

# VTCAP 2026 Office Hours March 25<sup>th</sup> Transcript

39m 44s

## Slide 1

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 0:03

Welcome to our office hours, obviously it is March 25<sup>th</sup>, and I'm just going to go ahead and get started.

## Slide 2

We're going to do introductions again for the folks that we have on our side supporting you. A few reminders, a couple of updates and then we're going to open it up to questions from all of you. As a quick reminder, the slides, the recording will all be shared on the help and support site and then our next office hours will be two weeks from today.

## Slide 3

Introductions. I'm going to start with me because I'm on the screen. My name is Heidi Jo Bartlett. I am the ACCESS Coordinator and the English Learner Coordinator here. I'm going to pass it over to Mabika.

**Mabika, Goma** 0:58

Wait, I was muted. I didn't realize. Sorry. So, my name is Mabika Goma, and I'm the VTCAP coordinator. Thank you. I'll pass it to Amanda.

**Hass, Amanda** 1:09

Good afternoon, everybody. My name's Amanda. I'm the MSAA or the Alternate Assessment Coordinator. I also do work with accommodations and accessibility features. I'll pass it to Lauren from Cogna.

**Lauren Copp | Cogna** 1:28

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lauren Copp, and I am the Program Manager

here at Cognia that supports the VTCAP assessment. Next, I will pass it over to our vendor, Stephanie Ada.

**Stephanie Ada** 1:43

Hi everyone, this is Stephanie Ada. I'm a senior project manager, just providing overall support to you from the Pearson team.

Slide 4

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 1:50

Thanks, everyone. All right, a few reminders as we start.

Slide 5

A FERPA reminder, please do not put any student information into the chat or talk about any specific student information because we are being recorded; it will be posted. We want to maintain student privacy. If you do need to share student specific information for the VTCAP, please call the Vermont Service Center. It has the phone number there on the screen. 1-800-215-8975 is the phone number. If you're working with students who are taking the MSAA, their phone number is 866-834-8879, and then there's an e-mail there for the MSAA as well.

Slide 6

OK, I'm going to talk for a moment about the ACCESS test that we finished up just a couple weeks ago. All your testing material should have been returned, and WIDA sends out an e-mail to the district test coordinator whenever that first box of paper materials get sent back to them. You can go on to the WIDA AMS and download the secure tracking report to get the information about what materials have been received and what hasn't been. Our data validation window is from April 1st through 9th. If you're contacted for verification or to get any additional information about your students, please respond back to that e-mail as promptly as you can. And also, if you have any students this year that were new for you that you tested, please make sure that a completed online home language survey is completed for

them. Then, scores will be available online in WIDA AMS on April 30th this year. All right, I'm going to pass it over to Amanda.

## Slide 7

**Hass, Amanda** 3:39

Another plug here for the Alternate Assessment Science Item Review Committee. The deadline to apply to be part of the committee is April 1st, which, if you can believe it, is already next Wednesday. The link to apply is there on the screen. You should be able to click on the screen to get that link, but we'll also put it in the chat and if you would like any more information or if you have questions about it, please e-mail me. My e-mail is there on the slide.

## Slide 8

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 4:18

Thanks, Amanda. All right, a reminder about test security incidents. If you have any issues that are happening during your testing sessions that need to be reported. We have a test security incident form to report any of those concerns. This could be if an unapproved device was used by a student, if the secure materials were accessed or shared, accessed by somebody that shouldn't have had it or shared by somebody that maybe should have had it but shouldn't have shared it. Any cheating, suspicions or issues or things like if the student took an incorrect test, or if a student took a test but the incorrect accommodation was used. Some of the issues might require the test to be reset for the student, but the test security is form is there for you to report any issues that might be happening.

## Slide 9

All right, a couple of resources and contacts. The key resource that we would like to highlight is the online support site, the VTCAP online support site. For the VTCAP questions, you can use the Vermont Service Center for questions such as transferring students, resetting a test if you need any additional materials to be sent out to you, if there are any technology-related questions or issues that you run into. And then as we said, you know with the FERPA and everything, calling is usually faster than

emailing, although they will respond to emails, as you're able to share student information in specific situations over the phone.

For MSAA, you can contact Amanda if you need to transfer students between sites, or if you have any questions about students' profiles, or if you need to edit their demographic information and also if you have any questions about appropriate accommodations to be using for folks. Mabika's going to talk a little bit about deleting students.

## Slide 10

### **Mabika, Goma** 6:29

Thank you, Heidi, Jo. So, we got a lot of questions about, you know, students have moved to a different state: should we delete them? We're trying to delete that. So, we just want to clarify that it's not possible to delete a student in ADAM. Instead, we should use different participation codes depending on the situation. So, for example, if the student has moved and instead of deleting you can use "Other" as you know as the code. Also, some of the relevant codes for ELA, for example, first year student that cannot take the assessment because they are English language learners, we use 01. And 02 for medical exemption and for student that take the alternate assessment we use 03. That also can be seen in the test coordinator manual. You can specifically look at page 43 and there are some screenshots that you can look at. I'll give it back to Amanda.

