



**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
FOR THE  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)**

**2018 - 2019 Administration**

This document is not intended to replace individual  
MEA Test Administration Manuals or Test Handbooks

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**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

**Table of Contents**

**2018-2019 TESTING DATES ..... 2**

**SECTION 1: ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS ..... 3**

    1.1 Federal Requirements.....3

    1.2 State Requirements .....3

    1.3 Which of Maine’s students must be tested?.....3

**SECTION 2: ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION ..... 4**

    2.1 Public Program in Resident School Administrative Unit (SAU).....4

    2.2 Public Program in Non-Resident SAU .....5

    2.3 Special Purpose School (SPPS) Approved by the Department.....5

    2.4 Residential Treatment Centers as defined in Title 20-A§1(24-A) (D)(3) .....5

    2.5 Home-Schooled.....5

    2.6 Maine Residents Attending School in Another State.....6

    2.7 Residents of Other States Attending Maine Public Schools .....6

    2.8 Privately Funded Students at Maine Public Schools .....6

    2.9 Publicly Funded Students at Private Schools.....7

    2.10 International Students .....7

    2.11 Special Enrollment Circumstances.....7

**SECTION 3: PARTICIPATION EXCEPTIONS..... 9**

    3.1 Multi-grade/ Off-grade Level.....9

    3.2 Parent/Student Refusal and Non-Participation Issues .....9

    3.3 Exemption from MEA with Special Considerations.....9

    3.4 Recently Arrived English Learner (EL) Exemption .....9

**SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT REGISTRATION..... 10**

**GLOSSARY .....11**

**GUIDANCE FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION..... 13**

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

**Maine Comprehensive Assessment System (MeCAS)**

**2018-2019 TESTING DATES**

<b>Test Name</b>	<b>Testing Dates</b>	<b>Intended For</b>
MEA – English Language Proficiency (WIDA ACCESS for ELLs)	Grades 1-12 (Online) Kindergarten (Paper) 1/7/19 – 3/4/19	English learners K-12
MEA (Alternate) – English Language Proficiency (WIDA Alternate ACCESS)	1/7/19 – 3/4/19	English learners K-12 with significant cognitive disabilities
MEA (Alternate) Science (PAAP) (Portfolio) <i>Tasks available 12/1/17 – 4/30/18</i>	3/1/19 – 4/30/19	Students with significant cognitive disabilities; Grades 5, 8, and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year high school
MEA – Mathematics and ELA/Literacy – eMPowerME	3/18/19 – 4/12/19	All students Grades 3-8
MEA (Alternate) Mathematics & ELA/Literacy (MSAA)	3/18/19 – 5/3/19	Students with significant cognitive disabilities; Grades 3-8, and 3 <sup>rd</sup> year high school
MEA Science – High School	4/1/19 – 4/12/19	All students 3 <sup>rd</sup> year high school
MEA Mathematics and ELA/Literacy – SAT	Tuesday 4/9/19 Makeup Tuesday 4/23/19	All students 3 <sup>rd</sup> year high school
MEA Science – Grades 5 and 8	4/22/19 – 5/3/19	Grades 5 and 8

**National & International Assessments**

<b>Test Name</b>	<b>Testing Dates</b>	<b>Intended For</b>
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	1/28/19 – 3/8/19	Sample of selected schools
Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)	4/1/19 – 5/31/19	Sample of selected schools

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

## **SECTION 1: ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Maine’s public school students at specific grade levels must be annually assessed in specific content areas based on both federal and state law.

### **1.1 Federal requirements**

Under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) are required to annually assess public school students in grades 3-8 and at one point in high school (third year high school in Maine) in mathematics and English language arts (ELA)/literacy. Maine DOE is also required to assess public school students in science at three grade levels (grade 5, grade 8 and third year high school in Maine). Additionally, English learners (ELs) in grades K-12 must participate in an annual assessment of their English language proficiency.

We interpret these requirements as applying to all students whose education is paid through Maine’s public school funds, even if those students are attending a private school. Publicly funded students are eligible and expected to participate in Maine’s state assessment program at state expense, whether they take the general assessment or an alternate assessment.

Moreover, public school districts and schools, that are biennially selected to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), are required to do so under the federal ESEA.

