibited devices is a separate code.

However, a student's test is **not** invalidated if the test is not/has not been started or if it is already completed when the behavior occurs. The validity of the assessment is not affected by the student's behavior in these cases since the behavior occurred at a time when then student was not testing. Similarly, if a student (Student A) provides answers to another student (Student B), Student A's test is not invalidated because the validity of Student A's test is not affected. In this case, Student B's test may need to be invalidated if Student B accepted or used the assistance provided by Student A.

Note: A test should **not** be invalidated if a student rushed through the test, did not appear to be taking the test seriously, or did not complete the test. The test should be scored as is, and information on the situation can be noted on a TAR if the district chooses to document the occurrence in case of questions after testing.

Invalidation Due to Device (INV-D)

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, INV-D is indicated if a student accesses a cell phone, wearable technology, or other prohibited device at any point during test administration (including breaks). The INV-D code is also used in circumstances where test security is violated using a device (such as capturing test content or looking up answers). Refer to *Cell Phone and Other Prohibited Personal Device Policy* in Chapter 8 for more information.

Invalidation Other (INV-O)

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, INV-O is indicated for misadministrations or other situations, including staff actions, which compromise the validity of a student's 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 response, 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.

Medical Excuse (ME)

An ME code is indicated for students 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. ME is to be used only for students unable to test at all. Refer to detailed information earlier in this chapter and in Appendix A, including the criteria for determining a medical emergency. ME can be indicated during the testing window for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA and/or during Posttest Editing for all assessments.

Not Enrolled (NE)

An NE code is indicated if the student was not enrolled when the test was administered in the district. Do not use NE if a student started their test. NE can only be indicated during Posttest Editing.

Districts determine when tests will be administered and must 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.

Special Education Deferred (SPD)

The Special Education Deferred (SPD) code is used when an IEP or 504 plan team has determined that a student's disability prevents the student from participating in one or more specific domains of a WIDA assessment. SPD is a domain-level code and does not exempt a student from participating in the WIDA assessment. SPD may be indicated during the testing window or during Posttest Editing.

Refer to Chapter 4 for guidance on determining whether SPD is appropriate, including requirements for considering accommodations.

Summary of Test Codes

Table 34 provides a summary of the test codes that can be indicated on student tests.

Table 34. Summary of Test Codes

Code	Test Status	Enter During Testing Window	Enter in Posttest Editing[3]
ABS	Not started	Yes for WIDA assessments (in WIDA AMS or on test booklet) No for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Yes
DEC (WIDA assessments)	Not started	Yes (in WIDA AMS or on test booklet)	Yes
INV (WIDA assessments)	Started or completed	Yes (in WIDA AMS or on test booklet)	Yes
INV-S, INV-D, INV-O (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA)	Started or completed	Yes (in ADAM)	Yes
ME	Not started	No for WIDA assessments Yes for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA (in ADAM)	Yes
NE	Not started	No	Yes
REF-P and REF-S (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA)	Not started	Yes (in ADAM)	Yes
SPD (WIDA assessments)	Not started	Yes (in WIDA AMS or on test booklet)	Yes

[3] Any refusal or medical excuse test codes for high school science must be entered in ADAM during the testing window; absent and not enrolled test codes can only be entered in Posttest Editing for high school science if the test is marked complete in ADAM.

Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students

The test materials, scoring, and results for the Minnesota statewide assessments are provided at no cost to public school districts testing public school students. Review Table 35 for 2026-27 testing costs for nonpublic and home-schooled students.

Test vendors will invoice nonpublic schools directly. Pearson will invoice the district for any home-schooled or shared-time students participating in the district's MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA testing, and the district may then request payment from the parent/guardian.

The statewide assessments meet the definition of a standardized test under Minnesota Statutes (refer to Appendix E), which means nonpublic pupil textbook aid may be used by the nonpublic school or home school to pay for this testing. Note: Home-schooled students are not allowed to participate in WIDA assessments. If these students are designated as English learners (EL) in enrollment data submitted to MDE and receive EL services from a public school district, they must be indicated as shared-time students and English learners in enrollment data. Refer to *Shared-Time Students* earlier in this chapter for additional information.

Table 35. 2026-27 Cost of Tests for Nonpublic and Home-Schooled Students

Test	Per Student Cost[4]
WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten	$30.75 + processing fee
Grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS Paper (except braille)	$30.75 + processing fee
Grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS Braille	$187.75 + processing fee
Grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS Online	$28.75 + processing fee
WIDA Alternate ACCESS	$141.25 + processing fee
MCA	$15.00 per online test $22.00 per paper test
MTAS/Alt MCA	$22.00 per subject

[4] Cost noted above for WIDA assessments 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.

Chapter 10 — After Test Administration

Overview

This chapter includes general information related to tasks that are completed after test administration, including the return of test materials and Posttest Editing. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

Collection and Return of Secure Test Materials

When testing has been completed, Test Administrators must verify that all secure test materials are accounted for before returning them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator. Detailed information, including the specific materials that must be returned and what can be securely disposed of, are provided in test vendor resources. In general, secure materials have a security number assigned to them for tracking and must be returned.

- For WIDA assessments, this information is provided in the *Test Coordinator Manual* on the WIDA Secure Portal.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, this information is provided with the shipment of test materials and in the *Returning Secure Test Materials* document on the User Guides page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Refer to the *Important Dates for Test Administration* on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub for the deadline for shipping secure test materials to the test vendors. The District or School Assessment Coordinator is responsible for collecting, packaging, and preparing all secure test materials for return by vendor deadlines. Missing these deadlines may result in no early student-level results (for WIDA assessments only), missing assessment records in Posttest Editing, exclusion of scores from accountability calculations, and no paper Individual Student Reports (ISRs).

For WIDA assessments, it is critical to return all paper-based test materials by the deadline to ensure they can be scanned and scored before data is provided to MDE. Before returning materials, verify that all student labels are correctly applied and that any hand-bubbled demographic information is accurate and complete. Confirm that there are no additional markings or bubbled information on the test booklets that may affect how the test booklet is scanned and scored and that a number 2 pencil was used. Inaccurate or incomplete bubbling may lead to scoring delays, unmatched records, or missing student results.

> For WIDA assessments, ship back all scorable paper test materials by the deadline. If missed, student tests may not be included for Posttest Editing and reporting.

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, it is critical that the student's responses and/or data (including LCI data) are entered in TestNav before the end of the testing windows, as Pearson does not scan and score paper tests.

Securely dispose of materials no more than two business days after the close of the testing window. "Securely dispose" means destroying materials so they are no longer intact and legible (for example, by shredding or incineration). Districts determine their own procedure to follow, including which staff will be responsible for the secure disposal (for example, collected in the office or securely disposed of by each Test Administrator). Note: The district may choose to use a contracted shredding service as long as the shredding is completed within the required timeframe and the service has processes for appropriately handling highly sensitive material.

Missing Secure Test Materials

If secure test materials are missing at any point while in the district's or school's possession (whether identified at the district/school or by the test vendor after materials are returned), the District Assessment Coordinator (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 36 outlines the actions to take, based on the circumstances surrounding the missing materials and whether they are located.

Table 36. Actions to Take for Missing Secure Test Materials

Circumstance	District Action
Materials missing because of a known circumstance (for example, inadvertently shredded, never received in shipment)	The DAC contacts the test vendor and provides the security number(s) of the missing material(s). The test vendor records the status of the material(s) and requests any additional documentation. Refer to *Defective or Damaged Test Materials* in Chapter 8 for more information. The DAC documents circumstances caused by the district on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).
Materials missing during testing window and status is unknown	School staff notify the DAC that materials are missing. 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 always kept secure (for example, locked in someone's desk). If they were ever left unsecured (for example, left out in a classroom) or if there is any uncertainty about whether they were kept secure the entire time, the DAC submits a security violation through Assessment Security Records (ASR) in Test WES. • 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 test vendor and MDE will follow up and request additional documentation (refer to next row).
Materials missing after the close of the testing window	The test vendor and MDE will follow up with the DAC and superintendent/director on missing materials. • Districts are expected to locate missing materials and communicate their findings with test vendors and MDE, even when school is closed for the summer. • If materials are found, determine if they were always kept secure, were ever left unsecured, or if there is any uncertainty about whether they were kept secure the entire time. • If materials have not been found, the DAC must provide an account as requested by the test vendor and MDE by a deadline specified. • If materials have not been found and the DAC has not provided an account after the deadline specified, MDE will submit a security violation through ASR on behalf of the district.

Since the return of secure materials occurs close to the end of the school year, DACs will need to develop a process with their schools to ensure all test materials are returned. If the DAC is not available to respond to communication requests from the test vendor or MDE over the summer, another staff member, such as an administrator, should be designated as an alternate DAC in MDE-ORG; they must be aware of the chain of custody to assist in locating missing materials during the summer. If missing test materials are located at a much later point in time, the DAC should contact the test vendor and MDE for instructions on returning those materials.

Posttest Editing

After testing is completed, DACs are expected to review and edit student assessment records (as needed) during the three-week Posttest Editing window in Test WES. The goal of Posttest Editing is to ensure each student's enrollment record is accurately connected to the assessment record(s) for each test the student took or was expected to take. To connect these records, the student's assessment record must contain the same information as the student's enrollment record submitted to MDE. It is important to verify or correct student information to ensure that final data, including the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) provided to families, is based on accurate and complete information; failure to edit records may also impact summary-level reports and assessment participation data. Work with the MARSS Coordinator to ensure that student enrollment updates are made on an ongoing basis so student information is correct and available prior to and throughout test administrations.

Districts must account for all students who were enrolled on the first day of the testing window but did not test by indicating the applicable test code. For WIDA assessments, this includes any student who was enrolled on the first day of the testing window and was then later identified as an English learner (EL), even if the identification occurred after the close of the WIDA assessment testing window. Note: Minnesota Standardized English Learner Procedures require a district to complete the identification process within two weeks for students who enroll after the beginning of the school year. For more information, refer to the English Learner Education page of MDE's website. Nonpublic schools can participate in Posttest Editing, but in a limited way, since enrollment data is not submitted to MDE; however, test codes can be added or changed, and student information on the assessment record can be updated. Note: Early student-level results for WIDA assessments are available in Test WES at the start of the Posttest Editing window. This is a static file that is not updated regardless of changes made during Posttest Editing. More information can be found in Chapter 11 and the *WIDA Assessment Early Student-Level Results* help document posted on the Test WES page of MDE's website.

Validation Against Enrollment and Assessment Records

Validation Against Enrollment Records

When determining if a student's information should be sent in precode for testing and for Posttest Editing, MDE uses the Status Begin and End Dates of the student's enrollment record to verify if they are enrolled. When a student is enrolled in more than one district, both districts must work together to determine where the student should be tested. If a student leaves the district, a student's Status End Date is often later than the actual date they stopped attending school. During Posttest Editing, student assessments will also be validated against their

enrollment record submitted to MDE and may be invalidated at the close of Posttest Editing if they do not meet specific eligibility requirements:

- A student with an alternate assessment record (WIDA Alternate ACCESS or MTAS/Alt MCA) must be designated as receiving special education services in enrollment data.
- A student with a WIDA assessment record must be designated as EL in enrollment data.

If a district does not make a correction in the enrollment data during Posttest Editing, there is no way to reverse the invalidation once Posttest Editing is over.

Grade level is also validated against student enrollment records during Posttest Editing. For example, if a student takes a grade 6 test, but enrollment data is updated after testing to show the student as enrolled in grade 7, the student's test record will receive a Wrong Grade (WG) test code instead of a score. This situation may also require a correction in the enrollment data submitted to MDE during Posttest Editing.

Validation Against Assessment Records

Students must take only one assessment per domain/subject (such as Reading MCA or Reading Alt MCA) for the grade in which they are enrolled. The assessment a student is to take must be identified prior to the student testing. If a student has two test records for the same subject (for example, WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS or Reading MCA and Reading Alt MCA), the alternate assessment becomes the test used for final reporting purposes.

If a student inadvertently takes the incorrect assessment, the incorrect assessment must be invalidated (using the INV test code for WIDA assessments and INV-O for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA). If discovered during the testing window, the student should then take the correct assessment. The assessment with the valid score will be used for final reporting purposes.

WIDA Assessment Requests

After testing is completed, districts may make requests to MDE regarding the circumstances described below; if approved by MDE, the request is sent to WIDA and DRC. MDE is allowed a certain number of these requests annually with WIDA/DRC, and MDE may exercise discretion when reviewing the requests.

Test Booklet Search Requests

A test booklet search can be requested when a student's score was not included in early student-level results and it is suspected that a completed test booklet had one of the following:

- A district/school label applied but no student information bubbled in pencil
- Bubbled student information but no district/school label
- A Do Not Process Label applied

DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us when they believe a test booklet search may be needed.

Transcription Requests

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 or if they did not completely fill in the bubbles or answer area (for example, check marks, slashes, or dashes were used to indicate responses). DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us when they believe a transcription request may be needed.

Scoring Appeal Requests

Scoring appeals may be requested for either the Writing (paper or online) or Speaking (online only) domains of the WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) when there is concern that a student's test may have been scored incorrectly. Because of DRC's rigorous quality control measures for trained raters, a scoring appeal rarely results in a change to the score for an individual student.

DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS/SSID number and the rationale for the scoring appeal. MDE will do an initial review and provide information to the district. If the district chooses to move forward with the scoring appeal, after final results are available in the DSR/SSR files, MDE will approve the request and send it to DRC. Note: While an initial inquiry about a scoring appeal can be sent to MDE once early student-level results are available, the official request cannot be sent until after final results are available to ensure edits made during Posttest Editing are reflected.

Scoring appeals cannot be requested for Reading or Listening scores, or if a test code was indicated for any domain. Scoring appeals are not applicable for WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten or WIDA Alternate ACCESS because they contain multiple-choice items only and are scored by the Test Administrator.

Data Corrections

A data correction can be requested for rare issues that are not correctly resolved after Posttest Editing in Test WES (for example, test records were not merged correctly or test/Do Not Score codes were not correctly resolved). DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS/SSID number, after final results are available in DSR/SSR files, when they believe a data correction may be needed.

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA Requests

Late Student Response Entry

If student responses in MCA paper test materials or MTAS/Alt MCA data or student responses are not entered during the testing windows, districts can contact Pearson to arrange for a late student response entry. This can be requested when some student responses or scores were partially entered during the testing window resulting in a Not Complete (NC) test code or when there is no test record (a Not Attempted (NA) test code).

Verify student responses and data are entered during the testing windows to avoid fees and delays in reporting.

There is a $200 fee for late student response entry for up to 10 students after the close of the testing window. The *Request for Late Student Response Entry Form* in Appendix A includes instructions for completing the form and the return of materials for the late student response entry process.

Depending on when requests are submitted to Pearson, late student response 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.

MCA Rescores

An MCA 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). Note: All items are reviewed multiple times before, during, and after testing to ensure they are functioning correctly and scored appropriately. Because of MDE's rigorous item review process, a rescore is highly unlikely to result in a score or performance/achievement level change for an individual student. If a discrepancy is found for an online item during a scoring review, scores will be updated for all affected students.

Parents/guardians should work with the district to initiate a rescore. DACs must email mde.testing@state.mn.us with the student's MARSS/SSID number and the rationale for requesting a rescore, and MDE will review the request. If approved, additional information will be collected. The cost for rescoring is $200 per test.

A rescore does not include test code changes (INV, NC, etc.) or the late entry of student responses for paper MCAs or MTAS/Alt MCA. Any questions regarding a test code must be addressed during Posttest Editing.

Chapter 11 — Statewide Assessment Results

Assessment results are the final component of statewide assessments and are used by schools and districts as part of their system of assessments.

Assessment results for individual students, schools, districts, and the state are distributed to a variety of audiences through different formats. This chapter gives an overview of these assessment reports and results for the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments, clarifies the appropriate uses of results provided by test vendors, and includes information about other reporting resources for the interpretation of results. Note: Throughout this manual, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

When considering whether a test is "valid," keep in mind that it is the interpretations of the results that are evaluated for validity. In the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014), validity is defined as the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretation of test scores for proposed uses of tests. In other words, an assessment is valid if it measures what it claims to measure. The Minnesota statewide assessments were developed to measure the extent students have learned the applicable standards. Additionally, there are rigorous statistical checks and validation processes used every year to ensure that all statewide assessments reliably measure what they are designed to measure. Therefore, when assessments are given in a secure and consistent way, students can independently demonstrate what they know and can do; therefore, the results can be trusted to accurately reflect their understanding of grade-level content or their level of academic English at the time of testing.

> An assessment is valid when its results are used to support a claim matching its design. Statewide assessments are designed to measure learning of the standards.

Overview of Secure Systems and Available Reports

Results for the MCA, MTAS/Alt MCA, and WIDA assessments are available publicly and through a variety of reports in secure Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and test vendor systems. All official assessment and accountability data are provided by MDE. Table 37 provides an overview of the available reports. Each report described in the sections following the table serves a specific purpose and provides data for districts to use and share.

Note: 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 standards that are being measured.

Table 37. Assessment Results at a Glance

Category	Name of Results	Assessments	Location of Results	When Available
Individual student-level results (secure; current year)	Results Explorer	MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	ADAM[5]	Within 60 minutes after submitting the test or data entry; within 72 hours for Science MCA only
	Early Student-Level Results	WIDA assessments	Test WES on MDE's website	When Posttest Editing opens
	District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR)	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE website	When available following the close of Posttest Editing; embargoed until public release
	Individual Student Reports (ISRs)[6]	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	WIDA AMS ADAM	When final assessment results are released publicly
Individual student-level results (secure; historical)	Student Assessment History Report	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE's website	When student's enrollment is submitted to MDE; includes final assessment results
Summary results (secure)	Test Results Summary	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE's website	After release of DSR/SSR Files; embargoed until public release
	District and School Frequency Reports[7]	WIDA assessments	WIDA AMS	When final assessment results are released publicly
	Benchmark Reports	Math MCA-III	ADAM	When final assessment results are released publicly
	Alternate Assessment Participation	MTAS/Alt MCA	Assessment Secure Reports on MDE's website	In the fall

[5] Results from 2025-26 were initially posted in PearsonAccess Next; all results transitioned to ADAM, Pearson's new platform, in fall 2026.
[6] In addition to the electronic versions provided in test vendor systems, paper copies of ISRs for distribution to families are shipped to districts; for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, districts may elect to receive electronic versions only. Refer to *Individual Student Reports (ISRs)* later in this chapter.
[7] In addition to the electronic versions provided in WIDA AMS, paper copies are also shipped to districts.

