ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 67, March 2024

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF Public Instruction

Updates...

Note from the Director

Thank you for the successful administration of the 2023-24 ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The first ACT window opened this morning and the Forward Exam, DLM, PreACT Secure test windows are beginning soon. I would like to express my gratitude for the work that district and school staff are doing to prepare themselves and our students for the 2024 spring test administration. Resources for student and staff training and test prep are available for each assessment on the Assessment webpage.

Districts and schools should plan to schedule the majority of their testing early in the window, which will allow time for make-up sessions. Taking advantage of the test window in this manner will allow schools to meet their participation goals ensuring all students enrolled in tested grades take part in statewide assessments. I would also like to remind districts to work with their virtual schools to ensure all students are able to participate.

The Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) is continuing to recruit Wisconsin educators for the upcoming Forward Exam test development opportunities and ACT Standard Setting. These events are important steps in the development and scoring of the statewide assessments and meaningful professional development for educators.

OEA staff are ready and available to assist with assessment and accountability matters and look forward to working with schools throughout the spring.

Viji Somasundaram

Director, Office of Educational Accountability

Calendar...

Important Dates

2024	
Date	**Event**
February 23 – April 26	DLM – District clean-up of individual student data, including correct WISEid associated with the student and correct spelling of student name
March 4 – April 26	Forward – District clean-up of individual student demographic data and assignment of individual student supports and accommodations in the DRC INSIGHT Portal
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
March 22	NAEP – Testing window closes
April 26	ACCESS – Electronic reports and data downloads available
May 1-31	Forward – Window for districts to request to opt-out of receipt of paper Individual Student Reports (ISRs)
May 7 - 21	ACCESS – Post-Reporting Data Validation Window
May 11	ACCESS – Paper reports delivered to districts

*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 2024 Forward Exam test window will open on March 18 and close on April 26. Schools are responsible for notifying families of upcoming assessments in a format that is accessible to them (i.e., meets their language or accommodation needs). Family notification resources, including a template letter and Forward Exam informational brochure, are available on the Forward Exam Resources webpage.

The required Forward Exam training videos, including the District and School Assessment Coordinator (DAC/SAC) Training and the Test Administrator Training (TA), are posted on the Forward Exam Training webpage.

Prior to testing, all students should be given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the test including the different question types, online tools, and the testing environment by practicing with the Forward Exam Practice test available on the Forward Exam Practice Test webpage. Student preparation should include the use of the Text-to-Speech (TTS) universal support (now available to ALL students to use if they choose) and any assigned accessibility features (e.g., Spanish Stacked Translation with English or Spanish TTS, Video Sign Language). Educators should familiarize themselves with how to use the accessibility features for the Forward Exam by viewing the accessibility related Administrator Tutorials.

To provide additional scheduling flexibility, schools may again utilize extended testing hours upon request on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday until 8:00 pm and Saturday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. More information on extended testing hours is available on the Assessment Forms webpage. Schools interested in extended testing hours should contact their DAC. 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 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 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

 March 12 is the first of three ACT test windows for grade 11 students. Districts may administer the ACT on paper or online. Additional 2024 ACT assessment testing windows are available on the ACT Calendar webpage.

Schools should continue to manage their student roster within PearsonAccess[Next], order additional testing materials, and complete all tasks for online testing site readiness. Refer to the ACT Schedule of Events for a list of assessment tasks and deadlines.

ACT shipped Taking the ACT Test booklets and individualized copies of MyACT Non-Test Instructions for each student. Schools should distribute these materials and have students complete their MyACT account registration within two days of testing. MyACT is ACT's online registration site that allows students to manage their ACT scores, demographic information, high school resume, and college plans.

Free ACT practice tests can be found within students' MyACT accounts once registered. Additional free practice tests and resources are available on the ACT Practice Tests and Sample Items webpage. Questions about The ACT may be directed to Nikki Braconier.

PreACT Secure Update

 The PreACT Secure test window for grades 9 and 10 is March 18 through April 26. Schools should be aware of the technology requirements and perform all online testing site readiness tasks prior to testing. Site readiness resources are located on the Wisconsin PreACT Secure webpage. Please refer to the PreACT Secure Schedule of Events for a list of assessment tasks and deadlines.

Trainings for the PreACT Secure assessment have begun and will continue throughout the month of March. All training opportunities and recordings are available on the PreACT Secure Trainings webpage.

A free PreACT Secure practice test can be found on the PreACT Secure Practice Tests webpage. Questions about the PreACT Secure may be directed to Nikki Braconier.

ACT Educator Involvement Opportunity

DPI is currently recruiting a diverse group of Wisconsin educators (including English learner and special education teachers) to establish cut scores for the ACT in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and Science. These cut scores are independent of ACT's College and Career Readiness Benchmarks and are used for state accountability. This is a great opportunity to be a part of DPI's assessment work, have detailed input on the ACT, and take knowledge back to your district about the process.

More information about the ACT Standard Setting and how to apply is available on the ACT Educator Involvement webpage.

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Update

The DLM test window is March 18 through April 26. DPI recommends that preparation for DLM testing be completed as soon as possible. Districts and schools should confirm they are prepared for testing by ensuring:

- portal data is verified,
- student rostering is finished, and
- educators have completed training.

