



This Month in Assessment

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| ACCESS for ELLs | ACT with Writing | CRT/CRT Alt | MSAA |
| NAEP | Science News | Smarter Balanced | Professional Development & Training |
| Contact Us | Help Desk Numbers | Test Portal Links | |

| 2018-2019 Statewide Assessment Calendar | ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency (ELP) | NAEP Math, Reading and Science | CRT-ALT Alternate Science | CRT Science | MSAA Alternate English Language Arts (ELA) and Math | SBAC ELA and Math | ACT with Writing ELA and Math |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Dates | Dec. 5–Jan. 30 | Jan. 28–Mar. 8 | Feb. 19–Mar. 26 | Feb. 28–Mar. 26 | Mar. 18–May 3 | Mar. 20–May 24 | Initial: April 2 Make Up: Apr. 24 Emergency: May 7 |
| K | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 1 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 2 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 3 | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 4 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 5 | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 6 | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 7 | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 8 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 9 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 10 | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| 11 | ✓ | | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 12 | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | |

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

| Date | Topic | Link |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | Recorded video from the Teacher Learning Hub (Hub) providing an overview of MontCAS assessments, data uses, and data systems of the required statewide assessments. | ELP 101: Serving English Learners in Montana's Schools |
| Wednesday, Oct. 10 2-3 p.m. | <i>MontCAS Updates</i> – Monthly Assessment Webinar | Join here |
| Wednesday, Oct. 17 12-1 p.m. | <i>ACCESS for ELLs for new District Test Coordinators</i> Hosted by WIDA | Join here |
| Thursday, Oct. 18 10-11 a.m. | <i>Test Scheduling</i> Hosted by WIDA | Join here |
| Monday, Nov. 5 3-4 p.m. | <i>Montana ACT Accommodations Training</i> Hosted by ACT | Join here |

Professional Development and Training Opportunities

Recordings of live webinars can be found on the [Assessment Webinars and Training](#) tab of the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Statewide Assessments website. Various types of courses can be found on the [Teacher Learning Hub](#). The Hub provides active learning, high quality content, relevant topics, and offers renewal units for completion of courses.

MontCAS 2018-2019 School Year Changes

Roles and Responsibilities

In the August edition, we sent information on the definition of System Testing Coordinator (or STC) stating this person is assigned by the authorized representative and is responsible for communicating roles and responsibilities to all authorized staff. In accordance with data privacy standards and OPI policies on restricted-use online applications, we are requesting all authorized representatives confirm the contact information we have on file for the designated STC. This annual contact update will be sent through the OPI Information Reporting Systems process in the [Central Data Update Form \(Contacts\)](#). In this location, the authorized representative will be provided with specific instructions on how to confirm the STC in this directory application.

The following enclosures will be referenced in the communication.

- MontCAS Test Security Manual
- Test Security Roles and Responsibilities Information for Authorized Representatives and School Principals

If you have any questions about these improvements, please contact the OPI Assessment Help Desk at 1.844.867.2569 or OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov.

Student Assessment Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (ARM 10.56.101)

The OPI convened its second Student Assessment Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (Committee) meeting on October 1 at the Helena Capitol Building. The Committee finalized consensus on the 19 OPI-proposed rules/amendments. For more information on this process, visit the [Student Assessment Negotiated Rulemaking Committee](#) page.

ACCESS for ELLs

English Language Proficiency Assessment

Things to do this month

- Update user accounts for the WIDA websites.** See “User Accounts” below for more information.

Testing Calendar

| Test Cycle | Testing Specifics | Start Date | End Date |
|----------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| Pretesting | OPI Loads Pre-ID File into AMS | Fri 10/26/18 | Fri 10/26/18 |
| | WIDA AMS Test Setup Available for Test Sessions | Fri 11/2/18 | Wed 1/30/19 |
| | Districts Receive Test Materials | Tue 11/27/18 | Tue 11/27/18 |
| During Testing | Test Window | Wed 12/5/18 | Wed 1/30/19 |
| | Additional Test Material Ordering Window in AMS | Tue 11/27/18 | Wed 1/23/19 |
| Post Testing | Deadline for Shipping Completed Test Materials to DRC | | Tue 2/5/19 |
| | Districts Receive Reports, Printed and Online | TBD | TBD |

User Accounts

It's time to update user accounts for the WIDA websites. STCs should review the test administrator (TA) and other district users to remove anyone who is no longer working in the district, and add new users who will assist with test administration of the ACCESS for ELLs or WIDA screeners.