Category	Name of Results	Assessments	Location of Results	When Available
Summary results (public)	How Well are Students Doing?	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Minnesota Report Card on MDE website	When final assessment results are released publicly
	Assessment Files	WIDA assessments MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Data Reports and Analytics on MDE website	When final assessment results are released publicly
	Subscore Report	MCA	Minnesota Assessment Hub	When final assessment results are released publicly

Results on the Minnesota Department of Education Website

Assessment Secure Reports

Reports provided by multiple divisions at MDE are available on the Secure Reports page of MDE's website. 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, as well as the Assessment Secure Reports page of MDE's website. These user guides provide detailed information about the data included in each report. For more information on access to MDE systems, refer to Chapter 1.

- **Alternate Assessment Participation**: This report provides the district's MTAS/Alt MCA participation rates from the past five years and includes comparison data to the state and similar districts. It is used to assist districts in completing the Assurance, Rationale, and Context (ARC) on an annual basis. Refer to the Alternate Assessment Participation page of MDE's website for more information about the ARC.
    - The report should be used by districts as part of conversations around how eligibility is determined for MTAS/Alt MCA participation.
    - The ARC is meant to guide district staff to reflect on their data and practices so that they can create guidance for individualized education program (IEP) teams regarding eligibility; it is not intended to mandate that districts reduce participation rates on MTAS/Alt MCA.
- **District and School Student Results (DSR and SSR)**: These files provide schools and districts with final student-level data on Minnesota's statewide assessments, including demographic information, achievement/performance or proficiency levels, overall test scores, and content area performance.
    - Districts can use the results to make data-driven decisions at the school and district levels in context with other student information available at the local level.
    - The data can be downloaded as Excel or tab-delimited text files to a student information system. It includes two additional tabs with column definitions and score label definitions.
- **Student Assessment History Report**: This report allows districts to access test history for enrolled students based on enrollment data submitted to MDE. Note: The report is updated at the beginning of the school year after the district submits enrollment data for the new school year.
    - Student testing history can be accessed for an individual student or for multiple students at a time.

- The report contains historical test records, including the standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments.

- **Test Results Summary**: These reports provide final summary-level data at the school, district, and state levels for Minnesota's statewide assessments.
  - These reports include summary demographic, achievement, performance, and proficiency level information and other available aggregated test score data as applicable. Note: Individual student results are not included.
  - This data may be used for school and district decision-making and planning in context with other information at the school and district level. This may be especially useful when the data is under embargo; before similar functionality is available publicly on the Minnesota Report Card.
  - Tables and graphs in Test Results Summary are generated based on selections in dropdown menus. Data can be downloaded for import to a Student Information System.
  - Because the Test Results Summary is a secure report, there are no student privacy protections in place based on the number of students, so summary results for student groups with fewer than 10 students are available.

Minnesota Report Card

Once results are released publicly, the information is available in the Minnesota Report Card on MDE's website. The Minnesota Report Card is an interactive online tool that allows users to explore data about districts and schools, including summarized statewide assessment results. In the "How Well Are Students Doing" section, users can view summarized of results for various groups of students across the state and within districts and schools, in tables and in graphs.

Assessment Files

Public assessment data can be downloaded as Excel files from the Assessment Files page of MDE's website. These files provide summary statewide assessment data at the state, county, district, and school levels.

Test WES

MDE provides early student-level results in the Test Web Edit System (Test WES) for WIDA assessments to allow districts to make reclassification and exit decisions for students receiving English learner (EL) services. These results are available as a downloadable Excel file and remain available until after final results are available annually. Refer to the *WIDA Assessments Early Student-Level Results* help document on the Test WES page of MDE's website for additional information. Note: These early results are embargoed; refer to the *Embargoed Early Assessment Results* section below for more information about using and sharing these results.

The intent of this early student results file is to inform instructional decisions for individual students. Districts should not use this file to calculate school or district summaries to share publicly. Early results are not final; while the score of the student is final (except in very special circumstances), actions taken during Posttest Editing (for example, districts making changes to student information or adding invalidations, or validations against student enrollment data to confirm EL status) could affect final results. Note: This is a static file, which means that it is not updated as changes are made in Posttest Editing.

Results in WIDA Systems

When final results are released publicly, the following reports for WIDA assessments become available to district-level users in WIDA AMS. However, keep in mind that MDE is the official source for WIDA assessment data. The exception is the Individual Student Report (ISR), which is provided through WIDA AMS. WIDA assessment data undergoes Posttest Editing in Test WES, and while most of this data is provided to WIDA, there may be differences between the results available in WIDA AMS and those provided by MDE. For example, assessment records created during Posttest Editing (such as blank records where a test code was entered for all domains) are only reported by MDE. In addition, the presentation of data in WIDA AMS may differ from how it is presented in MDE systems and websites. For more information on access to WIDA systems, refer to Chapter 1.

- **District and School Student Response File**: A data file containing student-level data for all tested students, primarily used for importing into student information systems or data warehouses.
- **Individual Student Reports (ISRs)**: PDFs of student results, described later in this chapter.
- **Student Roster Reports**: Overview reports on student performance within a single school and grade that include individual student scale scores and proficiency levels for each language domain and composite area, as well as tier and grade-level cluster information.
- **District and School Frequency Reports**: High-level reports for a single grade within a school, district, or state showing the number and percentage of tested students who achieved each proficiency level for each language domain and composite area.
- **Translated Student Reports**: Translated versions of ISRs, generated for individual students.

WIDA provides resources on the ACCESS Scores and Reports and WIDA Alternate ACCESS pages of the WIDA website, including:

- Interpretive Guides for Score Reports
- Family engagement resources, including parent-friendly guides, flyers, and videos
- Lesson plans and Speaking and Writing rubrics
- Resources for educators

The WIDA Data Dashboard, accessed through the WIDA Secure Portal (linked at the bottom of the page after logging in), provides aggregated analytical information for WIDA ACCESS at the consortium level. While percentile growth information is available for the consortium, those calculations focus on how much students improved on WIDA ACCESS compared to other students. MDE considers growth measures that rely on comparisons to other students inappropriate for a criterion-referenced assessment. MDE instead recommends using changes in scale scores between years, together with changes in proficiency levels, as a more appropriate measure of progress. **Info!** Districts should not calculate scale score progress by comparing results from the 2024-25 ACCESS administration to those from the 2025-26 WIDA ACCESS administration, because the 2025-26 results represent the first year of a new operational test. Progress calculations can begin only after the 2026-27 results are available, allowing comparisons between 2025-26 and 2026-27. Note: Two or more years of student results are needed to conduct scale score progress calculations. Since 2025-26 was the first operational year of

the WIDA ACCESS, districts will be unable to conduct progress calculations for their students until the 2026-27 WIDA ACCESS results are available.

Info! WIDA ACCESS Braille will continue to be scored using legacy ACCESS scales (pre-2026) until the test is aligned to the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. As a result, ISRs for braille testers will continue to reflect 2012 PLDs. In rare mixed-mode situations (for example, one domain completed in braille and others online), multiple partial ISRs will be produced.

Results in ADAM

In ADAM, MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA data is available at the student, school, district, and state levels, depending on the type of report accessed and the user role. DACs and authorized users can access all available results for their organization.

Reporting resources and user guides are available on the Additional Reporting Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. For more information on access to ADAM, refer to Chapter 1.

Results Explorer

New! Results Explorer in ADAM—formerly called On-Demand Reports in PearsonAccess Next—provides student scores for Reading MCA/Alt MCA, Math MCA/MTAS, and Science Alt MCA within 60 minutes after testing or data entry is completed, and they are available until final results are released. Results for Science MCA are available within 72 hours after testing or data entry is complete due to the additional time required for scoring constructed-response items. Districts are encouraged to share these results with educators, students, and families for instructional purposes, but these results cannot be shared publicly.

Keep in mind that while score changes are extremely rare, districts are still encouraged to share these early results because they provide timely information; however, they are not considered final for the following reasons:

- For MCA, periodic reviews of scoring and student responses are conducted as part of MDE's robust scoring verification process.
    - All items and test forms are reviewed multiple times before and during testing to ensure they are scored and functioning correctly.
    - 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.
    - Achievement/performance level changes occurring as a result of these reviews are very rare. In cases where the achievement/performance level changes, communication is sent to the DAC.
- Test administration situations (such as test invalidations or misadministrations) could lead to changes from these results due to test code changes.
- MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA assessment data go through Posttest Editing in Test WES before final reports are generated, and changes made during this process (for example, districts making changes to student information, or validations against student enrollment data to confirm special education designations) could lead to final results that differ from the results available in Results Explorer.

Note: These early results are embargoed; refer to the *Embargoed Early Assessment Results* section below for more information about using and sharing these results.

Report Assets

New! Report Assets in ADAM—formerly called Published Reports in PearsonAccess Next—include ISRs, Math MCA-III Benchmark Reports, and other reports available for DACs and other authorized users (including Testing Time Reports). Results in Report Assets are available to school- or district-level users only. Note: Final results are loaded for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA only once after Posttest Editing. Therefore, changes made or assessment data submitted after these results are loaded (such as straggler records—refer to the *Straggler Data* section below for more information) will only appear in MDE systems.

- **Individual Student Reports (ISRs)**: PDFs of ISRs, which are described in more detail later in this chapter.
- **Benchmark Reports**: MCA-III Benchmark Reports are available annually in the fall after the public release of results. Only Math MCA-III reports will be produced for 2026-27. Benchmark Reports were last provided in 2024 for Science MCA-III and 2025 for Reading MCA-III. These reports are a guidance tool educators can use to learn about school- and district-level performance on each assessed benchmark from the Minnesota Academic Standards for the current year. Refer to the *Using Benchmark Reports (MCA-III)* section below for more information.

Results on the Minnesota Assessment Hub Website

Subscore Report

Subscore Reports with data from 2022-26 are available on the Subscore Report page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. The reports provides the public with access to school-, district-, and state-level MCA subscore data for a selected test, year, grade, and subject. A user guide is available on the Additional Reporting Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Refer to the *Using Subscores (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA)* section below for more information.

Process for the Release of Final Assessment and Accountability Results

Minnesota developed the North Star accountability system, established under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (refer to Appendix E), in an effort to provide comprehensive information to the public. The North Star accountability system uses five indicators to identify schools and districts for support. Statewide assessments are an important part of the system, but other data, like graduation rates and consistent attendance, provide additional insight about schools. MDE uses accountability indicators in a particular way when identifying schools for support every three years. For more information about the five accountability indicators, refer to the *Accountability and Statewide Assessments* resource posted on the School and District Accountability page of MDE's website.

MDE publicly releases assessment and accountability results together. The intent is to provide greater context around these results and improve public understanding of how Minnesota schools are held accountable under state and federal law. While MDE uses accountability indicators in a particular way when identifying schools for support, the annual release of results is not meant to prioritize any specific indicator(s). The annual release allows members of the public to use their own judgment when determining which indicators are most relevant to their individual priorities.

The general process for the release of final assessment and accountability results in a typical year is as follows. Note: Embargoed early student results are available during the testing window (MCA/MTAS/Alt MCA) or in the spring (WIDA assessments) for districts to share with students, families, and educators for instructional purposes. Refer to the *Test WES* and *Results Explorer* sections above for more information.

6. Embargoed final district assessment results are available for district review in Assessment Secure Reports (beginning with DSR/SSR files and then Test Results Summary reports).
7. Embargoed district accountability results are available for district review in Accountability Secure Reports; districts have an opportunity to submit an appeal of these results if identified for support.
8. Embargoed statewide summary results are provided to districts shortly before they are provided to the media and for public release.
9. When MDE lifts the embargo, final assessment and accountability results are made available publicly on the Minnesota Report Card and the Data Reports and Analytics pages of MDE's website (summary level data). Assessment results are also available in test vendor systems (ADAM and WIDA AMS), and Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are provided to districts for distribution to families.

Note: Minnesota Statutes require MDE to treat all school performance data the department receives, collects, or creates as nonpublic data until it is released publicly by the commissioner (refer to Appendix E).

The following sections provide more details about the release of final assessment results. For more information about accountability results, refer to the School and District Accountability page of MDE's website or email mde.essa@state.mn.us.

Embargoed Assessment Results

Embargoed Early Assessment Results

Districts are encouraged to share early assessment results with educators, students, and families for instructional purposes, but these results cannot be shared publicly. It is a district decision to determine how early student results will be shared. The following guidance provides general considerations for appropriately sharing these results. Refer to the *Test WES* and *Results Explorer* sections above for more information.

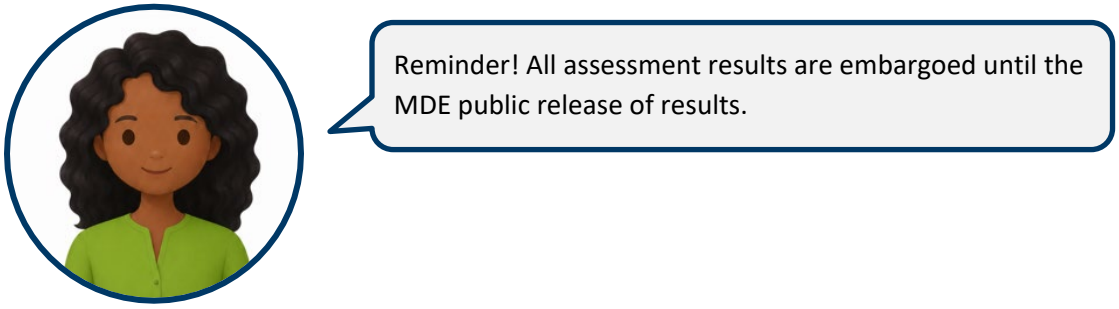
- Early student assessment results must not be discussed in public forums (for example, on social media), reflected in public meeting minutes (for example, school board meetings), or shared with the general public or media until the final assessment results have been released publicly.
    - This includes any summarization or accountability calculations determined by the district. Until results are publicly released by MDE, the Minnesota legislature classifies the school performance data as nonpublic (refer to Appendix E).
    - If sharing these results with staff, ensure they understand that "abiding by the embargo" means results cannot be shared or discussed with others before the public release of results.
    - Note: Individually-identifying student results must not be shared publicly at any point, as required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. Student-level results may be shared only with those who have a legitimate educational interest or others who are permitted

by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) or FERPA to have access to this private educational data. Refer to *Sharing Student Information in the School and District* later in this chapter for more information.

- While early student assessment results can be shared with school board members, school officials, and charter school authorizers, all requirements outlined in *Sharing Students' Private Information and Results Outside the School and District* (later in this chapter) 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.
- For WIDA assessments, because early student-level results are used to make individual student EL reclassification and exit decisions, districts may share these results with another district if a student transfers after testing. However, for other purposes (such as grant applications or state and federal reporting requirements), districts must use the final assessment results provided by MDE.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, districts may share these early student-level results with other educational institutions involved with Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and college placement, as it is considered an instructional use. Refer to the *Placement Scores and Placement Scores and Postsecondary Enrollment Options* section in this chapter for additional guidance. Note: Final assessment results provided by MDE must be used for other purposes, such as grant applications or state/federal reporting requirements.

Embargoed Final Assessment Results

When final assessment results are released through Assessment Secure Reports, they are embargoed until released publicly by MDE. Final assessment results include the DSR and SSR files (student-level results) 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, local community, and educational partners. This means that districts may share the results with district teachers and staff, but **these final assessment results cannot be shared publicly**.

MDE encourages districts and schools to share individual student results with parents/guardians and students for instructional purposes. This includes sharing these results through a secure student/family portal as long as no summary results are provided. In addition, early or final individual student results may be shared with educational institutions (such as for a PSEO application, when transferring to a new district, or for college course

enrollment) as long as no summary results are provided; if the results being provided are not final, this should be noted. Under FERPA regulations, individually-identifying results cannot be shared publicly at any point.

Final assessment summary results, including participation information, should not be discussed in public forums (for example, on social media), posted online, or reflected in public meeting minutes (such as school board meetings) until the embargo has ended. This includes any summarization or accountability calculations determined by the district. Participation information includes information such as the percentage of students who participated and participation by student group. Refer to *Sharing Students' Private Information and Results 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.

> The term "embargo" means that results cannot be shared in any public forum or with other staff members who should not have access to the results until they are released publicly by MDE.

If media outlets contact the district for results during the embargo period, the media should be directed to MDE's Communications division. 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.

Abiding by the Embargo

As District Assessment Coordinators (DACs) work with district staff to determine how early and final embargoed results will be shared, they must also provide information to all individuals with access to the results about abiding by the embargo. 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 MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA results are available during the testing window and WIDA assessment early student-level results are available in the spring, discussions around use of this data may be needed earlier, with additional information provided when embargoed final results are released.
- **Consider audience:** Teachers who have access to results must understand what the embargo means. Other staff members who may not be directly involved in test administration will need more information. For example:
    - While some teachers may have access to results or be provided information about results, other staff may simply hear about results in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) discussions or other school committees for instructional or curriculum planning. While this is allowed, DACs must remind staff in these instances that results cannot be shared or discussed with those outside the school or district.
    - Administrators and principals likely have access to all embargoed results and may be the individuals who are asked questions about district and school performance by community and educational partners; it is important that they know what information can and cannot be provided before results are released publicly.

- 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 early and final results are shared, DACs may need to clarify what it means to share results. In most 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.
  - Discussing results in PLCs may be allowable if all members have a legitimate educational interest in the results, but discussing them with teachers in other districts is not allowed.
  - Summary data cannot be shared or discussed on social media (for example, 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.
  - If results will be shared with school board members, the members must follow all requirements outlined in this chapter, and they cannot discuss the results in a public setting or answer questions from the media or other members of the public.

If embargo policies are not followed, a security violation must be submitted to MDE through Assessment Security Records (ASR).

Public Release of Final Assessment Results

Once results are released publicly, results are available in the Minnesota Report Card and the Assessment Files described earlier in this chapter.

Results for the current year are also available in test vendor systems once released publicly, as described earlier in this chapter under *Overview of Secure Systems and Available Reports*.

Summary data available in the Minnesota Report Card and public assessment data have privacy protection rules in place to safeguard individual student privacy while still allowing MDE to report relevant information about student groups. Further information is available on the Student Privacy and Public Reports page of MDE's website.

Note: For districts and schools, MDE recommends that data from Secure Reports—not from public reporting—be used for analyzing school and district data because it allows the most flexibility to explore the data and summarize it in meaningful ways. Secure Reports are intended for school and district use, while other public reports have different intended primary audiences.

Individual Student Reports

Paper and/or online PDFs of Individual Student Reports (ISRs) include final individual student results for each assessment and are provided to districts in the fall. Federal and state legislation require that these student reports be distributed to parents/guardians. Each district or school determines how and when the reports will be provided, but the reports must be provided no later than Dec. 1. When results are delayed due to standard setting, efforts should be made to provide ISRs to parents/guardians as close to Dec. 1 as possible, but there is flexibility with this requirement for those assessments.