### **1.2 State requirements**

Expectation for assessment in Maine’s legislation can be located in [Title 20-A, Chapter 222 Standards and Assessment of Student Performance.](#)

*This assessment applies to students in the public elementary and secondary schools, in public, charter and magnet schools, as defined in section 2401, subsection 9, and in all private schools approved for tuition whose school enrollments include at least 60% publicly funded students.*

The Maine DOE interprets this requirement as meaning that ALL students enrolled in Maine’s public schools, charter schools, or private schools with at least 60% publicly funded students are eligible for and must participate in the state assessments of mathematics, ELA/literacy and science content. In these schools, the participation of ALL students really does mean ALL. Students at these schools whose tuition is paid from a source other than Maine public funds must also participate in these state assessments (general or alternate).

### **1.3 Which of Maine’s students must be tested?**

Based on the combination of federal and state requirements, students in grades 3 – 8 and third year high school, including English language learners, must participate in Maine’s state assessment of mathematics and ELA/literacy. Students in grades 5, 8, and third year high school students, including English language learners, must participate in Maine’s state assessment of science.

Eligible students required to participate in MEA testing include:

- Students who attend a Maine public school (state requirement)
- Students who attend a Maine charter or magnet school (state requirement)

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

- Students who attend a private school with at least 60% publicly funded students (state requirement)
- Students supported by Maine public funding, regardless of where they attend school (federal requirement)

Additionally, English learners (ELs) in grades K-12 must participate in an annual assessment of English language proficiency. The following English learners are eligible and expected to participate in the annual assessment of English language proficiency.

- ALL English learners who attend a Maine public, charter or magnet school (federal requirement)
- ONLY the publicly funded English learners who attend a private school (federal requirement)

## **SECTION 2: ENROLLMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

All students as defined in the previous section must participate in MEA except for those who meet the criteria for the Special Considerations exemption or the recently arrived English learner exemption from the ELA/literacy assessment. This includes students designated as students in foster care, state agency clients, or homeless. Participation may occur through standard administration of MEA, administration with accommodations, or through MEA Alternates.

MEA reports are based on student primary enrollments in Synergy State Edition (replacing Infinite Campus State Edition). Schools are responsible for regularly updating individual student enrollment information in Synergy State Edition to ensure that MEA reports reflect accurate information. The official student data of record, except for accommodations, will be supplied by Synergy State Edition for all 2017-18 MEA assessments. **It is essential that schools keep their enrollment data current.** To ensure that an accurate roster of students is available for testing, schools must update and verify student enrollment on a daily basis as needed. To assist communication between schools, the Maine DOE has posted contact information for District Data Specialists at <https://neo.maine.gov/doe/neo/SuperSearch/> (choose SAU Primary Contacts/By Primary Contact Type; then filter by Data Specialist)

All MEA must be administered in accordance with the rules contained in the corresponding Test Administration Manuals.

### **2.1 Public program in resident School Administration Unit (SAU)**

- 2.1.1 Students who are attending a program in their resident SAU that is located in a school other than their resident school must be enrolled in their resident school.
- 2.1.2 Each student attending a program in the resident SAU that is not located in the resident school shall participate in MEA under the leadership of the resident school. This may be orchestrated by one of the following:
  - 2.1.2.1 Transporting the student back to the resident school; or
  - 2.1.2.2 Having a Test Administrator (TA) from the resident school assess the student at the program; or
  - 2.1.2.3 Designating a TA at the program site to assess students. If taking this third option, a district or school administrator (e.g. superintendent/director/principal) for the resident

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

school is responsible for ensuring the TA has received the necessary training is certified and has signed the Test Security and Student Privacy Agreement. Results are reported with the resident school and SAU.

**2.2 Public program in non-resident SAU**

- 2.2.1 Students who are publicly tuitioned to an in-state public program (regional special education or alternative education) must be enrolled in a grade appropriate school in their resident SAU.
- 2.2.2 Students who are publicly tuitioned to a public program (regional special education or alternate education) in a non-resident SAU must participate in MEA under the leadership of the resident school. This may be orchestrated by one of the following:
  - 2.2.2.1 Transporting the student back to the resident school;
  - 2.2.2.2 Having a Test Administrator (TA) from the resident school assess the student at the program; or
  - 2.2.2.3 Designating a TA at the program site to assess students. If taking this third option, a district or school administrator (e.g. superintendent/director/principal) for the resident SAU or school is responsible for ensuring the TA has received the necessary training, is certified, and has signed the Test Security and Student Privacy Agreement. Results are reported with the resident school and SAU.

