**Office Hours February 26, 2021**

**Question:**  **Will students be allowed to re-take an assessment? Will students be allowed to re-take the new Math & ELA/Literacy assessment?**

Answer: The assessment window for general ELA/math is open from March 1st – June 15th, 2021. The assessment will be administered within a single administration in order to align with other assessments administered statewide. A student should therefore participate and complete a single administration of the math & ELA/Literacy assessments.

**Question:** **Will the Science assessment be allowed to be taken remotely?**

Answer: The alternate science assessment, MSAA Science, must be administered in person. Both the general science assessment, Maine Science (provided by New Meridian), and the alternate science assessment, MSAA Science, must be administered in-person.

**Question: Math and ELA will be able to be administered remotely, correct?**

Answer: Yes, the new Math/ELA assessment will be able to be given remotely. Yes, the new Math & ELA/Literacy assessments will be able to be administered remotely.

**Question: Will there be guidance on how to complete accommodations on the New Meridian Science Assessment?**

Answer: Yes. As contracts are finalized Maine DOE and New Meridian stand ready to support districts with professional learning regarding the multiple facets of administration.

**Question: Are students who were scheduled to take the MSAAs last year and missed them, be required to take those tests this year as well as the grade level for this year?**

Answer: In Spring 2020, a blanket waiver from all statewide assessments was issued by the US Department of Education [USED]. No students are required to make up assessments from the previous year.

**Question: Will the MDOE provide guidance to schools and parents regarding encouraging students to enter schools who have chosen to be remote to take State assessments?**

Answer: Maine DOE is aware of several districts that have had success in reaching out to the families of remote learners for the purposes of assessment. Such communications included information pertaining to the importance of the assessments and the health/safety precautions and assessment environment for remote learners participating. If it would be helpful, Maine DOE can support districts with drafting a template to this effect or gathering communications districts have provided as resources.

**Question: If our district is administering the ‘anticipated’ math/ELA assessment to students in March, will that data be accepted by the state? Or will we be asked to administer again? Is there a known window we might plan for?**

Answer: No, students are required to make up assessments which were not taken last year due to the blanket waiver from assessment issued by US ED.

One administration of the assessment will be required for Spring 2021 between 3/1/21 - 6/15/21.

**Question: If doing the Math and ELA remotely, is that considered a special consideration?**

Answer: No, a special consideration pertains to an instance where a student is unable to participate during the entire applicable assessment window due to a medical emergency or COVID/Quarantine reason.

**Question: Will bulk registration of our remote students for special considerations count against our 95% requirement if approved?**

Answer: No. If students are unable to participate due to being fully remote learners for the entire assessment window, because of reasons related to COVID/Quarantine, a special consideration may be requested. Special considerations are exemptions from assessment and are not counted as nonparticipation.

**Question: The special considerations is only for on-site assessments, correct? Would that be for science and alternatives? I assume the ELA/math will be remote, so that doesn’t count for COVID related?**

Answer: Correct however, there may be mitigating circumstances that a special consideration may be required for a student for math or ELA/Literacy. Possible examples could include stability of internet connection etc.

**Question:** **Can you remind us where to find the Parent Consent Letter for Special Considerations?**

Answer: The parent consent form is generated automatically by the system as the special consideration request is submitted and includes student and assessment specific information. For templates / translations of the parent consent letter, please see the Maine DOE Assessment [Webpages](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/supports) in Communication Toolbox.

**Question:** **If we are unable to administer remote, as in we do not have the staff to do so, can we just say that no students remote will take the assessment?**

Answer: Please reach out to the applicable assessment coordinator.

**Question:** **So, if you are doing a bulk exemption you still need to have all parents sign the forms?**

Answer: Yes, a parent consent is required for each student to ensure the family is aware a special consideration will be submitted. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

**Question: I know it was stated that public comment periods are required in order to submit a waiver, but does the MDOE have any intentions on applying for accountability waiver?**

Answer: Maine DOE plans to move forward with all statewide assessments where safely feasible to do so. At the same time, DOE colleagues are exploring the possibility of a waiver providing flexibility from accountability and reporting requirements.

**Question:** **Is the intention to continue to allow district to define testing windows for the new ELA/math assessment?**

Answer: As mentioned above, current partners (users) with the projected vendor will continue to administer the math and ELA/Literacy assessment on the previously determined schedule. New users will administer the assessment once they have received onboarding and applicable professional learning. The assessment window for the new ELA/math assessment runs from March 1 – June 15. The district may schedule the assessment at any point during the window. Answer: It is, yes.

**Question: Where do you get the MyNAEP Registration ID?**

Answer: The MyNAEP Registration ID must be provided by the NAEP State Coordinator or the NAEP Help Desk. The Help Desk is available by phone: 800-283-6237 or email: naephelp@westat.com. This information is not customarily available to the other members of the Assessment Team.