Requirements for All Districts

- MDE requires that districts provide the final state-produced results, which have gone through rigorous quality checks, to parents/guardians. While early student-level results or district-created reports based on final test data can be provided to parents/guardians earlier than the ISRs, they do not replace the ISR. If the district receives an ISR for a student with a test code instead of a score, the ISR must still be provided to the family unless the parent/guardian has explicitly asked not to receive it.
- MDE requires districts to provide either the paper ISR or the PDF ISR to ensure families across the state receive information in a consistent and uniform manner. Districts cannot only communicate portions of the information (for example, adding scores into their Student Information System [SIS]) without also providing the ISR.

Determining the Format

- Each district determines whether to distribute paper copies or provide PDF ISRs electronically (such as through a secure parent/guardian portal). If reports are only provided electronically, the final version from the test vendor system must be used.
- When determining in which format the district will provide the ISR, consider which format provides the most equitable access for parents/guardians. For example, while a majority may be able to access ISRs online, paper copies may need to be provided in some instances.

If Providing Paper Reports:

- For student data privacy purposes, a staff member must be available to receive the district's shipment of reports (if paper reports were requested). The paper reports must then be secured until distribution.
- If providing paper reports, determine how to issue them in a way that maintains student data privacy. Mailing results home or giving them out during fall conferences are two distribution methods that protect student data privacy.
- If disposing paper reports (for example, because a PDF report was provided), ensure they are securely disposed because they contain private student data.

If Providing PDF Reports Electronically:

- If providing PDF reports electronically, consider your district procedures for securely providing private student data to families and meeting FERPA requirements. Secure delivery (such as through a parent/guardian portal) is preferred over email, unless allowed by district policy.

- If uploading PDF reports to a SIS for families to access, districts must determine how they will notify families of this information being available (such as via a newsletter article or email).

Additional Considerations:

- If districts provide ISRs at fall conferences, they need to determine a plan for parents/guardians who are unable to attend (such as by mailing ISRs to those families or providing them online) in order to meet the requirement of distributing these reports to families by Dec. 1.
- If districts do not have forwarding addresses or contact information for students that have left the district, they may consider contacting the families in a different way (such as by phone or email) or working with the student's new district.
- Regardless of how reports are distributed, districts should consider how to provide families with information (for example, via a letter or in discussions at conferences) about how statewide assessment results are used in the context of other districts and school information.
- **Info!** Districts may choose to keep a copy of the final ISRs (PDF or paper) for all students based on their retention policy for student permanent, cumulative records. Refer to the Government Records Services page of the Minnesota Historical Society website for more information on records retention schedule requirements for school districts.
- If an ISR is needed in an alternative format, such as large print, braille, or as an audio file, contact mde.testing@state.mn.us. Translated versions of paper ISRs for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA may also be requested for a fee. For WIDA assessments, translated versions of ISRs can be downloaded from WIDA AMS. Translated reports provided to families should accompany—not replace—the reports in English.

WIDA Assessments

Final reports for WIDA assessments, including paper copies of ISRs, rosters, and School and District Frequency Reports, are shipped to districts. ISRs are provided for all participating students and show both a proficiency level and a scale score for each attempted domain.

- For students who had a test code indicated for one or more domains, a Not Attempted (NA) code will be reported on the ISR for the domain(s) and all associated composite scores.
- For students who did not attempt one or more domains, a blank space will appear on the ISR for the domain(s) and all associated composite scores.

Related resources and sample reports are available on the ACCESS Scores and Reports and WIDA Alternate ACCESS pages of WIDA's website.

MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA

PDF ISRs are available in Report Assets in ADAM. Note: If districts choose to receive paper reports, they will still have access to the PDF reports in ADAM.

ISRs are provided for all students expected to participate, and they include a student's overall results as well as performance within the subject. Descriptions of achievement or performance levels are also included to help families understand their student's results. For students who did not participate, the ISR will show why results are not included (for example, parent or student refusal was indicated or the test was not complete).

Several resources for educators are available on the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub. Resources for students and families are available on the Assessment Results page of MDE's website. Student results labels are also available for every student for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA. Districts indicate in Test WES if they want to receive these printed labels. These labels can be used on student permanent hard-copy files. Student results labels in PDF format can also be printed from ADAM.

Straggler Data

Straggler data is additional assessment data that is included after final results are published. Following the public release of assessment results, the DSR/SSR files are updated when there is straggler data for WIDA assessments and MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA. This typically occurs in late fall, and a notice will appear in the *Assessment Update* when straggler data has been loaded to the DSR/SSR files.

- For WIDA assessments, this data typically comes from paper test materials that were returned after the shipping deadline, from a score appeal, or transcription request.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, this data typically comes from late student response entry requests that were processed after the deadline for results to be included in reporting.

While straggler data is updated in the DSR/SSR files (and therefore will appear in the Student Assessment History Report), it is not included in the Test Results Summary or accountability calculations, nor is it typically incorporated into publicly available data (such as the Minnesota Report Card) unless communicated by MDE. ISRs are provided in WIDA AMS for the WIDA assessments; no ISRs are provided for MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA.

Guidelines for Communicating Assessment Results

DACs may be responsible for communicating their district's assessment results to a variety of audiences. To assist new DACs with this task, MDE has gathered the suggestions below from experienced DACs.

- The DAC should work closely with district administrators (including the Superintendent, Curriculum Director, and EL Coordinator) on the plan and procedures for sharing test results with the school board, school administrators, staff, families, and the media. This plan should include:
  - Who will share the test results with each group.
  - When the test results will be shared with each group and how information on abiding by the embargo will be provided.
  - How and where the test results will be shared with each group.
  - What level of results will be shared with each group.
  - How test results fit into 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.

- Explain the purpose of the test and any changes in the test, including changes in the standards assessed or test administration. As revised English language development and academic standards are implemented, consider your district's standards implementation plan and how assessment results may be impacted during the transition.
  - Refer to the Test Score Interpretation Resources section of the District Resources page of MDE's website for guidance documents related to using assessment results during the transition to revised standards.
  - **Info!** A *Guidance for Reading MCA-IV and Alternate MCA Results Release* document is available on the District Resources page. This document provides an overview of the revised Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and statewide assessments in reading, as well as guidance and resources for using these results for future planning and continuous improvement for standards implementation.
- 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.
  - Note: Keep student privacy in mind when creating tables and graphs. Avoid reporting data in a way that allows individual students to be identified.
- 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 assessments 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 community and educational partners 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 performance?
- Why are the scores different from last year?

Appropriately Using Assessment Results

This section provides information about appropriate uses of statewide assessment results and important considerations to keep in mind when evaluating the data. As part of a continuous improvement process, MDE is redesigning existing reports and resources to ensure we are supporting assessment data needs of educators, students, families, and policymakers, while meeting state and federal requirements. Changes will span across the assessment program over the next few years; the report redesign process will take multiple years to fully implement, meaning some reports and resources will not be available for the first years of new assessments.

Minnesota's statewide assessments are *criterion-referenced*, meaning they measure performance against a fixed set of criteria, the WIDA English Language Development Standards or Minnesota Academic Standards. These assessments are also *summative*, meaning that they occur at the end of an instructional period (for example, after the student has completed an academic year of instruction) This is in contrast to *formative* assessments that occur throughout the school year and can be used to modify instruction and goals in the course of the academic year.

While individual student results on statewide assessments provide accurate, dependable information on the student's learning, there are also limitations of analyzing individual results. Statewide assessments are not designed to provide the same fine-grained information about student learning that classroom assessments can give. Classroom assessments provide the specific information teachers need to adjust and differentiate instruction for their students. In addition, when making important educational decisions about individual students (such as placement in programs, promotion, or retention), a comprehensive approach should be taken. Other classroom-level assessments and instructional data from those most knowledgeable about a student's learning should be used in conjunction with statewide assessment data.

Summarized results from statewide assessments are designed to be used at a student group, grade, school, district, and state levels:

- Statewide assessments provide one data point that should be considered in the context of each district's system of assessments. No single assessment can provide a complete picture of its own. While data on statewide assessment results provides a useful data point, the most valid and robust evaluations of district and school performance occur when this information is paired with other similarly aligned standards-based information from district, local, and classroom assessments.
- Districts can use summarized statewide assessment data, described in this chapter, as well as accountability data provided by MDE, to look at overall performance for a given year and at trends in performance over time.
    - Overall achievement/performance or proficiency levels over time between student groups
    - Percent of students by achievement/performance or proficiency level within a subject or grade level
    - Change in students moving between achievement/performance or proficiency levels over time

While this section provides a high-level overview related to available results and appropriate use, the following resources provide additional information:

- Chapter 5 includes examples of ethical and unethical practices related to the use and interpretation of statewide assessment results.
- The District Resources page of MDE's website includes a section for Test Score Interpretation Resources for educators, with resources providing detailed information and guidance on using statewide assessment results.
- The Testing 1, 2, 3 website contains several resource pages supporting assessment and data literacy that can be used and shared with district and school staff who interpret results from the statewide assessments.

Considerations for Comparing District and School Summary Results

It is important to keep in mind that making appropriate comparisons and inferences can be complicated when changes have occurred in the standards being assessed, test content and scoring, test participation, or test administration context. Some information is included in this section, but a history of the Minnesota statewide assessments is included in the applicable *Technical Manuals*, described under *Additional Reporting Resources* later in this chapter.

The English-language proficiency assessments (currently the WIDA assessments) have undergone several test design changes since they were first administered in 2012. Once new standards are introduced and the test design changes, results from the current assessment series cannot be compared with results from the previous assessment series. Refer to Table 38 for details on which ACCESS/WIDA ACCESS assessment results can or cannot be compared.

Table 38. Comparing English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessment Results from Year to Year

Test	Grades	First Year Administered	Year Test Design Changed	Years Scores Are Comparable
ACCESS for ELLs	K	2012	N/A	2012 to 2025
ACCESS for ELLs	1-12	2012	2016	2017 to 2025
Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	1-12	2013	N/A	2013 to 2023
WIDA Alternate ACCESS	K-12	2024	2024	2024 and beyond
WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten	K	2026	2026	2026 and beyond
WIDA ACCESS	1-12	2026	2026	2026 and beyond

In addition, when looking at ACCESS/WIDA ACCESS data over time, remember that the students with the highest language proficiency are exited from EL programming each year and are no longer part of the more recent data. The 2025-26 school year was a transition year for WIDA ACCESS and WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten. The

DSR/SSR files included the initial proficiency level results that were required to be used for English learner (EL) status reclassification and exit decisions. **Info!** Updated proficiency level results, based on new cut scores established through standard setting, will be available in fall of 2026 and are intended for future cross-year comparisons. Additional information is available in the guidance document *Using WIDA Assessment Results During the 2026 Transition to New Proficiency Levels* on the Minnesota page of WIDA's website (under the Manuals, Guides and Test Material dropdown).

For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, results should only be compared across years when the same versions of the standards were assessed. This will be especially important after the MCA-IV and Alt MCA, the next versions of the MCA-III and MTAS, respectively, are administered; the schedule for revisions to the Minnesota Academic Standards is in Appendix B, *Building a Test: From Academic Standards to Scoring*.

Table 39. Comparing Standards-Based Accountability Assessment Results from Year to Year

Subject and Test	Grades	Year Standards Revised	First Year Assessed on Revised Standards	Years Scores Are Comparable
Math MCA-III and MTAS	3-8	2007	2011	2011 to present
Math MCA-III and MTAS	11	2007	2014	2014 to present
Science MCA-III and MTAS	5, 8, HS	2009	2012	2012 to 2024
Science MCA-IV and Alt MCA	5, 8, HS	2019	2025	2025 and beyond
Reading MCA-III and MTAS	3-8, 10	2010	2013	2013 to 2025
Reading MCA-IV and Alt MCA	3-8, 10	2020	2026	2026 and beyond

However, even with the period when the same standards are assessed, there may be other programmatic changes or contexts that must be kept in mind (for example, limited data during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 or no longer including statewide assessments in graduation requirements). Refer to the *Technical Manual for Minnesota's Statewide Assessments* on the Technical Reports page of MDE's website for Minnesota's statewide assessment history.

Schools and districts should keep in mind that comparisons of assessment results across sites can be influenced by differences in local context and conditions that can impact student performance. Therefore, comparisons should be made selectively, intentionally, and with caution.

Using Scale Scores

- Scale scores are created by translating student results (based on a raw score for fixed-form tests, or a pattern of responses for adaptive tests) onto a standardized scale.

- For WIDA assessments, scale scores within each domain or composite area are on a vertical scale and have meaning across grade levels; each composite scale score or each domain scale score can be **Info!** compared from year to year. However, the scale scores for each composite and each domain are independent, and comparisons across composites and domains cannot be made with scale scores. Because school year 2025-26 was the first operational administration of the updated WIDA ACCESS and WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, districts should not calculate year-to-year growth using scale scores until results from the 2026-27 administration are available.
- For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, the grade-level scales are independent; scale scores cannot be compared across grades, since the tests assess the specific content for that grade level. Scale scores can be used to look at performance over time within a grade (for example, comparing performance of grade 4 students over time) but not across grades (for example, comparing grade 4 students to grade 5 students). Achievement/performance levels, however, may be used for comparison across grades from year to year but should not be compared when there is a new series of assessments (for example, comparing performance levels on the MCA-IV to achievement levels on the MCA-III).

Using Proficiency Levels (WIDA Assessments)

For WIDA ACCESS, students are assigned a proficiency level based on their scale score.

- For WIDA ACCESS, there are six English language proficiency levels: 1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, 5-Bridging, and 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 number following the decimal represents how far the student has progressed within that level.
- The interpretation of scale scores to proficiency level scores is grade-specific, not grade-level cluster specific. WIDA scale scores are used to determine a student's English language proficiency level, but the relationship between the two is not the same across all grades. A single scale score may correspond to different proficiency levels depending on the student's grade. In general, younger students need a lower scale score to reach the same proficiency level as older students. This grade-specific interpretation is designed to align with developmental expectations for each grade.
- Scale scores in one domain cannot be interpreted in the same way as scale scores in another domain. For instance, a student may receive the same scale score in both Listening and Reading, but that scale score could convert to different proficiency levels in the two domains.

For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, proficiency level scores describe a student's performance in terms of the five WIDA Alternate English Language Proficiency Levels: 1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, and 5-Bridging.

- WIDA Alternate ACCESS proficiency level scores are unique from other WIDA ACCESS assessments.
- A student who scores at the Entering alternate proficiency level on WIDA Alternate ACCESS is not necessarily performing at the same level as a student who scores at the Entering proficiency level on WIDA ACCESS Online or Paper.

Using Achievement (MCA-III/MTAS) or Performance (MCA-IV/Alt MCA) Levels and Descriptors

Following the assessment, students are assigned an achievement/performance level based on their scale score. An achievement/performance level describes the degree to which students demonstrate the knowledge and skills indicated in grade-level standards. These levels are also used to determine whether a student demonstrated proficiency in content aligned to grade-level standards.

Each achievement/performance level connects to achievement level descriptors (ALDs) or performance level descriptors (PLDs), which describe what student learning looks like in terms of categories of performance on an assessment and clarify the grade-level expectations in the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. They give educators a shared, teacher-facing reference for interpreting results, examining the rigor of instruction and classroom assessments, planning instruction, and communicating clearly about student performance.

ALDs/PLDs have several purposes or uses, including:

- Facilitating interpretation of student assessment results by educators and families
- Clarifying grade-level expectations reflected in the standards
- Examining whether classroom success criteria and assessments reflect the "Meets" level of rigor
- Evaluating whether instruction and classroom assessments reflect the full depth of the standard
- Planning instruction that moves students toward deeper understanding
- Supporting educators in the implementation of revised standards
- Providing the criteria for establishing performance levels (or cut scores) for the statewide assessment at standard setting

With the transition to new assessments based on revised academic standards, the terminology used to refer to the levels and the descriptors themselves have been updated to further distinguish new assessments.

- MCA-III and MTAS achievement levels: Exceeds, Meets, Partially Meets, and Does Not Meet
- MCA-IV and Alt MCA performance levels: Advanced, Meets, Intermediate, and Beginning

For Reading and Science MCA and Alt MCA, performance level guides are available on the Performance Level Descriptors page of MDE's website.

For Math MCA and MTAS, ALDs and Benchmark ALDs are available on the Achievement Level Descriptors page of MDE's website. The Benchmark ALDs provide more detailed descriptions of the knowledge and skills students typically demonstrate for each benchmark of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Mathematics. They can be used along with the Math MCA-III Benchmark Reports.

Using Composite Scores (WIDA ACCESS)

In addition to proficiency level and scale scores for each domain of WIDA ACCESS, students receive a proficiency level score and a scale score for different combinations of the language domains. These composite scores are Oral Language, Literacy, Comprehension, and Overall. This data is available in the DSR/SSR files and Test Results Summary.

Students must complete all domains to receive all composite scores. If a student does not complete a particular domain, scores for that domain and any associated composite scores will be missing from the student's results.

As with proficiency levels for individual language domains, the interpretation of scale scores to proficiency levels is grade-specific, not grade-level cluster specific. The following table illustrates how the composite scores are determined.

Table 40. WIDA ACCESS Composite Scores

WIDA ACCESS Composite Scores	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Oral Language Score	50%		50%	
Literacy Score		50%		50%
Comprehension Score	30%	70%		
Overall Score	15%	35%	15%	35%

Composite scores require careful considerations. For example, an Overall composite can be helpful in summarizing overall student performance. However, students with identical Overall composites might have very different profiles in terms of their oral language and literacy development (for example, one student might have very strong speaking skills, while another might excel at reading). Because a high score in one domain can inflate a composite score, a student's individual performance in each domain is more informative than a single composite score.

Using Subscores (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA)

MDE provides subscore data in order to share more detailed information about student performance to districts, educators, and parents/guardians. Subscore data at the student level can be found in the DSR/SSR files and ISRs. Subscore data at the school, district, or state level can be found in the Test Results Summary, Math Benchmark Reports, and the Subscore Report.

MTAS and Alt MCA subscore data are reported as a raw score, which is a value of points earned out of points possible within a subscore area. MTAS subscores provide information about student performance in content subject categories; Alt MCA subscores provide information about the cognitive complexity and levels of support needed on test items. Comparisons between different subscores or comparisons across multiple years are not advised. Comparisons at the school and district levels within the same testing year may provide insight into strengths or areas needing improvement relative to other schools or districts.

MCA-III and MCA-IV subscore data are reported using the categories—Below Expectations (B), At or Near Expectations (N), or Above Expectations (A). Reporting categories are determined by comparing the school (or district) performance to the state expectation at the Meets achievement/performance level. However, these reporting categories are separate from the overall performance levels (Beginning, Intermediate, Meets, Exceeds).