## Slide 11

### **Hass, Amanda** 7:50

So I wanted to mention about what to do at the end of the assessment for the alternate assessment. Just want to make sure that we are fully submitting the assessment. This just looks like actually pushing the submit button and then on the MSAA dashboard you'll see that the student's test has changed from in-progress to submitted. There should be an end of test survey link that becomes available. And I'm hitting this point kind of hard because I just want to make sure that all of those tests get submitted so they will be counted in the participation data and that the student will receive an individual student report in the ISR. If the test is not

submitted and remains in progress or is in the locked status, it will not be counted. The student will not receive an individual student report. Just want to make sure we're checking to ensure those tests are fully submitted very early on, and then I'll be keeping an eye on it as we go through the testing window and reaching out in case we're getting close to the end, and I'm not seeing some tests being submitted, but just wanted to bring this up now so we can be preemptive on submitting the tests.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 9:26

And it's also important because the MSAA is different than the ACCESS and the VTCAP because any in-progress tests for those get automatically submitted, but the MSAA ones you have to manually submit them.

**Hass, Amanda** 9:41

Yeah, it's not an auto submit.

## Slide 12

**Hass, Amanda** 9:45

So I will just continue on talking as this slide is about accessibility features. Just wanted to quickly review that a great place to start if you have any questions on accessibility features or accommodations is the VTCAP Accessibility and Accommodation Guidelines. There is also an alternate assessment accommodation manual on the alternate assessment webpage, but the alternate assessment itself has many built-in supports, whereas the VTCAP, there's quite a lot of things that can be added and you'll find all those detailed in that document. But if something is confusing or not explained or there's a question around it, please reach out to me. My e-mail is there. And then finally, there's a nice quick reference guide for the accessibility features and accommodations, essentially like a one page print out of what's available and which accommodations are compatible with other ones. And those links are there.

## Slide 13

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 11:02

Yeah, next for some updates, I'm going to pass it over to Lauren.

## Slide 14

**Lauren Copp | Cognia** 11:09

All right, so here we just wanted to provide a reminder regarding how to set a student's text to speech accommodation in ADAM. So, this year if you have a student who needs the Text to Speech accommodation, it is a two-step process to make sure that that functionality is set up correctly. So to assign this accommodation, the coordinator would navigate to the accommodations menu and add them in the user setup page, and they're going to have to check the box within the ELA column twice. It will be in two rows, so they would go to the Text to Speech row and then scroll down and go to the Text to Speech ELA accommodation row.

## Slide 15

And then this slide here is just two snips to show you what that looks like in ADAM on that page. These two options aren't next to each other on that page, so you will have to click the Text to Speech first and then scroll down a little to find the Text to Speech ELA accommodation. But you do have to check both because if you only check that first column, if you only check Text to Speech ELA, that will only set the students as having Text to Speech as a designated support. And then if you only check text to speech ELA accommodation and you miss that first check box, that is actually not going to provide the student any Text to Speech. The toolbar won't populate, so it may feel redundant, but you have to click it twice, but it's just the way it's configured on the back end in ADAM. We just thought it would be an important reminder to bring this forward. And so, if we go to the next slide to make sure your kiddo is set up correctly, you would this is just a sample kid on screen, but you would want to go to their accommodations in their user setup and here you would see both options. So you'll see Text to Speech and then again Text to Speech ELA accommodation. So, you should see both. And again, that's only if it's the accommodation, not the designated support.

All right. And then let me pause. I think there might be a question here.

"Was the Text to Speech ELA accommodation requiring two box checks made explicit before today? Sadly, I missed that detail and that has impacted 13 students." Oh, I'm

so sorry. We did try to make it pretty explicit within the manuals as well as if you look in ADAM, when you are setting up the accommodations, there is that fine print. Maybe if you go back, oh, on the slide where you have you see the check boxes, the fine print. It's probably hard to see here on screen, but under that Text to Speech ELA accommodations, we really did wordsmith that. So that way it tells you, you know, step one scroll up to click the Text to Speech and click this and then also when you click the check box for the Text to Speech ELA accommodation, a prompt comes up on screen and it's asking you to confirm that you've checked both boxes again. So we did try to think of as many touch points to bring that up because we did realize it is not an intuitive thing that you would have to click it twice to set up one setting.

So, "it would be helpful for those accommodations to be next to each other". I agree. Unfortunately, sometimes there are things that the way things are set up for how the data comes out, it's a little more technical and sometimes you have constraints on what you can do, but it's definitely feedback we can take back and look at again to see how we can improve it next year, but I do agree. It's a little not intuitive, a little challenging, but hopefully this reminder saves any pain points in the future. But I do apologize for any troubles that this might have caused folks. Other questions related to that?

