

M-STEP Assessment Preparation

Relevant assessments:

- M-STEP

- Important Dates and Deadlines
- Policies and Procedures
- Test Security
- Test Directions
- OEAA Secure Site and DRC INSIGHT Portal
- Schedule Test Sessions
- Off-Site Testing
- Accommodated Testing
- Preparing Staff and Students
- Paper/Pencil Testing

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

If as a new **M-STEP** Assessment Coordinator you have not already reviewed the [Quick Start Guide](#) in the **Overview Module** of this training guide, be sure to do so. 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 must 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 OEAA Secure Site and how do I do them?
- ▶ What do I need to do in the DRC INSIGHT Portal?
- ▶ 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?
- ▶ How do I prepare staff for testing?
- ▶ How do I prepare students for testing?
- ▶ How do I prepare for students who are 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](#) documents include a list of all major testing tasks that need to be done, the deadline for each task, and the testing mode—paper/pencil or online—for each task. There is also a Microsoft Excel file that includes all important dates for all statewide assessments. Users can filter this file to view only the assessment(s) relevant to their

position and/or according to task, testing window, or test mode. These documents are posted each year in the late fall on the [M-STEP web page](#) 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?



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 these tools will be managed during testing.

- **Online Testing:** headphones, scratch paper, graph paper
 - » **Headphones** (for Text to Speech [TTS] test directions [if using], online ELA Listening passages, and students using TTS) – Establish a process to ensure that all headphones are in working order, that storage is available, and that Test Administrators know how to access, distribute, and collect them.
 - » **Scratch paper** (all tests) – Establish a process for the secure storage and destruction of scratch paper at all times during and after online testing. Make sure Test Administrators are aware of the policies and procedures regarding scratch paper before testing.?
 - » **Graph paper** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Establish a process for the secure storage of graph paper before and during paper/pencil testing, and for the secure destruction of the graph paper after testing.
- **Paper/Pencil Testing:** scratch paper, graph paper, calculators
 - » **Scratch paper** (all tests) – Establish a process for the secure storage and destruction of scratch paper at all times during and after paper/pencil testing. Make sure Test Administrators are aware of the policies and procedures regarding scratch paper before testing.
 - » **Graph paper** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Establish a process for the secure storage of graph paper before and during paper/pencil testing, and for the secure destruction of the graph paper after testing.
 - » **Calculators** (grades 6–7 mathematics) – Establish a process to ensure that all calculators are available and in working order and that Test Administrators know how to access, distribute, and collect them.
- **Designated Supports/Accommodations**
 - » How will students who require materials for a designated support or accommodation be identified? Who is responsible for identifying the students?
 - » How will materials for accommodated testing 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 is the Test Administrator for each testing 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

Assessment Coordinators must be aware of all policies and expectations prior to testing.

Where can I find test directions for each assessment?



Test directions are included in the Test Administrator's Directions and Manual document that must be read by all Test Administrators prior to administering any M-STEP assessment.

- **M-STEP Online Test Administrator's Directions and Manual documents** are provided for each grade. They are printed and sent to schools, and are available on the [M-STEP web page](#)

- **M-STEP Test Administrator's Directions and Manual documents** are provided for each grade. They are printed and sent to schools, and 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?



The following is a list of OEAA Secure Site tasks with links to related chapters from this training guide and to instructional documents located on the [OEAA Secure Site Training web page](#).

- Confirm that you have access to the [Secure Site](#)
 - » Refer to the [OEAA Secure Site](#) chapter of this training guide for information about the OEAA Secure Site, and how to get access to it.
 - » [Requesting Access to Secure Site](#) (instructional PDF)
- Pre-identify students for the test they will be taking

- » Refer to the [Pre-Identification of Students for State Assessments](#) chapter of this training guide for information about how to pre-identify students for testing.
- » [Pre-Identification of State Assessments Overview](#) (instructional PDF)
- Set up test sessions for online testing
 - » Refer to the [Creating Online Sessions](#) document on the [OEAA Secure Site Training web page](#) for directions to set up test sessions from the OEAA Secure Site

- » Refer to the [DRC INSIGHT Portal User Guide](#) for directions to set up test sessions within the DRC INSIGHT Portal
- Set up reporting codes and/or research codes, if used
- » Refer to the [Reporting Codes and Research Codes](#) chapter of this training guide for information about how to set up reporting codes and research codes.
- » [Reporting Code Label](#) (instructional PDF)
- 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.

