

Assessment News Alert- Jan. 21, 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 are two upcoming in-person Interim Assessment trainings in different locations. See below for dates and registration links. **Please share with your teachers and principals!**

- [Rapid City: Jan. 29, 2026, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. MT](#)
- [Sioux Falls: Feb. 11, 2026, 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. 12, 2026](#) – Timber Lake
- [Feb. 18, 2026](#) – Sioux Falls
- [Feb. 19, 2026](#) – Sioux Falls
- [Feb. 23, 2026](#) – Watertown
- [Feb. 24, 2026](#) – Pierre
- [Feb. 25, 2026](#) – Rapid City

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

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

- [February](#): Passage Review
- [May](#): Item Review

Fill out the application below to be considered for these opportunities or any other ELA reviews.

- [ELA](#):

There will be **Math** item reviews available later this year as well. Please fill out the application at the following link to be considered for them.

- [Math](#):

State General Assessment Accommodations for Grades 3-8

Recommended deadline for submitting forms (through TIDE) is **Feb. 1, 2026**. 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.

Contact [Beth Schiltz](#) with questions

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

SD-ACT Student Upload

We will be updating students who are taking the Alternate Assessments within ACT Now as "Will not test". You do not need to worry about this at the district level.

[SD-ACT Training Provided by SD DOE Office of Assessment & Accountability](#)

SD-ACT training will be held on **Jan. 28, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (CT)** in Pierre. Topics covered will include the material from ACT's Jan. 13 training. There will also a time to ask questions and learn from other Assessment Coordinators. This will be a hybrid training – you can either attend in Pierre OR virtually.

ACT-Hosted Webinar for Test Day Administration

ACT hosted their last training for the spring SD-ACT on **Jan. 13**. If you missed it, you could view it on our [SD-ACT Website](#). This webinar is for anyone who will be assisting with test day, including test coordinators and test event staff (teachers).

Test Coordinators = Test Event Staff

Many ACT Test Coordinators (District/School) will also be Test Event Staff. **Within Test Center Manager (TCM), test coordinators are unable to assign themselves to a Test Event Staff role.**

All STCs (School Test Coordinators) become "Test Day Coordinators" in TCM - which means they can access and manage ALL rooms. If they will be the room supervisor, it's okay for that role to just be blank for that room in TCM. This will be the same if the District Test Coordinator will be Test Event Staff. Check out this [TCM resource](#).

Accommodations for SD-ACT

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): **CLOSED**
- Test Events 2 (Mar. 10-20): **Jan. 28**
- Test Event 3 (Mar. 24-April. 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 on the [DOE Assessment webpage](#) under the Parent Communication and Resources section.
- [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.

Check out the [SD-ACT Website](#) for resources, webinars and office hours, and other helpful information.

MSAA Update

Test Coordinators (TCs) will be uploaded into the MSAA System on Feb. 9. At this time, the TC will get a welcome email and will be able to sign in and add the Test Administrators to the system. If the Assessment Coordinator for your district is NOT the Test Coordinator for MSAA, contact [Sabrina Johnson](#).

SD-ELP (ACCESS Updates)

- **Testing Window**
 - Jan. 27 - Feb. 27, 2026
- **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.
- **Newly Identified English Learner Students**
 - Students identified as EL students after Nov. 26, 2025 will need to be added to DRC. Follow the [New Student Upload Process](#).
 - 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. For additional materials, fill out an [Additional Order Form](#).
 - Make sure that you check for overage of materials before placing an additional order. Additional orders can be placed until Feb. 20, 2026.

All educators administering the ACCESS assessment must complete the appropriate training in the WIDA Secure portal.

NAEP Updates

NAEP Testing window opens Jan 26. For those schools selected to participate, continue to stay on top of the information in the Assessment Management System (AMS) and stay in communication with your assigned NAEP Field Staff. If you have questions, contact [Betsy Chapman](#).

NOTE: Please review any students that have been selected to be excluded from participating in the NAEP assessment for reasons other than the student takes the MSAA or is first year in country. Even if all IEP accommodation cannot be met (i.e. text to speech or multiplication charts), most students should still be able to participate at some level with the allowed accommodations. There are no academic consequences for the student or for the school and students can stop testing at any time, but non-participation does count against the state at the federal level, both for IDEA and the state in general. The aim of NAEP is to allow as many students as possible to participate in the assessment and represent South Dakota by doing the best that they

possibly can, with the goal of measuring student progress, not individual student achievement. Contact [Betsy Chapman](#) to discuss these students and their individual situations if you have any questions.