**2.3 Special Purpose Private School (SPPS) approved by the Department**

Each student enrolled in a public school who is tuitioned by an SAU to a Department approved in-state SPPS must have a primary enrollment in a grade appropriate school in the resident SAU in Synergy State Edition **and** must have a partial enrollment in the SPPS. These students must participate in MEA through the appropriate avenue in the school they are attending. The student results will be included with the results for the resident SAU.

**2.4 Residential Treatment Centers as defined in Title 20-A§1(24-A) (D)**

- 2.4.1 Students publicly tuitioned to a Residential SPPS for placement by a sending SAU have an appropriate grade level primary enrollment within a school in the sending SAU, with a partial enrollment with the SPPS. These students must participate in MEA through the appropriate avenue in the school they are attending.
- 2.4.2 Students attending a Residential SPPS for placement by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or other state agency, have an appropriate grade level primary enrollment in a school in which the SPPS is physically located, with a partial enrollment with the SPPS. These students must participate in MEA through the appropriate avenue in the school they are attending.
- 2.4.3 Students attending Residential Treatment Centers outside of Maine are enrolled by the Maine DOE Data Team. School responsibility for the enrolled student is determined by the SAU where the parents/guardians reside. Students placed out of state will participate in MEA through the attending school in collaboration with the Department.

**2.5 Home-Schooled students**

- 2.5.1 Assessment of home-schooled students is a joint parent and local SAU decision.
- 2.5.2 If a home-schooled student is to participate in MEA and is already in the school's enrollment, due to the student partaking of some public-school instruction, leave the enrollment as it is. If an assessed home-schooled student is not already in the school's Synergy State Edition enrollment, he/she must be temporarily entered. Select the "Homeschool" checkbox **AND** select "1-25% of educational time spent at school" in the FTE field. Once the student

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

completes testing, exit the student using the exit code “01918 – Transferred to Homeschooling.”

- 2.5.3 Home-schooled students will receive an Individual Student Report (ISR), but will not be included in the testing school’s results. The student will count neither for nor against participation. Reports for home-schooled students must be distributed by the local school.

**2.6 Maine residents attending school in another state**

- 2.6.1 All students that are publicly funded by Maine are required to participate in Maine’s state assessment, even those receiving their educational program outside the state of Maine. For students placed in Special Purpose Private Schools (SPPS), see Section 2.4. For students being educated in another state in some other type of school, the Maine DOE recommends that, if feasible, the student participates in the MEA at their sending school district, whether that student is taking a general assessment or an alternate assessment.
- 2.6.2 The following enrollment protocol must be followed for students attending a non-Maine school at public’s expense: Students enrolled in a non-Maine school and educated at Maine public expense must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition by the DOE Data Helpdesk. Local SAUs cannot create this type of enrollment. If the local school district has a student attending an out of state school, the SAU must contact the DOE Data Helpdesk, [medms.helpdesk@maine.gov](mailto:medms.helpdesk@maine.gov) or 624-6896, to enroll the student in the non-Maine school. This communication must occur each year the student is attending a non-Maine school.
- 2.6.3 Maine public SAUs are accountable for students who are educated at out-of-state placements. Both the participation and the performance of these students being educated in another state will count in Maine SAU’s accountability.

**2.7 Non-Maine residents attending Maine public schools**

- 2.7.1 All students in testing grades at Maine’s public schools and charter schools, as well as those at private schools serving at least 60% publicly funded students, must be assessed. This includes students who are paid through private funding, including private pay international students. The student would have access to the most appropriate version of the assessment: standard administration, administration with accommodations, or an alternate assessment. The only exception would be in the case of an inter-state agreement requiring the student to take the test from their sending state. In this case, the Maine DOE Assessment Coordinator must be notified.
- 2.7.2 Non-Maine residents attending public schools in Maine must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition with the resident SAU as “Non-Maine SAU” and with a fiscal responsibility of “Paid by Other Source.”
- 2.7.3 Maine public schools and public SAUs are NOT accountable for non-Maine students who attend Maine schools. These students will not count in Maine’s accountability system for either participation or performance. Individual student reports will be made available for distribution through the Maine public school.

