Guidance for Universal Supports and Accommodations for Minnesota Statewide Assessments 2026-27

All public school students participate in statewide assessments: the English language proficiency accountability assessments (WIDA assessments) and the standards-based accountability assessments (MCA and MTAS/Alt MCA). Universal supports and accommodations are available to help ensure that all students, regardless of disability or linguistic background, can access the statewide assessments. Universal supports and accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or compromise the integrity of test results; however, it is important to clarify the role of universal supports and accommodations when considering how students will participate in statewide assessments

This document supports educators and teams involved in statewide assessment decisions by explaining the universal supports and accommodations available and helping them make informed choices about how each student will participate. It is not meant to be ready in its entirety, but staff should navigate to the applicable sections of this document to learn more about specific universal supports, accommodations, or their associated test administration procedures. Note: Throughout this document, the term "district" refers to both districts and charter schools.

To search for updates when viewing the guidance online, do a search using the terms "New for 2026-27" and "Note for 2026-27."

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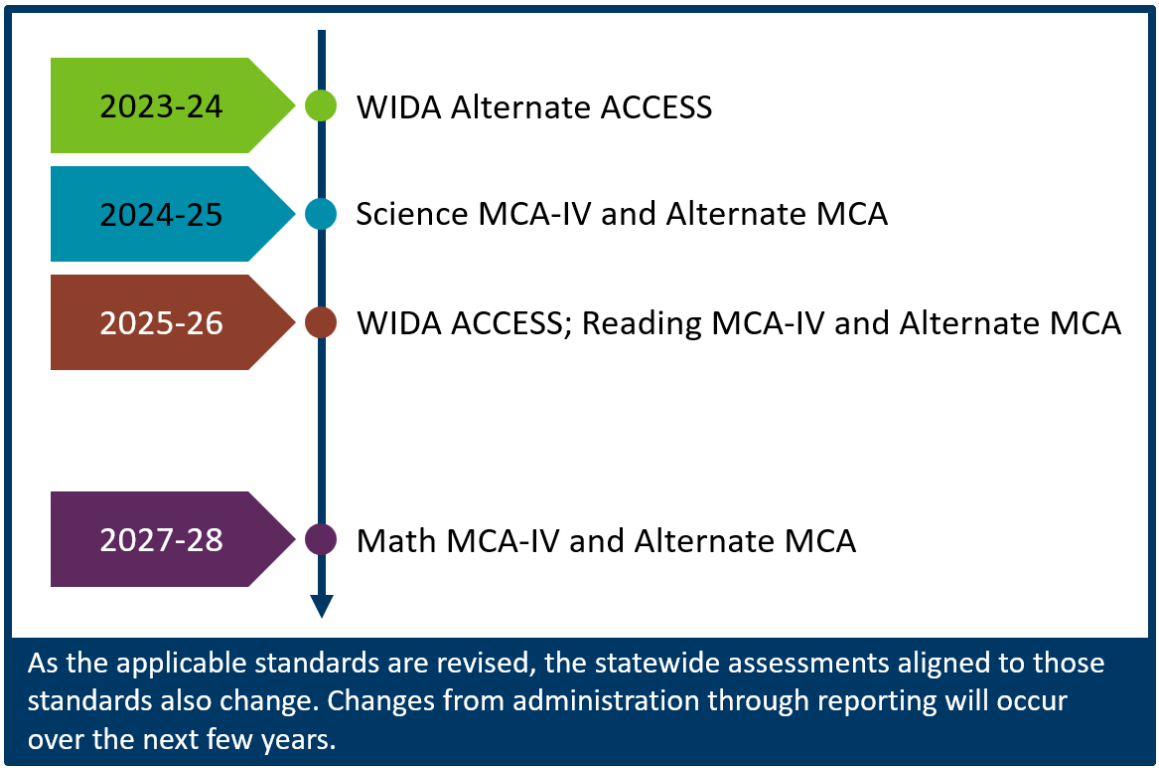
Changes to Statewide Assessments

As the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards and WIDA English Language Development Standards change, the assessments themselves must also change. The Minnesota statewide assessment program will continue to undergo changes over the next few years, as shown in the graphic below. 2023-24 was the first year of the revised WIDA Alternate ACCESS. 2024-25 was the first year of new science assessments. 2025-26 was the first year of new reading assessments and the revised WIDA ACCESS. 2027-28 will be the first year of the new math assessments.

Changes to Minnesota's Statewide Assessments



As the applicable standards are revised, the statewide assessments aligned to those standards also change. Changes from administration through reporting will occur over the next few years.

With new assessments, MDE seeks to continuously improve the supports, tools, and accommodations available. As a result, some accommodations and supports will be available only for the Reading and Science MCAs. As new assessments for math are developed, any new accommodations and supports will be communicated ahead of their first administration.

The Alternate MCA (Alt MCA) is replacing the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) in each subject. The Alt MCAs are newly designed alternate assessments that can be administered in online, paper, or hybrid (any combination of online and paper) modes to meet student needs. More details are available in MTAS/Alt MCA resources available on the Test Administration Resources page and in the Alternate MCA Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) on the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) page of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

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 document. 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.

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, supports or accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during a test administration because doing so may negatively affect student 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 the Student Resources page of MDE's website for specific information for each 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 document 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.

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 document, 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.

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 document. 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 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 Decisions about Universal Supports and Accommodations

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.

- **Note for 2026-27:** Documented process for how information about universal supports and accommodations are 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 that are designed to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of all students. In order 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 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 document:
    - 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 guide, the broader term of "multilingual learners" refers to students who use or are developing more than one language, including 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 document 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 both this document 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 in instructional or other assessment settings 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

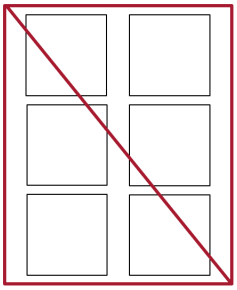
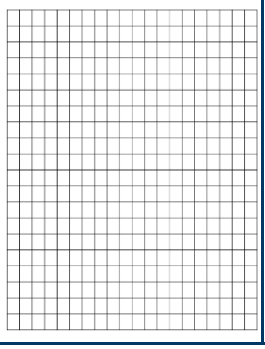
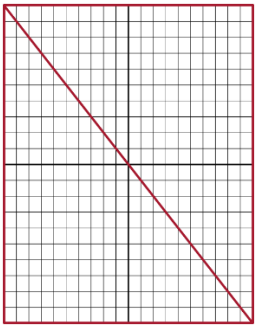
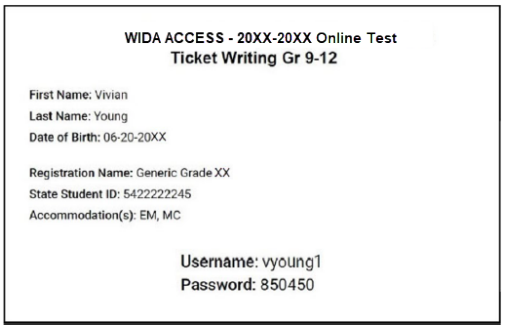
Description: Schools may provide or allow students to provide scratch paper for paper and online assessments. Specific materials may be used as scratch paper, including blank paper, individual whiteboards, commercially produced graph paper, or student test tickets.

