

AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS—SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

## QUICK LINKS

- [Virtual New DAC Orientation: Registration](#)
- [Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors \(ALDs\)](#)
- [Required Delivery of Individual Student Reports \(ISRs\)](#)
- [WIDA Webinars](#)
- [SIS and Data Warehouse Vendors: Scheduled Extracts](#)
- [NAEP 2021 Update](#)
- [Upcoming Opportunities](#)

## ***Virtual New DAC Orientation: Registration***

In October, MDE and Pearson will provide a Virtual New DAC Orientation. In the past, this orientation was provided as an in-person, full-day session. For this year, in order to provide the best training experience for participants, the New DAC Orientation will be a virtual event spread across three days for a few hours each day, and each session will cover different topics. MDE recommends that DACs attend the live sessions, if possible, as they will include interactive information sharing as well as time to discuss topics with colleagues. However, the presentation will be recorded for each day's sessions if participants are unable to attend all three sessions live.

MDE will provide an overview of the various roles and responsibilities of a DAC, the Minnesota Assessments, relevant MDE and WIDA systems, available resources, and training opportunities. Pearson will provide information on PearsonAccess Next, TestNav, and reporting resources. Though designed as an introduction for new DACs in their first or second year, other relatively new DACs are also welcome to attend.

To prepare for the orientation, new DACs are encouraged to review some New DAC training modules, which will be available in early October in the [Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) under the District Assessment Coordinator tab, New DAC Modules category. Note: If you are a brand new DAC, enter your district email and then complete the required fields to register an account for TMS.

Registration links are in the following table. Details for joining the webinar will be provided once participants register. Materials for the orientation will be provided on the [MDE & Pearson DAC Trainings site](#) closer to the orientation. Contact [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us) to request a reasonable accommodation to participate in this

event. Please note: MDE requires a two-week advance notice to provide accommodations and 48-hour notice to cancel the request.

DATE AND TIME	TOPIC AND DETAILS
Session 1: Tuesday, Oct. 20 9–11 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for Session 1</a>
Session 2: Wednesday, Oct. 21 9 a.m.–noon	<a href="#">Register for Session 2</a>
Session 3: Thursday, Oct. 22 9–11:30 a.m.	<a href="#">Register for Session 3</a>

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Benchmark Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)***

Over the years, educators have requested more detailed descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities demonstrated by students who scored at various achievement levels on the MCA, beyond what the traditional [Achievement Level Descriptors \(ALDs\)](#) offer. In response to this need, MDE staff collaborated to outline more specific descriptions: Benchmark ALDs for Mathematics and Reading in grades 3–8 and high school. The purpose of the Benchmark ALDs is to:

- Promote equity for all students across the state, by clarifying the expected learning outcomes for instruction and classroom assessment aligned to the Minnesota Academic Standards in reading and mathematics.
- Support teachers’ analysis of the depth of their curriculum, instruction, and classroom assessments.

The Benchmark ALDs will be available in two formats, and they will be posted on [Testing 1, 2, 3](#). The specific descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities are the same in both. See more detailed descriptions and the dates for when they are scheduled to be posted below:

- Oct 7: The table format for all grade will be available. Classroom teachers may find this format useful for lesson and unit planning, as it shows all the benchmarks continuously for a grade.
- Oct. 21: The vertical articulation format will be available. District curriculum planning and professional learning communities (PLCs) may prefer this format, as it provides the benchmarks by reporting category across all grades.