**2.8 Privately funded Maine students at Maine public schools**

- 2.8.1 All students in testing grades at Maine’s public, charter and magnet schools, as well as those at private schools serving at least 60% publicly funded students, must be assessed. This includes students who are paid through private funding.
- 2.8.2 Privately-funded students at Maine’s public or 60% schools must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition with a fiscal responsibility of “Paid by Other Source.”
- 2.8.3 Maine public schools and public SAUs are NOT accountable for the privately-funded students

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

who attend Maine schools. These students will not count in Maine's accountability system for either participation or performance.

**2.9 Publicly funded Maine students at private schools**

- 2.9.1 All students whose education is paid through Maine public funding must participate in the state assessment, even those who are publicly tuitioned to a private school.
- 2.9.2 Publicly funded students attending private schools must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition with their resident SAU and town filled in appropriately and fiscal responsibility of "Paid by Resident SAU or Education in Unorganized Territory (EUT)."
- 2.9.3 The responsible Maine SAU is accountable for the publicly-funded students that are tuitioned to private schools. These students will be included in the sending SAUs accountability for participation and for performance.

**2.10 International students**

- 2.10.1 All students in testing grades at Maine's public schools and charter schools, as well as those at private schools serving at least 60% publicly funded students, must be assessed. Students from another country, whether their tuition is paid privately or covered by an exchange program, would have access to the most appropriate version of the assessment: standard administration, administration with accommodations, or an alternate assessment.
- 2.10.2 International students attending public schools in Maine must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition with the resident SAU as "Non-Maine SAU" and with a fiscal responsibility of "Paid by Other Source."
- 2.10.3 Maine public schools and public SAUs are NOT accountable for the students from other countries who attend Maine schools through privately-paid tuition. They will not count in Maine's accountability system for either participation or performance. Individual student reports will be made available for distribution through the Maine public school.
- 2.10.4 Maine public schools and public SAUs ARE accountable for the students from other countries who attend Maine's schools as part of an exchange program. Exchange students should be enrolled in Synergy State Edition as residents of the district in which they reside. Exchange program students will count in Maine's accountability system for both participation and performance.

**2.11 Special enrollment circumstances**

- 2.11.1 Students Who Move: It is the school's responsibility to immediately update Synergy State Edition when students move. The two schools must attempt to coordinate the completion of testing for these students. Students' scores are based on the items answered/submitted and may be inaccurate if the students move during testing and do not complete an assessment.
  - 2.11.1.1 Students who move out of a school must be exited from the Synergy State Edition enrollment of that school on the last date of attendance. This must occur regardless of whether or not a request for records has been received. Students who move out of a Maine public school and into another during the testing window must take all sessions of MEA that are administered in that school before the date of the move.
  - 2.11.1.2 Students who move into a school must be enrolled in Synergy State Edition by the new attending school immediately (after being exited from the previous school). It will be the responsibility of the new school to ensure that students have the opportunity to finish any incomplete portions of MEA.

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**  
**MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)**  
**2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

