

Introduction to Testing Technology

Relevant assessments:

- **M-STEP**
- **MME**
 - » M-STEP (Science and Social Studies)
- **MI-Access**
 - » MI-Access Functional Independence (FI)
 - » MI-Access Supported Independence (SI)
 - » MI-Access Participation (P)
- **WIDA™**
 - » WIDA ACCESS for ELLs
- **Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments (K–2)**

 Software for Online Testing

 How INSIGHT Works

 How the Backend Software Works

 Downloading the Software

 Practical Tips

NOTE to Reader:

The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is composed 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 Training Guide 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 **Quick Reference** chapter readily available for future use.



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Intro

Online testing requires some technical computer setup. This chapter introduces Assessment Coordinators to the **software students will be using for online testing**, by answering the following questions:

- ▶ What software will we be using for online M-STEP, MI-Access, and Early Literacy and Mathematics Benckmarks Assessments testing?
- ▶ How does INSIGHT work?
- ▶ How does the backend software work?
- ▶ Where can I get more information about the software? How do I download the software?

What software will we be using for online M-STEP, MI-Access, and Early Literacy and Mathematics Benckmarks Assessments testing?



The testing software is comprised of two main parts.

1. **INSIGHT** is the secure browser software that delivers the online assessment to students. It is the interface used to access the online assessments, Online Training Tools (OTTs), and Online Assessment Tutorials.
2. Supplying INSIGHT in the background is the cache server, a **Central Office Services (COS) service device**. It works behind the scenes and is usually seen only by your District Technology Coordinator. The service device holds the content that is presented to students through the INSIGHT interface, in addition to its other functions.

The DRC INSIGHT Portal hosts the Central Office Services application that connects the INSIGHT testing environment to the COS service device. WIDA AMS does the same for the WIDA assessments. When you are setting up or managing test sessions, you will log into the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#) or [WIDA AMS](#), depending on the assessment, which you can do through your usual web browser.



Screenshot of the INSIGHT landing page.

Online testing requires an internet connection. If the testing computer loses its connection to the school or district network, or the network loses its connection to the internet, testing stops until the connection is restored.

For more information about the DRC INSIGHT Portal and WIDA AMS, refer to the [DRC INSIGHT Portal Basics](#) and [WIDA AMS Basics](#) chapters of this Assessment Coordinator Training Guide.



How does INSIGHT work?

During testing, INSIGHT uses password-protected access and a “secure browsing” system that allows the secure presentation of test directions, test content, and interactive assessment items; it also allows individualized access to embedded assessment tools, supports, and accommodations, such as calculators, text-to-speech, and color-choice functions.

INSIGHT locks down the computer and prevents students from accessing any other programs and/or web pages. If a student is testing on a Chromebook or iPad, INSIGHT must be activated before the student can log onto the computer. This keeps the mobile device in “kiosk mode,” running only the INSIGHT application.



How does the backend software work?

INSIGHT is the student-facing interface for content that is held securely behind the scenes by the backend software. The backend software product is called a Central Office Services (COS) service device, a new generation of test site manager technology.

The service device is a “cache server.” A cache is a local copy of the test content, so testing computers can receive test material from the local cache more expediently than by downloading a new copy for each test. This is similar to shipping a box of paper/pencil tests rather than mailing each student’s test separately.

The cache server holds an encrypted copy of all the test materials. When each student logs in, INSIGHT

asks COS for the right test, along with anything else it might need, such as audio or sign language files.

You may still hear people referring to the previous generation of this software: a “Testing Site Manager” or “TSM.” COS has replaced that. TSMs had narrower limits on how many students could test at once, while COS lets schools use simplified setups that balance student load across available resources.

Response caching is another recently removed worry. In previous years, you may have needed to check that the TSM was “cleared” of student responses. Now, in the event of a lost connection, the software attempts to reconnect instead of shifting to an offline testing mode.



Where can I get more information about the software?

How do I download the software?

The [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#) and [WIDA AMS](#) both provide access to the [Technology User Guide](#) and software downloads.

The Technology User Guide walks you through the software and its installation in detail. The guide is targeted at Technology Coordinators, but it does include an FAQ and an explanation of error messages, which may help you communicate with your Technology Coordinator.

Other supporting documentation on the DRC INSIGHT Portal and WIDA AMS includes system requirements, advanced guides for COS configuration, and slides from training presentations.

Downloading the testing software requires logging in with a Technology Coordinator role. Chromebook and iPad users can access INSIGHT in their respective application stores (free of charge), but make sure you check with your Technology Coordinator before

doing so. They may be mass-deploying INSIGHT to computers, and their help will be needed to connect INSIGHT to a caching server.



Practical Tips

- Students and most school staff members only need to know INSIGHT. If INSIGHT has been installed and connected to a caching server, you are all set.
- The district Technology Coordinator should be contacted first for any issues with connection or INSIGHT that may arise before or during testing.
- The solution to most common technology problems is to restart the software or computer. Sometimes the problem involves a blip in the technology; sometimes it is a minor, unintentional user error, such as accidentally selecting an unintended link or option. Rebooting allows the computer to reset itself, and allows the operator time to perhaps recognize an error. If INSIGHT isn't functioning properly, first try restarting it or rebooting the computer.
- If an error message appears, be sure to write it down before calling the district technology staff or DRC. You will be asked whether an error message was received.
- If a student experiences multiple issues with technology when testing, pause and exit. Seek help and then have the student resume testing. If the test is already completed or submitted before you report the problem, testing is finished and there is nothing else to be done.

