



Washington Online Testing Orientation Training FAQ November 14 and 18, 2011

Q: Does the testing engine support the iPad?

A: This year's engine will work with Mac, Windows, and Linux. We will not be supporting iOS this spring

Q: What is the online testing administration window?

A: Online Testing Window is April 25th - June 1st, 2012.

Q: Does the November webinar highlight differences between last year's and this year's test engines?

A: It includes highlights of some of the changes, but the focus will be on the 2012 admin. There are many more similarities than differences.

Q: What is the paper/pencil test administration window?

A: April 25 through May 17, 2012.

Q: Will writing be available online for grades 4&7 in 2012?

A: Writing will remain P/P for 2012.

Q: Does the computer have to support 800x600 or does it have to be set to 800x600?

A: The computer must support 800x600 or greater, but does not have to be set to 800x600; it can be set to a higher resolution. For optimal viewing, we recommend 800x600.

Q: Is this the same or a new LCS from last year?

A: New this year.

Q: Does the student have to have rights to write to the C: drive after the test engine is installed? Ours do not.

A: Once the testing engine is installed, the student needs to be able to write to a 'home' directory. This 'home' directory will store the log files which may be needed when troubleshooting issues.

Q: If we have a new IT director for a school, do we need to register with DTC to make sure they are emailing me directly in relation to online testing?

A: Please make sure you notify dennis.small@k12.wa.us with your email address if you want to receive tech director info, including online testing info.

Q: Last year the higher screen resolutions stretched the picture causing a square to become a rectangle in some math questions, which was a problem. Will the program force the resolutions and then release it?

A: For computers running higher than 800x600 resolution, the student will see a 'border' around the questions. The border will fill out the full screen, and all students will see the same size question, with no 'stretching' of the content.

Q: How did online testing scores compare with paper/pencil scores?

A: Item analysis showed no difference in student performance between paper/pencil and online.

Q: Where is the ppt. located for download?

A: <http://www.k12.wa.us/TestAdministration/Trainings/default.aspx>

Q: What is OTT?

A: OTT stands for Online Tools Training. This practice feature of the test engine had previously been called the 'Tutorial'.

Q: Will the client application be distributed as a package for MacOS or will we have to build our own?

A: The Macintosh version is packaged as a .dmg file, which will work to install the application on the supported MacOS versions.

Q: Last year we were told that online testing would be mandatory this year. Evidently that has been postponed? When will all schools need to go online?

A: We are strongly recommending districts move to online testing within the next three years. Online is not mandatory at this time.

Q: What are the implications for taking the test with no audio?

A: The test content has not been audio-enabled, so all students will get the same content (for a given test), regardless of a computer's audio capability.

Q: Can we add students with eDIRECT?

A: Yes!

Q: Where do you download the software for LCS install and online testing?

A: The test engine and LCS software will be available on the OSPI web site.

Q: Will the new students be refreshed after the March upload or will we have to add all new students after March?

A: The management tool will include student names reported to OSPI in the CEDARS upload as of March 28. Students enrolling in the district after March 28 will need to be added via the online test engine's management tool.

Q: Right before the testing window, is there a way that we can upload proctor names for students rather than changing them one by one?

A: Test Sessions are created from the Group field in CEDARS. Districts and Schools can edit these sessions and add sessions as needed but there is not an upload feature for this task. During future Webinar sessions we will discuss ways to create and edit Test Sessions.

Q: Will multiple LCS allow for students to stop a session and restart on the same LCS?

A: No. However, if previous responses for that student have not been transmitted to DRC, the previously used LCS will have to be accessed and responses sent, before that student continues.

Q: What's the process to volunteer a school to participate in an online test?

A: Registration window in WAMS runs through December 16, 2011.

Q: Is there a tech sheet that shows the IP address DRC is using so that I can bypass them in my web filter?

A: The domains and/or IPs that should be white-listed on your networks will be provided as part of the documentation for Tech Coordinators.

Q: Is there a symbols palette?

A: Yes, some of the math and science items will have symbols that may be used to respond to questions.