WIDA has created the [WIDA Accounts for Montana Document](#) to help STCs and TAs understand the accounts that are needed for the WIDA websites.

New STCs that do not have WIDA-user accounts may contact the assessment division at OPIAssessmentHelpDesk@mt.gov, 844-867-2569 or yfield@mt.gov, 406-444-0748.

Registration for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

The OPI will register all students who are identified as EL/LEP in AIM as of the fall program participation deadline of 10/26/18. Ensure that all students who meet the exit criteria have been exited and new students have been assessed with the WIDA screener. Students who have been identified must be entered into the AIM system as EL by 10/15/2018. Contact Yvonne Field with questions at yfield@mt.gov or 406-444-0748.

New Materials

A summary of new materials and changes to ACCESS for ELLs can be found on this printable [2018-2019 ACCESS for ELLs What's New](#) poster.

ACT with Writing

ELA and Mathematics

Things to do this month

- Access score reports in Pearson Access Next (PA Next).** The ACT Profile Report and Student Level Data are available in PA Next on the *Published Reports* tab on the *Reports* drop-down menu. Instructions for accessing reports can be found in the [PA Next User Guide](#). Additional reports were mailed to schools in late July.
***PLEASE NOTE: The score reports in PA Next will be deleted after November 2, 2018. Be sure to download and save any reports you need by November 2.**
- Manage participation in PA Next.** Beginning November 5 and until November 30, ACT Test Coordinators (ACT TCs) will log into PA Next and confirm your schools' test dates and materials receipt dates. Instructions for completing participation management can be found in the [PA Next User Guide](#). Participation management will be open through November.
- Begin submitting accommodations requests to ACT.** Using the [Test Accessibility & Accommodations System \(TAA\)](#), schools can begin submitting accommodations requests for the ACT with Writing test on November 5. Resources to assist ACT TCs with the accommodation request tasks are available on the [ACT State Testing website](#).
- Attend the Accommodations Q&A Webinar.** ACT will host a free webinar to cover all your accommodations questions. [Register for the webinar here.](#)

ACT Online Prep

The OPI has received several calls regarding the ACT Online Prep program (AOP) that was available free to Montana juniors last year. This year, the OPI will not be offering the AOP accounts as part of the ACT with Writing assessment. However, the Assessment Division would encourage districts/schools to try out [ACT Academy](#).

ACT Academy is a free resource providing personalized practice for the ACT. The learning platform is designed to help students pinpoint areas of academic weakness, improve their ACT scores, and master the core skills needed to prepare for success in college and career. Students, teachers and parents are all able to set up a free account.

CRT and CRT-Science Alternate

Science

Things to do this month

- Access score reports in the [Montana Analysis and Reporting System \(MARS\)](#).** CRT-Science and CRT-Science Alt scores are available on the MARS site. See below for more information about MARS. *Note that the MARS application is best viewed using Windows Internet Explorer version 7 or 8. Other browsers are not supported.*
- Order large print versions of CRT-Science and CRT-Science Alt.** STCs can order large print versions for the CRT-Science and CRT-Science Alt online through [iServices](#). The window to order these versions opened on October 1 and will close on December 19.

Montana Analysis and Reporting System (MARS)

The MARS is the secure, online site where digital results for the CRT-Science and CRT-Science Alt can be accessed and analyzed. It is best viewed using Windows Internet Explorer (IE) as other browsers are not supported. [MARS](#) is accessible by usernames and passwords assigned to schools and districts. Passwords are master passwords and are only for superintendents, building principals, authorized representatives, or STCs. All other educators needing access to MARS should be assigned a separate username and password using the accounts management tool in MARS. For instructions on using the MARS site, refer to the [MARS User and Training Guide](#).

