AN UPDATE FROM STATEWIDE TESTING – AUGUST 23, 2017

QUICK LINKS	IMPORTANT DATES
• Testing Calendar Requirements • Reimbursement Request Deadline Approaching • Upcoming WIDA Webinars • WIDA Screener Update • Updating Contacts in MDE-ORG • PearsonAccess Next Changes • Longitudinal Reporting Focus Groups • Science Simulation Pilot • PearsonAccess Next Unavailable	*Sept. 15: Deadline to submit reimbursement requests in GRR*

Testing Calendar Requirements

Prior to the first day of school, districts must post required testing calendar information on the district website and, if practicable, the school websites. Districts may choose how to format the information, and it should be easily accessible to students and families. This is especially important for test administration dates, which must include the specific day(s) when each grade will take each type of test at each school, **not** just the dates of the state-designated *2017–2018 Testing Calendar* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Teaching and Learning > Statewide Testing > Minnesota Tests > 2017–2018 Testing Calendar).

These requirements have not changed from last year. For more information, refer to the Aug. 16 *Assessment Update* or the *2016–2017 Procedures Manual* (PearsonAccess Next > Resources & Training > Policies and Procedures).

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Reimbursement Request Deadline Approaching

Districts use the Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) system to request reimbursements for the cost of college entrance exams. The Reimbursement Reports, which are used to review and confirm the accuracy of a district's requests, are available in GRR for those who have already submitted reimbursement requests.

For full details, use the *Graduation Requirements Records (GRR) User Guide* (MDE website > Districts, Schools and Educators > Business and Finance > Data Submissions > Graduation Requirements (GRR)). **The deadline for requesting reimbursement for college entrance exams administered in the 2016–2017 school year is Sept. 15.**

Upcoming WIDA Webinars

WIDA will offer a webinar on the topic of 2017 score changes on Sept. 7 at 11 a.m., and again on Sept. 20 at 2 p.m. WIDA will share insights and answer questions about how 2017 ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 scores can be used to address local needs related to accountability, planning, instruction, and test preparation. WIDA will focus on the Speaking domain scores and will allow ample time for questions. Registration is not a requirement. Access the webinar on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Webinar Schedule (wida.us > Assessment > ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 > Preparation & Training).

WIDA Screener Update

There are three approved English Language Proficiency (ELP) screeners in Minnesota: the WIDA Screener, the Kindergarten W-APT, and the Kindergarten MODEL.

The WIDA Screener has an online version and a paper version. Districts are strongly encouraged to make the transition to the WIDA Screener no later than Aug. 31, 2017, which is when WIDA will no longer support W-APT in grades 1–12 and remove related resources from its website. While the online option for the WIDA Screener is free, some of the paper screener items are available from WIDA for a nominal fee. If you have any questions, please email mde.el@state.mn.us.

Updating Contacts in MDE-ORG

With the start of the new school year, please ensure that the contact information is correct and up-to-date in the MDE-ORG system (MDE website > Data Center > Schools and Organizations (MDE-ORG)). This is especially important for DAC contacts, as there will be a series of new DAC trainings coming this fall.

All contact information in MDE-ORG is updated and maintained by the district's Site Verification Coordinator (SVC). You can look up the SVC for your district in MDE-ORG directly. If the SVC has any questions about the process, they can contact mde.school-verify@state.mn.us.

PearsonAccess Next Changes

In response to district feedback, MDE and Pearson made some layout changes to the [PearsonAccess Next website](#) (minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com). The following are some examples of the changes:

- A dropdown menu has been added to Resources & Training page to make it easier to locate resources and trainings.
- *Test Monitor and Student Directions* have been renamed and have their own page located under the Preparing for Testing tab.
- Past *Assessment Updates* will now be posted on PearsonAccess Next, under the MDE Updates tab.
- The recently developed *Teacher Newsletter* will also be available under the MDE Updates tab.

Longitudinal Reporting Focus Groups

Pearson is seeking participants to take part in Longitudinal Reporting focus groups this fall. Feedback from these short sessions will be used to improve user experience and inform future enhancement decisions. If you are interested in participating in a virtual focus group, contact the Pearson help desk at (888) 817-8659 or [submit a Pearson help desk request](#).

Science Simulation Pilot

Pearson and MDE are looking for schools and districts to help pilot a series of science simulations that collect "activity stream" data from student actions.

- The study will be conducted throughout the 2017–2018 school year, and there should be a minimum of 50 students in grade 5 and/or 50 students in grade 8 participating from a district or school.
- The students will test five simulations that will each take 15 to 30 minutes, provide feedback on the simulations, and take a short traditional assessment for comparison.
- In conjunction with Pearson, teachers will schedule the simulations to fit in the curriculum, review the results for comparison to other assessments, and provide the end-of-year science scores.
- Schools will need to provide devices that have the latest technical requirements for using TestNav.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Lauren Meyer at lauren.meyer@pearson.com.

Note: The five simulations include forces in the solar system, engineering design principles, using satellite imagery, principles of force and motion, and food webs and biomes. Though the curriculum may not cover all five topics, your participation in them as enrichment activities is welcome.

PearsonAccess Next Unavailable

PearsonAccess Next will be unavailable tomorrow, Aug. 24, for system updates.