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.
    - Scratch paper must be kept secure between testing sessions following your school's procedures (for example, you will secure test materials or return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator between testing sessions).
    - Once testing is completed, all secure materials must be securely disposed of or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school procedures). The secure disposal must be completed no more than two business days after the close of the testing window.
- 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.
- Table 1 provides guidelines for allowable scratch paper.

Table 1. 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
Commercially produced graph paper	Must **not** contain numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes	Allowed:  Not Allowed: 
Student test tickets	May be used	Allowed (example): 

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 English Language Proficiency Universal Supports 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 breaks:

- For WIDA ACCESS for Kindergarten, designated, optional breaks are scripted into the *Test Administrator Script* and *Score Sheet*.
- For grades 1-12 WIDA ACCESS, breaks are only allowed between domains unless a student has an IEP or 504 plan that documents the need for breaks.
- For WIDA Alternate ACCESS, allow students to take brief breaks as needed.
- Test Administrators must continue to actively monitor students during a break to ensure students do not discuss the test.

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). 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 English Language Proficiency Universal Supports 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 trainings.
- 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that its use can 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: Students may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Administrator, and the Test Administrator cannot provide verbal or nonverbal prompts. They must test in an individual setting.

Back to English Language Proficiency Universal Supports 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 for 2026-27: 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 for 2026-27:** 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 to use paper test materials for WIDA ACCESS.

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. This accommodation will require collaboration with the District or School Assessment Coordinator for any administration guidance or to complete documentation on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Universal 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.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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.

Provided by School

Tools

- Classroom materials (such as highlighters or place markers)
- Music or noise buffers
- Scratch paper
- Sensory tools

Administrative Considerations

- Different time of day
- Environment (such as lights and seating)
- Flexible testing time *
- Individual or small group setting
- Written, repeated, or clarified *Testing Directions* *

Accessibility Supports

- 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 *†

Accommodations

- Calculator (handheld), math manipulatives, or an abacus for grades 3-8 math #
- Other assistive technology devices #†
- Scribe #†

Provided by MDE

Accessibility Supports

- 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 *

Accommodations

- Paper test book (regular print, large print, and braille) #
- Script/human reader (including signed interpretation of the script) #†

Embedded in Test

Tools

- Answer eliminator
- Calculators (math and science)
- Formula sheet (math)
- Highlighter
- Pencil (math)
- Protractor (math)
- Ruler (math and science)
- Scratch pad
- Straightedge (math)
- White noise

Accessibility Supports

- 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

Accommodations

- 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 support document navigation.

Table 2: 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							

Universal Supports	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Suggested for Multilingual Learners	Individual Setting May Be Required	Test Administration Report Required*
Amplification devices	N/A	✓	✓	✓		✓	
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		✓		✓		

Universal Supports	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Suggested for Multilingual Learners	Individual Setting May Be Required	Test Administration Report Required*
Accessibility Supports—Embedded in Test							
Answer masking	N/A	✓	✓	✓			
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	✓	✓	✓			

*The *Test Administration Report* (TAR), or similar report created by the district, is used by District and School Assessment Coordinators to document special circumstances or situations that occur during test, including use of some universal supports and accommodations. Contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator with questions.

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.

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 document 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)

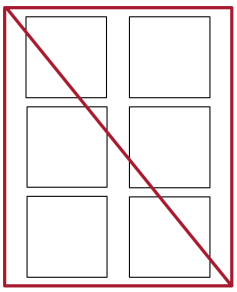
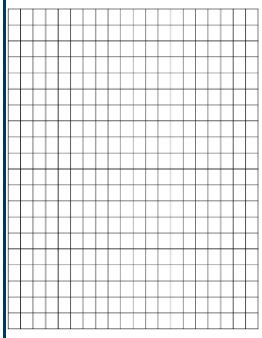
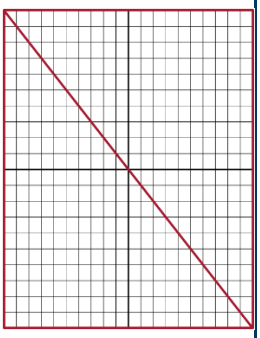
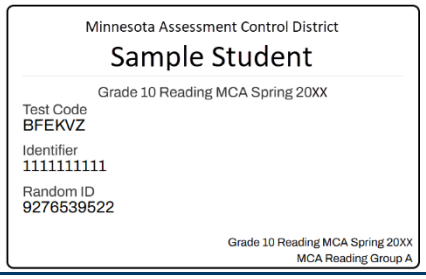
Description: Schools may provide or allow a student to provide scratch paper for paper and online assessments. Specific materials may be used as scratch paper, including blank paper, individual whiteboards, commercially-produced graph paper, or student test tickets. Refer to *Testing Directions* on the Test Administration Resources page 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.
    - Scratch paper must be kept secure between testing sessions following your school's procedures (for example, you will secure test materials or return them to the District or School Assessment Coordinator between testing sessions).
    - Once testing is completed, all secure materials must be securely disposed of or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school procedures). The secure disposal must be completed no more than two business days after the close of the testing window.
- Table 3 provides guidelines for allowable scratch paper.

Table 3: 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
Commercially produced graph paper	Must **not** contain numbers, coordinates, or numbered boxes	Allowed  Not Allowed: 
Student test tickets	May be used	Allowed (example): 

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 document 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 the 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. 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.

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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: Test security requirements for rooms include having a closed room that is being only used for testing, materials on walls are covered or removed, and enough space between students is maintained to ensure students work independently. Confirm testing room requirements with your District or School Assessment Coordinator.

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. **Note for 2026-27:** 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 MCA, at approximately 30-minute intervals (or on a schedule determined by the district), students may be allowed a short break. For online MCA, students cannot review previously completed items if more than 20 minutes have passed.
- 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 session.
- Test Administrators must continue to actively monitor students during a break to ensure students do not discuss the test.

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).

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.

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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 Appendix A 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 calculator in TestNav may be used as a universal support. Refer to *Accommodations—Provided by School* in this document for information for grades 3-8 Math MCA. Refer to Appendix A: *Calculator Use General Guidelines* for detailed information about calculator usage 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 Appendix A: *Calculator Use General Guidelines* for detailed information about calculator usage 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 provided, 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 document 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 document. 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 this document 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, must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that the information can 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that its use can 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that its use can be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

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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 document 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 in order for the test to be scored. Refer to *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* in this document.

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 document 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 or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school procedures).

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 must be securely disposed of or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school procedures).

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 document.

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 this support must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that its use can be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR), including the name(s) of the people providing the translation as applicable.

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 or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school 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 or returned to the District or School Assessment Coordinator for secure disposal (following school 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.

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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 for 2026-27:** 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-S and/or CR-W

Allowed for: Science MCA

Description: **New for 2026-27:** The Read&Write TestNav extension allows students to use word prediction (CR-W) or speech-to-text and word prediction (CR-S and CR-W) features 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.