Additionally, a training module will available in early November on Testing 1, 2, 3.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Required Delivery of Individual Student Reports (ISRs)***

Districts that received 2020 Individual Student Reports (ISRs) — either for MCA/MTAS or ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS— **are required to distribute ISRs to families by Dec. 1**. Note: Not every district received ISRs this year because fewer students took statewide assessments in the spring. In the past, the deadline was “by fall conferences.” However, with the additional challenges facing districts this year, MDE has set a specific date for this requirement instead. Districts may determine how to distribute ISRs following best practices for data privacy.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***WIDA Webinars***

### **Upcoming Webinars**

There are several WIDA webinars coming up:

- The *WIDA MODEL Overview* is tomorrow, Thursday, Sept. 17, from 1–2 p.m. This webinar will provide general information about the WIDA MODEL and highlight key features of the WIDA MODEL as an interim assessment; it is designed for DACs and Test Administrators. [Join the \*WIDA MODEL Overview\* webinar on Sept. 17.](#)
- The *Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New Test Administrators* is Tuesday, Sept. 22, from 1–2 p.m. This webinar will provide information on preparing to administer the ACCESS; it is designed for Test Administrators. [Join the \*Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New Test Administrators\* on Sept. 22.](#)
- The *Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New District Test Coordinators* is Thursday, Sept. 24 from 1–2 p.m. This webinar will provide information on creating WIDA user accounts, monitoring test administrator training, and using WIDA AMS; it is designed for DACs. [Join the \*Pre-Testing: ACCESS for ELLs for New District Test Coordinators\* on Sept. 24.](#)

### **Recordings of Previous Webinars**

Unfortunately, last week’s *Assessment Update* had an incorrect link for *WIDA’s Welcome Back: What’s New This Year* webinar. Within one week after a WIDA webinar, a recording is posted on the WIDA Secure Portal on the [ACCESS Webinars page](#) ([Sign in] > ONLINE Grades 1-12 > ACCESS Webinars). Note: The webinar currently listed called “Welcome Back: What's New This Year?” is a training from last year.

### **Webinar Schedule**

The *2020-21 ACCESS and Screener Webinar Calendar* document is also available on the [ACCESS Webinars page](#); it provides a schedule and description for all of WIDA’s planned webinars.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***SIS and Data Warehouse Vendors: Scheduled Extracts***

For the spring 2021 test administrations, Student Information System (SIS) and data warehouse vendors will have the opportunity to receive regularly scheduled extracts of preliminary on-demand test result data for the MCA and MTAS during the testing window and/or final data extracts for MCA/MTAS and ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS following the release of the DSR/SSR files.

As of Wednesday, Sept. 16, at noon, Pearson has received a commitment to use the extracts from the following vendors:

- Sourcewell (formerly TIES)
- cmERDC (Viewpoint)
- Peridot Solutions (LearnersEDGE)

If you would like to participate in this opportunity and your SIS or data warehouse vendor is not on the list, consider contacting your vendor to request participation. Vendors need to make a commitment **no later than Sept. 25**; they can contact Pearson for more information at 888-817-8659 or [submit a help desk request](#). See the [Sept. 2 Assessment Update](#) for additional information.

[Back to Top](#)

## ***NAEP 2021 Update***

On Aug. 26, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) informed MDE of plans to proceed with the congressionally mandated NAEP assessments of mathematics and reading at grades 4 and 8 during the 2020–21 school year. NCES recognizes the ongoing challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has put on schools, districts, and state agencies, and has already begun to adapt the administration procedure to accommodate for flexible schedules and mitigation protocols. MDE supports the NAEP assessments and encourages the participation of selected schools and districts.

In the coming weeks, MDE’s NAEP state coordinator, Jenny Cain, will be notifying those districts and schools selected to participate. Since it is unclear whether students will be attending school in-person during the assessment window (Jan. 25–March 19), we request that selected districts and schools begin planning for NAEP as if it will occur. If you have questions, please contact Jenny at [jennifer.cain@state.mn.us](mailto:jennifer.cain@state.mn.us).

[Back to Top](#)

## ***Upcoming Opportunities***

### **Day with DACs and Tips for Successful Participation**

On Sept. 29, MDE’s Statewide Student Assessment and Data Analytics Division will host a virtual conference for DACs. This event will feature a “State of the Statewide Assessment” presentation by division director, Jennifer

Dugan. Following this presentation, Jennifer will host a roundtable discussion with three prominent Minnesota assessment data experts. The afternoon will include two breakout session opportunities; these breakout sessions focus on district needs and input, with MDE staff prompting engagement and taking notes but not directing the conversation.

