

# ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 66, January 2024



## Updates...

### Note from the Director



We hope you were able to enjoy a well-deserved winter break and a happy holiday season.

[School and District Report Cards](#) were publicly released in November. Please direct accountability questions to [oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov).

The 2023-24 assessments have begun with the opening of the ACCESS for ELLs testing window on December 4. Test windows for the ACT, Forward Exam, DLM, and PreACT Secure assessments begin in March. Our staff is busy finalizing trainings and manuals that will be available soon on the [Assessment webpages](#). Resource availability and training dates are posted on the calendar webpages of each assessment.

We would like to encourage you to look into the [Forward Exam Educator Involvement Opportunities](#). These events are all important steps in the development and scoring of the Forward Exam and wonderful professional development experiences for educators.

Thank you for your dedication to the education of our Wisconsin students. We look forward to working with you.

*Viji Somasundaram*

Director, Office of Educational Accountability



## Calendar...

### Important Dates

2024	
Date	Event
January 8	Forward – 2024 Trainings and Administration Resources available
January 10	Forward – First of three DAC, SAC, and DTC Q&A webinars of 2024
January 19	ACT – Deadline for schools to submit accommodation requests in TAA
January 22	PreACT – PAnext opens
January 22 – February 23	DLM – Data validation and revision period
January 26	ACCESS – Additional materials window closes
January 29-31	ACT – Schools verify enrollment rosters in PAnext
January 29 – March 8	NAEP – Test window (for selected schools only)
February 2	ACCESS – Test window closes
February 7	Forward – Second of three DAC, SAC, and DTC Q&A webinars of 2024
February 9	ACCESS – Deadline to ship materials back to DRC
February 12-23	Forward – Optional add accessibility features window
February 21-29	ACCESS - Pre-reporting data validation window
March 1	ACT – Deadline to request additional testing materials for test window 1
March 4	Forward – Access to DRC INSIGHT Portal test sessions, student information, and accessibility features
March 6	Forward – Final DAC, SAC, and DTC Q&A webinar of 2023
March 12	ACT – Test window 1 (Paper Administration) *
March 12-15 & 18-22	ACT – Test window 1 for students testing with accommodations (Paper Administration) *
March 12-15 & 18-22	ACT – Test window 1 (Online Administration and Online Accommodations) *
March 18 – April 26	PreACT Secure – Online Administration, grades 9-10
March 18 – April 26	Forward – Test window for ELA and Mathematics grades 3-8, Science grades 4 and 8, and Social Studies grades 4, 8, and 10
March 18 – April 26	DLM – Test window for ELA and Mathematics grades 3-11, Science grades 4 and 8-11, and Social Studies grades 4, 8, and 10

\*For Additional test windows see the [ACT Calendar webpage](#).

Dates may be subject to change. Check the Assessment calendar webpages for the most current dates throughout the year.

## Forward Exam Update



The spring 2024 Forward Exam for ELA and Mathematics at grades 3-8 will be aligned to the new Wisconsin Standards for ELA (adopted in 2020) and Mathematics (adopted in 2021).

There have been some changes to the ELA test design. These changes include:

- Three ELA test sessions instead of four. The test sessions will be:
  - Session 1 - Reading Comprehension
  - Session 2 - Language Arts/Writing
  - Session 3 - Language Arts/Writing
- The listening session has been removed.
- The Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) has been removed and replaced with two one-paragraph, mode specific, writing tasks in test sessions 2 and 3, in addition to the language arts and writing questions.

Text-to-Speech (TTS) is now a Universal Tool available to all students in all grades for mathematics, science, social studies, and English language arts (ELA) (not allowed for the passages in the ELA Reading Session). With this feature, test content (i.e., words and numbers, test directions, questions, answer choices) is read aloud by the computer in the English language. TTS will not automatically play. The student is required to press the play button for each question they would like TTS to read. This allows a student to decide if and when to use the feature. Students will need headphones for every content area unless tested individually in a separate setting. Be sure to refer to the 2023-24 Accessibility Guide available on the [Forward Exam Accommodations and Supports webpage](#) prior to the 2024 test administration.