The Read&Write support cannot be used with the assistive technology screen reader form as screen readers are not compatible with this TestNav extension.

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.

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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.

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.

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

Table 4: 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	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Script/human reader (reading)	HR	✓				With paper tests only	✓
Script/human reader (math)	HR		✓			✓	✓

Accommodations	Code	Reading MCA	Math MCA	Science MCA	Individual Setting May Be Required	Data Entry Required	Test Administration Report Required*
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	✓			✓		✓

*The *Test Administration Report* (TAR), or similar report created by the district, is used by District and School Assessment Coordinators to document special circumstances or situations that occur during test, including use of some universal supports and accommodations. Contact your District or School Assessment Coordinator with questions.

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 document 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. Communicate to the District or School Assessment Coordinator the use of accommodation in injury situations so that its use can be documented on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR), including the medical documentation that indicates the use of an accommodation in these instances. 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. **New for 2026-27:** 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 for 2026-27:** 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 of the Minnesota Assessment Hub.

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 District Assessment Coordinator 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).

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 document, 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 other 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). The use of an approved accommodation will require collaboration with the District or School Assessment Coordinator for any administration guidance or to complete documentation.

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 Appendix A, 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 Appendix A 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document. Refer to *Accessibility Supports—Provided by School* in this document 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. The use of these accommodations must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that the code(s) can be indicated for MDE.

For MCA, the following are the approved uses of other assistive technology devices:

- 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 Appendix A: *Calculator Use General Guidelines* (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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Scribe

Code: SC

Allowed for: MCA (Reading, Math, Science)

Description: District staff helps 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 by the student 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 be given the opportunity to review their responses. Refer to Appendix C for detailed administration instructions.

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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document. 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 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

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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 *Providing Accommodations in Injury Situations* earlier in this document.

Notes for administration: Paper test books (12, 18, 24 (math only), or braille) cannot be used together. With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed. 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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: Paper test book (12, 18, 24 (math only), or braille) cannot be used together. With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed. 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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 with 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.

Paper test books (12, 18, 24 (math only) or braille) cannot be used together. With all paper math or science test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed. 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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, so communicate with the District or School Assessment Coordinator that these materials are needed.

- 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. **Note for 2026-27**: 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 MDE's 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 will require the student to test in an individual setting and will require communication with the District or School Assessment Coordinator to document the use of this accommodation 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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. Refer to Appendix D for detailed administration instructions.

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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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. Refer to Appendix D for detailed administration instructions.

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

Accommodated text-to-speech and script cannot be used together. With all paper math test books, it is automatically assumed that a handheld calculator or math manipulatives/tables/abacus will be needed. 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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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. Refer to Appendix D for detailed administration instructions.

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 *Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations* earlier in this document.

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. The use of these accommodations must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that the code(s) can be indicated for MDE.

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. Refer to Appendix B for detailed administration instructions, 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it on the *Test Administration Report* (TAR) or other similar form developed by the district.

- 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 Entering Student Responses Online for MCA Paper Accommodations earlier in this document.

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. Refer to Appendix B for detailed administration instructions, 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

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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 available as 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 and the script cannot be used together.

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 for 2026-27:** 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 the use of a student-owned device, districts must indicate the approved accommodation (AA) code in addition to the AT-S or AT-N code. The use of these accommodations must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that the code(s) can be indicated for MDE.

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. 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 communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator, who will document it 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 in order to be available for the student. The use of this support must be communicated to the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that the code can be indicated for MDE
- For Science MCA, the Read&Write support cannot be used with the assistive technology screen reader form since screen readers are not compatible with this TestNav extension.

- The assistive technology screen reader form cannot be used with the script/human reader accommodation as it is expected that the screen reader is providing the read-aloud support.
- The assistive technology forms (screen reader and non-screen reader versions) 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. **Note for 2026-27:** 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 document 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 will require the student to test in an individual setting. It also must be documented by the District or School Assessment Coordinator on a *Test Administration Report* (TAR).

Back to Summary of Accommodations table

Appendix A: 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

The following table provides a summary of calculator use for online MCA, paper MCA, and MTAS/Alt MCA. Refer questions about calculator use to your District or School Assessment Coordinator. 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 Alt 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. 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.
- 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 MCA)
    - Scientific calculators (required for grades 6-7 Math MCA)
    - 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 MCA)
    - Basic, 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.
    - Use 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.
- For the Science MCA, basic or four-function, scientific, or graphing calculators may be used.
- The following are prohibited (except as an approved accommodation or specified under other assistive technology above):
    - 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.

Appendix B: Signed Interpretation Guidelines

Background

There may be cases where a student requires sign language (ASL or signed English) interpretation of test directions and/or the Reading, Math, and Science MCA scripts. The guidelines for signing a script below are also included in the script. Note: While the guidelines below are specific to MCA, the Test Administrator may provide needed supports for MTAS/Alt MCA as long as the support is not specifically prohibited in the task script. For MTAS/Alt MCA, signed interpretation of any content that is intended to be provided or read to a student, including the scripts, reading passages, math scenarios, and science phenomena may be provided for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Test Administrators may refer to the *American Sign Language (ASL) Guidelines* for MTAS/Alt MCA administrations as well. For MTAS/Alt MCA, if the Test Administrator determines that a sign or signs will clue answers to the items, they must fingerspell those words.

Qualifications of Interpreters

- Whenever possible, the interpreter should be familiar with the student and be someone who is typically responsible for providing signed interpretation in the classroom.
- The interpreter must be familiar and comfortable with the process before signing either test directions and/or the script during test administration.

Preparation Procedures

- All interpreters must complete applicable trainings annually.
    - If the interpreter is not a district employee (for example, employed by a region service cooperative), they must provide a record of their completed training, and a Test Administrator who is employed by the district and has completed all necessary training must be present during administration.
    - 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 test materials.
- Interpreters must be familiar with district policies and procedures for testing, and they should verify with the District or School Assessment Coordinator on the process for ensuring the applicable *Testing Directions* and/or script are available prior to testing.
- Interpreters are expected to familiarize themselves with the test format using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) and the applicable *Testing Directions* in advance of test administration.

- For math, the script must be administered with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille).
- For science, the script can be administered with the online test, including the assistive technology non-screen reader online form, or with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille). There is only one version of the script used for both online and paper tests. If administering the script with the online test, readers must verify with the District or School Assessment Coordinator that the correct test for the script has been assigned. If not set up correctly, the student's test will not match the script.
- For reading, read-aloud accommodations, which includes the use of the script, must be approved by MDE. Refer to the *Script/Human Reader (Reading)* section above for more information. The script can be administered with the online test, including the assistive technology non-screen reader online form, or with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille). There is only one version of the script used for both online and paper tests. If administering the script with the online test, readers must verify with the District or School Assessment Coordinator that the correct test for the script has been assigned. If not set up correctly, the student's test will not match the script.

