

M-STEP Assessment Preparation

Relevant assessments:

- M-STEP

- Important Dates and Deadlines
- Policies, Procedures, and Security
- Test Directions
- OEAA Secure Site, eDIRECT and Test Sessions
- Off-Site and Accommodated Testing
- Preparing Staff and Students
- Paper/Pencil Testing

NOTE to Reader:

The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is comprised of a series of documents published by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to provide information to District and Building Assessment Coordinators regarding their assessment-related roles and responsibilities. This guide provides the resources and knowledge base necessary to establish sound test administration practices and procedures that will allow for the reporting of valid and reliable test results. It will introduce you to Michigan's state assessment systems in general and will link you to the people, trainings, materials, tools, and resources needed throughout the process of coordinating state-provided assessments in your district.

This document is one chapter of the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** series. The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is not meant to replace assessment-specific testing manuals, guides, training resources, or other documentation associated with each assessment program.

The web pages referenced in this document are active links. For the full URLs to these pages, please see the **Assessment Coordinator Quick Reference** chapter. In that resource you will find an interactive list, along with the full URLs, of the assessment-related web pages you will need to access, as well as:

- A preface for the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide**, which includes information on how to use the guide
- An interactive **Table of Contents** for the training guide
- A reference list of acronym definitions, and
- Important contact information

It is recommended that you keep the **Assessment Coordinator Quick Reference** readily available for future use.



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Regardless of the test being administered, MDE requires that ALL testing staff read the **Assessment Integrity Guide** and sign the **OEAA Assessment Security Compliance Form**. A signed **Assessment Security Compliance Form**, testing schedules, and training materials should be kept on file for any staff member who participates in the administration of a state assessment or handles secure test materials. A link to the **OEAA Assessment Security Compliance Form** is also provided in the **Assessment Coordinator Quick Reference** chapter of this Training Guide.

Intro

As a new **M-STEP Assessment Coordinator**, if you have not already done so, make sure that you review the **Quick Start Guide** in the **Overview Module** of this training guide. The **Quick Start Guide** was developed with you in mind and lists several up-front tasks that all Test Coordinators must complete in order to ensure a smooth test administration, regardless of the assessment(s) you are responsible for.

This chapter provides an overview of the tasks that need to be completed before administering the M-STEP, as well as information about where to find the resources and tools necessary to complete each task, by answering the following questions:

- ▶ Where can I find important dates and deadlines for M-STEP assessment-related tasks?
- ▶ Where can I find all the administration policies and procedures for M-STEP testing?
- ▶ Where can I find information about assessment integrity and security?
- ▶ Where can I find Test Directions for each assessment?
- ▶ What tasks do I need to do in the Office of Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) Secure Site and how do I do them?
- ▶ What do I need to do in eDIRECT and how do I do it?
- ▶ How do I schedule Test Sessions? How much time should I plan for each Test Session?
- ▶ How do I create a testing schedule and what does it need to contain?
- ▶ What is needed for off-site testing?
- ▶ Where can I find information about student supports and accommodations?
- ▶ What do I need to do to prepare staff for testing?
- ▶ What do I need to do to prepare students for testing?
- ▶ What do I need to do if I have any students testing by paper/pencil?

Where can I find important dates and deadlines for M-STEP assessment-related tasks?



The **M-STEP List of Important Dates** and the **Grade 8 List of Important Dates** are documents that include all major testing tasks that need to be done, what the deadline or window is for each task, and the testing mode for each task – paper/pencil or online. These documents are posted to the [M-STEP web page](#)

each year in late fall in the **Current Administration** section. The availability of these documents, as well as other assessment-specific dates, will be announced in the weekly Michigan Department of Education (MDE) **Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability** newsletter.

Where can I find all the administration policies and procedures for M-STEP testing?



The MDE has prepared an [M-STEP Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](#). The TAM is the primary source for all test administration policies and procedures. It outlines the responsibilities of the [District Assessment Coordinator](#), [Building Assessment Coordinator](#), and [Test Administrators](#). It also includes detailed information about the policies and procedures for the assessment, including the [Calculator Policy](#), [Scratch Paper Policy](#), [reporting of any testing irregularities](#), and more. The M-STEP TAM is available in January–February each year. An announcement will be made in the MDE [Spotlight](#) newsletter when it is available. The TAM is available on the [M-STEP web page](#). Be sure to read and thoroughly review all the content in the M-STEP TAM so you are prepared to administer the assessment.

Once you have reviewed the calculator and scratch paper policies, you will need to determine how you will manage these tools used during testing.