Updated Forward Exam Practice Tests are now available on the [Forward Exam Practice Tests webpage](#) to help students prepare. Practice tests include the new short write tasks, new student testing environment design, TTS Universal Tool, and other accessibility features. Educators should ensure all students have the opportunity to access the practice test and student tutorials prior to the testing so they are familiar with the 2024 changes.

Forward Exam training resources for District and School staff are now available on the [Forward Exam Resources webpage](#).

Questions regarding the Forward Exam may be directed to [Alison O'Hara](#) or [Jennifer Teasdale](#).

### Forward Exam Educator Involvement Opportunities

DPI is currently recruiting a diverse group of Wisconsin educators from all over Wisconsin (including English learner and special education teachers) to participate in three separate Forward Exam Educator Involvement Opportunities. These events are all important steps in the development and scoring of the Forward Exam. This is a great opportunity to be a part of the Forward Exam development and scoring, have detailed input on the exam, and take knowledge back to your district about the processes.

- **Rangefinding** - Participants will review student writing responses to finalize the short write rubrics, approve scoring guides, and select anchor, training, and qualifying papers used by evaluators to score the Forward Exam new ELA short write tasks.
- **Standard Setting** - Participants will recommend new cut scores for the Forward Exam in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The cut scores separate students into one of the four achievement levels, which provide clear indicators of a student's level in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards and indicate if they are on track for future learning.
- **New Item Review** - Participants will review new ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies test questions created for the exam for content, grade level appropriateness, alignment to correct standard, cultural inclusivity, and bias/sensitivity issues prior to placement on the exam.

More information about each opportunity, including how to apply, is available on the [Forward Exam Educators Involvement webpage](#).

## The ACT with writing Update

**ACT**® The first ACT test administration window will begin on March 12. Districts are able to choose the delivery mode of the ACT (paper or online) and should begin preparing their testing sites accordingly. 2024 test administration and technical resources have been posted to the [Wisconsin ACT website](#). School and district testing staff should familiarize themselves with the website and pay close attention to the testing tasks and deadlines outlined in the Schedule of Events. 2024 training opportunities will continue through early 2024. All upcoming trainings and recordings of past trainings are posted to the [ACT Training webpage](#).

The window is open for schools to **submit requests for ACT accommodations**. Accommodations and English Learner supports require approval by ACT prior to testing. School staff must submit requests with supporting documents via the online Test Accessibility and Accommodations (TAA) System before January 19. DPI strongly encourages accommodation requests be submitted early to allow time for reconsideration if necessary. Additional accessibility resources are available on the [ACT Accommodations and Supports webpage](#) and the [Wisconsin ACT website](#).

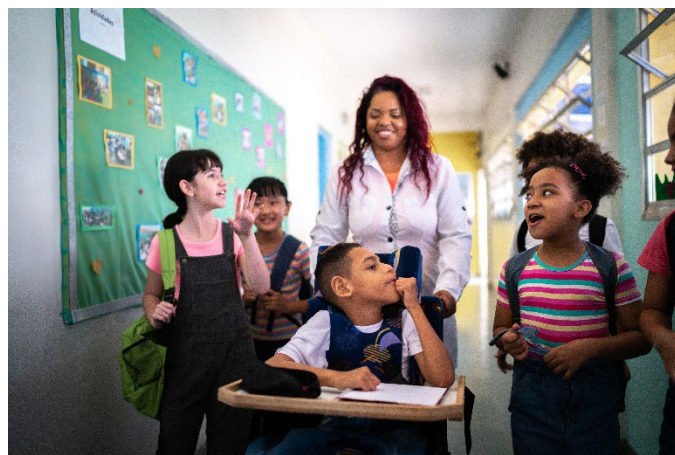
Free ACT test preparation resources are available for all students on the [ACT Practice Test and Sample Items webpage](#). Questions about The ACT may be directed to [Nikki Braconier](#).

## PreACT Secure Update

**PreACT**® The test window for the PreACT Secure is March 18 - April 26. The 2024 PreACT Secure Schedule of Events (SOE) and technical resources have been posted on the [Wisconsin PreACT Secure Website](#). Beginning January 22, testing staff will be able to access the PreACT Secure Portal (PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup> – “PAnext”) to update testing

staff and verify addresses. Please refer to the SOE for a complete list of all upcoming testing tasks and deadlines.