For password assistance, contact your principal or superintendent. Superintendents or principals needing login assistance should contact the OPI Assessment Help Desk at 844-867-2569. *Those credentials cannot be shared via email or voice mail.*

If a teacher was assigned to a student in the “sort by” field in AIM for 2018 testing, a new 2018 password will automatically be generated and posted in the “teacher roster.” The teacher roster can be accessed on the principal’s homepage in MARS. If a teacher was not assigned to a student(s) in AIM, the STC/principal needs to make the assignments and create new passwords using the accounts management tool in MARS.

CRT and CRT-Science Alt Results Resources

- For detailed instructions on using MARS, see the [MARS User Manual](#).
- The MARS [Report Interpretation Guide](#) provides support to local educators in understanding and using test data to better serve the academic needs of students and to evaluate and improve curriculum and instruction.

MSAA

Alternate Assessment, ELA and Math

Things to do this month

- Access score reports in the [Online Assessment System](#).** Results reports are available until Friday, October 12. Districts will be responsible for printing paper copies of the reports for distribution to parents/guardians.

Resources to help access and interpret score information

- The [MSAA Interpretive Guide](#) provides information on each results report and suggestions for interpretation. This guide includes information that identifies the demonstrated skills of a student performing at each

performance level.

- The [Online Assessment System](#) is the MSAA online assessment portal. STCs will need to log in, download the results reports file for the district, and print out the Individual Student Reports (ISRs) for distribution to parents and educators.
- Directions for accessing and downloading district reports are in the [MSAA Test Coordinator User Guide](#) starting on page 35.
- A short tutorial on downloading the results reports is available and takes about 7 minutes to watch. [Results Reports Tutorial](#)

NAEP

National and International Assessment Studies

Things to do this month

- Notify parents and guardians of student selection.** School Coordinators must notify parents of selected students for the NAEP assessment. See below for more information.

Parent Notification Preparation

By now, most schools have completed the first phase of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by registering and providing their school's information. This month school coordinators will receive email communication about preparing a letter to notify parents/guardians of selected students. The school coordinator will download the customizable letter template from the [MyNAEP](#) website. Federal law requires that parents be notified in writing that their child has been selected for the NAEP assessment and that the student's participation is voluntary. Schools may notify parents through a variety of means of communication, such as a newsletter, email or by postal service if they are confident the communication will reach parents/guardians of NAEP-sampled students. If you have questions or concerns, contact Shantel Niederstadt at 406-444-3450 or SNiederstadt@mt.gov. You can receive immediate assistance from the NAEP Help Desk at 800-283-6237 or email naephelp@westat.com Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. ET.

Science News

Science Assessments

Did you know Montana is a member state of the U.S. Department of Education's Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG)?

The Strengthening Claims-based Interpretations and Uses of Local and Large-scale Science Assessment Scores (or SCILLSS) was developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Education under Enhanced Assessment Grants Program CFDA 84.368A. Checkout the [Principled Approach to Designing Three-Dimensional Science Assessment Tasks: A Process Guide](#) to support your standards-aligned instruction. You may also want to check out some Grade 5, 8 and 11 principled-design resources on the [SCILLSS website](#). The OPI will continue to use the CRT-Science general assessment and alternate in Grades 4, 8 and 10 in the spring of 2019. The new science general assessment and alternate assessment are slated for the spring of 2020.

If you have questions about the transition or the OPI Science Partner Task Force, contact Ashley McGrath at amcgrath@mt.gov or 406-444-3656.

Smarter Balanced

ELA and Math

Things to do this month

- Access score reports in the [Online Reporting System \(ORS\)](#).** District and school level reports and Individual Student Reports (ISRs) are available.

