

2023 Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) Administration: Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

This document provides answers to questions collected by the AOE from field educators concerning their administration of the 2023 Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA). It will be updated weekly through the opening of the MSAA administration window on March 13, 2023. If you would like to submit a question for possible inclusion in a future iteration of this document, please contact chris.case@vermont.gov.

This document was last updated on 2/28/23.

MSAA Set-Up

Q1: Have the MSAA systems readiness checklists posted already?

A: Yes, the [Test Administrator Checklist](#) and the [Test Coordinator checklist](#) are posted on the VT AOE's [alternate assessment website](#).

Q2: When will Test Coordinators receive log-in information for their MSAA profiles?

A: Test Coordinators will have user accounts created for them by MSAA, and will receive their log-in information on 2/21. The list of Test Coordinators that will receive accounts from MSAA will be delivered by the AOE, and will reflect the Alternate District Test Administrators (ADAs) that were identified by LEAs through the survey that was shared with the field on 2/3, and the LEA and Independent School District Test Administrators (DAs) who currently have accounts through Cognia for the general assessment. Please see [Memo: New Alternate Assessment Implementation for SY'22-'23](#) for further information on timelines.

Q3: Currently there is one Alternate District Administrator for each LEA. Can there be two Test Coordinator accounts created per LEA to support the administration of the MSAA?

A: Each LEA will have two Test Coordinator accounts: one for their ADA, and one for their DA. The AOE needs LEAs to maintain a dedicated ADA role within their LEA, but is supporting DA's having Test Coordinator access to the MSAA platform in the interest of giving LEAs some flexibility in their coordination of the alternate assessment.

Q4: Will the General District Administrator (DA) also have access to the MSAA platform?

A: DAs will have direct access to the MSAA platform as Test Coordinators, and should receive their profile information from MSAA on 2/13.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact [Chris Case](#), Division Director of Student Support Services.

Q5: Paraprofessionals also assist our students in taking the test. What steps should they take in getting ready for administration?

A: Test Coordinators should provide paraprofessionals with Test Administrator accounts. Paraprofessionals should complete all the necessary steps within the Test Administrator checklist, including completing the MSAA training modules after 2/27, if they will be assisting any student in taking the test.

Q6: What are the two platforms for each the general assessment and the alternate assessment?

A: The ADAM platform is specifically for the General Assessment, and has a separate login from your alternate assessment. There is no TestNav equivalent for the alternate assessment. MSAA also does not utilize the TIDE portal. Administering the MSAA will only require access to the MSAA webpage; there is nothing to download, and no kiosk for test items—users login, and can do everything from your user profile page, including launching the assessment and monitoring student progress.

Q7: Who creates Test Administrator (TA) profiles in MSAA?

A: Test Coordinators (TCs) for each LEA and independent school can create TA profiles. There is no cap on the number of profiles that can be created. Once added, the MSAA Online Platform will automatically generate an email for TAs to log in and complete their registration.

Q8: What do we do if we have entered a staff member into the system as a Test Administrator, but the staff member hasn't received their confirmation email from MSAA?

A: If a TA has been added to the system but hasn't received an email, there could be three possible issues:

- The account setup wasn't completed and no account was created
- Welcome email was blocked/went to a spam folder
- Account was created with incorrect email address

Test Administrators could also try using the "Forgot your password?" link found on the main MSAA login page to see if they receive a password reset email from MSAA. If it is not one of these issues, the Test Coordinator should reach out to

Ana.Russo@vermont.gov

Q9: If a Test Coordinator/Test Administrator account was created for the wrong person, who can we contact?

A: Please reach out to Ana.Russo@vermont.gov

MSAA Training

Q1: What trainings will the AOE provide?

A: All training modules for the administration of the MSAA will be delivered through the MSAA site. Modules for Test Administrators and Coordinators will be made

available through that site on 2/27. The AOE will be providing supplemental office hours weekly to help educators navigate their MSAA questions and needs.

Q2: How do Test Coordinators and Test Administrators access MSAA training?

A: Test Coordinators and Administrators will access their trainings through the MSAA site. Please see page 10 of the [System User Guide](#) for directions on completing the MSAA training modules.

Q3: Will anyone administering the Alternate Assessment need to complete the General Test Administrator training as well as the Alternate Test Administrator training?

A: Test Administrators for the MSAA will need to complete the six MSAA training modules and the science module, if applicable, even if they have also completed training materials associated with the general assessment. Test Administrators must take the end-of-training final quiz and attain a score of 80% correct or higher to “pass” their training.

Q4: Do you have an estimate on how long the training will take?

A: Approximate total training time is 2.5 hours.

Q5: What is the deadline for test administrators/coordinators to complete the training modules?

A: The modules need to be completed at the Test Coordinator or Test Administrator’s convenience, at any time prior to the administration of the assessment.

