Assessment News Alert- March 3, 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.

General Assessment Updates

Virtual Summative Assessment Training

If you missed one of our face-to-face trainings or just want a refresher, join us on March 5 at 10 a.m. - Noon CT.

State General Assessment Accommodations for Grades 3-8
Recommended deadline for submitting accommodation requests (through TIDE Forms) was **Feb. 1, 2026**. **Submit accommodation requests in ASAP.**
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 <u>weekly</u> office hours during the testing window (March 2 until May 4) on Mondays at 10 a.m. CT.
- 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. All trainings are 11 a.m. - Noon CT
- TIDE System Training – Mon., March 2
- TDS Teacher/Proctor Training – Wed., March 11
- SDSAA Training – Thurs., March 12
- Response Entry Interface System Training (for SDSA Paper) – Wed., March 18
- Reporting System Training – Thurs., April 9

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

SD-ACT Testing Has Begun
If you have issues during testing, call ACT support at **319.337.1566** (**option 3** for tech assistance)

Spring 2027 ACT Window – We need your feedback
South Dakota needs to decide if we will go with Test Events 1-3, or if we go with Test Events 2-4 for the spring 2027 administration. Complete a **short survey** to vote for your preference.

ACT Q&A from Summative Assessment Trainings

1. I thought I saw somewhere that if you mark students absent, it is an irregularity? Is that wrong? Does it only apply to district testing, not state testing? If they mark a student absent, the system will autogenerate an irregularity. The site can then use the irregularity report to help them determine who has tested or who they would need to test on a future date.

2. In TCM, what do I choose for students needing standard time but testing over two days using the flexible schedule policy? Choose Standard Time, Single Day. Multi-Day is ONLY for students with the approved accommodation to test over multiple days.

3. Is the only allowable scratch paper the student's test ticket? Or is it the MyACT claim code sheet? What if the student needs more scratch paper? I read it is the test ticket, but some districts were certain it was the claim code page. It would be the test ticket. If they would need more, the school would need to provide and collect after the session.

4. Do the test tickets come in the FedEx box? Or is it just the MyACT claim codes? Just the MyACT instructions with the claim codes, they would print the authorization tickets from TCM. Instruction can be found on the before day checklist at the bottom: https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/secured/documents/ACT-Now-Before-Test-Date-Checklist-TC.pdf

5. During the extended break, can students eat lunch with other students in the school who are not testing? Schools have lunch periods where all students are together, so this question came up. Yes--they can have lunch together; however they need to monitor for prohibited behavior. We have this note that is in the flex policy.
   Special location: While local logistics are up to the test coordinator, it may be easiest to designate a special location for students to take their extended break at the school. This supports easier coordination of examinees and monitoring of any prohibited behaviors.

6. I know students cannot have their cell phones during the extended break. However, why would having a cell phone be different than a student having their cell phone between day 1 and day 2 of testing with the flexible schedule policy? (They can have their cell phone between testing days, right? I assume so, since they would be going home in the evening). For cell phones, the same policy for prohibited behavior and sharing content applies after testing is completed as for those who test over multiple days; they should not share content.
   Prohibited behavior: All policies for prohibited behavior must be enforced, especially discussing or sharing test questions, answers, or test form identification numbers at any time, including during test administration, during breaks, or after the test.

   This is the verbal instruction we use for 2-day testing as well as all accommodations that are multi-day.

   > Testing will resume on (give the date) promptly at (give the time). Test materials may not be removed from this room. Remember, discussing or sharing test content, test form identification numbers, or answers is prohibited, including on social media. You may not access your cell phone or other electronic devices until you leave the building.

7. I just wanted confirmation that snacks for a diabetic during testing was a designated support, not an accommodation. I found it in the accessibility document, but wanted confirmation. If locally authorized by the TAC/TC, then they may bring and consume snacks/food during the test. As long as it does not destroy their test/answer doc or cause distractions (loud package for example). The student does not need to be in a 1:1 room unless they are using accommodations (if approved) or supports that require individual testing.

SD-ACT Test Window 1

The first SD-ACT window opened on February 24 and will close on March 6. If you are testing during Window 1, please 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, please 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 yesterday afternoon. The update is from March 1 or March 2. 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 à Student tab à 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.

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 April 24. If a student's test becomes "locked" or you experience MSAA system issues, contact MSAAServiceCenter@cognia.org or 866-834-8879.

SD-ELP (ACCESS Updates)
Testing Window
- **Window closed 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