No test score is perfectly precise. Calculations for the subscore reporting categories use the standard error of measurement, which is an estimate of how much error there is likely to be in an individual's observed score, or how much score variation would be expected if the individual were tested multiple times with equivalent forms of the test. Therefore, every subscore represents a small range of performance for an individual student, rather than one exact point:

- If the student's entire range sits below Meets, that subscore is Below Expectations (B).
- If the Meets cutoff falls within the student's range, that subscore is At or Near Expectations (N).
- If the student's entire range sits above the Meets, that subscore is Above Expectations (A).

The subscore reporting categories are not well suited to judging an individual student's strengths or weaknesses; each subscore is based on relatively few items, which makes it less reliable at that student level. They are much more useful and reliable at the school or district level (available in the Subscore Report or Math Benchmark Reports) to look at trends over time or areas of relative strength and need across a group. It is best practice to examine this data alongside local district and classroom data to determine the extent to which the same trends are noticeable when making decisions about curriculum and instruction.

The ALDs/PLDs described previously, pair well with subscore data. Where the subscore reporting categories describe where a content area is relatively strong or in need of attention, the ALDs/PLDs describe what student learning looks like at each level within that content area. These can be used together to examine whether classroom instruction and assessments reflect the level of rigor described at "Meets," and to plan next steps for a content area where students are in the B or N categories.

Using Benchmark Reports (MCA-III)

MCA-III Benchmark Reports are available annually after public release of results. Only Math MCA-III reports will be produced for 2026-27. These reports measure and provide school- and district-level performance by grade on each assessed benchmark from the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards for the current year. Note: Benchmark Reports were last provided in 2024 for Science MCA-III and 2025 for Reading MCA-III; 2026 will be the final year for Math MCA-III Benchmark Reports.

These reports are designed to be an additional resource that educators can use to identify benchmarks from the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards within a grade for which a school or district shows performance less than, similar to, and/or greater than the "Meets" achievement level—in other words, how students performed on each benchmark assessed compared to the "Meets" achievement level expected for each grade.

It is important to interpret Benchmark Reports with caution because this data has been aggregated at the benchmark level within the school and/or district; some benchmarks are assessed more or less frequently than others according to the test specifications. Staff may find it helpful to have conversations about this data and

compare how students have performed on classroom assessments measuring learning of similar benchmarks, or where and how a specific benchmark is taught in a course's scope and sequence.

Resources to support districts in the appropriate use and understanding of the benchmark reports are available on the Additional Reporting Resources page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

Using Individual Student Assessment Results

Individual student results show a broad overview of student learning of grade-level standards. These results are intended to be interpreted alongside more fine-grained information about the individual student from their classroom teacher. Federal and state legislation require that individual student results be reported for all statewide assessments; therefore, it is important that parents/guardians are given information and guidance on the appropriate use of these results.

- While individual student results provide accurate, dependable information on student learning of the standards, districts and families should consider their limitations, as they only provide information from one point in time. When making educational decisions about individual students, a comprehensive approach should be taken, and other classroom-level assessment and instructional data should be used in conjunction with statewide assessment data.
- The WIDA assessments are also summative, but the results are designed to measure an individual student's progress towards English language proficiency. These results can be used at both the individual level and to evaluate EL programs at a school or district level.

When using individual student results, refer to your district's data privacy policies and procedures for sharing the data with other district and school staff. Even if the data are summarized, the results presented may be for only a small number of students, making it possible to identify individual students. Ensure student data privacy is maintained when accessing or sharing data electronically or when sharing printed paper copies of any reports or results. Refer to *Use of Student Information and Results* later in this chapter for additional information.

When you share statewide assessment results with families, make sure you give them additional information so they have enough context about what those results mean.

And remember, while it is inappropriate to make individual student decisions based on MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA results, it *is appropriate* to make individual student decisions with WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS results.

Career and College Readiness Indicators

Career and college readiness (CCR) indicators, required by Minnesota Statutes, are measures of students' career and college readiness (refer to Appendix E). Note: There are no CCR indicators reported for Science MCA.

CCR goal scores are provided for the grades 10 and 11 Reading and Math MCAs. The CCR goal scores act as cut scores for career and college readiness based on students' performance on the MCA. The MCA scores and CCR

goal scores are on the same scale, and can be compared to determine if a student is on track to demonstrate career and college readiness:

- Students whose MCA scale scores are at or above the CCR goal score are expected to be on track to demonstrate career and college readiness in that subject on a college admissions test at the end of grade 11 and be able to successfully complete coursework in that respective subject without remediation.
- Students whose MCA scale scores are below the CCR goal score may indicate that the student's performance is not on track to meet career and college readiness.

Additional information about CCR indicators is available in the Career and College Readiness section of the Technical Reports page of MDE's website.

Placement Scores and Postsecondary Enrollment Options

Minnesota Statutes enable college students to be placed into college-level courses at Minnesota State colleges and universities based on their high school MCA scale scores (refer to Appendix E). Therefore, students who have a score at or above a designated score on the grade 10 Reading MCA and/or grade 11 Math MCA are not required to take a developmental level course in the respective subject area. For more information and scores for course placement, contact the individual Minnesota State college or university directly or go to the Minnesota State Academic Affairs page of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities website (under the Academic Readiness expandable heading; select System Procedure 3.3.1 to access specific course placement information).

In addition, results for the grade 8 Reading MCA are used to determine eligibility for students who wish to enroll in Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) in grade 10. Refer to the PSEO for 10th Graders (CTE Pathway) page of MDE's website for more information.

Districts may share individual student results with educational institutions for these purposes before final results are released publicly since they are being shared for an instructional purpose. Refer to the *Embargoed Final Assessment Results* section earlier in this chapter for more information.

Accountability Measures

Minnesota's North Star accountability system established under ESSA (refer to Appendix E) uses data generated by statewide assessments for three of its indicators: Academic Achievement (one each for reading and math), Academic Progress (one each for reading and math), 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 of MDE's website. 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 (such as enrolled half an academic year). For more information on how students are included in accountability, refer to the *North Star Business Rules* and *Accountability and Statewide Assessments* resources posted on the Accountability Indicators page.

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 Minnesota's statewide assessments.

The Technical Reports page of MDE's website includes the following reports:

- **Achievement/Performance Level Cut Scores**: Documents that provide the minimum scale scores and score ranges for each achievement/performance level on the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA.
- **Alignment Reviews**: Information about studies conducted to evaluate the alignment between the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA and the applicable Minnesota Academic Standards.
- **Annual Technical Reports for WIDA Assessments**: Information on the construction, scoring, reporting, and psychometric characteristics of the WIDA ACCESS for both online and paper tests and the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.
- **Standard Setting Reports**: Reports on the process used to set the achievement/performance levels for assessments that categorize student performance. This section on MDE's website also includes the *English Language Proficiency Definition* report, which provides the process used to define proficiency for WIDA ACCESS.
- **Technical Manual and Yearbook Tables**: Information on the construction, scoring, reporting, and psychometric characteristics of all statewide assessments is found in the *Technical Manual for Minnesota's Statewide Assessments*. The corresponding *Yearbook Tables for Minnesota's Statewide Assessments* provide statistics on the measurement properties and score distributions of these assessments.

The WIDA Secure Portal, under Resources, includes the following reports:

- **Scale Score to Proficiency Level Tables**: These tables—one each for WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS—provide the scale scores that correspond to the proficiency levels for each grade and domain or composite area; the scale score cuts for the proficiency levels remain the same from year to year. Note: Due to the standard setting process for a new assessment, the table for WIDA ACCESS will be available when provided by WIDA.

WIDA provides comprehensive resources to help families and educators interpret assessment results and translate them into instructional planning and student support. These are available on the WIDA website. Key resources include:

- **Interpretive Guides for Score Reports**: Explains how to interpret student scores and use them to inform decisions about EL services and instructional planning.
    - WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS on the ACCESS Scores and Reports and WIDA Alternate ACCESS pages, respectively.

- WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework on the ELD Standards Framework page: Helps educators connect assessment results to instruction and curriculum design. The Alternate Performance Level Descriptors further describe the continuum of language development for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- Can Do Descriptors/Alternate Can Do Descriptors: Describes what students at different proficiency levels can do across language domains and content areas, supporting instructional planning and differentiated instruction.
- WIDA Language Chart resources on the Resources/Recursos page: Helps educators understand the expectations of the revised WIDA ACCESS and connect assessment results to the WIDA ELD Standards Framework.
- Family and community engagement resources on the Engaging Families and Communities page: Helps families understand their student's assessment results and support language development at home.
- Professional learning options on the Grow page: Includes self-paced workshops, on-demand videos, and webinars.

Educators can use the data to create personal learning profiles based on WIDA assessment scores, the Can Do Descriptors, Language Charts, and classroom information. Knowledge of student proficiency levels across the four language domains can be used to offer instructional support that enhance access to content and advance language use and development. WIDA ACCESS data can help 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. Working together, these educators can provide ELs with opportunities throughout the school day to develop English language skills in all content areas.

Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments

MDE provides the public and parent(s)/guardian(s) access to Minnesota-developed assessments as outlined in *Policy for Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments* in Appendix B. Members of the public can request the opportunity to review the MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA for a specific test, subject, and grade level; parents/guardians can request access to their student's specific test, including their responses. All requests to review test materials must be made in writing, and this review can only be done at MDE at a mutually agreeable time. To ensure student data privacy, the parent/guardian must request the review through the district where the student is currently enrolled. If contacted by a parent/guardian, the DAC confirms that the requesting individual(s) should have access to the student's information, and provides the student MARSS/SSID number, test/subject, and parent/guardian name(s) and contact information securely to MDE by uploading a document through File Exchange in Test WES. MDE will then work directly with the parent/guardian for scheduling. The deadline for parents/guardians to make a request is March 1, but after the delivery of ISRs to ensure parents/guardians have received final results.

Use of Student Information and Results

This section includes detailed information about data practices and the use of student information, including results.

Retention of Student Results

Info! Based on Minnesota Statutes 123B.06, districts are required to keep accurate and complete personal records for all students. Each district is individually responsible for creating retention policies, including policies for retaining individual and summary results for statewide assessments. Refer to the Government Records Services page of the Minnesota Historical Society website for more information on records retention schedule requirements for school districts.

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.

- Review FERPA language on the U.S. Department of Education website.
- Review FERPA language on the electronic Code of Federal Regulations page of the U.S. Government Printing Office website.

MGDPA, Minnesota Statutes chapter 13, also governs student information and adds Minnesota's requirements for data practices in schools. It applies to all public schools, including charter schools.

- Review MGDPA language on the Minnesota Revisor's website.
- Review MGDPA language governing educational data on the Minnesota Revisor's website.

Each district determines their 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 required to provide annual notification to parents/guardians about FERPA rights.

Much of the information in the applicable systems used for test administration, student assessment results, and data files, such as test scores and eligibility for a free or reduced-price meal, is classified as private data under both FERPA and the MGDPA. If the information is directly related to an individual student, it is classified as private educational data and cannot be shared, even within the school community, unless either the district and school have parental/guardian consent to do so or if 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 and other education professionals working in the school and district.

One exception in FERPA does allow 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 determines whether teachers have a legitimate educational interest in a specific piece of information from a student's record (such as eligibility for a free or reduced-price meal). Thus, schools and districts must 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 assessment reports and data files, including eligibility for a free or reduced-price meal, may 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 the school 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. Schools should consider, however, whether this method of sharing is most useful to the students (as opposed to being convenient for staff). From a best practice perspective, schools may only share student data in a way that serves 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.

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, sharing educational data within the educational agency is permissible, 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 the school board or contractors 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 criteria:

- The contractors perform an institutional service or function for which the agency or institution would otherwise use employees;
- The contractors are under the direct control of the agency or institution with respect to the use and maintenance of education records; and
- The contractors are bound by FERPA requirements not to redisclose 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.

Embargoed early and 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 Embargoed Early and Final Assessment Results with School Officials* later in this chapter for the policy on sharing this data.

Charter School Authorizers

Charter schools may also choose to report some information to their authorizers to show how students are performing on statewide assessments.

- A FERPA exception allows schools to share private student-level data 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. The charter school must designate the authorizer as an authorized representative, and it must enter into a data sharing agreement with the authorizer.
- If a charter school does not decide to share student-level data with the charter authorizer, it still can share summary data to report testing information about groups of students in a way that does not potentially identify any individual students.

As a best practice, MDE recommends that charter schools limit the amount of private information shared to only what is necessary and that schools consider removing personally identifying student information, even with a data sharing agreement. The school should work with its legal counsel or other qualified personnel to ensure that the data sharing agreement satisfies FERPA requirements.

Embargoed early and final assessment and accountability results are included in the data charter schools may share with authorizers. If only summary-level information is provided, a non-disclosure agreement is required instead of a data sharing agreement; refer to 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 embargoed early and final results.

Sharing Embargoed Early and Final Assessment Results with School Officials

This section outlines the policy on sharing embargoed data with school officials, including school board members and contractors hired by the district. (Charter schools can share results with its authorizers under a FERPA exception, as defined in the previous section. Requirements in this section must also be followed by authorizers if a data sharing agreement is not in place, or if it does not address embargoed early or final results.)

Schools should limit the number of individuals with access to assessment results; only those school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the assessment results should have access to embargoed early or final assessment and accountability results in any form. School districts must collect and retain non-disclosure agreements for all school officials with access to these results. These agreements must then be kept in 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 embargoed assessment results prior to public release. A sample non-disclosure agreement that may be used by districts for school officials is available in Appendix A.

> If sharing embargoed results with school officials, collect and retain non-disclosure agreements to confirm officials understand the requirements for using results during the embargo.

If embargoed early or final results are shared, they cannot be discussed in public forums (for example, social media), posted online, or reflected in public meeting minutes until the embargo has ended. Refer to *Embargoed Assessment Results* earlier in this chapter for more information. Note: Individual student-level results cannot be shared publicly at any point, as required under FERPA regulations. Student-level results should be shared only 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's current privacy protection rules prohibit publicly reporting assessment results if there are fewer than 10 students represented in the data, even with aggregate data. However, if results involve a small number of students, or if all or most of the students fall into a category that would reveal information about all of the students (such as achievement level), it may be possible to identify individual students based on demographic information and other factors. Districts should recognize that legislative changes made to Minnesota Statutes chapter 13 restricts what schools and districts can and cannot designate as directory information. Districts should also consult with their internal guidance, legal counsel, or data practices compliance official about how to protect private data even within aggregate data by considering student privacy protection at all levels of results (for example, completed assessments by grade, performance levels).

Note: The requirement for a non-disclosure agreement for sharing results described in this section is specific to school officials who are not district and school employees, such as board members, contractors, or consultants. Districts should follow their data privacy policies and procedures for district and school staff who have access to embargoed results.

MDE Data Sharing

FERPA and MGDPA place similar restrictions on MDE data sharing. FERPA regulations authorize MDE to redisclose private information about individual students 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.

For Student Information System(SIS) and Data Warehouse vendors to receive results for the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA during the testing window from Pearson, and to receive 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 early and final data.

Any entity (such as a law firm or research organization) or individual outside of a school district that wishes to request assessment data must complete a data request. Review the Data Practices page of MDE's website for more information.

If MDE shares individual-level student data with outside researchers or authorized representatives, it must enter into 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 MDE's Data Sharing Review Team, and generally MDE does not share student identifiers such as name, MARSS/SSID number, or date of birth with researchers. MDE advises that districts and schools take similar steps to comply with FERPA and protect student privacy when sharing data with researchers.

SIS and Data Warehouse Vendor Access to Results

Student Information System (SIS) and Data Warehouse vendors can access results for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA from Pearson during the testing window. These vendors can also receive final data from MDE for all statewide assessments for their member districts to load into their system for access by school districts with a data sharing agreement with their vendor(s) and MDE. Vendors must annually confirm participation and collect data sharing agreements to access the data. Refer to the Data Extracts page of MDE's website for more information, including details on how vendors can participate.

Secure Methods for Sharing Student Information

MDE recommends that schools and districts avoid using email to share student test results with staff members. If email is used to share data, MDE advises that a secure email method be used to ensure the contents of the email cannot be viewed by someone other than the intended recipient and that FERPA requirements are maintained. Complete student demographic information (such as a 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/SSID number to MDE when requesting help on student records. Do not send other demographic data (such as student name, date of birth) 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.

Remember, when emailing MDE about a student, only include the student MARSS/SSID number.

Providing Assessment Results When Students Move or Are Not Enrolled

When a student moves between districts, the district where the student tested is authorized under a FERPA exception to release their results, including early results, to the receiving district. Minnesota also requires that the district transmit the student's educational records to the new district. Parents/guardians requesting test results will need to contact the school district where their student was tested to receive the results.

MDE expects districts and schools to provide statewide assessment results (and districts may also choose to include any local assessment results) to the receiving school or district when a student moves. The receiving district may use the Student Assessment History Report to look up a selection of statewide assessment history for any student enrolled in their district.

To obtain the assessment history for students who are newly 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. Review the Data Practices page for more information.

Note: Since students enrolled in nonpublic schools are not submitted in student enrollment data to MDE, nonpublic schools cannot look up assessment history through the Student Assessment History Report.

Appendix A — Forms

Table of Contents

Appendix A — Forms **297**

Test Administration Report 298

Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist 300

Sample Group Training Documentation 302

Test Room Tracking Template 303

Request for Late Student Response Entry Form 305

Sample Medical Excuse Documentation Form 306

Completed by Medical Professional 306

Completed by District 308

Sample Non-Disclosure Agreement for Sharing Assessment and Accountability Results 309

Test Administration Report

The following form is a sample that districts may use and modify to document circumstances and incidents. Other formats can be used as long as they capture the required information.

Test Administration Reports (TARs) are used to document a variety of situations, including but not limited to test misadministrations, special circumstances (such as documentation of certain accommodations and universal supports), and reasons for invalidations. Refer to Chapter 5 of the *Procedures Manual* for additional information about circumstances and incidents to document on a TAR and how districts can use this information for documentation and future planning.

Documentation on should include a description of the circumstance or incident that occurred. If a student was involved, include their name, grade, MARSS/SSID, the test, and subject/domain. If an adult was involved (for example, a translator), include the adult's name and role in test administration in the description. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Do not return TARs to MDE or test vendors 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 provided to the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC).

District Name: _____ School Name: _____

Date: _____ Form Completed By: _____

Name of Student	Gr.	MARSS/SSID (13 digits)	Test and Subject/Domain	Description

Name of Student	Gr.	MARSS/SSID (13 digits)	Test and Subject/Domain	Description

Test Materials Assigned to Students Checklist

(For district and school use only—Do not return to MDE or the test vendor)

Test(s): _____

Test Administrator: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Use this form to assign secure test materials to students; secure materials that may be used for multiple students (such as a math 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 (if applicable)	Date Returned	Notes

Test	Type of Material	Security Barcode	Student Name (if applicable)	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 Administrator (Signature) *Date* *Assessment Coordinator (Signature)* *Date*

The following form is a sample that districts may use and modify to document trainings completed by staff.