Test Administration Training Modules are required for all educators who will be administering the DLM to students. All training requirements must be completed before the Test Administrator will have access to the student's Kite login information to be able to administer the DLM. More information is available in the Guide to DLM Required Test Administration Training. It is the educator's responsibility to ensure student First Contact Surveys are completed and accurate. The surveys are used to collect background information including communication methods, assistive technology devices, motor and sensory impairments, and academic performance for students eligible to participate in DLM assessments. The data gathered is used to determine the subject area linkage levels for each tested Essential Element. More information is available in the Educators Portal User Guide. More information about DLM is available on the DLM webpage. Questions about DLM may be directed to Michael Peacy.

ACCESS for ELLs® Update

The U.S. Department of Education has undergone a bit of a reorganization, and Title III has been moved back into the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). As part of the department's Raise the Bar initiative, OELA is revamping a number of its offerings, starting with their Newcomer Toolkit and Family Toolkit.

OELA sponsors the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), which is hosting these toolkits. NCELA also publishes numerous other guides and fact sheets around all things EL, including podcasts, webinars, and more. If you are interested in learning more about multilingual learners on the national level, please check out these resources. Questions about ACCESS for ELLs 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.

Assessment of Reading Readiness Update
(continued from page 4)

The Department sent out reimbursement forms to the District Assessment Coordinator for each district on March 5. Districts are 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
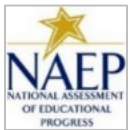
Thank you to the schools that are participating in NAEP 2024. The closing of the test window has been extended from March 8 to March 22 to allow time for rescheduled and make-up testing. Results from this assessment will be released around the end of the year. Visit the Nation's Report Card for more information and to explore results from previous years.

Federal Accountability Updates

Preliminary Joint Federal Notifications were provided to schools and districts in SAFE, the Secure Access File Exchange on February 29. Every school received a preliminary ESSA Accountability Report, which includes data on schoolwide and student group performance and indicates whether or not the school is identified for an ESSA federal identification. Schools with existing Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) identifications also received a Progress to Exit Report with available data.

The preliminary Joint Federal Notifications release also included District Summary Reports containing ESSA Identifications and IDEA LEA Determinations for all schools in the district.

Questions about ESSA accountability may be directed to OEA's accountability staff. For questions about IDEA determinations, please contact the DPI Special Education Team.

Test Participation and Accountability

The Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) would like to provide districts and schools with some reminders on the impact of test participation on state and federal accountability. Please see below for more information.

Federal Accountability (ESSA) requires Academic Achievement calculations to be based upon the greater of 95% of students enrolled for the full academic year or the actual number of students tested. Hence, schools that have student groups with lower than a 95% test participation rate have their scores reduced. Wisconsin's ESSA system applies this requirement by adjusting the denominator of the points-based proficiency rate calculation to the 95% tested level for schools testing below the required 95% rate.

For example, if a middle school serving students in grades 6-8 had 100 full academic year students, but only 90 of these students participated in state assessments, the school's points-based proficiency rate is calculated by dividing the number of points by 95 (minimum participation required by ESSA) rather than 90 (the actual number of students tested). This results in a lowered achievement score for that school.

For State Accountability, DPI publishes school and district test participation on school and district report cards for informational purposes only. Test participation has no impact on report card scoring. This rule has been effective since the 2016-17 report cards. Please note that a minimum two years of 20 full academic year tested students are required to generate a report card score.

Questions about accountability may be directed to OEA's accountability staff.

Assessment Professional Learning and Coaching Series Update

70 school districts across the state of Wisconsin are participating in a free professional learning and coaching series during the 2023-24 school year. The OEA and CESAs have partnered to create in-person learning opportunities on meaningful and equitable classroom assessment, project-based assessment, performance assessment, assessing writing across grade levels and content areas, and analyzing formative, interim and summative assessment data. Each district brings a team of educators and administrators to the professional learning events where they spend two to three days learning about effective assessment strategies, engaging in activities and discussions with colleagues within the region and planning how to implement these practices within the district. Additionally, each district receives five in-district coaching sessions on an assessment topic they would like to learn more about and apply within the district. Participants are reporting that the content within this series is matching district assessment needs and they are walking away with ideas to bring back to their districts. There is still availability to join this series for the last few sessions. Please contact your local CESA or visit the Assessment Professional Learning and Coaching Series website for more information.

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

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 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 areas of the Forward Exam because Text-to-Speech (TTS) is now a Universal Tool all students have access to.

Q. Where can I find technical requirements and resources for the different assessments?
Each assessment has a technical requirements and resources webpage in its submenu that is specific to that assessment.

Q. If testing the ACT online, are we required to wait until the next test window to administer make-up testing?
No. Online make-up testing can be administered on any remaining online testing dates within the three testing windows. Note: Multiple-day testers must complete the entire ACT test within the window in which they started.

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.

Q. Is a public school or district responsible for testing a home-schooled student if the parent requests that?
No. Public schools do not have the authority to administer the statewide assessments to home-schooled students, including those enrolled in their district for two or fewer classes per day.

Jill K. Underly, PhD., State Superintendent