ACT and DPI will host several webinar trainings for the PreACT Secure 2024 administration. Information about these trainings is now available on the [PreACT Secure Training webpage](#). Additional information and testing resources will be posted to the [Wisconsin PreACT Secure Webpage](#) as they become available. Questions about the PreACT Secure may be directed to [Nikki Braconier](#).



## Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Update



**DYNAMIC**<sup>™</sup>  
LEARNING MAPS

Dynamic Learning Maps, along with educators throughout the consortium states, have written new Science Essential Elements (EE) to add to the EEs that are currently being assessed. DLM selected educators from a pool of interested educators to participate in writing and reviewing the new EEs. The next step in the process is to create and review Learning Maps, a cognitive model that interconnects student learning in a content area, for the different EEs. Science content area experts and special education teachers are needed to make sure we have the best EEs and Maps possible. Interested educators should create a profile through the [recruitment site](#).

This time of year, Test Administrators should begin planning for the required annual training through the DLM Training Site and completing their test security agreements. Districts should ensure that

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### Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Update (continued from page 3)

students are rostered, and teachers are completing their required DLM training. Districts are strongly encouraged to complete the following tasks by February 23:

- Enrollment, user, and roster uploads for participation in the spring DLM assessment.
- Required DLM test administration and security training.
- First contact and Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile for participation in the spring DLM assessment.

For a detailed timeline and key dates refer to the [DLM Calendar webpage](#). More information about DLM is available on the [DLM webpage](#). Questions regarding DLM may be directed to [Mike Peacy](#).

### ACCESS for ELLs® Update



WIDA provides free eLearning courses in the [WIDA Secure Portal](#) which are available to all educators in the state of WI. *Making Language Visible in the Classroom: Explore the Key Language Uses* is one of their newest offerings. Districts interested in these professional learning opportunities are encouraged to create accounts for staff who need them, including classroom teachers and administrators.

Questions regarding ACCESS and finding or using EL data in WISEdash for Districts may be directed to [Jesse Roberts](#).



### Assessment of Reading Readiness Update



The assessment of Reading Readiness requires each district to screen all 4-year-old Kindergarten through 2nd grade students at least once each school year. As the 2023-24 school year is well under way, it is expected that most students will have already been screened at least once. District Assessment Coordinators and reading specialists are encouraged to work with their teachers to ensure that all students are screened, results are communicated to parents, appropriate interventions or remedial reading services are provided where necessary, and the results for all students are used to help guide instructional practices.

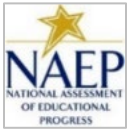
The Department will load 2023-24 MAP and Star Reading Readiness results to WISEdash for Districts.

- For districts using MAP, the data sharing agreement authorizing DPI to load a district's data can be found at: [Local Assessment Data Use Agreement](#).
- For districts using Star, steps to follow for data to be loaded can be found at: [WISEdash for Districts Star data](#).

The Department will be sending out reimbursement forms to the District Assessment Coordinator for each district in late February/early March. Districts will be asked to indicate the screener or screeners used at each grade, the number of students screened, and the amount the district is seeking for reimbursement. Once all reimbursement requests have been received, department staff will determine whether the appropriation is sufficient to reimburse the full amount requested by each district. If the appropriation is sufficient, each district will be reimbursed the full amount. If the appropriation is insufficient, payments to districts will be prorated. It is anticipated that all payments will be distributed prior to the end of the school year.

More information on the Reading Readiness requirements is available on the [Reading Readiness Overview webpage](#). Additional information is available on the [Reading Readiness FAQ webpage](#). Questions about Reading Readiness may be directed to [Duane Dorn](#).

### NAEP Update



The NAEP 2024 test window opens at the end of January and will run through the beginning of March. Selected schools will have their grade 4, 8, and/or 12 students participate in Reading and Mathematics assessments. Additionally, some schools will have grade 8 students participate in science testing. We expect the results from these assessments to be released around December 2024. Schools are working now with their NAEP field staff representatives to prepare for testing.