Q6: Can the AOE’s MSAA office hours be recorded for anyone who is unable to attend?

A: The AOE’s MSAA Office Hours won’t be recorded, but questions posed during those office hours will be captured and answered within this FAQ document. The goal is to have this document serve as a record of those Office Hours sessions.

Student Enrollment

Q1: How should LEAs and independent schools represent students that go to out of placement settings within the MSAA platform?

A: The AOE had originally planned to link Independents with their sending LEAs within LEA and Independent school profiles. But the restrictions of the MSAA platforms will make that logistically impractical, so the AOE and Cognia have identified an alternate solution that we hope will be an easy option for educators to support.

Independent school DAs will be given Test Coordinator profiles by MSAA on 2/21. From there, they can create additional Test Administrators, and create and update student profile information.

LEAs and independent schools should create and update student profile information for the students who they serve. If a student is taking the assessment within an LEA, the LEA should create and update their profile. If the student is taking the assessment at an independent school, the independent school should create and update their profile.

There is no expectation that independents connect their students’ profiles back to sending LEAs; we just encourage LEAs and independents to communicate and

coordinate re: who is being represented within their respective profiles. The AOE will reconcile students' links to sending LEAs after the assessment has been completed.

Please note that while students should be tested in their instructional environment, it is still the responsibility of the sending LEA to ensure that their students are registered to test.

Q2: Should students at independent schools participate in statewide assessments?

A: Yes, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. These laws mandate that all students participate in assessments that measure student achievement on grade-level content standards. Determinations about whether students take the general or alternate assessment should be made locally using the state's Eligibility Criteria.

Q3: When and how do we complete the Learner Characteristics Inventory?

A: Please view page 13 of the [MSAA System User Guide](#) on how to complete the LCI. The Test Administrator should complete the LCI for each of their students. Test administrators can complete the LCI in the [MSAA Portal](#).

Q4: How can schools determine which students have "the most significant cognitive disabilities" and are eligible to take the alternate assessment?

A: The AOE has developed an [Eligibility Criteria Checklist](#) to support local IEP teams in making MSAA-eligibility determinations.

Q5: Who is able to create student profiles in MSAA?

A: Only Testing Coordinators can add students to the MSAA Online Platform. Once students are added, Test Administrators can complete students' LCI, SRC and Accommodations.

Q6: Do Test Coordinators (TCs) have to add each student profile individually, or can they do a mass upload?

A: TCs can do a mass upload into the MSAA system.

Q7: Does VT AOE have to approve students' LCI before a student can take the Alternate Assessment?

A: VT AOE does not approve or deny students to take the Alternate Assessment. Participation is an IEP team decision that should be made in consultation with the student's family.

Q8: How do we assign students to specific case managers/Test Administrators (TAs) so that all of our TAs can see all of our students' information?

A: Students can be assigned to a "classroom". Classrooms can be assigned to specific TAs.

Q9: What is the process for applying for a medical exemption?

A: Any questions regarding medical exemptions should be sent to Goma.Mabika@vermont.gov

MSAA Administration

Q1: How do we access sample test items?

A: Example test items can be accessed on the [Sample Items webpage](#) for MSAA and page 15 of the [Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](#).

Q2: Is there a human voice on the audio player tool?

A: The embedded Audio Player reads each line automatically and can be paused, resumed, and made to repeat segments as needed. If a student responds better to a human voice, verbally administer the items following the language in the directions for test administration (DTA) rather than using the audio player feature.

Q3: Can we request specialized testing materials with Braille, enlarged printing, etc.

A: MSAA will be able to provide Vermont with specialized testing materials upon request, but they will also need advanced notice, and what they can provide will depend on the time that they have between receiving the request, and the test administration window. To request specialized materials, please contact Ana.Russo@vermont.gov with a description of what you will need.

Q4: Is MSAA adaptive and if so, how?

A: The test is adaptive; more information can be found on page 12 of the [Test Administration Manual](#).

Q5: What device should the student take their test on? Their own device or their teacher's device?

A: Students do not have direct access to the MSAA platform and are not provided with MSAA usernames or passwords. Test Administrators (TAs) can log into MSAA, and start each student's test on their own devices, or the student's devices. If using student's device, TA's must make sure to log off the system after the student has finished engaging with the assessment, so that the student does not have access to the MSAA platform.

Q6: Where do we bring our student-specific questions about accommodations, modifications, or test administration strategies?

A: Please send these questions to Ana.Russo@vermont.gov.

Q7: Can Test Coordinators (TCs) create Test Administrator (TA) accounts for contracted employees (i.e., behavior interventionists) who will be administering the assessment to students?

A: Yes, TCs can create TA accounts for contracted employees who will be administering the MSAA to students.

Q8: What should an LEA do if they need to administer an assessment remotely for a student?

A: Please email Ana.Russo@vermont.gov for technical assistance.