- 2.11.1.3 Students who move into a school from another state during the testing window must participate in MEA during the open testing window.
- 2.11.2 Students Taking the Personalized Alternate Assessment Portfolio (PAAP) Who Move
- 2.11.2.1 Eligible PAAP students who move from one Maine school to another Maine school before or after March 1<sup>st</sup> must participate in the PAAP. The receiving school must administer and complete the PAAP. All previous PAAP work must be sent to the receiving school for incorporation into the final portfolio.
- 2.11.2.2 Eligible PAAP students that have moved from a non-Maine school and enrolled in a Maine school before March 1<sup>st</sup> must complete the PAAP. The receiving school must administer the PAAP. Out-of-state students who transfer into a Maine school after March 1<sup>st</sup> are not required to take this assessment.
- 2.11.3 Expelled students are not considered to be part of a school’s official enrollment. These students must be exited from Synergy State Edition, with expulsion code of “01925 – Expelled or involuntarily withdrawn”. In order to use this exit code, there must be an expulsion behavior incident recorded in the Behavior Module of Synergy State Edition. Expelled students receiving special education services must then be re-enrolled in Synergy State Edition as a primary enrollment, however the FTE field must show “5 – Special Education only provided by school”. No assessment is required.
- 2.11.4 Suspended students are considered to be part of a school’s official enrollment and are expected to participate in all MEA through a combination of regularly scheduled administration and makeup sessions.
- 2.11.5 Students adjudicated and committed to Long Creek Youth Development Center are enrolled and assessed in the educational program provided at that site. These students must be exited from the Synergy State Edition enrollment of the former school and enrolled in Synergy State Edition by the Long Creek Youth Development Center.
- 2.11.6 Students detained by law enforcement but not committed to a Youth Development Center during the entire MEA testing window remain enrolled in Synergy State Edition at the school they attended prior to being detained, and remain eligible for testing.
- 2.11.7 Retained Students - All students who have been retained at a grade level will participate again at the repeated grade level with the following exception: high school students participate in MEA Mathematics and ELA/Literacy, and Science only once, during their third year in high school, regardless of their grade level.
- 2.11.8 Students who are Recently Arrived English Learners (ELs) - ELA/Literacy – All EL students who were enrolled in a United States school for the first time on or after March 1, 2018, as indicated in the appropriate field in Synergy State Edition “Date Entered US School”, have a one-time exemption from MEA ELA/Literacy only, provided that they participated in the ACCESS for ELLs during the testing window or were administered the WIDA Screener Online, Kindergarten W-APT, or Kindergarten MODEL if enrolled after the ACCESS for ELLs testing window. There is no exemption from the mathematics or science assessment for English learners.
- 2.11.9 Students who are not present during testing:
- 2.11.9.1 Absent: All students enrolled in a Maine public school must take part in the appropriate MEA for their grade level. Students not present for testing, including those on scheduled vacations, will be considered non-participants, except for those students with Special Considerations approved by the Maine DOE.
- 2.11.9.2 Truant: Habitually truant students who do not participate in MEA due to absences during the testing window will be considered non-participants.

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

**SECTION 3: PARTICIPATION EXCEPTIONS**

**3.1 Multi-grade/Off-grade level**

- 3.1.1 Students in ungraded, multi-age programs must participate in MEA at the grade level in which the student is enrolled by the school in Synergy State Edition.
- 3.1.2 Out-of-Level Assessments: Students at one grade level may not be assessed with material developed for a different grade level. The grade level of record is the grade level in Synergy State Edition. If a student takes any MEA at another grade level, that student will be considered a non-participant, and no scores will be computed.

**3.2 Parent/student refusal and non-participation issues**

- 3.2.1 Federal law requires that Maine’s publicly funded students in grades 3-8 and 3rd year high school participate in the statewide assessment of mathematics and ELA/literacy. Federal law also requires that Maine’s publicly funded students in grades 5, 8, and 3rd year high school participate in the statewide assessment of science. In addition, federal law also requires that Maine’s publicly funded English learners in grades K-12 participate annually in statewide assessment of English language proficiency.
- 3.2.2 There is no available coding through the Maine DOE for designating a student that does not participate due to a parental decision. Students who are eligible for testing, but do not participate, count as non-participants in Maine’s accountability system.

**3.3 Exemption from MEA with special considerations**

Students may be exempted from a State Assessment when a significant medical emergency has rendered the student incapable of participating in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment. This includes long-term hospitalization without access to academics, severe trauma, mental health crisis (student is in danger to self or others), or placement in hospice care. A Medical Emergency may also include medically fragile students that are not able to participate in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment due to a debilitating disease. For accountability data purposes, the medical exemption is reviewed during the Maine DOE nonparticipation reconciliation process.

