Assessment News Alert- Jan. 13, 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. Thank you and have a good rest of your week!

General Assessment Updates

Interim Assessment Training
There will be various Interim Assessment trainings in January/February 2026. See below for dates and registration links. **Please share with your teachers and principals.**
- Jan. 16, 2026, Belle Fourche, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (MT)
- Jan. 29, 2026, Rapid City, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (MT)
- Feb. 11, 2026, Sioux Falls, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (CT)

Summative Assessment Winter Roadshow
This professional development equips Assessment Coordinators to effectively train district staff on administering required spring assessments. Each training will go from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. local time. Register using the links below.
- Feb. 18, 2026 – Sioux Falls
- Feb. 19, 2026 – Sioux Falls
- Feb. 23, 2026 - Watertown
- Feb. 24, 2026 - Pierre
- Feb. 25, 2026 – Rapid City
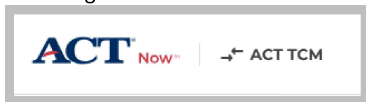
SD-ACT Updates (for public-school districts only)

SD-ACT Student Upload
Currently, all 10–12 grade students have been uploaded into ACT Now. This was a mistake, as only 11 grade students were supposed to be uploaded. ACT is aware of the issue and is working to correct it. Once the system reflects only juniors, an alert to notification will be sent to ypu .

ACT Now To-Do List by Jan. 16, 2026
Assessment Coordinators need to:
- Log into ACT Now and **confirm participation**.
- **Add event staff**: Once this is completed, test event staff can complete modules in Test Center Manager (TCM). There is a toggle at the top of ACT Now to get to TCM.

- **Assign all students** to a test event or mark as "not testing"
- View Schedule of Events

ACT-Hosted Webinar for Test Day Administration
ACT will host their last training for the spring SD-ACT on **Jan. 13 from 11 a.m.-Noon (CT)**. Webinar is for anyone including test coordinators and test event staff (teachers).

SD-ACT Training Provided by SD DOE Office of Assessment & Accountability
SD DOE will offer a training over SD-ACT on Jan. 28 from 10 a.m. -12:30 p.m. (CT) in Pierre. Topics covered include the material from ACT's Jan. 13 training. There will also be time to ask questions and learn from other Assessment Coordinators. This will be a hybrid training – you can either attend in Pierre OR virtually.

Accommodations for SD-ACT

If you missed ACT's Accommodations webinar last week, you can view it on demand.

Districts should be finishing up with requesting accommodations for the SD-ACT. District staff will need to create an account in Test Accessibility and Accommodations (TAA), which is in ACT Success. If staff create the TAA account, it may take ACT three to five business days to verify the account. Here are some resources to help with the process:

- How to Create an Account to Request Accommodations
- TAA User Guide
- South Dakota-Specific Accommodations Training Recording and Resources
- DOE Made SD-ACT Tools, Supports, and Accommodations
- List of available accommodations for SD-ACT
- If district staff need additional support, they can reach out to ACT's accommodations team at actstateaccoms@act.org or at 800.553.6244, ext. 1788

Hard deadlines for accommodations are:
- Test Event 1 (Feb. 24-Mar. 6): **Jan. 14**
- Test Events 2 (Mar. 10-20): **Jan. 28**
- Test Event 3 (Mar. 24-Apr. 3): **Feb. 11**

Helpful District Tools

Here are a couple resources provided for district use.
- **Grade 11 Sample Parent Letter**- hot off the press- posted to our website under the Parent Communication and Resources section (and attached to this News Alert).
- **Parent/Guardian Guide** – This document is intended for communication with parents and guardians. It provides an overview of the SD-ACT and offers guidance on how they can best support their children.
- **SD-ACT Accommodations** – This quick-reference document is designed to assist districts in requesting appropriate accommodations for students.

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

MSAA Update

If the Assessment Coordinator is not the Test Coordinator for the MSAA, please let us know via email. If you have students that should be added to the MSAA system or deleted from the MSAA system, please send an email with student SSIDs and a sentence of which is needed and why (i.e. student transferred, change in decision by IEP team, etc.).

SD-ELP (ACCESS Updates)

ACCESS testing materials should have arrived in district last week. As you prepare to begin testing, please take a moment to **double-check your student rosters in DRC**. If you notice any issues, reach out to Shari Lord as soon as possible so they can be resolved before testing begins.
Below are a few important updates:
- **Required Non-Disclosure Agreement:** For the SD-ELP (ACCESS) Assessment, all Assessment Coordinators and Test Administrators **must** sign the SD DOE Non-Disclosure agreement before proctoring the SD-ELP (ACCESS) assessment. Form can be found here: SD DOE Non-Disclosure
- Students identified as EL students after November 26, 2025, were not captured in the Pre-ID file upload and the district will need to follow the New Student Upload Process.
  - Students are now visible in WIDA AMS
  - If you are administering WIDA ACCESS Online, make sure your students are entered in the appropriate registrations and accommodations are added if needed.

Test Materials: SD DOE orders all materials for the ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS assessments. If additional materials need to be ordered, you will need to place an Additional Order.
- Make sure that you check for overage of materials before placing an additional order
  - Additional orders can be placed until 2.20.26

Any educator who will be administering the ACCESS assessment must complete the appropriate training in the WIDA Secure portal

NAEP Updates

NAEP Assessment Preparation Reminder

Schools should schedule Assessment Planning Meetings with their NAEP Field Assessment Coordinators if they haven't already. Enter demographic details, including SPED and EL information, for students selected to participate. For schools using their own devices, install and verify the NAEP application. At least 50% of devices must be verified before assessment day. The Verification Code is available on the school page in the AMS or by contacting Betsy Chapman.