» [Incident Reporting](#) (instructional PDF)

- Refer to the [Accountable Students Enrolled and Demographics](#) and the [Answer Documents Received and Not Tested Students](#) chapters

» [Accountable Students Enrolled and Demographics](#) (instructional PDF)

» [Answer Documents Received and Not Tested Students](#) (instructional PDF)

What do I need to do in the DRC INSIGHT Portal?



The DRC INSIGHT Portal (formerly known as eDIRECT) is Data Recognition Corporation's (DRC) test management system. It is used to manage student online testing and performs the following functions:

- assign student supports and accommodations
- print test tickets and test rosters
- set up and maintain test sessions

- monitor test completion

Refer to the [DRC INSIGHT Portal Basics](#) chapter of this training guide for more information about the portal and how to obtain access.

Additional directions for performing tasks in the DRC INSIGHT Portal, including step-by-step instructions for managing test sessions, are available in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal User Guide](#) or in the [Mini-Modules](#), which are found in [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#).

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](#). These estimates will help Building and District Assessment Coordinators build a schedule for each school that ensures all students are tested and all tests are administered on time.

When reviewing the test session time estimates, remember that time estimates do not include any classroom tasks, such as taking attendance, passing out test tickets, reading directions, or addressing any technology issues that may arise. Also consider that

the M-STEP is not a timed test, so when building the schedule, have a plan in place for students who finish early, as well as for students who need extra time.

Because MDE does not extend testing windows regardless of whether or not students finish the test, all testing must be completed within the posted testing window. Be sure to monitor student completion of testing on the DRC INSIGHT Portal Testing Status screen throughout the window to be sure all tests are complete. Also note that the Testing Status screen in the portal lists 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 using paper/pencil must test on the published test dates for each grade and content area.

Schools are allowed flexibility in scheduling online test sessions to best meet the needs of their students. However, the OEAA recommends that schools not wait 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 impact a school's ability to ensure all students complete testing. The OEAA will not grant exceptions to the assessment participation requirement for students who were not tested because the tests were scheduled for administration too late in the testing window.

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 needs and resources. The testing schedule must follow the test administration windows 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) (such as room number or classroom)

- starting and ending time of testing session
- assessment/grade/content being administered for each testing session
- the names of the 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. Refer to the [Assessment Integrity Guide](#) for the detailed test schedules policy and for sample test schedule templates.

What is needed for off-site testing?



There is an [Off-Site Test Administration Request](#) form for M-STEP. The dates to request off-site test administrations are listed in the M-STEP Important Dates document and Excel file, and will be posted in the weekly [Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability](#) newsletter.

Off-Site Test Administration Requests are done through the [OEAA Secure Site](#). For more information on Off-site Test Administration Request procedures, see the [Appropriate Practices for Test Security](#) chapter of this training.

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 students taking the M-STEP.

For more information on student supports and accommodations, refer to the following chapters of this training guide:

- [Student Supports and Accommodations Overview](#) – includes detailed information about which universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations are available to students when testing.

- [Selecting and Assigning Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations](#)

– describes how to assign supports and accommodations for students who need them.

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

How do I 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 all 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, refer to the following chapters of this training guide:

- [Preparing Yourself and Staff as a District Coordinator](#)
- [Preparing Yourself and Staff as a Building Coordinator](#)

How do I prepare students for testing?



MDE recommends that all students be prepared and have time to practice prior to testing.

For online testing, there are three steps for preparing students to use the tools and functionality of the test. The recommended order is for test administrators to:

1. View the [Student Tutorials](#) in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#) with students in the classroom.
2. Model the use of the [Online Tools Training \(OTTs\)](#) for students in the classroom.

3. Provide students the opportunity to practice with the OTTs on the device they will use for testing prior to the test administration.

For students using the paper/pencil test, they can practice using the [Paper/Pencil Sample Item Sets](#).

Prior to test day, Assessment Coordinators and/or Test Administrators should talk to students about the following:

- » Doing their best.

- » Not cheating.
- » Allowable post-test reading materials.
- » Cell phone policy during testing.
- » Types of writing materials they will need for paper/pencil testing.
- » Calculators to be used for mathematics paper/pencil (grades 6 and 7). More information about locating 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.

How do I prepare for students who are testing by paper/pencil?



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

Paper/pencil testing requires pre-identifying student(s), ordering materials, and adhering to the posted testing schedule for paper/pencil test administration. 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/pencil, an [Online Waiver Request](#) must be submitted in the [OEAA Secure Site](#). The Online Waiver window

opens and closes in late fall each year, preceding spring testing. Be sure to watch the [Spotlight](#) newsletter and refer to the [M-STEP List of Important Dates](#) for the Online Waiver window 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](#)