- If signed interpretation of the script is required, interpreters should be provided with a copy of the script. Upon request, interpreters should be provided with access to the script up to five business days prior to the scheduled test administration, in order to become familiar with the words, terms, symbols, signs, and/or graphics that will be presented to the student. The *Testing Directions* may be provided further in advance, as they are not secure test materials.
  - Upon review of the script, if an interpreter is unsure how to sign unfamiliar content, the interpreter should collaborate with an ASL-fluent content expert (if available) to determine which sign is most appropriate to use. Otherwise, fingerspelling should be used.
  - If collaborating with an ASL-fluent content expert, only concept(s) in questions may be shared; the entire script cannot be shared. The content expert must also complete the *Test Security Training*.
  - If collaborating with another ASL-fluent content expert, any part of the script may be discussed but cannot be shared. All interpreters involved in the conversation must have completed the *Test Security Training* and ensure that the discussion format maintains security of the script. Keeping the script secure includes not sharing electronically over email, not leaving materials unsecured or left out, not discussing or sharing the test content with anyone else, and not removing materials from the secure location.
- 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 your District or School Assessment Coordinator if considering using this option for a student; your District or School Assessment Coordinator must request approval for this option from MDE and receive additional instructions.
- Interpreters must be familiar with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, so that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.

Interpreters must be aware of whether a student requires additional tools, devices, or adaptive equipment that has been approved for use during the test.

- If possible, interpreters should meet with students in advance and practice signing the directions and/or the script using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs), as needed, so students are familiar with the format of the test that will be taken.
- Prior to administering the test, interpreters should inform students of the guidelines that must be followed for these accommodations, as outlined in the following sections.
- Interpreters must confirm the testing location and test administration day(s) with the District or School Assessment Coordinator. The script accommodation must be provided in an individual setting or small group setting with other students who require the script. Interpreters must also know how testing is scheduled and when students will stop testing for the day.

Guidelines for Signed Interpretation of Test Directions

- Sign scripted directions as steadily and clearly as possible without changing, emphasizing, or adding information. Do not sign any part of the questions or answer options in the assessment, unless the student also requires the script accommodation.
- Use signs that are conceptually accurate, with or without simultaneous voicing.
- Use facial expressions consistent with sign language delivery. Do not use expressions that may be interpreted by the student as approval or disapproval of the student's answers.
- Do not assist the student outside of the guidance provided in the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*.
- Do not influence the student's selection of a response in any way.
- Adjust your signing speed if requested by the student.
- Do your best to use the same signs if the student requests a portion repeated.
- When using an ASL sign that can represent more than one concept or English word, you must adequately contextualize the word to reduce ambiguity. You may also fingerspell the word after signing it if there is any doubt about which word is intended.
- Fingerspell any words requested by the student during the test administration.
- Respond to student questions using only scripted directions and guidance from the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*.

Guidelines for Signed Interpretation of Scripts

General Instructions

- Sign scripted instructions to students from the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*, as directed, and refer to the directions throughout test administration.
- Do not discuss test content with the student during or after the test.
- Do not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.

General Guidelines

- Follow the instructions in each script for what test content to sign. With the changes to the new assessments, the format of the math script is different than the reading and science scripts. Sign information exactly as written and as steadily and clearly as possible without changing, emphasizing, or adding information.
- Do not clarify or define any part of the questions, answer options, or instructions in the script.
- The script or text-to-speech in an online test are the only sources you may use to sign the test to the student. Signing any test content from the test book or the screen is considered a security violation and will require the test to be invalidated.
- Respond to student questions using only the scripted directions and guidance provided in the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*.

Use Professional Judgement when Signing

- Do your best to use the same signs if the student requests a portion to be repeated.
- Use signs that are conceptually accurate, with or without simultaneous voicing.
- When using an ASL sign that can represent more than one concept or English word, you must adequately contextualize the word to reduce any ambiguity. You may also fingerspell the word after signing it to remove any doubt about which word is intended.
- If you are unsure how to sign and/or pronounce an unfamiliar word, advise the student of the uncertainty and fingerspell the word.
- In cases where signs give clues to the answer, fingerspelling must be used.

Respond to the Student's Needs

- Adjust your signing speed if requested by the student.
- Fingerspell any words requested by the student.
- After a question has been signed, allow the student time to respond. If the pause has been lengthy, you may ask, "Do you want me to sign the question or any part of it again?" before continuing. The student may also ask you to sign any questions as many times as they need.

Use Appropriate Physical/Facial Expressions

- Use facial expressions consistent with sign language delivery; do not use expressions that may be interpreted by the student as approval or disapproval of the student's responses.
- Do not attempt to determine the correct answer to a question while signing, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection that may mislead the student or suggest the correct answer.
- Be careful to give equal emphasis to each answer option. If the student chooses an answer before all the answer options have been signed, ask, "Do you want the other answer options signed?" before continuing.

American Sign Language (ASL) Guidelines

When the language of an assessment changes, it raises concerns about the validity of inferences made from the test scores. For test scores on interpreted tests to be comparable with those from assessments administered in English, it is imperative that the interpreted test items represent the content presented in the English text in a way that does not change what is being measured.

Maintaining the meaning of the test item does not entail a literal or direct word-for-word translation of the English text into the other language; in fact, this is highly likely to alter the original meaning. Rather, the translation must convey the same essential meaning of the original text while also adhering to the linguistic rules and conventions of the language of which the items are being interpreted. For the interpreted test to be fair and lead to valid conclusions about student performance:

- The translation cannot alter the constructs measured by the item,
- The translation cannot lead or cue students to a particular response, and
- The translation cannot give an unfair advantage or disadvantage to the students who receive the interpreted version over students who receive the English version.

This section contains two parts: *ASL Grammar Guidelines* and *Content Guidelines*. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide specific information on how to achieve the balance of conveying the construct in a manner that reflects the linguistic rules and conventions of ASL while at the same time, maintaining the essential meaning of the item. The *ASL Grammar Guidelines* section highlights key grammar rules that should be reviewed and considered for incorporation in all items. Much of the ASL guidance provided here is adapted from Georgia's document titled *American Sign Language Guidelines* from 2017.

ASL Grammar Guidelines

Syntax/Grammatical Structure

Like all languages, ASL is rule-governed, operating on a specific set of linguistic principles that distinguish it from other languages, including English. ASL and English can express the same content but employ different rules to do so. When interpreting a test item using ASL, every sentence must be signed in a manner that conforms to rules governing ASL word order, sentence type, subject-verb-object agreement, prosody, and classifier constructions.