Q: Is there a minimum Flash version?

A: Flash 10.1 or higher.

Q: Last year we had issues with reconnecting students who had to restart a test session (computer restart, move to another computer, etc) to the LCS that contained their test session. Will a student attempt restart multiple times until their session is "found" on the original LCS?

A: For LCS responses, there are two ways to resolve the issue. The LCS is set to automatically transmit responses to DRC servers every 15 minutes. If there are issues that prevent that, a Tech Coordinator can access the LCS's interface, and force the transmit at any time, without impacting the automatic transmittal. It is strongly recommended that you map each building (or set of buildings) to a unique LCS server; they are not intended to be used in tandem or in a fail-over or load-sharing environment. You can use more than one LCS within a district, but again point each workstation to a single LCS server.

Q: What is the function of the options button?

A: At this time, the options button will allow a student to change the background color in the testing engine.

Q: When will you be sending the password and login info to DACs for the eDirect?

A: Usernames and Passwords will be sent on January 20th.

Q: When will LCS and end-user software be available for download from OSPI's website?

A: We expect it to be released on Jan.20, 2012, and will provide a link to where to download the software.

Q: Students should practice with demos first and then OTT?

A: Yes, have them do demos first. Demos allow the user to observe how the engine works. The Online Test Tool (OTT) allows a student hands-on practice using the engine features.

Q: Will the engine have an .msi file with switches so we can install this through a push to mass machines?

A: The testing engine installer is an .msi file. The documentation will provide a list of switches available to automatic installs.

Q: May a non-IEP student take the p/p version if there are specific reasons for that child?

A: Yes

Q: Must paper/pencil be required for a student with an IEP?

A: No. IEP teams and staff familiar with the features of the test engine will determine what is the most appropriate mode.

Q: Students that are to use the P/P option (e.g. students receiving special education services), does this need to be recorded in the student's IEP that they are using the P/P option. Also, students that are receiving English language services, are they required to take the online format if a school decides to participate online or are ELL students allowed to use the P/P option.

A: In general the IEP will help determine p/p or online. There are exceptions: Translation accommodation in 2012 will not be delivered via the online test engine. Translated tests on CD will be used with a stand-alone computer and paper test booklet.

Q: High School will not be an option for online testing?

A: There are no high school tests available online.

Q: Although December 16th is the deadline to register schools/districts to participate online, if a school decides to participate after the Dec. 16th registration timeframe, can they "opt-in" to participate online.

A: After the December 16th cut-off date for WAMS registration, districts need to contact Assessment Operations.

Q: Districts need to decide whether to test online or paper/pencil without having any software or tutorials to review? As a district that has not tested online in the past, I do have concerns with the process.

A: Correct, this schedule does not allow for release of the demos or OTT until January. However, the majority of districts that participated in the past two years utilized the demos and tutorials (OTT) beginning in the 2nd semester. Please contact OSPI's Assessment Operations with any questions or concerns.

Q: Last year if a student had completed all questions but was not finished checking, and if that student got kicked out of the system for some reason, there was no way for the student to go back. Will that still be the same?

A: Modifications have been made for 2012. If a student's session is terminated before finishing, they can login again to finish the test.

Q: Last year's test engine required a staff person with admin rights to login so the update would run. It would be nice if we can get the update out earlier than a week before testing starts.

A: As with last year, you will have the option to allow auto-update on machines, or not. We are working hard to avoid any last-minute changes this year!

Q: We have a large number of students in our online program who reside in various areas of the state. Is there a way for districts to identify only the schools that are testing on line through the OSPI pre-id window? Last year we experienced difficulty in this area as some districts were testing on line only and placement of our online students was difficult.

A: Online school students most likely will test in the district of residence. Check with the resident district's office to determine whether or not a school is testing online. Online program students can test with paper/pencil or online, as the resident district's resources/infrastructure support

Q: If we are testing 6th grade students in reading online, but we have some students who need the paper/pencil version, what is the process for ordering paper/pencil tests for those students?

A: Based on the number of enrolled students, you will automatically receive 10% of that enrolled number in paper booklets.