Sample Group Training Documentation

Title of Group Training: _____ Person Providing the Training: _____ Date: _____

District Name: _____ School Name: _____ Location: _____

Use this form as documentation for virtual or in-person group trainings. All staff involved in testing must complete the required trainings for their specific role in testing. Staff must complete and sign the *Assurance of Test Security and Non-Disclosure* form in the *Test Security Training* that is posted in the Learning Management System (LMS) or they must sign this assurance in the *Test Security Checklist*.

Name	Email	Testing Role	Signature	Test Security
				☐ Completed in LMS ☐ Signed *Test Security Checklist*
				☐ Completed in LMS ☐ Signed *Test Security Checklist*
				☐ Completed in LMS ☐ Signed *Test Security Checklist*
				☐ Completed in LMS ☐ Signed *Test Security Checklist*
				☐ Completed in LMS ☐ Signed *Test Security Checklist*

The following form is a sample that districts may use and modify to track staff/students who are present in the test room.

Test Room Tracking Template

Districts are required to have a plan to track which students test with which Test Administrator as well as any other person who is in the test room (Chapter 8). This plan is documented in the *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments* developed by each district.

Districts can determine what method of tracking works best for them if it lists every student, Test Administrator, and any additional person who enters the room for any reason. The test room location, the time and date of the test session, and the assessment type must all be documented as well. This documentation needs to be retained for two years after the end of the academic year in which testing took place. The template below can be used to fulfill this requirement.

Note: This applies to each specific location of a test session. If one test session is administered in two rooms, two of these forms need to be used.

District Name:_____ School Name: _____

Date: _____ Grade and Test Subject/Domain:_____

Form Completed By:_____ Room Location:_____

Name of Adult	Testing Role	Time In/Out of Room

Name of Student	Time In/Out of Room	Test and Subject/Domain (if different than above)

Request for Late Student Response Entry Form

Pearson Minnesota Program Team Fax: 319-358-4299

Use this form to request a late entry if student responses from MCA paper test materials or MTAS/Alt MCA (or LCI data) were not entered during the applicable testing windows. One form must be completed for each student.

There is a **$200 fee** for late student response entry for a group of up to 10 students after the closing of the applicable testing window. A purchase order (PO) made payable to Pearson can be included with the completed form(s). The PO should have an address indicating where an invoice can be sent.

All secure test materials must be returned to Pearson, including the material needed for late student response entry. Late student response entry material can be returned with the rest of the secure test material.

- If the test materials **have not** yet been returned to Pearson, fax this completed form to Pearson. Ship the test materials to the following address: Pearson, Attn: Minnesota Program Team, 7405 Irish Drive SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. Note: Pearson does not supply return labels for this shipment. Use a shipping service that will provide a tracking number to track your return. Once secure materials are received by Pearson, they will be removed from the missing materials list.
- If test materials **have** been returned to Pearson, fax this completed form to Pearson. Indicate when test materials were shipped and ensure the test book security number(s) are provided below. Submit these requests as soon as possible so test materials can be located in a timely manner.

For MTAS/Alt MCA or LCI:

- Fax this completed form to Pearson and include the *Data Collection Form(s)* and the *Learner Characteristic Inventory* (LCI) (if not already entered).
- If forms were inadvertently returned with the MTAS/Alt MCA secure materials, provide a security number for the Task Administration Manual, and submit the request as soon as possible so test materials can be located in a timely manner.

Note: If you do not have access to a fax machine, contact Pearson.

District/School Information

District and School Name:_____

District #: _____ School #: _____ Phone #:_____

District Assessment Coordinator: _____ PO #:_____

Student Information

Name (last, first, MI): _____

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):_____Grade: _____

MARSS/SSID (13-digits): _____Date Tested: _____

Late Student Response Entry and Test Material Information

Test:	Subject:	Test Material Security Number:	How Material was Returned:
☐ MCA	☐ Reading	_____	☐ Returned with secure materials (recommended)
☐ MTAS	☐ Math	_____	☐ Shipped separately from other secure test materials
☐ Alt MCA	☐ Science	_____	

Shipment Tracking Number: _____ Date Shipped: _____

_____ _____

District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) Signature *Date*

The following form is a sample that districts may provide to medical professionals to document information related to the Medical Excuse (ME) test code.

Sample Medical Excuse Documentation Form

There are times when a student cannot participate in instruction or assessments due to a significant medical or mental health emergency. For statewide assessment purposes, a medical emergency differs from an ongoing medical condition:

- A *medical emergency* is defined as a short-term circumstance that directly interferes with a student's ability to participate in instruction, including assessments, where no alternate arrangements can be made and no appropriate supports or accommodations can be provided.
- An *ongoing medical condition*, unlike a medical emergency, is a situation in which the school and/or district is providing instruction, and the student is participating in instruction and assessments with supports or accommodations.

The top of this form is to be completed by a licensed medical professional who is operating under the scope of their license. The bottom of this form is completed by the district.

Note**:** This information must be retained by the school district for two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place. It is considered an educational record under FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99) and is excluded from the definition of protected health information under the HIPAA Privacy Rule (45 C.F.R. § 160.103).

The Minnesota Department of Education may review this document to ensure requirements are met.

Completed by Medical Professional

1. Student name: _____

2. What is the medical emergency?

3. When did this medical emergency start? _____

4. How long do you anticipate this medical emergency will last? _____

5. In your professional opinion, how does this medical emergency impact the student's ability to participate in daily instruction?

6. In your professional opinion, how does this medical emergency impact the student's ability to participate in required statewide assessments? For example, are there any considerations or concerns if the student is taking assessments online or on paper?

_____

Name of Clinic or Practice

_____ _____

Printed Name *License Number*

_____ _____

Signature *Date*

Completed by District

Student Information

Name (last, first, MI): _____

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Grade: _____

MARSS/SSID (13-digits): _____ Test(s): _____

Testing Window

Provide information on the district's testing calendar and how the student could not be tested during that schedule due to the medical emergency.

Remedy Through Accommodations and Supports

Describe how the district reviewed the situation and determined that available supports and/or accommodations would not allow the student to participate in statewide assessments in a similar manner to how instruction is being delivered.

Based on this documentation, does the student meet the criteria for a medical excuse from statewide assessments according to the *Procedures Manual*?

☐ Yes ☐ No

_____ _____

District Assessment Coordinator Signature *Date*

_____

Name (printed)

The following non-disclosure agreement is provided as a sample that districts may use with school officials who will have access to early and/or final embargoed results.

Sample Non-Disclosure Agreement for Sharing Assessment and Accountability Results

This non-disclosure agreement applies to any early or final embargoed statewide testing or accountability data for the standards-based accountability assessments (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment [MCA], Alternate Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment [Alt MCA], and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills [MTAS]) and English language proficiency accountability assessments (WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, WIDA ACCESS, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS). This data is provided by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and may be available to the school district through secure reports, test vendor systems, or other district data systems.

This agreement must be completed by any school officials who will have access to early or final embargoed results in any form, including school board members and contractors hired by the district. This agreement also includes charter school authorizers, if a separate data sharing agreement for these results is not already in place.

I understand that:

1. All assessment and accountability data MDE shares with the school district is educational data as defined by the federal Family Educational 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 the data is not public and cannot be shared with anyone who does not have either legal authority or a signed parental/guardian 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 early or final embargoed assessment and accountability results in any form with anyone who does not have legal authority or legitimate educational interest 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 consent from a parent/guardian 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 people 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.

_____	_____	_____
Name (printed)	*Signature*	*Date*

Appendix B — Policies and Procedures

Table of Contents

Appendix B — Policies and Procedures 311

Building a Test: From Academic Standards to Scoring 312

MDE Test Security Procedures 318

Test Security Investigation Guide 320

Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide 322

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Requirements 324

Test Administration Calendar Examples 327

Calculator Use General Guidelines 330

What Does It Mean to “Abide by the Embargo”? 334

Policy for Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments 335

Document Retention Policy for Districts 337

Building a Test: From Academic Standards to Scoring

The development of a statewide assessment is a multi-year, ongoing process that includes many phases and committees to ensure the test content is aligned to the standards and relevant to student experiences. Each statewide assessment in Minnesota has a different test development process through contracts with test vendors.

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments Process

Test Development

As a member of the WIDA Consortium, Minnesota administers the WIDA assessments (WIDA ACCESS, WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, and WIDA Alternate ACCESS), which are developed by WIDA and aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. WIDA Alternate ACCESS was first administered with this alignment in 2023-24, followed by WIDA ACCESS and WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten in 2025-26.

As large-scale criterion-referenced assessments, the WIDA assessments follow a development process, that is similar to the process outlined below for the standards-based accountability assessments. Because WIDA assessments are developed for the consortium, Minnesota educators participate in different aspects of the assessment development based on available opportunities and the consortium's need for representation from all members.

- Each year, educators from across the consortium participate in multiple stages of WIDA assessment development, including generating contextual themes and reviewing items for content, standards alignment, bias, and sensitivity.
- Educators are selected from across the consortium based on their teaching experience, experience working with English learners—including students receiving special education services,—and representation across educational settings.
- Additional information about the WIDA assessment development process is available on the Building a WIDA Assessment page of WIDA's website.

Scoring

After assessment are administered, student responses and/or Test Administrator ratings are submitted to the test vendor. Every response is then either machine-scored or human-scored. The test vendor maintains a rigorous process for hiring, training, qualifying, and monitoring human raters and rater reliability.

- For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, Test Administrators score student responses in real time during test administration. Responses and ratings are captured in Student Response Booklets and sent to the test vendor for scanning and score entry.
- For WIDA ACCESS Online Reading and Listening (grades 1-12), responses are captured by the test delivery system and scored electronically by the test vendor.

- For WIDA ACCESS Online Speaking and Writing (grades 1-12), the test delivery system captures responses, which are then scored by human raters at the test vendor. Handwritten Writing responses for grades 1-5 (and, if selected, grades 6-12) are captured in WIDA ACCESS Online Grades 1-3 Writing Test Booklets or WIDA ACCESS Online Writing Response Booklets, then sent to the test vendor for scanning and scoring by human raters.
- For WIDA ACCESS Paper Reading, Listening, and Writing (grades 1-12), responses are captured in the WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklets and sent to the test vendor for scanning and scoring.
- For WIDA ACCESS Paper Speaking (grades 1-12), Test Administrators score student responses in real time during test administration. Scores are recorded on the Speaking Test Scoring Sheet within the WIDA ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklet and sent to the test vendor for scanning and score entry.

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments Process

Test Development

Minnesota's standards-based accountability assessments (MCA, MTAS, and Alt MCA) are designed to measure student learning of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The steps below outline how statewide assessments are created, beginning with the revision of the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. The MCA test development process is also outlined in an infographic available on the MCA Information and Resources page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website (under the How the MCAs and Alt MCAs Are Developed heading). Each step of the test development process makes an important contribution to the reliability and validity of the assessment and ensures that test content is aligned to the standards and relevant to student experiences.

Process for Creating a New Test

1. MDE partners with educators and community members to revise academic standards.
2. MDE partners with educators and community members to write test specifications.
3. MDE, educators, and community members continuously develop test content.
4. After the first year a new assessment is administered, standard setting happens to define student performance levels.
5. Annually, the test is administered, scored, and results are reported.

1. The academic standards are revised and defined based on the schedule determined by state legislation. Minnesota educators and content experts write the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards that describe the knowledge and skills students at each grade level should possess within each content area.
2. Test specifications are developed after the revised academic standards are approved.
   - Test specifications provide a summary blueprint for test construction, specifying the portion of questions for each reporting category and outlining the essential features of the test design to provide consistency and transparency across test forms for the life of each assessment. Committees of educators and content experts write the test specifications and consider comments after a period of public review.
   - The committee also provides information that guides item writers in their work and helps the assessment remain consistent from year to year regardless of item writers or test vendors involved.
3. It takes at least two years to create and evaluate a test item (also referred to as a test question) before it is ready to be included in an assessment. Test questions are developed and reviewed following the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014) guidelines for accessibility, fairness, bias, and sensitivity. The test vendor is responsible for item development, publication, scoring, and reporting for MDE's-developed statewide assessments. Adhering to universal design principles, statewide assessments are developed to allow participation of the widest possible range of students, generating valid inferences about performance for all students who participate in the assessment. Test questions are intentionally designed for maximum readability and comprehensibility to be linguistically accessible to all students.
   - MDE's test vendor works with contracted writers who are specifically trained to develop passages (for reading assessments) and items that meet Minnesota's Mathematics (Math) and Reading MCA test specifications, as well as the test specifications for all three subjects for the alternate assessments.
   - For Reading MCA, the test vendor selects published passages or works with writers to write passages for MDE to review that reflect the diversity of Minnesota students, are free of bias and sensitivity concerns, and are amenable for item development. The approved passages are then reviewed and approved by educator and community member review committees before writers create items for the selected passages.
   - For Reading Alt MCA, all texts are written specifically for the assessment. The passages and items are created and reviewed at the same time.
   - For Science MCA, Minnesota science educators are trained to develop phenomena, items, and simulations to meet Minnesota's Science MCA test specifications.
   - All test content is 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 test content should be approved, edited, or rejected based on the age- and grade-appropriateness of each stimulus and item as well as the alignment and rigor of the benchmark for each item (educator review of items); whether passages are age- and grade-appropriate (educator review of passages); and whether items, phenomena, and passages are fair and equitable considering the cultural sensitivity of each item and whether there are features that could give certain groups of students an advantage or disadvantage in demonstrating their knowledge (community review).
   - An item is not included in a student's score until after it has been field tested and its data reviewed by an Educator Data Review Committee. The committee analyzes data from the new test items to determine

how the items performed across all student groups. The Data Review Committee ensures that an MCA or Alt MCA test item does not favor a specific gender, racial group, or special population. If the item is performing as expected and approved for use, it is then put into the operational item pool the following year.

- More information about MCA/Alternate MCA Review Committees is available on the Join an MCA/Alternate MCA Review Committee page of MDE's website.
- More information about test development is available on the MCA Information and Resources page of the Testing 1, 2, 3 website.

4. Once test questions have been approved, MDE and the test vendor construct a test form or build an adaptive test using an algorithm that matches the test specifications. For example, if the Math 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. More information about test construction is available on the Test Specifications page of MDE's website.

The schedule for revising academic standards is found in Minnesota Statutes (refer to Appendix E) and is outlined in the table below. This table reflects the implementation of new statewide assessments based on the implementation schedule for the revised academic standards.

Introduction of the MCA-IV and Alt MCA as required by Minnesota Statutes

Year	Science	Reading	Math
2024-25	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	Items Field Tested	Items Field Tested
2025-26	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	Items Field Tested
2026-27	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	Items Field Tested
2027-28	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational	MCA-IV and Alt MCA Operational

Scoring

After the assessments have been administered to students and answers are submitted to the test vendor, every item is either electronically scored or human scored.

- The responses to MCA multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items are captured by the test delivery system and scored electronically. Multiple reviews are conducted before and during testing to ensure the items are scored and functioning correctly. 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. Students receive one point for each operational multiple-choice and technology-enhanced item answered correctly.
- Science MCA constructed-response items are captured by the test delivery system and scored via an automated scoring process. Students receive up to three points for each operational constructed-response

item, and are scored based on their understanding of science concepts and practices, regardless of grammar, spelling, sentence mechanics, or formatting. In preparation to be scored electronically, all constructed-response items go through a robust scoring and validation process:

  - When these items are field tested, scoring judgements are made by committees of educators who review selected student responses to determine the characteristics of responses that represent a range of possible score points. These judgements guide human scoring for all remaining field test responses which are then used to train the automated scoring engine.
  - When these items are operational, ten percent of student responses are randomly selected for back-reading by a human reader to verify the automated scoring. In addition, any responses that do not fit the automated scoring engine model (for example, multiple repeated characters that cannot be matched to a possible response) are flagged for scoring by a human reader.

- **Info!** Constructed-response items are also flagged if the response includes concerns about student wellbeing or safety. Pearson will email the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) to notify them that a student alert was generated during the scoring process and will securely provide the student's response and documentation to the DAC.
- Tasks on the MTAS are scored by the Test Administrator administering the test; following the test, the scores are entered into the test delivery system by the Test Administrator or district staff if entered centrally.
- The responses to Alt MCA multiple-choice items administered via a paper administration mode are entered in the test delivery system by the Test Administrator administering the test or other district staff and scored electronically. For students testing using online or hybrid administration modes for the Alt MCAs, students or Test Administrators enter responses directly, and the responses are then scored electronically.

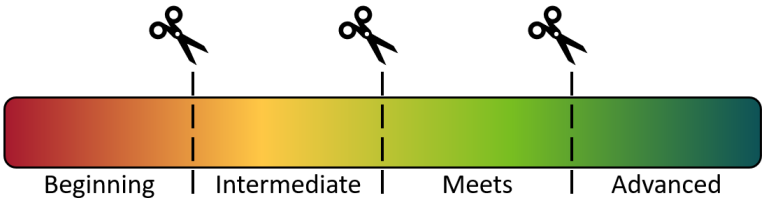
Standard Setting

Tests go through a process called "standard setting" the first year they are administered operationally before scores can be released. The goal of standard setting is to recommend the minimum knowledge and skills students need to show on the assessment for each performance level. Using rigorous, research-based procedures that have been widely used and validated in Minnesota and many other states, the psychometric staff at MDE and the test vendor establish the performance levels for the new tests with the input of community and educational partners.

Prior to convening the standard setting committees, a team of MDE content specialists, assessment specialists, and Minnesota educators develop performance level descriptors (PLDs) based on the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and the test specifications for a given assessment. The PLDs describe the knowledge and skills associated with each of the four performance levels (Beginning, Intermediate, Meets, and Advanced) for a particular grade and subject.

The standard setting committees begin their work once scoring and preliminary data analysis are completed. Educators from across Minnesota can apply to participate in the standard setting committees and are selected based on their areas of expertise and for the grade levels needed. The committees are then balanced to ensure participant experience represents Minnesota students as closely as possible. Each committee uses the PLDs to evaluate the depth and breadth of understanding students showed on the assessment by correctly responding to different types of test questions. As part of the process, the committee recommends three cut scores, which define the minimum knowledge and skills students need to show for each performance level and divide student performance into the four different levels on the assessment.

Performance Level Cut Scores



Once the committees make their recommendations, another committee of community and educational partners provides guidance for messaging and reporting the new scores. The committees also consider how proposed cut scores could impact students and schools before they recommend the scores to Minnesota's commissioner of education.

After the commissioner has reviewed and finalized the cut scores, they are applied to the performance levels and assessment results are reported to students, families, and schools. Summary results are also then reported to the public on the Minnesota Report Card. Since this process can only be completed after the test administration window, reporting for new assessments is delayed. In addition, the specific methodology and outcomes are documented in standard setting reports, which are available on the Technical Reports page of MDE's website.