- **Online Testing:** headphones, scratch paper, graph paper
 - » **Headphones** (for online ELA Listening passages and students using Text to Speech [TTS]) – Who will ensure all headphones are in working order? Where are they stored? How will Test Administrators access, distribute, and collect them?
 - » **Scratch paper** (all tests) – Where is scratch paper kept? How will used scratch paper be returned to the Building Assessment Coordinator for secure storage or secure destruction? How will scratch paper be kept secure during any break in testing?
- » **Graph paper** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Where will it be kept? How will used graph paper be returned to the Building Assessment Coordinator for secure storage or secure destruction?
- **Paper/Pencil Testing:** scratch paper, graph paper, calculators
 - » **Scratch paper** (all tests) – Where is scratch paper kept? How will used scratch paper be returned to the Building Assessment Coordinator for secure storage or secure destruction?
 - » **Graph paper** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Where will it be kept? How will used graph paper be returned to the Building Assessment Coordinator for secure storage or secure destruction?
 - » **Calculators** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Who will ensure all calculators are in working order? How will Test Administrators access, distribute, and collect testing calculators? How will they be stored?
- **Designated Supports/Accommodations**
 - » Who will identify students who require materials for a designated support or accommodation?
 - » How will these materials be provided and maintained during and after testing?
- **Testing Schedules**
 - » What location(s) will be used for testing?
 - » How will technology needs impact testing schedules and location(s)?
 - » On what times and dates will testing occur?
 - » Who will be the test administrator for each session?

Where can I find information about assessment integrity and security?



The **Assessment Integrity Guide** defines all the assessment security requirements for the M-STEP and other state assessments. It details requirements regarding, but not limited to:

- » cell phones and electronic devices
- » who can administer assessments
- » testing schedules

- » prohibited behavior and materials
- » assessment monitoring procedures
- » reporting administration irregularities and incidents

It is important that Assessment Coordinators are aware of all policies and expectations prior to testing.

Where can I find Test Directions?



Test Directions are used by Test Administrators in addition to the TAM during the administration of the M-STEP.

- » **Online Directions** are also provided for each grade. They are printed and sent to schools, and they are available on the [M-STEP web page](#)

- » **Paper/Pencil Directions** are provided for each grade. They are printed and sent to schools, and they are available on the [M-STEP web page](#).

Be sure to determine how test directions will be made available to Test Administrators, and who will be responsible for their distribution.

What tasks do I need to do in the OEAA Secure Site and how do I do them?



- **Confirm your access** to the [Office of Assessment and Accountability \(OEAA\) Secure Site](#)
 - » See the **OEAA Secure Site** chapter of this training guide for information about the OEAA Secure Site, and how to get access to the Site.
- **Pre-identify Students** for testing to the test they will be taking
 - » See the **Pre-Identification of Students for State Testing** chapter of this training guide for information about how to pre-identify students for testing.
- **Set up Test Sessions** for online testing
- **Set up Reporting Codes and/or Research Codes**, if used
 - » See the **Reporting Codes and Research Codes** chapter of this training guide for information about how to set up Reporting Codes and Research Codes.
- **Report Testing Irregularities** (during testing)
 - » Go to the **Incident Reporting** chapter of this training guide for information on Testing Irregularities and how to report them.
- **Manage Accountable Students** and **Test Verification**

What do I need to do in eDIRECT?



eDIRECT is Data Recognition Corporation's (DRC) test management system that is used to manage student online testing and perform the following functions.

- **Assign Student Supports and Accommodations**
- **Print Test Tickets and Test Rosters**
- **Set up and maintain Test Sessions**
- **Monitor Test Completion**

See the **eDIRECT Basics** chapter of this training guide for more information about eDIRECT and how to obtain access.

Additional directions for performing tasks in eDIRECT, including step-by-step instructions for managing Test Sessions are available in the **eDIRECT User Guide** or in the **Mini-Modules**, which are found in **eDIRECT All Applications General Information Documents** search for **ALL**.

How do I schedule Test Sessions? How much time should I plan for each Test Session?



Online Test Session time estimates for each grade and content area are provided in the **Guide to State Assessments** on the **M-STEP web page** to help Building and District Assessment Coordinators build a schedule that works for each school to ensure all tests are administered.

When reviewing the Test Session time estimates, it is important to consider that time estimates do not include any classroom tasks such as taking attendance, passing out test tickets, reading directions, or addressing any technology needs. Also note, the M-STEP is not a timed test, so when building the schedule, be sure to plan for fast finishers, as well as for students who need extra time.

MDE does not extend testing windows due to students not finishing; all testing must be completed within the published testing window. Be sure to monitor student completion of testing on the **eDIRECT Testing Status** screen throughout the window to be sure all tests are complete. Also note that the Testing Status screen in eDIRECT is based on students who are pre-identified in the **OEAA Secure Site**; if a student is expected to test but is not pre-identified, that student will not appear on the Testing Status screen.

Any student(s) testing via paper/pencil form must follow the published test dates for each grade and content area.