**Question:** **So, September is not an option for administration of the ACCESS assessment? The letter from the feds mentioned that as a possibility.**

Answer: The ACCESS assessment window closes on April 16th, 2021. Please refer to the [assessment calendar](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/calendar) for specific assessment administration windows, for the spring of 2021.Answer: The current plan is that assessment windows will close by June 15th 2021.

**Question: If we do not have the assessment that is going to be used for ELA and Math when will it be available to our district?**

Answer: As of the time of this meeting, the contract is in the approval process. Stay tuned for more information from general assessment coordinator Nancy Godfrey, Nancy.godfrey@maine.gov.

**Question:** **Can you tell us how many years the new math & ELA/Literacy contract with the vendor is anticipated for?**

Answer: The initial contract is for two years.

**Question: For Math assessments the vendor currently has several assessments, such as Math 6+, Algebra, Geometry, will schools for 3rd year students still use the assessment that they took in the fall and winter?**

Answer: The students in 3rd year of high school will participate in the Math 6+ assessment form.

**Question: Will districts be reimbursed for grades 3-8 and 3rd year high school students who are currently using the vendor that will be revealed next week?**

Answer: That is the plan. More information is forthcoming from Maine DOE regarding this reimbursement.

**Question: New Meridian Science cannot be assessed remotely, math and ELA/Literacy will be allowed to be administered remotely. Am I correct? With recent communication from the Fed’s, it allows us to administer a ‘shortened version’ of the assessments. Is that the intention of the MDOE?**

Answer: The new assessment in ELA/Literacy and math is the only state assessment with a remote administration capacity. There is no current plan to administer shortened assessments.

**Question: Is the Science testing window also extended to June 15th as well?**

Answer: The New Meridian Science assessment window is currently scheduled to close on May 28th. We will keep the field updated of any extensions.

**Question:** **Has the distinction been made between web-based vs app-based remote administration for the math & ELA/Literacy assessment?**

Answer:The Department is still examining these elements and will be providing additional information.

**Question: Are there concerns about data reliability of remote students who take this assessment?**

Answer: Yes. Due to remote administration, there are varying factors that are beyond our control.

**Question: Are their crosswalks alignments between the new assessment results and results from Star?**

Answer:We are currently researching this question.

**Question: We have been using the assessment and what do we do if parents are assisting? This has happened using the remote guidance from the company.**

Answer:We are encouraging districts implement, as much as possible, an assessment experience that mirrors an environment the student would experience at school. This would include using the app-based remote administration option.

**Question: Will there be a sample letter/language for requesting children come in for Science assessment?**

Answer: The Department has not drafted language regarding participating in assessment. This is something the Department can explore if it would be beneficial to schools/districts.

**Question:** **Will schools who are current partners (users) be able to set their own local windows and access their data and reports as has been the case in the past?**

 Yes. As mentioned above, current users (partners) should continue to implement and administer the assessment on the previously determined schedule. Answer: Yes.

**Question: Is the Parent Consent Letter (English) available now?**

Answer: Yes, it is on the Maine DOE [Assessment Support and Resources webpage](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/supports) within the Communication Toolbox.

**Question: Will there be a draft parent consent letter for special consideration for Bulk remote?**

Answer: The parent consent letter posted on the [assessment support and resources page](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/supports) would be the same consent form used for bulk special consideration requests.

**Question: Could it be a notice rather than a consent?**

Answer: Unfortunately, no. The parent (family) consent is required to ensure family members are aware of the special consideration request while also being aware this means there will be no student level assessment data available from the spring assessment administration.

**Question: Just to be clear, everyone who opts out of coming in person will require a signature, yes? Not just a notification, yes?**

Answer:All students who are unable to participate in assessment due to reasons of medical emergency or COVID-19 factors may qualify for a special consideration request. All special consideration requests require a signed parent consent letter, locatedon the Maine DOE [Assessment Support and Resources webpage](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/supports) within the Communication Toolbox. If a parent is refusing assessment on behalf of the student, this does not qualify for a special consideration.

**Question:** **Will the MSAA training meeting on March 2 be recorded?**

Answer: Yes, the MSAA training on 3/2 will be recorded. Yes, the training on 3/2 will be recorded. The recording will then be shared via the alternate assessment listserv, Erin Frazier's communication, and the Assessment Team website.

**Question:** **You mentioned if a district is currently using the math/ELA assessment, we would not be expected to give the assessment twice, one for state data and once for our local data. Do we assume the state assessment will be the same test and we will have our year progress data for our year starting with our fall data, winter data, and the spring data with be a continuum?**

Answer: The assessment window for general ELA/math is open from March 1st – June 15th, 2021. The assessment will be administered within a single administration during that window in order to align with other assessments administered statewide. A student should therefore participate and complete a single administration of the math & ELA/Literacy assessments. If the district is a current partner with the projected vendor, the intent would be the spring assessment would be the final data point for the administration this year.

**Question:** **Can the Special Considerations parent consent have a digital signature via in person?**

Answer: Yes, if you can have a parent sign the form in person, the “wet” signature would be acceptable. Alternatively, the form may be provided to the parent via email to be signed electronically.