[Register for Day with DACs](#). Note: Registration is required, and when registering, participants will select the two breakout session conversations in which they want to participate.

The schedule for the conference is as follows:

- **9–10:00 a.m.** “State of the Statewide Assessments,” Jennifer Dugan
- **10–11:30 a.m.** Panel conversation and Q&A
- **11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** Virtual conversation corners and lunch
- **12:45–1:45 p.m.** Session 1: Breakout conversations (students, parents/guardians, or teachers/administrators)
- **2–3:00 p.m. Session 2:** Breakout conversations (students, parents/guardians, or teachers/administrators)

Participants can connect to the audio of the event using their computer/device, or they can call into the event using a phone.

Note: Those that use a phone may consider downloading the Cisco WebEx smartphone app. Using the smartphone app will provide an easier connection to the event and will allow for more functionality than using the dial-in phone number. [WebEx provides further details on how to use the mobile app on its website.](#)

## **Test Specifications Development Committee: Alternate MCA**

MDE is looking for diverse group of K–12 special education, reading, and science educators to use their expertise to develop test specifications for the Alternate MCA (previously MTAS) in science and reading. The Alternate MCA is the redesigned alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The purpose of the committee is to decrease the depth, breadth, and complexity of the science and reading standards on the Alternate MCA by developing assessment boundaries and access points for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The committee will meet virtually throughout the 2020–21 school year.

Share this opportunity with educators in your districts who work with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. View the [Specifications Committee for Alternate MCA: 2020–21 application](#) for more information and to apply. Interested educators must complete the application by Sept. 18.

## **Teaching and Learning Led by Evidence Webinar Series**

This series of webinars is for any teacher or school leader who wants to center instruction on evidence of student learning. Kendra Olsen, MDE’s Outreach Specialist in Statewide Student Assessment and Data Analytics,

will facilitate each session to engage teachers and school leaders in making sense of assessment and data, so that it can be used to build trust and collaboration and develop fluency in decision making to help close gaps in instruction and learning.

Registration is required for each WebEx session, using the links in the table below. Participants will earn one continuing education unit (CEU) for each session. All sessions will be recorded and posted for future reference. Please contact Kendra at [kendra.olsen@state.mn.us](mailto:kendra.olsen@state.mn.us) with any questions.

Note: The first two sessions have already taken place. Staff can join any session, and if someone did not attend the first two sessions, they are still encouraged to attend any session of interest.

SESSION #	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC AND DETAILS	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
3	Thursday, Sept. 24, 4–5 p.m.	Leading Instructional Decisions with Evidence <a href="#">Register for Session 3</a>	Participants will be able to: Use or modify an ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional) framework to facilitate staff discussions about student learning led by evidence Understand how data use cycles can influence systems in schools, which impact student achievement
4	Thursday, Oct. 22, 4–5 p.m.	Assessment <i>for</i> Learning – How do we know what our students really know? <a href="#">Register for Session 4</a>	Participants will be able to: Integrate simple, frequent “checks for understanding” into existing instructional plans that elicit an accurate picture of the depth of what students know Improve rigor and alignment of formative assessment to the standards Define success criteria for students

SESSION #	DATE AND TIME	TOPIC AND DETAILS	LEARNING OBJECTIVES
5	Thursday, Nov. 12, 4–5 p.m.	Assessment <i>of</i> Learning – Summative Assessments for your Classroom <a href="#">Register for Session 5</a>	Participants will be able to: Improve alignment of classroom assessments to standards Increase the rigor of questions to eliminate student misconceptions Ensure assessments measure the extent students have mastered the standards for an instructional unit

[Back to Top](#)

---

STATEWIDE STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA ANALYTICS

Minnesota Department of Education

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

If you have any questions or want to unsubscribe, please send an email to [mde.testing@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us).