The cut scores and the performance levels determined in the standard setting process define the expectations for student performance until the academic standards are revised again. Using the same performance levels allows educators, families, and the public to evaluate student progress over time and their learning of the grade-level standards and benchmarks. The *Overview of the Standard Setting Process for MCA and Alternate MCA* video on the Statewide Testing page of MDE's website also summarizes the standard setting process.

MDE Test Security Procedures

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is charged with investigating and resolving all alleged violations of test security. Any 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 (refer to Appendix E). Oversight and investigation of these violations is done by the Test Security and Data Integrity (TSDI) team in the Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment division.

The test security violation process serves many purposes and provides MDE with the opportunity to:

- Work with districts to identify and prevent future test security issues.
- Collect information and analyze trends to identify district training needs or policy and procedure updates that may be needed.
- Create a culture of oversight for test security and integrity across the state by defining, collecting, and following up on violations.

In addition, the test security violation data collection process provides MDE's educational partners with a transparent view of MDE's test security and data integrity system, which is achieved through communications with districts throughout the reporting process and/or through MDE-created reports. Partners include superintendents/directors, Minnesota's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Office of the Legislative Auditor, and the U.S. Department of Education through peer review documentation.

Initial Report of Test Security Violation

Information about possible test security violations may be provided to MDE in the following ways:

- If a security violation occurs in the district, the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) collects information and contacts mde.testing@state.mn.us. If directed to do so, the district submits the information to MDE via Assessment Security Records (ASR) in Test WES.
- If individuals submit test security concerns to MDE through the Test Security Tip Line, by email or phone, MDE will follow up as necessary with the district to investigate the alleged incident, depending upon the nature of each report and the amount of information provided.
- If test security concerns are observed or discovered during MDE site monitoring or audits.

If concerns are reported through the Test Security Tip Line, by email or phone, or discovered during MDE site monitoring or audits, additional information may be requested from district personnel, and/or MDE may request that the district report a security violation through ASR.

MDE Investigation and Follow-Up

Upon reviewing the information provided to MDE, several outcomes may occur. These include the following, which are communicated in an email to the DAC with the superintendent/director included:

- Closure of the ASR with no further action required by the district and/or school.
- Follow-up required by the district and/or school such as additional training for an individual or individuals.
- Confirmation of test invalidations. Other corrective action in conjunction with Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment staff at MDE, including MDE attendance and/or participation during a district's internal 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 Office of the Inspector General (OIG).
- Referral of the incident to the Minnesota Department of Administration for statutory violations.

If the violation affects student data privacy, a reported incident is referred to the Data Practices staff at MDE. 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 for a formal investigation, 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. The Office of the Inspector General will then send a final report to the TSDI team with a determination of the scale and scope of the violation. The TSDI team will review the results of the investigation and recommend action, which may include:

- The closure of the case after the OIG found no violation occurred.
- A plan for corrective action. If the investigation confirms a violation of test security, required corrective action(s) will be determined and sent to the district. MDE will follow up in the future to ensure the action(s) took place.
- The forwarding of the findings to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) or Board of School Administrators (BOSA), whichever has jurisdiction, to conduct an inquiry into whether disciplinary action against a license is warranted for possible misconduct pursuant to Minnesota Statutes (refer to Appendix E). In certain cases, the Minnesota Attorney General's office may be involved with this inquiry.

The district may determine additional consequences for staff involved if misconduct occurred. Employer-level sanctions—including but not limited to probation or termination—are between the district and the employee and are not a function within the discretion of the TSDI team.

Test Security Investigation Guide

To facilitate the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in carrying out its role in maintaining the security and integrity of statewide assessments, this guide has been created to help schools and districts follow best practices when testing irregularities occur. This document is designed to guide and support districts in local test security investigations and help 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 (DAC) starts the process of determining the facts of the incident and reporting them to MDE.

Incident Discovery

There are multiple ways to discover a possible testing violation; once it 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 District and/or School Assessment Coordinator, who then informs MDE.
- A student, parent/guardian, 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 a phone call.
- A student, parent/guardian, or other member of the public reports an incident to the media; MDE reviews the report and follows up as appropriate.

Employees who report incidents can request whistleblower protections and their identities are confidential.

Initial Review vs. Formal Investigation

The initial review provides a preliminary understanding of what may have occurred. This review is often, but not always, conducted 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 test security, and/or data integrity should be documented on the *Test Administration Report* (TAR) which the district keeps on file.

If MDE determines the incident must be reported as a security violation through Assessment Security Records (ASR), the ASR documentation must be completed and submitted within two business days of the incident. Districts are also expected to document these incidents on a TAR to maintain a comprehensive local record, especially if the incident resulted in the invalidation of a student's test. 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 district investigation can proceed according to local policy. It is also highly recommended that the district stay 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. Following these guidelines 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 district 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 the district follows when an incident arises. Note: If district administrators are implicated or if other circumstances warrant, external investigators could be hired to conduct an independent investigation.

Determining 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 a violation has 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.
- Collect and review any evidence that may exist on an electronic device or platform (such as social media or generative AI engine) if one was a part of 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 requested by MDE.

Prohibited Electronic Devices Investigation Guide

Use of an electronic device during testing can lead to a security and/or data integrity violation. This guide is meant to help districts with follow-up actions if an electronic device was accessible and suspected of having been used during testing by a student. This guide is advisory and any questions should be sent to mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Prevention

As outlined in Chapter 8 of the *Procedures Manual*, access to electronic devices, including cell phones, smart glasses, and other wearable technology, is prohibited during test administration, and districts are required to have and implement policies and procedures specific to their district and schools.

- If students will retain possession of their cell phone, district must require that they must show the Test Administrator that it has been silenced or turned off and not accessible. Wearable technology must be removed (as it is considered accessible if worn). If devices are collected, districts must ensure they account for all devices, including wearable technology. Smart glasses must have the camera and microphone turned off.
- All staff 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 need to be actively monitoring the room throughout the test administration so that any incident is identified immediately. This includes observing if a student is paying special attention to a watch or any other device.

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 captured, following the district's policy for searching on a student's device. When collecting and documenting evidence of the incident, it is critical that personnel involved understand the applicable abilities and limitations. 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:

5. The search was justified at the inception of the incident: There must be a reasonable belief by school personnel at the time that a search will discover evidence that the student has broken or is currently breaking school policy and/or the law.
6. 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:

7. Notify the DAC and building administrator immediately that a prohibited device was accessible during test administration and may have been used.
8. Retain possession of the device and do not allow the student to use it any further.
9. 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.
10. Gather and document evidence to determine if the device was used in any way to capture, retain, and/or communicate test content.
    - Contact MDE for further guidance on documenting the evidence for the specific situation before it is deleted or removed from the device.
    - Documentation must include information about the test (including subject, item number, MARSS/SSID number), a detailed description of how the test content was captured (such as entire passage was captured or a general description was written), and whether it was communicated or shared.
11. Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us and MDE will determine if an ASR must be submitted. Districts should not make this determination independently. Submission of a security violation through Assessment Security Records (ASR) to MDE will depend upon the outcome of evidence collection.
    - 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 to potentially assist and communicate with another student in any manner, then submission through ASR is necessary.
    - If the evidence gathered does not lead to either of the determinations above, then submission through ASR is not necessary. However, documenting on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR) is still required due to possible test invalidation; documentation should include mention of the search and its purpose.

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 their device during testing.

- A search within 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 through pictures taken prior to testing.

Situational Example #2

A student was seen typing on their cell phone during testing.

- A search within 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 within reasonable scope could include reviewing web browser history to ensure sites were not accessed to assist with a question during test administration.
- A reasonable search would **not** include looking through web browser history prior to testing.

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Requirements

Each school district must have written District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments that address how test security policies and procedures will be implemented in the district for all statewide assessments; procedures must be reviewed and updated each school year. Districts may create their own procedures or use the *District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Template* available on the Policies and Procedures page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub, 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 procedures reference other district policies and procedures that are in place, they should be included with the procedures for statewide assessments. Appendix C includes the evaluation rubric MDE uses when district policies and procedures are requested for review.

- Identifying the District Assessment Coordinator(s) (DACs), School Assessment Coordinator(s), and District Technology Coordinator(s) for the current school year. Specific names that identify who is responsible for each task can be included directly in the procedure or provided separately (Chapter 3).
- Identifying the plan for the DAC (and/or other designated staff) to monitor testing within the district (Chapter 5).
- Specifying who is responsible for determining the testing calendar, ensuring it is posted to the district website no later than Oct. 1, and keeping test administration dates updated (Chapter 6).
- Ensuring all staff involved in any aspect of testing complete required trainings annually for their role before test administration and documenting completed trainings (Chapter 7).
- Providing all staff with MDE's Test Security Tip Line and MDE contact information for reporting security concerns (Chapter 5).
- Determining the following district policies and procedures for testing and how they will be communicated to district staff prior to testing:
    - Preparing students for test administration using the provided student resources, including determining how resources will be used (Chapter 7).
    - Reminding students of the importance of keeping test content secure and acting with honesty and integrity (Chapter 5).
    - Determining process for documenting reasons why students may not be participating in testing (for example, parent/guardian refusals, medical excuse) and communicating information to applicable school staff (Chapter 9).
    - Determining process for how information will be communicated to applicable school staff to ensure that students take the correct assessment (MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA; WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS) and/or receive universal supports and/or accommodations required (Chapter 4).

- Preparing rooms for test administration, including assigning the number of students per Test Administrator (especially for WIDA ACCESS Writing and Speaking tests), assigning student seating/spacing to maintain test security, planning for removing or covering materials on walls and desks, and considering any security cameras present in the testing rooms (Chapter 7).
- Verifying materials allowed/prohibited for testing and how allowable materials (such as headphones, scratch paper) will be gathered and provided (Chapter 7).
- Developing a plan to get students to their correct locations for testing (for example, testing rooms and computer labs, small group, or individual settings) (Chapter 7).
- Developing a plan to track which students test with which Test Administrator for all test sessions (including any other trained staff present in the testing room, such as paraprofessionals providing assistance) (Chapter 8).
- Ensuring students do not access or use cell phones, wearable technology, or other devices (for example, 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 of them (Chapter 8):
  - What to do for all student breaks during testing (for example, whether they are planned and their duration) and how test content will be secured during breaks.
  - What to do for any restroom use or interruptions during testing, including coordinating or supervising students from multiple rooms.
  - What to do if an unexpected situation arises with students during testing (for example, illness, behavioral issue, or early dismissal for activity).
  - What to do if an entire group of students needs to leave during testing (for example, emergency situation or fire drill).
  - What to do when the Test Administrator becomes ill or needs to leave during testing.
  - What students will do if they complete testing early (for example, 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 (for example, go to another room, makeup 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 should contact in case of an 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 5).
  - Determining what Test Administrator and staff may and may not discuss with students about the test administration experience following test administration (Chapter 8).
  - Establishing the process and assigning staff for entering student responses from MCA paper test materials and MTAS/Alt MCA data and student responses online (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 (Chapters 5, 8, and 10):
    - What are the specific locations secure materials are stored in each school prior to, during, and after testing at each school.
    - Who has access to secure test materials.
    - Who will receive, secure, and distribute materials to schools (if applicable).
    - Who will inventory and organize secure test materials.
    - How will distribution of test materials for test administrations be handled and who is responsible.
    - What the process is for securing test materials between test sessions.
    - Who will be responsible for collecting, inventorying, and returning secure test materials as well as securely disposing of materials as required.
  - Determining the plan for providing access to test results (Chapter 11):
    - Whether early results will be provided to students, families, and/or staff, and what will be communicated about these results.
    - Who the embargoed final results will be shared with.
    - How final results will be shared within the district (for example, load to data warehouse or student information system or provide access to test vendor systems).
    - How information regarding what it means to abide by the embargo (such as, how early and final results can and cannot be shared) will be provided to staff who may have access to or be part of discussions about 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 school, test, subject/domain, grade, and specific planned days of administration. Note: All information provided here is sample information and does not reflect correct testing or calendar dates and/or the district-required assessments used by districts; this information has been included for sample purposes only.

The following 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 6 for detailed information on all testing calendar requirements.*

Sample District Calendar 1

Dates	School(s)	Grades	Test	Subject/Domain
Sept. 14-18	All Elementary Sites	K-5	Districtwide Assessments	Reading
Sept. 21-15	All Elementary Sites	K-5	Districtwide Assessments	Math
Sept. 28-Oct. 2	Middle School	6-8	Districtwide Assessments	Reading
Oct. 5-9	Middle School	6-8	Districtwide Assessments	Math
Oct. 5-9	High School	9-12	Districtwide Assessments	Reading
Oct. 12-15	High School	9-12	Districtwide Assessments	Math
Nov. 16	High School	11-12	ACT	Math, Reading, with Writing
Feb. 1-5	All Elementary Sites	1-5	WIDA ACCESS	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
Feb. 8-12	Middle School	6-8	WIDA ACCESS	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
Feb. 15-19	High School	9-12	WIDA ACCESS	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
Feb. 22-26	All sites	1-12	WIDA Alternate ACCESS	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
Feb. 22-26	All Elementary Sites	K	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
March 1-5	All Sites	K-12	Make-Ups (WIDA Assessments)	Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing
April 12-16	All Sites	3-8, 10	MCA and Alt MCA	Reading
April 19-23	All Sites	3-8, 11	MCA and MTAS	Math
April 26-30	All Sites	3, 8, High School Biology	MCA and Alt MCA	Science
May 3-7	All Sites	3-8, 10, 11, High School Biology	Make-Ups (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA)	Reading, Math, Science

Sample District Calendar 2

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 Math Assessment Grade 3: Sept. 24, May 18 Grade 4: Sept. 25, May 18 Grade 5: Sept. 26, May 19	
	Statewide Assessments		
	WIDA ACCESS Listening Grade 3: Feb. 15 Grade 4: Feb. 15 Grade 5: Feb. 17	WIDA ACCESS Reading Grade 3: Feb. 18 Grade 4: Feb. 18 Grade 5: Feb. 19	WIDA ACCESS Speaking Grade 3: Feb. 20 Grade 4: Feb. 20 Grade 5: Feb. 22
	WIDA ACCESS Writing Grade 3: Feb. 23 Grade 4: Feb. 23 Grade 5: Feb. 24	No WIDA Alt ACCESS Administrations	Reading Alternate MCA Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 27-29 Math MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: April 3-5 Science Alt MCA Grade 5: April 13-15
	Reading MCA Grade 3: March 13-14 Grade 4: March 15-16 Grade 5: March 16-17	Math MCA Grade 3: April 15-16 Grade 4: April 17-18 Grade 5: April 21-22	Science MCA Grade 5: April 23-24

Elementary (Grades K-5)

Elementary	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 Assessments		
	WIDA ACCESS Listening Grades 1-3: Feb. 7 Grade 4: Feb. 8 Grade 5: Feb. 9	WIDA ACCESS Reading Grades 1-3: Feb. 14 Grade 4: Feb. 15 Grade 5: Feb. 16	WIDA ACCESS Writing Grades 1-3: Feb. 21 Grade 4: Feb. 22 Grade 5: Feb. 23
	WIDA ACCESS Speaking Grade 1: Feb. 23 Grades 2-4: Feb. 24 Grade 5: Feb. 25	WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten: Feb. 7-11 WIDA Alternate ACCESS Grades 1-5: Feb. 7-19	Reading Alt MCA Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 13-18 Math MTAS Grades 3, 4, & 5: March 20-24 Science Alt MCA Grade 5: March 27-30

	Reading MCA Grade 3: April 4-5 Grade 4: April 4-5 Grade 5: April 4-5	Math 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 Assessments		
	WIDA ACCESS Listening Grade 6: Feb. 18 Grade 7: Feb. 19 Grade 8: Feb. 20	WIDA ACCESS Reading Grade 6: Feb. 24 Grade 7: Feb. 24 Grade 8: Feb. 24	WIDA ACCESS Speaking Grade 6: Feb. 25 Grade 7: Feb. 25 Grade 8: Feb. 26
	WIDA ACCESS Writing Grade 6: Feb. 27 Grade 7: Feb. 27 Grade 8: Feb. 28	WIDA Alternate ACCESS Grades 6, 7, & 8: Feb. 7-19	Reading Alt MCA Grades 6-8: March 14-25 Math MTAS Grade 6: March 20-31 Grades 7-8: March 21-April 2 Science Alt MCA Grade 8: April 24-May 1
	Reading MCA Grade 6: March 17-18 Grade 7: March 18-19 Grade 8: March 19-20	Math 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 Assessments		
	WIDA ACCESS Grades 9-12 Reading: Feb. 18 Listening: Feb. 19 Speaking: Feb. 20 Writing: Feb. 21	WIDA Alternate ACCESS Grades 9-12: Feb. 7-19	Reading Alt MCA Grade 10: March 10-12 Math MTAS Grade 11: March 16-19 Science Alt MCA Grade 10: April 14-16
	Reading MCA Grade 10: April 2	Math MCA Grade 11: April 4	Science MCA Grade 10: April 8

Calculator Use General Guidelines

All Math and Science MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA 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/Alt MCA, including the use of other materials (such as math manipulatives or tables). The following table provides a summary of what is addressed in Chapter 8. Online calculators include both Texas Instruments (TI) and Desmos versions. For more information about Desmos calculators, refer to the *Instructions for Using Desmos Calculators in TestNav* resource under the Stand-Alone Calculators header on the Student Tools and Supports page on the Minnesota Assessment Hub. In addition, online versions of the hundreds chart and multiplication tables are available in all online Math MCAs when calculator use is allowed.

General Calculator Use Information

Test	Can Handheld Be Used?	Notes
Online Grades 3-8 Math MCA	No	The online calculators and online math tables in TestNav are 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.
Online Grade 11 Math MCA	Yes	The online calculators and online math tables in TestNav are available throughout the entire test. A handheld calculator can be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.
Online Science MCA	Yes	The online calculators in TestNav are available for items on the test that may ask the student to complete simple mathematical computations. Any type of handheld calculator can be used instead of or alongside the online calculators.

Test	Can Handheld Be Used?	Notes
Paper Grades 3-8 Math MCA	Yes; allowed segments	Handheld calculators and printed math tables may be used, except for Segment 1 (the non-calculator segment). The type of calculator required is as follows: • Grades 3-5: Basic or four-function • Grades 6-7: Scientific • Grade 8: Graphing
Paper Grade 11 Math MCA	Yes	Handheld calculators and printed math tables may be used throughout the test. The type of calculator allowed is a graphing calculator.
Paper Science MCA	Yes	Any type of handheld calculator may be used; basic or four-function calculators are all that is required, but scientific or graphing calculators are also allowed.
Math MTAS and Science Alternate MCA	Yes	Calculators, math tables, or anything that the student uses as a calculator (such as math manipulatives or assistive technology devices) may be used on any tasks. Note: While it is allowed to be provided, a calculator is not needed for the Science Alt MCA.