October 2018 Newsletter: Prepared by the Montana Office of Public Instruction, Elsie Arntzen Superintendent

- ❑ **Add users to the Test Information and Distribution Engine (TIDE).** Users in TIDE were cleared in August. STCs were uploaded to the system by the OPI, and STCs need to add users for their districts and schools. STCs can refer to the [User Roles and Access Document](#) for assistance in choosing the correct role assignment for local users.
- ❑ **Complete the TA Certification Course.** All users in TIDE administering Smarter Balanced assessments are required to take the [Test Administrators Certification Course](#) annually. If taking the course as a group, ensure each user is logged into the portal so the system will auto-update course completion for each user.

Smarter Balanced Results Resources

Resources are available to assist STCs, school coordinators, and teachers with reading and understanding Smarter Balanced score reporting.

- [Online Reporting System \(ORS\) User Guide](#): The guide provides an overview of the ORS. After reviewing this manual, you should be familiar with navigating the system and viewing score reports.
- [ORS Training Module](#): Recorded webinar provides information on the ORS and its functions.
- [Smarter Balanced Interpretive Guide](#): Guide provides additional information on how to read the Smarter Balanced ISR and information on each claim level.

Passwords

Many of the MontCAS programs require separate passwords to access test management sites, training materials, and test results. The following is a list of programs that require separate passwords.

- **Access for ELLs 2.0:** Test administrator training, assessment management system, WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT), result reports.
- **ACT with Writing:** Test administration, reports, and test results.
- **CRT and CRT Alt:** Test results.
- **MSAA (Multi State Alternate Assessment):** Test administration and training, results, and student reports.
- **MontCAS Online Reporting:** Nonparticipation and testing irregularity reports and requests for accommodations not routinely approved.
- **Smarter Balanced:** Test administration, administration certification, interim tests, and test results.
- **Smarter Balanced Digital Library:** Formative assessment processes.

Online Assessment System Links

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and W-APT Screener, English Language Proficiency Screener

- [Training and online resources](#)
- [Assessment Management System](#)
- [OPI ELP page link](#)

ACT with Writing

- Assessment Management: [Pearson Access Next](#)
- [ACT State and District Testing](#)
- [ACT Academy](#)

MSAA

- [Assessment Management System](#)
- [OPI MSAA](#)

Smarter Balanced

- [Assessment system](#) (AIR portal)
- [OPI Smarter Balanced](#)

My NAEP

- [My NAEP Login](#)

MontCAS Assessment Help Desk Contact Information

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and W–APT English Language Proficiency Screener

- WIDA help desk phone: 866-876-7735
- WIDA help desk email: help@wida.us
- WIDA AMS help desk phone: 855-787-9615
- WIDA AMS help desk email: WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com

ACT with Writing

ACT General Inquiries

- Phone: 800-553-6244, Ext. 2800
- Email: [Contact Form](#)

Accommodations Questions

- Phone: 800-553-6244, Ext. 1788
- Email: ACTStateAccoms@act.org

ACT Online Prep Questions

- Phone: 319-337-1429
- Email: [Contact Form](#)

CRT Science and CRT Alt Service Desk

- Phone: 888-792-2741
- Email: montanahelpdesk@measuredprogress.org

Multi State Alternate Assessment (MSAA)

- Phone: 866-834-8879
- Email: MSAAServiceCenter@MeasuredProgress.org

Smarter Balanced Service Desk

- Phone: 888-792-2741
- Email: montanahelpdesk@measuredprogress.org

NAEP

- Phone: 800-283-6237
- Email: naephelp@westat.com

Assessment Contacts

Assessment Division

844-867-2569

[OPI Assessment Help Desk](#)
[Email](#)

Ashley McGrath

State Assessment Director

amcgrath@mt.gov

Marcy Fortner

Administrative Specialist

mfortner@mt.gov

Paula Schultz

Smarter Balanced
Accommodations Lead
pschultz2@mt.gov

Whitney Mitchell

Administrative Specialist

whitney.mitchell@mt.gov

Yvonne Field

Assessment Specialist

yfield@mt.gov

Shantel Niederstadt

NAEP State Coordinator

sniederstadt@mt.gov

Pam Birkeland

Smarter Balanced Digital
Library Lead
pbirkeland@mt.gov