- **Word order:** ASL follows a set of syntactical (word order) rules in the composition of sentences. It is imperative when interpreting test items to adhere to the rules governing ASL syntax, rather than defaulting to the word order of the sentences as written in the English item. To convey the exact meaning of the test item and prevent confusion, sentences must be composed carefully and thoughtfully with respect to ASL syntax. For example, the first five words of the English sentence "Jamie goes to the store [to buy magazines]" is structured differently in ASL: the object is stated first (the store), the subject second (Jamie), and finally the verb (goes).
- **Sentence types:** A variety of sentence types are used in ASL. Decisions about which sentence type to use should be guided by the content in the item, what is being measured, and maintaining students' interest and engagement. Some example sentence types are as follows:
    - **Rhetorical questions:** In ASL, sentences can include rhetorical questions. For example, the English sentence "Jamie goes to the store to buy magazines" can be structured in ASL as "STORE, JAMIE, GOES, WHY?, BUY MAGAZINES."
    - **Conditionals:** Conditional sentences express hypothetical situations and their consequences, or factual implications. In ASL, non-manual grammatical features distinguish the dependent clause containing the conditional "if he buys two magazines" and the main clause conveying the consequence "how much money will he have left?" In addition, a brief pause after the dependent clause marks the transition to the main clause.
    - **Topic comment:** ASL sentences may be presented in a topic-comment structure. The topic is declared at the beginning of a sentence and marked with linguistically correct non-manual grammatical features. The remainder of the sentence relates to the established topic and is marked as the comment. To convey the same meaning as the English sentence, "School is on Monday morning," the interpreter first introduces the topic, SCHOOL, and then completes the phrase by commenting on the topic, MONDAY MORNING.
- **Prosody:** Prosody in any language plays an important role in the production and perception of every utterance. Prosody provides mechanisms for organizing, sequencing, shifting topics, separating ideas, and providing hierarchy. In spoken languages, prosody manifests as pausing, inflection, and emphasis, expressed by altering the speech stream through stress, lengthening, and volume. In ASL, visual prosodic features also include pausing, inflection, and emphasis and are expressed by altering the sign stream through stress, lengthening, and varying use of sign space. It is important when interpreting test items using ASL that prosodic features are used in a linguistically appropriate manner to provide structure and organization, thereby ensuring that students have clear access to the test content.
- **Classifier constructions:** Classifier construction uses the body, space, and time to represent settings, objects, and events. For example, in the English sentence, "A car went up a hill and parked at the top," the interpreter would first sign CAR, then use a three hand-shape (forefinger and middle finger with thumb pointing up) to represent the car as a classifier and a specific movement pattern to represent the car going up a hill and parking at the top. Manner and other adverbial information are also efficiently and appropriately conveyed in classifier constructions; for example, a car moving quickly up a hill is represented differently than a car moving slowly.

- **Non-manual grammar:** Non-manual grammar in sign language is most often expressed on the face and conveys a rich array of information such as sentence type, topic marking, and adjectival and adverbial modifications. Grammatical markings include changing facial expressions through the eyes, cheeks, mouth, and shifting body movements. Non-manual elements are very important components of ASL grammar as they add a layer of obligatory linguistic information across the signs being uttered.
    - **Inflectional facial expression/sign movement:** Facial changes such as raised eyebrows, puffed cheeks, pursed lips, clenched teeth can all be used to show size, degree, manner, and temporal aspect (time) of what is being signed. As an example, the word "large" might be shown through a sign, where "huge" is shown using the same sign, with altered hand movement, puffed cheeks, and raised eyebrows.
    - **Negation/affirmation:** Non-manual markings for negation or affirmation can be layered across a sign, phrase or sentence, by simultaneously signing while also nodding the head "yes" or shaking the head "no." Timing is an important element in negation and affirmation; the correct signal must be applied over the correct string of signs to accurately convey the information desired. For example, to express "not" in the sentence, "I will not be going tonight," the interpreter may add the non-manual marker of the head shaking "no" across the entire sentence. If "I will not be going tonight," is followed by, "but I will be going tomorrow," the initial negation quickly switches to affirmation at the appropriate moment.

Noun/Pronoun Structures

In ASL discourse, a noun must first be stated before it can be referred back to as a pronoun. Pronouns in ASL involve pointing to a referent if it is physically present and visible to the interpreter. If the referent is not present, it is identified with a sign and then designated as a referent in a location close to the interpreter's body. As an example, in the English sentences, "A boy has five cakes. He sold three cakes at the school carnival," the boy would first be introduced with the sign for BOY, and then "assigned," a physical referent space close to the interpreter. From that point on, BOY would not be signed; rather, the physical location that the interpreter previously established serves as a pronoun [equivalent to saying "he" in English]. Test items that contain proper names, such as "Jason has five boxes" are introduced according to this rule. The interpreter will begin by stating that there is a boy and his name is Jason. After introducing Jason, a physical referent point will be established, which, when pointed to, is the pronoun for Jason. Alternatively, the name will be fingerspelled to reintroduce Jason.

Numbers and Plurality

More than a dozen numbering systems have been identified in ASL. As a result, pluralization of actions and nouns are a complex process in ASL; some nouns and verbs can be inflected for plurality via numeral incorporation or a process known as reduplication and some cannot. When numeral incorporation or reduplication is ungrammatical, plurality must be expressed with additional signs. For example, the sign for CAT is followed by THREE to indicate three cats. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to presentation of numbers and plurality in test items. Two examples are presented below.

- **Number incorporation:** Number incorporation occurs when a number is included in a sign. For example, in the sign for "three years old," the sign for AGE and the number THREE are combined to simultaneously include both pieces of information. To do so, the interpreter starts with the number

three hand-shape in ASL (thumb, forefinger, and middle finger) touching the chin at the tip of the forefinger. The THREE hand-shape then moves away from the chin in a specific sweeping motion, which is the sign for "years old" or "age," creating one sign that has the equivalent meaning of a two- or three-word phrase in English.

- **Pluralization:** When nouns are pluralized, the linguistically correct movement such as sweeping, inflection of movement, reduplication, and repositioning must be used. For example, "he" changes to "they" by inflecting the single movement in the sign for "he" to a sweeping motion of the dominant hand to indicate there is more than one person.

Verbs

ASL verbs can be modified to show the type of action, incorporate subject and object information, and can include things like repeated action or action over time.

- **Appropriate directionality, pronoun, and subject/object incorporation rules for ASL verbs:** Verbs that are indexical, or incorporate information about subjects and objects, are signed in a specified path from subject to object. This movement path is the only way to differentiate such English sentences as "Sally walked home from school," and "Sally walked to school from home."
- **Temporal actions/repeated actions:** In ASL, there are no grammatical tense markings on verbs; additional signs are used to mark past, present, or future action. However, there are many ways to modulate ASL verbs for verbal aspect, framing the action with respect to time (frequency or duration) using linguistically patterned signing, movements, and beats. These are known as reduplication and aspect (placing the verb in an aspectual frame). Through reduplication, aspectual framing, or a combination of both, interpreters can show if something is happening regularly, continually, repeatedly, or for an extended period of time. This process often differs from one ASL verb to the next. Verbal aspect is a complex linguistic process with somewhat unusual rules in ASL; therefore, careful consideration must be given to ensure appropriate choices are made when interpreting test items. In the ASL version of the sentence, "Rachel and Joe study together every week," the verb STUDY is inflected with a specific movement pattern and beat to indicate that the studying happens regularly.

Content Guidelines

This section describes guidelines for presenting specific types of test content in ASL: academic terms, expressions and equations, and graphs and images. Note: If the way you sign a concept during instruction is different from what is provided in these guidelines, you can continue to sign the concept in the same way you do during instruction, unless it changes the construct of the item being assessed.