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 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 calculators as well as the online math tables (or printed versions for paper administrations) before testing. During testing, Test Administrators will not be able to assist students with the use of calculators or math tables. The only exceptions are if a handheld calculator is not functioning (for example, 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, refer to *What Help Test Administrators Can Give 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. Additional requirements for memory-enabled calculators are listed below.
- Students may be asked at any time to surrender their calculator for examination by a Test Administrator and may be asked to delete programs on the calculator.
- When handheld calculators are allowed, follow the requirements listed below by grade level for Math MCA. Using a more technologically advanced calculator than the one specified provides assistance that invalidates what is being assessed (for example, using a scientific calculator instead of a four-function calculator for grade 5). Using a less technologically advanced calculator than the type specified (for example, using a four-function calculator instead of a graphing calculator for grade 8) is allowed but not recommended as students do not have the same access to additional functions the calculator provides.
    - Basic or four-function calculators (required for grades 3-5 math)
    - Scientific calculators (required for grades 6-7 math)
    - Graphing calculators (for example, the TI-83, TI-84 Plus series, and TI-Nspire, without computer algebra systems, are acceptable; required for grades 8 and 11 math)
    - Basic or four-function, scientific, or graphing calculators may be used for the Science MCA.
    - Basic or four-function, 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.
    - Usage of a device calculator application as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team for the assistive technology accommodation is allowed as long as the guidelines in this appendix are followed, 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 and that the required type of calculator is used (basic/four-function, scientific, or graphing).
    - Calculators of any brand may be used when handheld calculators are allowed. However, specific Texas Instruments and Desmos calculators are the types of calculators available in TestNav for online testing.
- The following are prohibited (except as an approved accommodation specified in Chapter 4):
    - Web-based calculators or calculator apps accessed from another device (for example, a Chromebook)
    - Calculators with built-in computer algebra systems (CAS)
    - Cell phones, tablets, laptop computers, or any other devices that can electronically send, receive, or capture information
    - Electronic writing pads or pen-input/stylus-driven devices
    - Calculators with a typewriter keypad (a QWERTY keyboard similar in appearance and function to a word-processing keyboard with function and letter keys)

- Calculators with an infrared data port (not allowed unless students completely cover the infrared data port with heavy opaque material such as duct tape)
- Calculator modules that allow access to the Internet (such as the module that attaches to the TI-NSpire CX)

Handheld Calculator Memory Clearing Policy

Students with memory-enabled calculators are not allowed to bring stored examples, formulas, or programs 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 (for example, the TI-NSpire has “Press to Test” mode).

Test Administrators 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 Administrators must invoke the temporary disabling feature, if available, at the beginning of each test session and 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 another device 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 Administrator to verify that each calculator meets the above requirements will constitute a security violation and the student’s test may be invalidated.

What Does It Mean to "Abide by the Embargo"?

Before statewide assessment and accountability results are released publicly, 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 (including social media), posted online (such as on the district website), or reflected in any public meeting minutes (such as for a school board meeting). They also cannot be shared or discussed with other staff members who do not have a legitimate educational interest in viewing results.

What results are embargoed?

All early or final statewide assessment or accountability results prior to MDE's public release are considered embargoed, including:

- MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA early individual student results available during the testing window, including any data loaded into your Student Information System (SIS) or data warehouse.
- WIDA assessment early student-level results available in late spring.
- Secure reports through MDE's Data Center released prior to public assessment results being released.
- Any final assessment or accountability data or reports for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA or WIDA assessments provided to the district during the summer or loaded into your SIS or data warehouse.

Who has access to embargoed results?

Each district determines how 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 are encouraged to be shared with parents/guardians and students for instructional purposes, depending on your district's policy for providing these results. However, no summary results can be provided to parents/guardians 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 DAC has 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 (such as via email, SIS/data warehouse, presentation).
- **Not allowed:** Results are shared on social media in any form, even in general terms (such as, "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 planning meetings 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/ guardians about summary results (such as how their student did in comparison to their class).

Policy for Public and Parent/Guardian Review of Statewide Assessments

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) provides the public and parent/guardian access to Minnesota-developed assessments, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30, subdivision 13. Under this statute, the public can request the opportunity to review the MCA and/or MTAS/Alt MCA, and parents/guardians can request access to their student's specific test, including their responses.

Note: Because the WIDA assessments were developed by the WIDA Consortium as a collaborative effort of consortium member states, they are not available for public or parent/guardian review.

Parent/Guardian Request for Review

Parents/guardians who want to review their student's responses to a statewide assessment must make a written request to the district where their student is enrolled. Inquiries should be sent to the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC). DAC contact information can be found in the Minnesota Department of Education Organization Reference Glossary (MDE-ORG), a searchable database of Minnesota's educational organizations. The DAC confirms the parent/guardian relationship to the student and provides the student MARSS/SSID number, test(s)/subject(s), and parent/guardian name(s) and contact information securely to MDE through File Exchange in the Test Web Edit System (Test WES). MDE then works with the parents/guardians directly to schedule the review.

Requests must be received by MDE no later than March 1 of the next school year, but after the delivery of final Individual Student Reports (ISRs) to ensure parents/guardians have received final results.

MDE will set up a mutually agreeable time for the parent/guardian to review materials at MDE's office. This opportunity is open only to parents/guardians of the student; no other individuals can participate in the review. All electronic devices must be put away, including wearable technology such as smartwatches and smart glasses. Parents/guardians should disclose any wearable technology—including technology built into prescription glasses—so test security procedures can be confirmed. The review of student responses and test materials will be done under the supervision of MDE staff who are not familiar with the content of the assessment(s).

The review cannot begin until the parent/guardian and the student, if present, have signed a non-disclosure agreement. Other than MDE's staff supervising the review, no other individuals are allowed in the room. The reviewers are not allowed to make copies of the test or take notes from their review out of the room. At the end of the review, MDE will collect all materials that the parent/guardian and student may have generated (such as notes or solutions to problems), along with any questions about the items/responses that were written down for review; MDE may need to schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss these questions with the parent/guardian.

Public Request for Review

The general public can also request the opportunity to review an MCA and/or MTAS/Alt MCA. In these cases, the individual requestor must make a written request to the Division of Academic Standards, Instruction and Assessment at mde.testing@state.mn.us and choose a specific test(s), subject(s), and grade(s) to review. All security procedures will apply, including signing a non-disclosure agreement prior to the review. The review will be done under supervision—at a time mutually agreeable to the individual and MDE—and will be conducted at MDE. The individual reviewing the materials is not allowed to make copies of the test or take notes out of the room.

Document Retention Policy for Districts

The table below indicates the **minimum** amount of time that assessment-related documents must be retained. If your district requires you to retain assessment-related documents longer than specified below, follow your district policy. Documentation may be completed or stored electronically, but you must ensure that you can retrieve files or have copies of documentation for the required time period. For any audits or monitoring, MDE may request that districts provide this documentation.

Following the test administration windows, no secure test materials may remain at the district or school after the test vendor's courier picks up the test materials. Note: MDE also follows a document retention policy; contact mde.testing@state.mn.us with any questions.

Test-Related Document(s)	Retention Duration	Notes
District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments	Two 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 Administration Reports (TARs)	Two 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.
Security violations submitted through *Assessment Security Records* (ASR)	Two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Submit online to MDE in Test WES; access past years' ASRs and supporting documentation as needed in Test WES.
Test materials security checklists	Two 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	Two years after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Track completions through test vendor systems if training is completed online. If provided in a district/school training or on paper, keep records of staff completions following guidance in Chapter 7. Submit to MDE if requested during monitoring, for an audit, or as part of an ASR submission.

Test-Related Document(s)	Retention Duration	Notes
Records of which students tested with which Test Administrators, including any other adults present in each testing room	Two 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/guardian refusal and medical excuse documentation for test codes	Two 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.
WIDA ACCESS (grades 1-12) Paper Speaking test inter-rater reliability documentation	Two 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/Alt MCA Data Collection and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) forms	Two year after the end of the academic school year in which testing took place	Keep on file after entering scores, student responses, or data online in case there are any questions about this information.

Appendix C — Monitoring and Audits

Table of Contents

Appendix C — Monitoring and Audits 339

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Evaluation Rubric 340

Training Verification Evaluation Rubric 342

Medical Excuse Documentation Evaluation Rubric 343

Minnesota Statewide Assessments Monitoring List 344

Interview with District/School Assessment Coordinator 344

Observations 344

MTAS Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire 346

Prior to Test Administration 346

Testing Environment 346

During Administration 346

Scoring 346

Test Administrator Questionnaire Following Administration 347

Alt MCA Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire 348

Prior to Test Administration 348

During Test Administration 348

After Test Administration 349

Test Administrator Questionnaire Following Administration 349

District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments Evaluation Rubric

Each district must have written District Policies and Procedures for Statewide Assessments that address how test security policies and procedures will be implemented in the district (refer to Appendix B for the requirements that must be addressed). MDE uses the following rubric to evaluate district policies and procedures.

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met All
Training and Preparation	• Identify coordinators and staff responsible for posting an accurate testing calendar; posted testing calendar meets requirements • Ensure all staff involved in any aspect of testing complete annual required trainings for their role • Compile and retain training documentation • Prepare students for test administration • Prepare test rooms, including considerations for security cameras and Test Administrator to student ratios			
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 • Plan for documentation of and communication-related reasons why students may not be testing • Plan for ensuring staff is aware of the available universal supports and accommodations • Plan for ensuring students take the correct test and receive the universal supports and accommodations required • Verify allowable/prohibited materials for testing • Provide process for getting students to correct testing locations • Provide policy for prohibited electronic devices • Provide procedures for breaks, restroom visits, unexpected situations, emergencies, and finishing testing • Provide procedures and contacts for assistance, emergencies, or errors/technical issues reported during test administration • Provide policy for discussing test experience with students after testing • Provide process for entry of student responses/scores and data online • Provide process for handling subsequent test results			

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met All
Secure Materials	• Provide chain of custody before, during, and after testing • Provide list of all staff who have access to secure materials and are responsible for distribution and collection • Provide location of stored secure materials before, during, and after testing • Provide process for returning secure materials to provider and secure disposal of test tickets and scratch paper			
Test Security Reporting and Documentation	• Remind students of test security, honesty, and integrity • Provide MDE's Test Security Tip Line contact information to staff • Provide process to report misadministrations and security violations within the school and district • Provide process to track which students tested with which Test Administrator and any other trained staff present			

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 7.

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met All
MDE-Required Trainings for MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA	Each person involved in testing in the school completed all MDE-required trainings for their role and for the tests administered, including:* • District Assessment Coordinator • Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Administrators • MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA Test Administrators			
MDE-Required Trainings for WIDA Assessments	Each person involved in testing in the school completed all MDE-required trainings for their role and for the tests administered, including:* • District Assessment Coordinator • Other staff involved in testing and/or who have access to secure test materials but are not Test Administrators • WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten Test Administrators • WIDA ACCESS Test Administrators • WIDA Alternate ACCESS Test Administrators			
District Policy and Procedure Information or Training	Statement describing how all staff involved in testing in any aspect received information and training on district- or school-specific test administration policies and procedures		N/A	
Timeliness of Training	Statement describing how assessment coordinator ensured training was completed for each person prior to their involvement in testing according to posted testing calendar dates		N/A	

*Note: If *Test Security Training Checklists* were used and/or group trainings were held for the *Test Security Training*, the applicable information documenting each person's completed training(s), as outlined in Chapter 7, must be included.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Medical Excuse Documentation Evaluation Rubric

MDE uses the following rubric to evaluate a school's documentation related to the Medical Excuse (ME) test code.

Categories	Required Components	Met None	Met Some	Met All
Documentation	There is appropriate medical documentation for each ME test code indicated. • Documentation is from a medical professional who is operating under the scope of an applicable medical license. • It includes mention of the underlying medical emergency.			
Supports and Accommodations	Statement describing how the student's underlying emergency and incapacity to participate cannot be remedied with appropriate supports or accommodations provided by the district for each ME test code indicated.		N/A	
Duration of Testing Window	Statement describing why the district's inability to provide appropriate supports or accommodations exists for the duration of the testing window for each ME test code indicated.		N/A	
Temporary Emergency	The ME test code was not used for the same student(s) in prior years. In the rare circumstance where the ME test code may apply for more than one year, a statement documenting this need must be included.		N/A	

Minnesota Statewide Assessments Monitoring List

This list outlines the areas that MDE monitors will observe or discuss during a monitoring visit of WIDA 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.
- How do staff receive training or information, prior to testing, on the processes that are specific to your school or district (for example, process for breaks or where to pick up materials)?
- What is the process for tracking which student tested with which Test Administrator and other trained staff 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 during testing (for example, technical issues, answering questions, or unexpected situations)?
- What is the process for noting things that happen during testing (for example, misadministrations, unexpected situations, and security violations)?

Observations

- Test Administrators collect secure materials on the day of testing from locked storage or materials are securely handed off to them. They must make sure at no time are materials left unattended.
- Online test items are not visible until time of testing; test booklets/books remain closed until students are instructed to begin.
- All materials related to explicit language instruction or the language expectations of an academic content area (WIDA 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 and turned off, including cell phones, smart glasses, and other wearable technology.
- Only authorized materials for testing are on student desks during the administration.
- Student questions about directions or testing procedures are answered before testing begins.
- Throughout test administration, directions are provided in line with guidance in the applicable *Test Administrator Script* (WIDA ACCESS) or *Testing Directions* (MCA), including scripted instructions.
- Only students who are testing or finished testing during the current testing session are present in the testing room.

- Designated staff members are available to Test Administrators for troubleshooting, providing assistance, and answering questions.
- The testing room is always supervised by at least one trained district staff member.
- If a student who has not finished testing needs to leave the room (for example, to visit the restroom or due to illness), only one student is allowed to leave at a time. Unless there is a plan in place for staff to monitor multiple students outside the testing room.
- If a student needs to leave the room, the online test is exited/content is covered (items not viewable) or the test booklet/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 actively monitor test administration by moving through the room and observe that students are working independently.
- Student questions during testing are addressed appropriately using the *Test Administrator Script* (WIDA ACCESS) or *Testing Directions* (MCA).
- The Test Administrator maintains order, and ensures the room is quiet and disruptions are kept to a minimum.
- There is one Test Administrator for approximately every 30 students for WIDA ACCESS Reading and Listening and MCA, or there is one Test Administrator for every 15 students for WIDA ACCESS Writing. (Note: To ensure students feel comfortable in the testing environment, MDE does not observe WIDA ACCESS Speaking tests. If districts are monitoring WIDA ACCESS Speaking, ensure there is one Test Administrator for every 5 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 may be present. (Note: If districts are monitoring WIDA ACCESS Speaking, ensure there is enough space between students so that each student's headset is recording only their speech.)
- 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, these students will work on appropriate paper materials, read a paper book, or sit quietly. Even when a student has completed testing, any type of device use is prohibited.
- Secure test materials are collected at the end of the testing session and properly secured.
- Test Administrators account for all materials before returning them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator or designated staff member.

MTAS Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire

This list outlines the areas that Alternate Assessment Field Auditors will observe or ask the Test Administrator about during a Math MTAS observation.

Prior to Test Administration

- Does the student meet the requirements for the MTAS specified in the Eligibility Requirements and Decision-Making Tool for Minnesota Alternate Assessments?
- Did the Test Administrator receive training for administering the MTAS (by completing the online trainings individually or in a group training arranged by the school)?

Testing Environment

- Distractions are kept to a minimum during the administration.
- Information that might clue answers to the tasks is removed from the environment.

During Administration

- The test is administered individually.
- 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 correctly transitions to administering field test items 10-27, if observed.
- The Test Administrator reads/delivers each task in an appropriate manner for the individual student (for example, the presenting the task to allow the student to perform to the best of their ability).
- 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 1-9 appropriately according to the script.
    - If observing items, the Test Administrator records the student responses accurately.
- Performance tasks stop after a score has been clearly identified, following the script at each score point.
    - If observing items 10-27, the administration of the item stops after the student provides their response.
- The Test Administrator provides a copy of scores/student responses for the tasks observed during the audit.

- Exact agreement or adjacent agreement is found for each task (tasks 1-9) observed.
    - If observing field test items 10-27, exact agreement is found for each recorded student response.
- The Test Administrator administers all tasks/items, presents all materials, and ensures all scores and item responses are recorded accurately.
- The Test Administrator understands the district's procedure for entering scores online (for example, the Test Administrator enters the MTAS scores in TestNav or the Test Administrator provides the Data Collection Form(s) to a central location for data entry).

Test Administrator Questionnaire Following Administration

- Did the test administration trainings prepare you effectively?
- Did you use the object lists to present the tasks?
- Were the test materials provided to you ahead of time and did you have adequate time to prepare materials?
- For tasks 1-9, were the directions for scoring the tasks clear?
- For items 10-27:
    - Were the directions for recording student responses clear?
    - Did you decide to adapt the test materials, and if so, how?
    - Did you use the object lists to present items 10-27?
        - If so, what type of object did you use?
        - Do you have any suggestions to improve the format of that part of the object list?
    - Did the administration training prepare you effectively for the new format?
    - What went well during administration and recording student responses?
    - What needs to be improved to ease administration and recording of student responses?
    - What would you like MDE to know about the changes in the available test materials?

Alt MCA Field Audit Checklist and Test Administrator Questionnaire

Prior to Test Administration

- Does the student meet the requirements for the Alt MCA specified in the Eligibility Requirements and Decision-Making Tool for Minnesota Alternate Assessments?
- Did the Test Administrator receive training for administering the Alt MCA (by completing the online trainings individually or in a group training arranged by the school)?
- Does the Test Administrator collect the secure materials on the day of testing from the locked storage, or are materials securely handed off to them? Are materials at no time left unattended?
- Are only materials authorized for use during testing on the student's desk and on the walls during the administration?

During Test Administration

- The test was administered individually, and the student who was testing was the only student present in the testing room.
- The Test Administrator read/delivered each item in an appropriate manner for the individual student (for example, the presenting the task to allow the student to perform to the best of their ability).
- The Test Administrator stopped administration of the item after the student provided their response.
- Throughout test administration, directions, support, and scripts were provided in line with guidance in the *Reading* or *Science Alt MCA Task Administration Manual*.
- The administration was free of any clueing that might impact the student's response.
- Student questions were addressed appropriately, using the Reading or Science Alt MCA Task Administration Manual.
- The Test Administrator kept distractions to a minimum and worked through any disruptions during the administration.
- The correct materials were used for the mode of administration.
- The Test Administrator entered student responses directly in TestNav for online/hybrid administration or documented student responses on the Data Collection Form for a paper administration.
- If observing a hybrid administration, what materials were used to administer the test?
- Adaptations to the test materials prepared for the student, preserved the construct of the items.
- Were supplemental materials used in the administration to meet student needs?
- If observing an online or hybrid mode of instruction, was an assistive technology online form used?
- If an assistive technology online form was used, was a device or extension used?
- Test Administrator answered the Test Administrator Survey Questions at the end of the TestNav form.