In order for the student to be considered for a medical exemption, the following protocol applies:

- 3.3.1.1 The attending district or school must obtain parent permission to request exemption. Requests for Special Consideration are made online through the MEA module found at <https://neo.maine.gov/DOE/NEO/Accounts/Account/Login>. This dashboard requires login credentials. A principal may request log-in credentials by contacting the DOE Data Helpdesk at (207) 624-6896 or [medms.helpdesk@maine.gov](mailto:medms.helpdesk@maine.gov).
- 3.3.1.2 The attending school or district will provide medical documentation from a medically trained professional by uploading the documentation to the state secure MEA module within the specific assessment testing window.
- 3.3.1.3 The Department’s Special Consideration Review Committee will review the documentation and contact the principal requesting the exemption, via email, stating the decision of the committee. If the exemption has been approved, the student will not be included in performance, accountability and participation reporting.

**3.4 Recently arrived English Learner (EL) exemption**

All EL students who were enrolled in a United States school for the first time on or after March 1, 2018,

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

as indicated in the appropriate field in Synergy State Edition “Date Entered US School”, have a one-time exemption from MEA ELA/Literacy only, provided that:

- The student participated in the ACCESS for ELLs during the testing window or
- The student was administered the Kindergarten W-APT, Kindergarten MODEL, or WIDA Screener Online if enrolled after the ACCESS for ELLs testing window.

There is no exemption from the mathematics or science assessment for English learners.

## **SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT REGISTRATION**

### **4.1 Assessment registration**

- 4.1.1 Student Registration (General Assessment) - Student testing rosters for the MEA Mathematics and ELA/Literacy and Science are automatically generated based on Synergy State Edition enrollment data.
- 4.1.2 Student Registration for the Multi State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) Alternate Assessment) - Student testing rosters for the MEA Alternate for Mathematics & ELA/Literacy are automatically generated based on Synergy State Edition enrollment data. Only students appearing on the MSAA roster on March 1, 2019 will take the MSAA assessment.
- 4.1.3 Student Registration for WIDA ACCESS for ELLs (General and Alternate) - Student testing rosters for the MEA ACCESS for ELLs are automatically generated based on Synergy State Edition enrollment data.
- 4.1.4 Student Registration MEA Alternate Science (PAAP) - Student testing rosters for the MEA Alternate Science are automatically generated based on Synergy State Edition enrollment data. Teacher and student registration will occur through the online Task Bank from December 1, 2018 - March 1, 2019. All students appearing on the PAAP roster through the online Task Bank on March 1, 2019 will participate in the alternate science assessment.

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

**GLOSSARY**

**Accountability** – A system of indicators for which schools and SAUs are held publicly accountable, and which may systematically determine prescribed supports. Maine’s accountability system considers measures of assessment participation, achievement performance, and other indicators to determine school identifications. A new accountability system, due to the reauthorization of the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, will be implemented beginning with the 2018-19 school year.

**Attending School** – The school that a student attends daily.

**eMPowerME** - State assessments, known as the Maine Educational Assessments (MEA), measure the progress of Maine's students toward the content standards adopted for Maine students. eMPowerME is the state assessment for grades 3 through 8 for Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy.

**English Learner (EL)** – This designation refers to a student group whose English proficiency in *any* of the language modalities (reading, writing, listening or speaking) is significantly below that of their peers. A student is classified as an “English Learner” based on the student’s English language proficiency as measured by WIDA ACCESS for ELLs.

**ESEA** – Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, and most recently amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*.

**Individual Educational Program (IEP)** – A program designed by a team of individuals, including parents, responsible for determining a student’s eligibility for special education and related services, including the student’s avenue of participation in the MEA. (Maine Unified Special Education Regulations, Chapter 101).

**Limited English Proficient (LEP)** – An LEP designation refers to students who are English Learners (ELs) and is a category in Synergy State Edition and assessment and accountability reports.

**Maine DOE** – Maine Department of Education, also referenced as the Department.

**Maine Educational Assessments (MEA)** – The MEA include a set of assessments administered to public school students in Maine as required by federal and state legislation. These include assessments of: (1) mathematics and English language arts/literacy content at grades 3-8 and third year high school; (2) science content at grade 5, 8 and third year high school, and (3) English language proficiency for English learners in grades K-12. Three avenues of participation are provided (Standard Administration, Administration with Accommodations, or Alternate Assessment).