Academic Terms

Test items in math often include specific mathematical terms that are integral to the construct being measured. Some terms need to be represented via fingerspelling in English because there is a concern that signing these terms may cue students to the correct answer and/or provide extra information. Fingerspelling is the process of presenting each letter of an English word or term individually, instead of presenting the ASL sign for the term.

- When using ASL to interpret test items, it is important to consider construct-violation issues and examine the extent to which a sign provides comparable, more, or less information than the English

word in print. It is important for the interpreter to critically evaluate the meaning conveyed by both the individual ASL term(s) and the individual English term(s), as well as the meaning of the entire item conveyed in each language. For example, consider the term "triangle." The ASL term TRIANGLE is signed as a shape with three sides. If a test item is designed to assess whether or not students can identify a triangle from among a group of shapes or describe the properties of a triangle, one might argue that the sign for triangle cues students to the correct answer because of its physical representation of a three-sided figure. However, one might also argue that the word "triangle" when printed in English provides two key cues to students that could give them an advantage in answering the test item 1) "tri" could signal to the student that there are three of something and 2) "angle" tells the student that the shape includes angles. Looking at the meaning conveyed from these two perspectives, it is clear that both the ASL sign and English word for triangle provide potential cues to the meaning of the word. This example illustrates the importance of critically examining both the ASL and English text for the term in question and from multiple perspectives. Words in ASL and English provide meaning; sometimes the two languages provide different cues, but even then often of a similar type. It is important to use each language to convey the test content without focusing on direct or word-to-word translation.

- Consider the additional cognitive complexity that is added to the test item when a term or terms are fingerspelled rather than signed. Choosing to fingerspell terms over using ASL signs may add to the cognitive complexity of the test item because it requires students to decode and comprehend the English spelling of the term. Fingerspelling a word that has an ASL sign to a deaf student during an assessment is comparable to requiring a hearing student to listen to a word spelled aloud rather than allowing them to read the word in print. In both cases, the cognitive complexity is increased because the student has to first recognize a word that is being conveyed in an uncommon format before they can consider the meaning of the word. This increased cognitive load could make it more difficult for the student to understand and respond to the item. There may also be issues related to cumulative fatigue when high quantity terms are fingerspelled across the assessment. In addition, it is important that fingerspelling used during assessment is consistent with the way fingerspelling is used during instruction.
- Limit fingerspelling to cases where most students are unlikely to be familiar with an ASL term and where it would be linguistically appropriate. When there is an ASL term available, it should be signed. It is recommended to limit fingerspelling to cases where most students are 1) unlikely to be familiar with a sign and 2) where fingerspelling a term would be linguistically appropriate. An example includes "quadrilateral." When fingerspelling is used, the ASL term should be presented first, followed by the fingerspelled English term.

Expressions and Equations

Sign expressions and equations that are in test items. It is recommended to sign expressions and equations in ASL test items. Expressions and equations are a form of notation often included in test items; for example, x + y = 45. Including expressions and equations in ASL assessment items could present two challenges to students' understanding of the content in the item. First, when items contain long or complex expressions and equations, the number of signs in the item increases greatly; this may add construct-irrelevant cognitive complexity to the information that a student needs to process while viewing the ASL version of the item. Second, there can be more than one way to sign expressions and equations and if the method used in the ASL version of the item is not consistent with instruction, the student may be confused, resulting in compromised access to the test content.

Graphs and Images

When presenting test items in a visual-spatial language such as ASL, it is important to consider how to pronominalize by establishing and referring to information in the space around the interpreter. In ASL, both abstract and concrete information can be presented spatially in a number of ways. Graphs and images are presented as viewed from the interpreter's perspective, not from the viewer's perspective, consistent with the rules of ASL.

- Sign all titles and labels provided for graphics and images, including a brief description if needed.
- When describing graphs, the characteristics of the graph should be consistent with the text-based version of the graph. For example, if a line graph is being referred to, the interpreter should orient the graph from his/her own perspective on the horizontal or vertical plane and depict the line in the same direction (slope) as the graph on the test booklet or computer screen.
- Graphs should be presented in the most linguistically appropriate way. In most cases, this will be in the general space in front of the interpreter's body.

ASL Glossary - Guidelines for Specific Test Elements

Use the information described in the table below for examples of signing symbols, numbers, formulas, abbreviations, and other special information found in the Minnesota statewide assessments.

Conventions

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Abbreviations	Reading, Math, Science	If a unit of measurement is abbreviated, sign each letter in the abbreviation versus each word being abbreviated.	"kg," NOT "kilograms"
Apostrophes	Reading, Math, Science	Interpreter should not sign "s" as "ess." It will be signed as the plural form of the word.	"Evelyn's table" should be signed as "Evelyns table"

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Bullet points	Reading, Math, Science	Interpreter will pause between bullets and phrases.	
Dates	Reading, Math, Science	Dates will be signed using the complete words for days of the week, months of the year, and years. Numbers will be signed as appropriate.	For the year, the last two numbers are paired. 2010: “Twenty ten” June 16, 1978: “June month sixteen nineteen seventy-eight” June 16th: “June sixteen” 1978: “Nineteen seventy-eight” 1900: “Nineteen hundred”
Time	Reading, Math, Science	When “AM” and “PM” appear in conjunction with a time zone, there will be a pause between the time of day and the time zone.	“2:30 p.m. eastern” will be signed as “time (touching the wrist) two thirty night east”

Numbers

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Whole large numbers	Reading, Math, Science	Large numbers (numbers with more than six digits) will be signed as the numbers in order.	453,562,908 will be signed as “four hundred fifty-three million (breathe) five hundred sixty-two thousand (breathe) nine hundred eight.” In cases where signing the number will give away the answer, refer to the number as “the number shown” and point to the number. Ex: What is 453,562,908 written in words? Sign as “In words, what is the number shown?” and point to the number. Ex: What is the value of the digit 3 in the number 352? Sign as “What is the value of the digit 3 in the number shown?” and point to the number.

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Fractions	Reading, Math, Science	Simple fractions will be signed as "numerator over denominator." Mixed numbers will be signed as "whole number and numerator over denominator." Fractions that contain expressions and/or variables in the numerator or denominator will be signed as described in the example column.	$\frac{3}{4}$ will be signed as "three over four", NOT "three fourths" $2\frac{3}{4}+6\frac{7}{8}$ will be signed as "two and three over four, plus six and seven over eight" $\frac{(3-1)}{4+8\div2\times3}$ will be signed as "open parenthesis three minus one, close parenthesis, over four plus eight divided by two times three"
Exponents	Math, Science	The exponent 2 will be signed as "squared." All other numeric exponents will be signed as "to the nth power." An exponent of 0 will be signed as "to the zero power." Variables presented as exponents will be signed as they appear.	2^2 will be signed as "two squared" 6^{-5} will be signed as "six to the negative fifth power" 3^0 will be signed as "three to the zero power" 2^x will be signed as "two to the *x* power"
Decimals	Reading, Math, Science	Decimals will be signed as "point." Digits after the decimal will be signed individually.	3.504 will be signed as "three point five zero four" 46.8 will be signed as "forty-six point eight" 4.333333… will be signed as "four point three repeating" across the body