- When answering Test Administrator Survey Question 1 concerning the administration mode used to administer the majority of the test, the Test Administrator indicated the correct administration mode.
- If the early stopping rule was used, the Test Administrator accurately engaged the rule (the student gave no response for the first 6 items, the Test Administrator responded to the Test Administrator Survey Questions at the end of the test, and then the Test Administrator submitted the test).

After Test Administration

- Secure test materials were collected at the end of the testing session and properly secured.

Test Administrator Questionnaire Following Administration

- Did the administration trainings and available resources (Alt MCA SRT, sample tasks) prepare you effectively for selecting administration modes (online, paper, or hybrid) for your students?
- Were the test materials provided to you ahead of time and did you have adequate time to prepare materials?
- Were the directions for administering the items and recording student responses clear?
- What went well during administration and recording student responses?
- What needs to be improved to ease administration and recording of student responses?
- What would you like MDE to know about the Alt MCA administration modes (online, paper, and hybrid)?
- Did you use any of the supplemental materials (braille materials, Visual Descriptions, Response Option Cards, object lists)?
- Do you have any other feedback about the Alt MCA you would like to share?

Appendix D — Key Testing Terms

Table of Contents

Appendix D — Key Testing Terms 351

Key Testing Terms 352

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments 353

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments 354

Resources and MDE Systems 356

Key Testing Terms

General Assessment Overview

- **Accommodations and Universal 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.
    - *Universal Supports*: General supports available for all students on standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Universal supports tailor the testing experience based on individual needs or preferences specific to the testing environment or online features, and they are divided into three categories: tools, administrative considerations, and accessibility supports.
    - *Accommodations*: Only available for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan on standards-based and English language proficiency accountability assessments. Accommodations provide changes in the way a test is administered and are meant to ensure equal access to the assessment.
- **Criterion-Referenced Test**: A test that measures how well a student has learned a defined set of knowledge and skills, rather than comparing performance to other students. Both the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA) and the English language proficiency accountability assessments (WIDA assessments) are criterion-referenced; they measure performance against the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and the WIDA English Language Development Standards, respectively.
- **Data and Test Integrity:** The establishment of a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for properly preparing students, managing and administering tests so that results are reported accurately and appropriately, and maintaining the security of assessment materials for future use. These policies must ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- **District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)**: The primary person in each district or charter school who oversees 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 test vendors, and staff regarding statewide assessments and any questions or issues that may arise.
- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**: A reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which initiated the current system for accountability, reporting, school improvement, and recognition used in Minnesota.
- **Individual Student Reports (ISRs)**: An individual report that is distributed to families and communicates the student's performance, including overall results and achievement/performance level for each subject (MCA or MTAS/Alt MCA) or proficiency level for each domain (WIDA assessments).

- **Invalidation**: A test code that indicates a test result has been suppressed due to an irregularity or misadministration. A student whose test is invalidated will not receive results for that assessment.
- **Irregularity**: An unexpected situation occurring before, during, or after test administration that might compromise the validity of the assessment. Irregularities should be documented on the district's *Test Administration Report* (TAR), and in some cases may result in the invalidation of the student's assessment.
- **Misadministration**: A situation where testing policies and procedures are not followed during a test administration that compromises the validity of the assessment. Misadministrations should be documented on the district's *Test Administration Report* (TAR), and in some cases may result in the invalidation of the student's assessment.
- **Reliability:** A general notion of consistency of test scores across repeated instances of testing.
- **Security Violation:** An action that jeopardizes the security of test content, gives an unfair advantage to a student or group of students, and/or jeopardizes the integrity of test results.
- **Test Administration Report (TAR)**: A form districts use to document special testing circumstances, including irregularities, misadministrations, and any time a student's assessment has been invalidated. These forms are kept on file at the district and only submitted to MDE or test vendors if requested. Districts should use TARs for recordkeeping, planning for future assessment administrations, and identifying policies and procedures that need clarification or more training.
- **Test Security:** The protection of the content of a test from unauthorized release or use, to protect the integrity of the test scores so they are valid for their intended use.
- **Test Security Notification (TSN):** A report of a security violation that a DAC submits through the ASR system in MDE's Test Web Edit System (Test WES).
- **Test Vendors**: The testing companies or educational organizations that MDE contracts with to administer statewide assessments. Pearson is the test vendor for the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA), and WIDA and Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) are the test vendors for the English language proficiency accountability assessments (WIDA assessments).
- **Validity:** The degree to which evidence and theory support interpretations of test scores for the proposed uses of the tests.

English Language Proficiency Accountability Assessments

- **Can Do Descriptors**: An educator resource that describes what multilingual learners can do at different stages of English language development across academic contexts.
- **Domains**: The four subtests—Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing—that are assessed by the WIDA assessments.
- **English Language Development (ELD) Standards**: WIDA-developed expectations adopted by Minnesota as the state's ELD standards. These standards reflect the social and academic dimensions of acquiring a second language that are expected of English learners in grade levels K-12. The ELD standards provide a connection between language development and academic content.

- **English Learner (EL)**: A student indicated in enrollment data submitted to MDE as learning English as an additional language. The acronym ELL (English language learner) may also appear in other documents.
- **Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP)**: A language instruction educational program for English learners that addresses state academic and ELD standards.
- **Language Proficiency**: Students are assigned a proficiency level based on their scale score. For WIDA ACCESS, there are six English language proficiency levels: 1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, 5-Bridging, and 6-Reaching. For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, proficiency level scores describe a student's performance in terms of the five WIDA Alternate English language proficiency levels: 1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, and 5-Bridging.
- **Multilingual Learner (ML/MLL)**: A term used to describe students developing proficiency in multiple languages. This includes students identified as English learners, former English learners, and students enrolled in bilingual education programs.
- **Performance Definitions**: An educator resource that outlines what ELs can do at each English language proficiency level within each language domain.
- **WIDA**: The consortium that develops and maintains the WIDA English Language Development Standards and WIDA assessments.
- **WIDA ACCESS**: An English language proficiency accountability assessment aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. The assessment measures listening, reading, speaking, and writing.
- **WIDA Alternate ACCESS**: An English language proficiency accountability assessment aligned to the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. The assessment measures listening, reading, speaking, and writing for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- **WIDA Assessment Management System (WIDA AMS)**: The secure website used to manage student data, create online test sessions, indicate the number of online testers, order paper test materials, and access WIDA assessment score reports. WIDA AMS is managed by DRC.
- **WIDA Language Charts**: An educator resource that provides actionable descriptions of language expectations across English language proficiency levels for use in instruction and assessment.
- **WIDA Secure Portal**: The secure WIDA website that provides training courses and resources for test administration, technology, reporting, and professional learning. Note: Staff must complete MDE-required trainings in the Learning Management System (LMS) in addition to WIDA trainings.

Standards-Based Accountability Assessments

- **Achievement Level**: A range of scores on the MCA-III and MTAS assigned to a level that describes a student's performance in relation to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. There are four achievement levels on the MCA-III and MTAS: Does Not Meet Standards, Partially Meets Standards, Meets Standards, and Exceeds Standards. For assessments administered in 2026-27, achievement levels apply only to the Math MCA-III and MTAS.
- **Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)**: A resource for educators that describes the four levels of achievement on the Math MCA-III or MTAS using the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

- **Assessment Delivery and Management (ADAM)**: Pearson's secure online platform for administering the MCA, Alt MCA, and MTAS and accessing results (replaced PearsonAccess Next in 2026-27).
- **Alternate MCA (Alt MCA)**: A redesigned alternate assessment that replaced the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) in science in 2024-25 and reading in 2025-26; math will transition in 2027-28.
- **Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors**: An educator resource for math that can be used with benchmark reports; the Benchmark ALDs describe the knowledge and skills students typically demonstrate across the four achievement levels for each benchmark from the standards.
- **Benchmark Report**: A report educators can use to learn about school- or district-level performance on each benchmark from the Minnesota Academic Standards that was assessed on the current year's MCA. Only available for Math MCA in 2027.
- **LaunchPad**: Pearson's online platform for accessing the Learning Management System (LMS) and ADAM via a single login. DACs and Assessment Administrator users use LaunchPad to create and manage staff user roles for testing (replaced PearsonAccess Next in 2026-27).
- **Learning Management System (LMS)**: The online platform where district and school staff complete trainings in preparation for administering statewide assessments.
- **Minnesota Academic Standards**: Statewide expectations that identify the knowledge and skills all K-12 students are expected to learn by the end of a grade level or grade band.
- **Minnesota Assessment Hub**: Pearson's non-secure website that contains resources, trainings, and tools necessary for DACs, Test Administrators, Technology Coordinators, educators, and students to prepare for and/or administer the Minnesota statewide assessments.
- **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)**: The standards-based accountability assessment for reading, math, and science based on the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.
- **Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)**: The alternate standards-based accountability assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; currently administered for math only.
- **Performance Level**: A range of scores on the new series of assessments (MCA-IV and Alt MCA) assigned to a level that describes a student's performance in relation to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards. There are four performance levels on the MCA-IV and Alt MCA: Beginning, Intermediate, Meets, and Advanced.
- **Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)**: A resource for educators that describes the four levels of performance (Beginning, Intermediate, Meets, and Advanced) on the MCA-IV or Alt MCA using the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.
- **Subscore Report**: Report available publicly on Minnesota Assessment Hub that provides school-, district-, and state-level subscore data, also known as strand/substrand performance levels, on the MCA.
- **TestNav**: The online testing platform students use to take the online Reading, Math, and Science MCAs and Reading and Science Alt MCAs. Staff also use TestNav to enter student responses from MCA paper tests, Math MTAS data, student responses from the Alt MCA if administered using a paper mode, and Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) data.

Resources and MDE Systems

- **Assessment Secure Reports**: A secure section of MDE's website where districts can view test results, including the District and School Student Results (DSR/SSR) files, Test Results Summary, and Student Assessment History Report.
- **Assessment Security Records (ASR)**: System accessed through MDE's Test Web Edit System (Test WES) for communication and recordkeeping between the district and MDE related to test security, monitoring, and audits. DACs submit security violations to MDE through ASR.
- **District and School Student Results (DSR/SSR)**: Data files that contain all student-level data from the assessments, including demographic information, achievement, performance, and proficiency level information, and test scores.
- **Ed-Fi**: An MDE system used to submit enrollment information to MDE, along with Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS). MDE has been transitioning student-level data submission from MARSS to Ed-Fi technology. For the 2026-27 school year, districts that have not yet been certified to report using Ed-Fi only, must continue dual reporting by submitting both MARSS A/B files and Ed-Fi syncs until they are certified for Ed-Fi-only reporting. Both MARSS A/B files and Ed-Fi syncs are validated through MARSS WES.
- **Graduation Requirements Records (GRR)**: The secure MDE system used by districts to request reimbursement for college entrance exams (ACT or SAT) for eligible grade 11 and grade 12 students.
- **Minnesota Automated Reporting Student Systems Web Edit System (MARSS WES)**: The MDE system districts use to submit enrollment information to MDE through MARSS A/B files, along with Ed-Fi.
- **Minnesota Department of Education-Organization Reference Glossary (MDE-ORG)**: A searchable database on the MDE website with organizational details, including contact information for DACs and other district roles.
- **Minnesota Questions Tool (MQT)**: An online resource that contains released or sample test questions from past MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA across all subjects and multiple grade levels, as well as links to data about each item. The released or sample questions in the MQT are intended to support educators in understanding how the academic standards are assessed on the MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA, to help identify student misconceptions, and to provide examples of questions that assess student understanding at different DOK (Depth of Knowledge) levels.
- **Precode**: The term used to describe data files sent to test vendors (Pearson and DRC) with student and test eligibility information.
- **Student Assessment History Report**: A secure MDE report that allows districts to look up the assessment history for any student enrolled in their district.

- **Student Resources**: A variety of student resources are available for districts to ensure students are familiar with the assessments. They include the following:
  - For WIDA assessments:
    - The **test demo** is available for each online WIDA ACCESS grade-level cluster to show students how to navigate different features of the test. It is recommended that students watch the test demo before taking the test practice.
    - The **test practice** can be used to help students become familiar with the online WIDA ACCESS test format. These items are very easy but will help students become familiar with the test environment. Note that the test practice can also be used to familiarize students with accommodations that are embedded in the test.
    - The **sample items** are recommended for students who have experience taking the WIDA ACCESS Online. They can be used to help students become familiar 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 WIDA Alternate ACCESS, WIDA ACCESS Paper, and the braille WIDA ACCESS accommodation.
  - For MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA:
    - The **Student Readiness Tools (SRTs)** are resources used to help students and educators become familiar with the online and paper MCAs and Alt MCAs. Resources are available to provide guidance and tips for educators using the SRTs with their students. **Stand-alone online calculators, math tables,** and **formula sheets** are available on the Minnesota Assessment Hub to allow students to practice using these resources outside of the SRTs.
    - The **MTAS Released Questions** and **Alternate MCA Sample Task**s are available to prepare Test Administrators and students for the MTAS.
- **Test Results Summary**: Secure MDE reports with district- and school-level assessment data available by grade for the standards-based accountability assessments and the English language proficiency accountability assessments.
- **Test Specifications**: The summary blueprint for test construction, specifying the portion of questions for each reporting category and outlining the essential features of the test design to provide consistency and transparency across test forms for the life of each assessment.
- **Test Web Edit System (Test WES)**: The secure MDE system DACs and other district staff use throughout the year for activities related to data editing and test security.
- **Testing 1, 2, 3**: MDE website that contains resources for assessment and data literacy that can be used and shared with district and school staff who interpret results from the statewide assessments and other district and school assessments

Appendix E — Summary of Minnesota Statutes and ESSA

This appendix summarizes Minnesota Statutes and federal legislation from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that are applicable to statewide assessments and related activities that are referenced throughout this *Procedures Manual*. This list contains key references and does not provide a complete summary of the 2025 Minnesota Statutes.

Minnesota Statutes

Academic Standards and Assessments

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30 is the overall statute reference outlining the purpose and general requirements of the Minnesota statewide assessments.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30, subdivision 15 addresses the requirement of the state to create and maintain a system through which teachers, administrators, and students may report service and technical issues that have disrupted testing.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a addresses the requirements of districts to post information for parents and guardians that outlines the importance of the required state academic standards and assessments. It also requires districts to post a form that allows parents to exempt their child from participating in the assessments.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.302 addresses the requirement of the state to develop math, reading, and science assessments aligned with state academic standards and to administer those assessments to students in grades 3-8 and high school.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.306, subdivision 1 addresses the requirement of districts, with exceptions permitted, to adhere to annual testing time limits for locally adopted assessments and to post a detailed standardized testing calendar on their website by October 1.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 123B.41, subdivision 3 defines “standardized test” as an assessment or scoring service offered by commercial publishers or the state that is used in public schools to evaluate the academic progress of students.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 124D.59, subdivision 2(a) defines “English learner” and addresses the requirement that a student’s English learner status be partially determined by a valid assessment that measures the student’s proficiency in the English language.

Career and College Readiness

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30, subdivision 7 addresses that high school students who have shown attainment of required state academic standards are deemed career and college ready and should be encouraged to participate in courses awarding college credit.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30, subdivision 16 addresses the guidelines for districts to offer and pay the cost for eligible students to take a nationally recognized college entrance exam one time at the high school level during the school day.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.125 addresses the various actions school districts must take to assist students by grade 9 in exploring, strengthening, and developing a successful pathway toward their educational and career interests and goals.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.307 addresses the criteria and expectations for Minnesota students to be considered "career and college ready." It details the responsibilities of schools, districts, and institutions of higher education to ensure students are provided with the support necessary to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and competency on high school assessments and to pursue future employment or postsecondary education.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.303 addresses that students are not required to achieve a specific score on an assessment to graduate or meet graduation assessment requirements.

Data and Reporting

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 13.34 defines nonpublic testing data and specifies the restrictions concerning access to that data.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.36, subdivision 1(f) defines school performance data as nonpublic until the data is published publicly on the department's website.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.20, subdivision 1(a) addresses the teacher licensure penalties if a written complaint is filed by a school board, teacher organization, or other interested person stating teacher conduct that is unethical or illegal.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 13.32, subdivision 1(a) defines "educational data" and addresses various types of data, including student-related data held by a public educational agency.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.30, subdivision 13 addresses the requirement of the state to create a policy that provides public and parental access for review of qualified state assessment content and data.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.302, subdivision 4 allows schools and districts to incorporate statewide assessment results on student transcripts, as a percentage of a high school final course grade, and when determining grade promotion or retention.

Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.36, subdivision (1)(f) and subdivision (2)(b) requires annual school performance reports to be posted to the department's public website, generally by September 1.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

20 U.S.C. 6311 Section 1111(b)(2)(B) requires states to develop a plan that addresses standards, assessments, school and district accountability, and support for schools and educators. The plan must ensure a well-rounded education for all students that prepares them for career and college. States are required to have academic achievement standards and aligned assessments in reading/language arts, math, and science for specific grade levels. The standards and assessments must objectively measure academic skills without evaluating beliefs/attitudes or disclosing personal information. A state may implement alternate assessments aligned with state academic standards and alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. States must produce interpretive reports in an understandable format to support student needs.

20 U.S.C. 6311 Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(v) requires the state to administer annual statewide academic assessments, aligned to state academic standards, in reading/language arts and math for students in grades 3-8 and once in grades 9-12; for science. Assessments must be administered at least once in each of the grade spans: 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12.

20 U.S.C. 6311 Section 1111(b)(2)(G) requires the state to administer annual statewide academic assessments, aligned to state academic standards, in English language proficiency for English learners. These assessments must address different levels of English proficiency and must originate from the four accepted domains of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

20 U.S.C. 6312 Section 1006(e)(2)(B) addresses the requirements of districts and schools to publicly post a schedule detailing the dates assessments will occur, time allowances, and time and format of assessment results.

20 U.S.C. 6311 Section 1111(g)(2)(D) requires states receiving Title I funds to participate biennially in the grades 4 and 8 reading and math academic assessments of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

20 U.S.C. 6312 Section 1112(c)(3) requires local education agencies receiving Title I funds to participate, if selected, in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and math assessments in grades 4 and 8.

20 U.S.C. 6311 Section 1111(b)(2) requires the state to implement a single, statewide accountability system to distribute meaningful data to families, communities, and educators on school performance, school support, and information on closing achievement gaps.

34 CFR 200.2(b)(4)-(5) and (d) designates the process of Peer Review to maximize collaboration, promote effectiveness of the standards, and provide transparency in the quality of state assessment systems

Upon request, the information in this manual will be made available in alternative formats.