### State Accountability Updates



The final 2022-23 school and district report cards were released publicly on November 14. You can read about the 2022-23 report cards in the [DPI news release](#). As a reminder, all schools and districts are required to share their most recent report cards with parents. Further details can be

found on the [Notification Requirements webpage](#). Questions about report cards may be directed to [reportcardhelp@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:reportcardhelp@dpi.wi.gov).

The updated Target Group Preview Dashboard is available for 2023-24, showing the likelihood of students appearing in the target group of the 2023-24 report cards, based on 2023 assessment results. Please note that this dashboard is a “forward facing” tool used to inform continuous improvement efforts that is only available to school, district, and CESA staff with access to [WISEdash for Districts](#).

The Target Group Outcomes priority area of the report cards is designed to help schools see their own “gaps” between students scoring in the lowest quartile and the rest of their student body. To support schools and districts in identifying and serving their lowest-performing students, students who are *likely* to be in the target group in future report cards at a district- and school-level are displayed securely on WISEdash for Districts. For more information, please see the [WISEdash for Districts - Target Group Preview Dashboard page](#).

### Federal Accountability Updates



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to identify schools and student groups for support and improvement. Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) reports will be available in February and April as part of the Joint Federal Notification (JFN) packet. This new timeline differs from years past, in which the preliminary JFN release typically took place in December. Please see the [email to District Administrators](#) from Deputy State Superintendent John Johnson for more information on this new timeline.

For more information on ESSA accountability, please see the [Office of Educational Accountability ESSA webpage](#). Questions about ESSA accountability may be direct to [oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:oeaemail@dpi.wi.gov). Questions about IDEA accountability may be directed to the [Special Education team](#).

## Statewide CESA Assessment Professional Development and Coaching Series



The Office of Educational Accountability has partnered with CESAs across the state to offer a free Assessment Professional Development and Coaching Series

focusing on classroom level assessment and data use. The purpose of this series is to increase teacher (and leader) capacity in understanding different types of assessment, how to use them, and how to create them.

This series is available to 10 districts within each CESA region and includes 12 days of professional learning across the 2023-24 school year as well as five in-district coaching sessions.

Assessment topics include:

- Classroom Assessments  
Project Based Assessments and Rubrics
- Performance Tasks
- Assessing Writing Across Classrooms, Grade Levels, and Content Areas
- Analyzing Data - Student Classwork / Formative, Interim, and Summative

There is limited space for more districts available at some CESAs. To register for this event and learn more about this free opportunity, visit the [Assessment Professional Learning and Coaching Series website](#) or contact your local CESA.

## FAQ ...

**Reminder** – Each assessment has an FAQ webpage with scenarios/issues related to that specific assessment: [ACCESS for ELLs FAQ](#), [ACT FAQ](#), [DLM FAQ](#), [Forward Exam FAQ](#), [Pre ACT Secure FAQ](#).

**Q. Is there a sample letter available to send home to parents about upcoming assessments?**

Yes, there is a sample letter available about upcoming assessments available on the DAC Resources webpage. There is also an informational for brochure for families about each assessment available under each assessment's resource page. These resources are available in English, Spanish, and Hmong.

**Q. Are headphones required for the Forward Exam?**

Yes, headphones are required for all content area of the Forward Exam because Text-to-Speech is now a Universal Tool all students have access to.

**Q. Where can I find assessment calendars or timelines with key dates?**

Each assessment has a calendar webpage in its submenu that is specific to that assessment. More information about each specific assessment's key dates, deadlines, publication releases, etc., may be found on those pages.

**Q. Where can I find information about assessment training opportunities?**

Each assessment has a training webpage in its submenu that is specific to that assessment. More information about each specific assessment's training opportunities may be found on those pages.

**Q. Our school is administering the ACT online. Do we need to start testing within the first week of the test window?**

When administering the ACT online, schools are not restricted to testing on the first testing date/week. You can schedule online testing for any of the nine online testing dates within a test window.

We hope you find this newsletter and its contents beneficial. Questions may be directed to the [Office of Educational Accountability](#).



Jill K. Underly, PhD., State Superintendent



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