Assessment News Alert- Feb. 26, 2026

This message was sent to assessment coordinators and WIDA contacts in public school districts and several approved programs and non-public school systems. If you have any questions email doeassessment@state.sd.us.

SD-ELP (ACCESS Updates)

Testing Window
- **Window closes tomorrow, Friday, Feb. 27**

Returning Materials
- **Must be Postmarked by March 9, 2026**
  - DRC would like items returned ASAP
- Items that MUST be returned
  - All test booklets (collected in plastic bags)
  - All ACCESS Paper Test Administrator Scripts
  - ACCESS Online Test Administrator Scripts for grade 1 and grades 2-3
  - Listening and Speaking Test CDs
  - All large print, braille, Kindergarten ACCESS (including low-vision) and Alternate ACCESS test materials

Score Reports
- 5.5.26 -available online in DRC platform
- 5.11-13.26 -districts will receive printed reports from DRC

General Assessment Updates

State General Assessment Accommodations for Grades 3-8
Recommended deadline for submitting accommodation requests (through TIDE Forms) was **Feb. 1, 2026**. **Get your accommodation requests in ASAP if you have not done so yet.**
TIDE forms include:
- Assessment Non-Embedded Accommodations Request
- General Assessment Print on Demand Request
- General Assessment Reading Passages Request
- Special Accommodation Consideration Request
- Speech-to-Text and/or Word Completion Request Form

It may take a week for the state to review and complete these requests, depending on the number of requests received.
If you have questions, contact Beth Schiltz.

Office Hours During Testing Window
We will host weekly office hours during the testing window (March 2 until May 4) on Mondays at 10 a.m. CT (9 a.m. MT). Zoom info is:
- https://state-sd.zoom.us/j/94662091350
- Meeting ID: 946 6209 1350

Virtual Trainings Provided by Cambium
Cambium will provide one-hour virtual trainings specifically for South Dakota assessment coordinators and educators. Details for the trainings and registration links are located on the Gateway. **First training is on Monday!**

SD-ACT Updates (for public-school districts only)

SD-ACT Testing Has Begun!

The first SD-ACT window opened on Feb. 24 and will close on March 6. If you are testing during Window 1, follow the Window 1 Schedule. Reference the following step on the ACT Now web page for additional information and resources:

- Step 2: Administration

Steps for Testing Coordinators to complete during testing:

1. Assign the test event to students before they test.
2. Enter and review any irregularities in ACT® Test Center Manager™ (TCM) as soon as possible (no later than 3 days after the end of the test event). Use Irregularity reports to identify any students who were absent on their originally scheduled test day and assign them to new test events and rooms in TCM.

Accommodations for SD-ACT

The deadline for districts to request accommodations for SD-ACT has passed. If you get a new student who needs accommodations, follow this process:

1. **Complete** the Qualified Exception to the Deadline (QED) form.
2. **Upload** form to **Other Documentation** in TAA.
3. **Verify** all required documentation is complete and accurate, including the QED form, before selecting submit in TAA. *Important: If the examinee is denied for any reason under the Qualified Exceptions to the Deadline window, ACT will not review any reconsideration request for the examinee for this administration.*

SD-ACT Student Upload

We updated the students in ACT Now this morning. The update is from Feb. 25, 2026. You will need to check your roster and assign students to the correct test window. Assigning students to the correct test windows will ensure they get their test materials on time. FYI, you can always print the students' MyACT instructions that were not shipped due to late adds. To do this, log into ACT Now, click on the Students Tab, click Reports, and click to generate the MyACT Instructions. If you see students in your ACT Now that should not be testing (seniors, alternate assessment takers), please mark them as "Will not test" within ACT Now.

MyACT accounts

In order for your students to utilize the four free score sends, they need to create a MyACT account and claim the MyACT student code within two days of testing. **It is recommended for students to complete this before testing.** Need support? Check out the MyACT User Guide! The MyACT instructions are included in the initial shipment from ACT. You can also access the MyACT instructions in ACT Now - Student tab - Reports.

- **REMINDER**: Students need to create their MyACT accounts no later than TWO calendar days after testing to complete their non-test information, receive their scores in their accounts, and be eligible to send free score reports. ACT recommends schools host in-class sessions to create and complete their MyACT accounts. MyACT account creation is recommended but not required.

Don't forget to check out the SD-ACT Website for resources, webinars and office hours, and other helpful information.

MSAA Updates

Test Coordinators (TCs):

- TCs should have all MSAA system district TAs accounts created, and all student lists verified at this time!
- Contact Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us with any questions.
- Districts can give parents the Parent Letter Before Testing and MSAA Parent Brochure.

Test Administrators (TAs):

- TAs should complete their assigned MSAA system Training by March 9.
- After completing Training, TAs can download and print each student's Session 1 Directions for Test Administration (DTA) to prepare the student's constructed response items.
- TAs can show students MSAA Sample Items to become familiar with the system.
- TAs can begin testing March 9 through Apr. 24. If a student's test becomes "locked" or you experience MSAA system issues, contact MSAAServiceCenter@cognia.org or 866-834-8879.

Upcoming Educator Opportunities!

ELA & Math Review Opportunities (Please share with your ELA and Math teachers!)

There are some upcoming educator reviews for **ELA** item development for South Dakota:

- <u>Feb.</u>: Passage Review
- <u>May</u>: Item Review

Complete the <u>ELA application</u> to be considered for these opportunities or any other ELA reviews.

There will be **Math** item reviews available later this year as well. Complete the <u>Math application</u> to be considered for them.

K–2 Educator Involvement Opportunity for English Language Arts and Math Resource Development

Smarter Balanced will soon begin developing ELA and Math lesson plans for Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade (K–2). All lesson plans will include formative assessment and accessibility strategies, and they will be available on the Tools for Teachers website.

We are looking for K–2 teachers to assist in the development of these new resources—specifically, current K–2 classroom teachers with strong expertise in grade-level expectations and experience supporting the unique needs of young learners. Compensation will be provided upon resource publication.

If you would like to participate, please complete the <u>Virtual SNE Workshop Interest Survey</u> to share your availability.

3-8 and 11 Educator Involvement Opportunity for English Language Arts and Math Resource Development

We are looking for grades 3-8 and 11 teachers to assist in the development of new resources. All lesson plans will include formative assessment and accessibility strategies, and they will be available on the Tools for Teachers website.

Compensation will be provided upon resource publication.

If you would like to participate, complete the <u>Virtual SNE Workshop Interest Survey</u> to share your availability.