Symbols

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Denominations (money)	Reading, Math, Science	$	$13.50 will be signed “thirteen dollars and fifty cents” $45.00 will be signed “forty-five dollars” $100.05 will be signed “one hundred dollars and five cents” $0.45 will be signed as “forty-five cents”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	<	5 < 10 will be signed “five is less than 10”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	>	10 > 5 will be signed “ten is greater than 5”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	≤	A ≤ B will be signed “A is less than or equal to B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	≥	A ≥ B will be signed “A is greater than or equal to B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	~	A ~ B will be signed “A is similar to B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	≈	A ≈ B will be signed “A is approximately equal to B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	≠	A ≠ B will be signed “A is not equal to B”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	≅	A ≅ B will be signed “A is congruent (signed as “same” with two hands across the body) to B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	+	A + B will be signed “A plus B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	-	A - B will be signed “A minus B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	±	A ± B will be signed “A plus or minus B”

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	×	A × B will be signed “A times B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	÷	A ÷ B will be signed “A divided by B”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	-5	This will be signed “negative five”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	|5|	This will be signed as “the absolute value (flat hands up and down together, like the word “person” is signed) of five”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	°F	75 °F will be signed “seventy-five temperature F”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	°C	45 °C will be signed “forty-five temperature C”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	√	This will be signed “R√”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	π	This will be signed “pi”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	*	A * B will be signed “A times B”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	θ	This will be fingerspelled as “T-H-E-T-A”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	α	This will be fingerspelled as “A-L-P-H-A”
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	∞	This will be signed “Infinity” with the letter *i* on the forehead then outward letter *y* from the forehead
Math Symbols	Reading, Math, Science	{ }	{10, 20, 30, 40} will be signed “the set of ten, twenty, thirty, forty”
Math Symbols	Math, Science	*f(x)*	This will be signed as “F of X”
Formulas	Math, Science		Letters and numbers of mathematical formulas will be fingerspelled exactly as they are printed; no representations of letters will be made. *A* = *bh* will be signed as “Capital A equals b h,” not “area equals base times height”

Description	Content Area	How to Sign	Example
Elements or compounds	Reading, Science		The chemical symbols and subscripts in a chemical formula will be signed as letters and numbers: H_2O will be signed as “H two O” “NaCl” will be fingerspelled as “N A C L” In a chemical formula, a quantity before a chemical symbol or chemical formula is signed as a number. A right-facing arrow (or a double headed equilibrium arrow) will be signed as “yields”: $6CO_2 + 6H_2O + \text{Energy} \rightarrow C_6H_{12}O_6 + 6O_2$ will be signed as: “6-C-O-2 (bring hand down to sign 2 lower) plus 6-H-2 (hand down to sign 2 lower) -O plus energy yields C-6 (sign 6 lower) -H-12 (sign 12 lower) O-6 (sign 6 lower) plus 6-O-2 (sign 2 lower)”
Angles and points	Reading, Math		Angles will be signed as they are named and without pauses: When variables appear on a figure, such as QRTS, it will be signed as “Angle Q, R, S, T” starting with the letter in the upper left vertex of the figure and moving clockwise ∠ ABC will be signed as “Angle A B C”
Line segments	Math		Line segments will be signed as “line X X” $\overline{XY}$ will be signed as “line X Y”
Trigonometric functions	Math		Trigonometric functions will be signed as full words. “Sin 15°” will be signed as “sine of fifteen degrees”

Graphs

Description	Content Area	How to Sign
General	Reading, Math, Science	Sign the words in the graph or table as written in the script. Below are some best practices for signing tables, graphs, and figures that are reflected in the script.
Venn Diagrams	Reading, Math, Science	The elements of Venn diagrams will be signed in the following order: titles and then labels in the diagram.

Description	Content Area	How to Sign
Coordinate Grids	Math, Science	Sign the title associated with the coordinate grid, as well as any headers or labels on the X- and Y-axes.
Graphs	Reading, Math, Science	Sign the title associated with the graph, as well as any headers. Ex: “The graph is titled ‘World Population’” “The graph shows ‘Number of People’ and ‘Year’”
Tables	Reading, Math, Science	Sign the titles of tables and any headers. Words within the table should be signed. Numbers should not be signed. If the header of a row or column is a number, such as in a list, the numbers should be signed in this case. Ex: “The table is titled ‘Toy Sales’” “Columns are labeled ‘Month’ and ‘Number of Toys’” “‘Months’ are labeled ‘September, October, November, etc.’”
Line Plots	Reading, Math, Science	Sign text within line plots. Ex: “The plot shows ‘X’ and ‘Y’”
Tree Diagram	Reading, Math, Science	Sign text from left to right from top to bottom. Ex: “The tree diagram shows ‘h’ and ‘t’”
Pictures	Reading, Math, Science	If text in an image is circled, highlighted, or called out in any way it should be signed.
Pie Charts	Reading, Math, Science	Sign words within pie charts by starting at the top and then working clockwise.
Scatter Plot	Math, Science	Sign the title associated with the scatter plot, as well as any headers on the X- and Y-axes. Ex: “The scatter plot is titled ‘Grid Title’” The horizontal axis is signed “X” across the body The vertical axis is signed “Y” up and down Titles of X- and Y-axis would be signed in most cases or fingerspelled when necessary.

Appendix C: Scribe Guidelines

Background

In cases where visual or motor difficulties prevent a student from indicating their own responses, students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan may be provided with the scribe accommodation. The student dictates via speech or an assistive communication device while the scribe indicates responses in paper test materials or navigates and enters responses into the online test. Scribes may also be provided to general education students in the case of an injury situation (for example, a broken arm).

An audio recording may be used by the student in an individual setting to record and edit answers for paper test materials if the student is unable to mark their answers or use 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.

Qualifications of Scribes

- The scribe should be a district staff member who is familiar with the student and who is typically responsible for providing this accommodation in the classroom.
- The scribe must have prior experience in providing scribing or transcribing services; they must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this accommodation during test administration.

Preparation Procedures

- Scribes must complete the required trainings in for MCA Test Administrators prior to test administration.
- Scribes must be familiar with district policies and procedures for testing.
- Scribes are expected to familiarize themselves with the test format using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) and the applicable *Testing Directions* in advance of test administration.
- Scribes must be familiar with the student's IEP or 504 plan, if applicable, so there are plans in place for providing all universal support and accommodations needed.
- Scribes should meet with students in advance and practice scribing using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs), as needed, so students are familiar with the format of the test that will be taken.
- Prior to administering the test, scribes should inform the students of the guidelines that must be followed for the administration of the scribe accommodation, as outlined in the following sections.
- Scribes must confirm the testing location and test administration days with the District or School Assessment Coordinator. This accommodation must be provided in an individual setting to not disrupt other students who are testing. Scribes must also know how testing is scheduled and when students will stop testing for the day.

- If the student is recording responses for paper test materials using an audio recording, the device used for the audio recording must be school-owned, and any recordings must be deleted after transcription. 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) by the District or School Assessment Coordinator. Communicate with the District or School Assessment Coordinator when this step has been completed following administration.