Schools are allowed significant latitude in scheduling Online Test Sessions in a manner that best meets the needs of their students. Having said that, the OEAA recommends not waiting until the end of a testing window to administer the test unless absolutely necessary, as unforeseen events such as building emergencies, technology problems, or student illness may have a negative impact on a school's ability to ensure all students can complete testing. The OEAA will not grant exceptions to the assessment participation requirement for students who were not tested simply because the tests were scheduled to be administered late in the test window.

Testing schedules should minimally include the following information:

- » district name
- » building name
- » building coordinator's name
- » date of assessment administration
- » location of testing session(s) (i.e., room number, classroom, etc.)

- » starting and ending time of testing session
- » assessment/grade/content being administered for each testing session
- » test administrator(s) and proctor(s) for each testing session.

Testing schedules must be retained by the district or school for three years. The OEAA may request a copy of a building’s testing schedule for monitoring and irregularity investigation purposes.

How do I create a testing schedule and what does it need to contain?



It is the **Building Coordinator’s** responsibility to develop test administration schedules for the M-STEP assessments based on the school’s resources and needs. The testing schedule must follow the test administration windows as established by the OEAA. Testing schedules should minimally include the following information:

- » district name
- » building name
- » building coordinator’s name
- » date of assessment administration

- » location of testing session(s) (i.e., room number, classroom, etc.)
- » starting and ending time of testing session
- » assessment/grade/content being administered for each testing session
- » test administrator(s) and proctor(s) for each testing session.

Testing schedules must be retained by the district or school for three years. The OEAA may request a copy of a building’s testing schedule for monitoring and testing irregularity investigation purposes.

What is needed for off-site testing?



There is an **Off-Site Test Administration Request** form for M-STEP. The window to request to test whole large groups of students opens in or close to November and continues through January. After this window to request to test large groups of students ends, typically in February, schools can

submit requests to test individual students who are homebound, suspended, or expelled with service. The dates for each request window are posted in the **M-STEP List of Important Dates**. The link to the **Off-Site Test Request** form is found on the [M-STEP web page](#).

Where can I find information about student supports and accommodations?



The [Student Supports and Accommodations](#) section of the [M-STEP web page](#) provides detailed information and documents regarding which Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations are available to M-STEP students.

Additionally, the [Student Supports and Accommodations Overview](#) chapter of this training guide includes detailed information about which Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations are available to students when

testing. And, the chapter called [Selecting and Assigning Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations](#) describes how to assign supports and accommodations for students.

NOTE: An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team can determine that a MI-Access assessment (Michigan's alternate assessment) is more appropriate for a student than the M-STEP assessment. See the [MI-Access: Who Takes the Alternate Assessment?](#) chapter of this training guide for more information.

What do I need to do to prepare staff for testing?



District Assessment Coordinators are responsible for providing training on the policies and procedures listed in the [M-STEP Test Administration Manual](#) and the [Assessment Integrity Guide](#) for staff involved in test administration. Also, all staff involved in testing must sign the [OEAA Assessment Security Compliance Form](#).

For more information about preparing staff for testing, see the [Preparing Yourself and Staff as a District Coordinator](#) and/or the [Preparing Yourself and Staff as a Building Coordinator](#) chapters of this training guide.

What do I need to do to prepare students for online testing?



The MDE recommends that all students be prepared to use the tools and functionality of the test prior to testing. The recommended order is:

1. Test Administrators view the [Student Tutorials](#) in [eDIRECT](#) with students in the classroom.
2. Test Administrators model the use of the [Online Tools Training \(OTTs\)](#) for students in the classroom.

3. Test Administrators provide students the opportunity to [work with the OTTs on the device they will use for testing](#) prior to the test administration.

More information about where to find these resources and other considerations for preparing students for testing is available in the [Preparing Students and Parents for Testing](#) chapter of this training guide.

What do I need to do if I have any students testing using paper/pencil?



Some schools may have individual students who are testing with paper and pencil, due to their assigned accommodations. In a few unique situations, an entire building may need to test using paper and pencil.

Testing with paper and pencil requires pre-identification of the student(s) to the paper/pencil administration of the assessment, ordering materials, for the student(s), and adhering to the published paper/pencil testing schedule. The paper/pencil dates for the spring testing window are posted every fall on the [M-STEP web page](#) in the [Summative Testing Schedule](#).

When an entire building needs to test using paper and pencil, an [Online Waiver Request](#) must be submitted in the [OEAA Secure Site](#). The [Online Waiver](#) window

occurs in late fall each year, preceding testing. Be sure to watch the [Spotlight](#) newsletter and refer to the [M-STEP List of Important Dates](#) for the dates.

For more information on all of these activities, see the following chapters of this training guide:

- » [Pre-Identification of Students for State Assessments](#)
- » [OEAA Secure Site](#)
- » [Initial Material Orders](#)
- » [Additional Material Orders](#)