Q: What is the current projection (time wise) to include the translated math/science tests for ELL students as part of the online test?

A: The state's budget and resources will determine timeline

Q: Are the DFAs updated and do they mention any character limits?

A: Yes, DFAs are updated for 2012 and will include item character limits.

Q: In the demo, are the questions always the same? If they review the demos over and over, are they looking at the same question?

A: There is a fixed set of demo questions, by grade and subject.

Q: Is OSPI going to require students in our online program who are testing in their resident school districts to be pre ID in WAMS like last December?

A: Yes, the process will be the same as in 2011.

Q: My district is considering going back to paper testing as they saw a significant drop in test scores from paper to online. Is there a date when the state is looking at mandating online testing? Is there a reason why I should encourage my district not to go back to paper testing?

A: The state assessment is moving online. The plan is to be online before the required common core assessments (all online) are implemented in 2014-2015. OSPI will post statistical analyses to the web. In meantime, results can be discussed by calling Assessment Operations staff.

Q: Is there going to be similar mass-deployment options as there were last year?

A: The Windows installer is an .msi file which allows mass deployment.

Q: Will we know which districts are testing 100% on line with no paper pencil options for online students?

A: Yes, the list of participating districts/schools will be posted to the web.

Q: Has the new test engine been tested with IE9?

A: The test engine itself is not run through a web browser, so this should not be an issue.

Q: Will MSI's be available for the update installers as well? As is the concern with many here, we have no intention of allowing our students administrative access to systems and will be looking for an alternative deployment method.

A: The update installers do not have .msi installers.

Q: The behavior of last year's test was that a flagged question would "disappear" after the student re-logged in?

A: Flagged questions will be preserved between login attempts. This does not apply to the demo or OTT tests.

Q: Capacity calculator availability?

A: Yes. OSPI will post the calculator at <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/OnlineTesting.aspx>

Q: Will wireless labs be supported?

A: Supported, as long as you have adequate capacity on your wireless network. (Hint: if it works well with Internet browsing, it should support the test engine as well).

Q: Chrome is not on the list of browsers. Will it be included?

A: The demos will run using the Chrome browser, although eDirect cannot run in Chrome. The operational test is not browser-based, and does not run on the Chrome OS.

Q: Is downloading the student test engine the only way to install? Can we download it and then push it out to computers?

A: You can download the installation once and then push it out to several computers. It supports silent installation.

Q: The LCS is recommended for installing at EACH school, regardless of Internet bandwidth, if more than 150 students are being tested at the same time?

A: It is recommended, but not required. Using an LCS will reduce the bandwidth requirements by >50%. It also allows tests to be completed without interruption if internet connectivity is dropped after beginning the test.

Q: If a student needs more time than others in a group, can the test be paused or stopped and then restarted?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a solution that does not require us to put an LCS out at each school - we've centralized resources very successfully many years ago and putting a server out at schools just for the purpose of testing is an incredible burden on our resources, both at the district office and at the buildings.

A: Districts do not need to have a server physically at each school. They can either use one of the machines already on premise as a virtual server (can be running other apps), or just identify unique servers (or virtualized servers) at the district level for each building if the WAN bandwidth is pretty robust.

Q: Will an install of the engine be required ahead of time or is it like a plug-in install at each session?

A: It is an installed piece of software that needs to be set up ahead of time.

Q: The highlighting, cross-out, and other features -- do they go away when a student flags the item to come back to later?

A: No, these will be retained with the test. Any markings will not go away as long as the system closes properly. Some markings may be lost if the application closes unexpectedly, but all responses are always saved.

Q: Is it possible that the student testing engine could be made available to districts to use for local testing to get students accustomed to using it for testing?

A: Yes the engine will be available on Jan.20, 2012. We will send out links to download at that time.

Q: We won't need our username and password to register for taking test online. Would we use our normal access to CEDARS to do that?

A: Online registration will be done through WAMS.

Q: What is the target year for all testing to be done online?

A: For the MSP we anticipate close to 100% by 2013-2014.