Guidelines for Scribes

General Instructions

- Read scripted instructions to students from the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*, as directed, and refer to the directions throughout test administration.
- Do not discuss test content with the student during or after the test.
- Do not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.

Respond to the Student's Needs

- As needed, respond to procedural questions asked by the student (for example, test directions or navigation within the test). Do not answer student questions about test items. To ensure a standardized administration, scripted directions and guidance from the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper* should be used to respond to the student whenever possible.
- Use the online and accessibility tools within the online test as requested by the student.
- Allow the student to review and request changes to what has been entered or written. Make all requested changes, even if incorrect.

Transcribe Only What is Communicated by Student

- Do not question or correct student choices, alert students to errors, prompt, or influence students in any way that might compromise the integrity of student responses. You may repeat directions provided on the item; for example, instructions that clarify how many responses are required or what symbols may be used, but do not provide additional information.
- Use the following guidance for certain types of items:
    - For Science MCA constructed-response items, the scribe must type the response as directed by the student without any cueing or guidance to the student. Capitalization, spelling, and punctuation are not factored into the score and do not need to be specified by the student. The scribe will correctly spell all words as dictated and conform to standard writing conventions.
    - For fill-in-the-blank items:
        - The scribe must write or type the response as directed by the student without any cueing or guidance to the student. If a warning comes up when inputting an answer online, you may read the warning to the student but do not prompt nor help the student on how to input the answer a different way.

    - Specifically for Math MCA, if the response includes a decimal, fraction, or negative sign, the student must specify where to place them.
    - Specifically for Science MCA, capitalization, spelling, and punctuation are not factored into the score and do not need to be specified by the student. However, if the response includes a decimal or negative sign, the student must specify where to place them.
- Do not edit or alter student work in any way, and record exactly what the student has dictated.
- Ask the student to restate the answer or parts of an answer as needed. Such requests must not be communicated in a manner suggesting that the student should make a change or correction.

Maintain Neutrality

- Communicate in a neutral tone of voice, but not monotone, and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Do not read aloud student responses or any test content.
- Avoid conversing with the student about test content during test administration.

Appendix D: Script Administration Guidelines

Overview

A script may be provided to students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. When the script accommodation is selected, the reader uses the script to read aloud specified portions of the test to the student. The guidelines for reading aloud below are also included in the script.

Qualifications of Readers

- The reader should be a district staff member who is familiar with the student and who is typically responsible for providing this type of accommodation in the classroom.
- The reader must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this accommodation during test administration.

Preparation Procedures

- Readers must complete the required trainings for MCA Test Administrators prior to test administration.
- Readers must be familiar with district policies and procedures for testing.
- Readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test format using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs) and the applicable *Testing Directions* in advance of test administration.
    - For math, the script must be administered with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille).
    - For science, the script can be administered with the online test, including the assistive technology non-screen reader online form, or with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille). There is only one version of the script used for both online and paper tests. If administering the script with the online test, readers must verify with the District or School Assessment Coordinator that the correct test for the script has been assigned. If not set up correctly, the student's test will not match the script.
    - For reading, read-aloud accommodations, which includes the use of the script, must be approved by MDE. Refer to the *Script/Human Reader (Reading)* section above for more information. The script can be administered with the online test, including the assistive technology non-screen reader online form, or with a paper test book (regular print, large print, or braille). There is only one version of the script used for both online and paper tests. If administering the script with the online test, readers must verify with the District or School Assessment Coordinator that the correct test for the script has been assigned. If not set up correctly, the student's test will not match the script.
- If administering the script with a braille test book, readers should also refer to the *Braille Test Administration Notes* included with the braille test materials.
- Readers must be familiar with the student's IEP or 504 plan, if applicable, so there are plans in place for providing all universal supports and accommodations needed.

- Readers should meet with students in advance and practice reading the script using the Student Readiness Tools (SRTs), as needed, so students are familiar with the format of the test that will be taken.
- Prior to administering the test, readers should inform students of the guidelines that must be followed for the administration of the script, as outlined in the following sections.
- Readers must confirm the testing location and test administration day(s) with the District or School Assessment Coordinator. The script accommodation must be provided in an individual setting or small group setting with other students who also require the script. Readers must also know how testing is scheduled and when students will stop testing for the day.

Guidelines for Reading Aloud – Math

General Instructions

- Read scripted instructions to students from the *Testing Directions: Paper*, as directed, and refer to the directions throughout test administration.
- Do not discuss test content with the student during or after the test.
- Do not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.

General Guidelines

- Read aloud test content in **bold type** in the script exactly as written, as steadily and clearly as possible without changing, emphasizing, or adding information.
- Do not paraphrase, clarify, define, or translate any part of the questions, answer options, or instructions in the script.
- The script is the only source you may use to read the test to the student. Reading any test content from the test book is considered a security violation and will require the test to be invalidated.
- Respond to student questions using only the scripted directions and guidance provided in the *Testing Directions: Paper*.

Respond to the Student's Needs

- Adjust your reading speed and volume if requested by the student.
- After a question has been read, allow the student time to respond. If the pause has been lengthy, you may ask, "Do you want me to repeat the question or any part of it again?" before continuing. The student may also ask you to repeat any questions as many times as they need.

Maintain Neutrality

- Communicate in a neutral tone of voice, not monotone, and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Do not attempt to determine the correct answer to a question while reading, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection that may mislead the student or suggest the correct answer.

- Be careful to give equal emphasis to each answer option. If the student chooses an answer before all the answer options have been read, ask, “Do you want the other answer options read?” before continuing.

Guidelines for Reading Aloud – Reading and Science

General Instructions

- Read scripted instructions to students from the applicable *Testing Directions* and refer to the directions throughout test administration.
- Do not discuss test content with the student during or after the test.
- Do not discuss any portion of the test or the student’s performance with others.

General Guidelines

- Follow the instructions in the script for what test content to read aloud. With the changes to the new assessments, the format of the math script is different than the reading and science scripts.
- Read information exactly as written and as steadily and clearly as possible without changing, emphasizing, or adding information.
- Do not paraphrase, clarify, define, or translate any part of the questions, answer options, or instructions in the script.
- The script is the only source you may use to read the test to the student. Reading any test content from the test book, phenomena or passages book, or screen is considered a security violation and will require the test to be invalidated.
- Respond to student questions using only the scripted directions and guidance provided in the *Testing Directions: Online* or *Testing Directions: Paper*.

Respond to the Student’s Needs

- Adjust your reading speed and volume if requested by the student.
- After a question has been read, allow the student time to respond. If the pause has been lengthy, you may ask, “Do you want me to repeat the question or any part of it again?” before continuing. The student may also ask you to repeat any questions as many times as they need.

Maintain Neutrality

- Communicate in a neutral tone of voice, but not monotone, and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Do not attempt to determine the correct answer to a question while reading, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection that may mislead the student or suggest the correct answer.
- Be careful to give equal emphasis to each answer option. If the student chooses an answer before all the answer options have been read, ask, “Do you want the other answer options read?” before continuing.