**MODEL** - The WIDA MODEL (Measure of Developing English Language) is a series of English language proficiency assessments for Kindergarten through Grade 12.

**MSAA** - Multi-State Alternate Assessment used for the MEA Alternate Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy.

**National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** – An annual national assessment that supports the

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

comparison of academic progress over time and across states, also called the Nation’s Report Card.

**PAAP** – Personalized Alternate Assessment Portfolio used for the MEA Alternate Science.

**Partial Enrollment** – A student who is tuitioned to special purpose private school has a primary enrollment in Synergy State Edition at his/her resident school and a partial enrollment at the special purpose private school.

**Resident School or Resident SAU**- The school or school administrative unit where the student’s parent/guardian resides.

**SAT** - State assessments, known as the Maine Educational Assessments (MEA), measure the progress of Maine's students toward the content standards adopted for Maine students. SAT is the state assessment for 3<sup>rd</sup> year high school students for Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy.

**SAU** - A school administrative unit “SAU” may be a charter school, magnet school, school administrative district, municipal district, a community school district, state operated school, or a regional school unit for the purposes of this document.

**Sending SAU** – For the purposes of this document, a sending SAU is one that has fiscal responsibility and pays tuition for students to attend private schools or schools in another SAU.

**SPPS** – Special Purpose Private School. A Maine approved out of district placement for students with needs that are not able to be met in the SAU.

**Synergy State Edition** – The statewide student data management system (replacing Infinite Campus)

**TA** – Test Administrator. School personal that administers any assessment to students.

**WIDA - ACCESS for ELLs** – ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is an English language proficiency assessment administered to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as English learners (ELs). It is given annually to monitor ELs’ progress in acquiring academic English.

**W-APT** – The WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test is an English language proficiency "screener" test given to Kindergarten incoming students who may be designated as English learners.

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**

**GUIDANCE FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

A Special Consideration is a request for a student to be exempt from participation in any required Maine Educational Assessment. Special Consideration requests must be submitted by the last day of the testing window of the applicable Maine Educational Assessments (MEA). These requests must be based on a decision made by an education team that includes as appropriate; the student’s teachers, English as a Second Language endorsed educator, school counselor, principal, parent or legal guardian, and if possible, the student. This educational team collects and reviews information, and documents the decision.

In accordance with Federal guidelines, students may now only be exempted from a State Assessment when a significant medical emergency has rendered the student incapable of participating in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment. This includes long-term hospitalization without access to academics, severe trauma, mental health crisis (student is in danger to self or others), or placement in hospice care or mental health facility. A Medical Emergency may also include medically fragile students that are not able to participate in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment due to a debilitating disease.

For accountability data purposes, the medical exemption is reviewed during the DOE nonparticipation reconciliation process. Documentation is required for Medical Emergency/Serious Illness.

Requests for Special Consideration are made online through the Maine.gov NEO dashboard which requires login credentials. To request a Special Consideration, a principal must obtain log-in credentials for the Maine Educational Assessments module by contacting the DOE Data Helpdesk at (207) 624-6896 or [medms.helpdesk@maine.gov](mailto:medms.helpdesk@maine.gov). Login credentials carry over from year to year. The principal will complete the request for Special Consideration and obtain parent/guardian consent. Requests are reviewed by the Special Considerations Review Panel at the Maine DOE. The Special Considerations Review Panel may request additional information and/or documentation.

**Special Consideration Contact Information**

General Assessments:

Nancy Godfrey, Assessment Coordinator  
[nancy.godfrey@maine.gov](mailto:nancy.godfrey@maine.gov) 624-6775

Alternate Assessments:

Sue Nay, Alternate Assessment Coordinator  
[sue.nay@maine.gov](mailto:sue.nay@maine.gov) 624-6774

English Language Proficiency Assessments:

Sue Nay, WIDA ACCESS Coordinator  
[sue.nay@maine.gov](mailto:sue.nay@maine.gov) 624-6774

Assessment Management Analyst I

Eric Buckhalter  
[eric.buckhalter@maine.gov](mailto:eric.buckhalter@maine.gov) 624-6770

**MAINE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES  
MAINE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (MEA)  
2018-19 ADMINISTRATION**