"I see the print now, but didn't see it when I did the uploads."

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 16:00

I'll add to what you said, Lauren, that information was in the accessibility manual with the directions. So, if you don't want to go back and listen to this recording again, you can reference the manual, and it has the instructions in there as well.

**Lauren Copp | Cognia** 16:17

Yes. Thank you.

Slide 17

All right, so moving on with a couple of other updates that happened in ADAM since the last office hours. There was some feedback we got from the field regarding the

challenge with the proctor timeout with the login sessions. It was logging folks out after 15 minutes of inactivity. So that was something we were able to increase. That now is timed out at 60 minutes. So, we hope that this change, you know, better supports the testing coordinators and proctors and you know, less interruptions due to inactivity. Hopefully that's a positive change there for you all. And then just another reminder that we thought is important is really for students when they're taking the ELA test is to just reiterate to read the directions and not get click happy and click ahead because there is a point in Session three with the writing prompt where if you click too far you can't go back. So we have been seeing some test resets where students clicked ahead and submitted the test before they were able to do the writing prompt. And so unfortunately in that scenario, you can either have the kiddo's test submitted without the writing prompt or we would have to reset the entire test so the student would have to redo Session one and Session two. So I would really, before proctoring, just hit that hit that point a few times. Maybe remind students as they're approaching Session three to take their time and read the directions and the prompts because there are quite a few prompts along the way, so they do have to click through a few things before they submit the test. But on a positive note, I will say we are seeing a lot less test resets this year with moving that to Session three. So I do think that's helping, but there's always going to be students, I think, that get excited and click ahead. So wanted to hit that reminder today as well.

## Slide 18

And then this next slide here is just showing the test progress. This was as of Monday. So, it's a little small here on screen, but the new test sessions assigned in ADAM are the blue bars and then the green is showing test submitted. And this is very close to the counts of where we were at this time last year, so things are looking pretty consistent.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 19:13

Thanks, Lauren. I saw a couple messages come up on the screen, and it looks like Stephanie's going to get back to Danielle about why they're not seeing an increased proctor time out time.

And then I see a question from Tim. Would a Bluetooth connection for your earbuds

be considered a medical device? I guess it would depend on the purpose of the Bluetooth connection. If you want to provide any more specific details, we're going to talk just for a moment here about some accessibility features and we will get back to that question and go to the next screen.

## Slide 19

So a couple of current frequently asked questions that we've got and Amanda's going to talk about accessibility.

## Slide 20

**Hass, Amanda** 20:08

Yes, so good transition. Just wanted to touch again on the different levels of accessibility features from Designated Support to Accommodations.

**Hass, Amanda** 20:25

Universal tools are available to all students, and they're either built into the test itself, like zoom or answer masking or Eliminator. Those things you can use on the computer while taking the test. Also, if it's a paper test, or even if it's a computer test, a universal tool is like scratch paper, pencil, things like that available to all students. Then the next level in is a designated support. Designated supports are available to all students, but I want to emphasize a support is assigned by a team of educators that identified a need a student had that was becoming a barrier to testing. And so, if a team of educators agrees that a student has a need, and one of the designated supports would remove a barrier to testing, then that student doesn't need an IEP or a 504 plan to access that designated support. So with designated supports, just want to emphasize test administration should not be the first time the student is experiencing the support. It should be used in instruction, practice.

If test administration is the first time a student experiences the support, it could be distracting. It could actually detract from the assessment experience, and so we don't want to influence the test experience. We want the student to be able to use the support to overcome a barrier versus, you know, being hampered by the barrier or by the support itself that's supposed to be helping them overcome the barrier.

And then finally we have the level of accommodation. These are available to students with IEP or 504 plans, and again, test administration should not be the first time a student is using the accommodation. They should be written into the IEP and well used an instruction beforehand.

So I saw Christina had a question about designated support of separate setting. Do students need to have this reflected in an IEP or 504 or is it open to all students so? If it's a designated support, it is available to all students, but it's really based on the student's need and student like apostrophe S not *all* students. So we want to avoid having designated supports as sort of a blanket for all students. There should not be a designated support decided for every student. It should be a need determined for an individual student and then a team of educators agrees. You know this student would definitely access the assessment in a separate setting rather than having all students in a separate setting.

Hopefully that distinction is clear. And then Tim, I'm seeing your messages about the Bluetooth earbuds since the earbuds are related to a hearing aid and a hearing aid device that would be considered a medical device, yes, and so that would be allowed. I think that's everything. Are there any other questions about the different levels of accessibility features and accommodations?

## Slide 21

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 24:47

And if you think of one as we have a few more slides, you can go ahead and throw them in the chat too.

I'm going to talk for a moment about frequent breaks. Breaks are one of those universal tools that are available to all students. It's not a designated support, it's not an accommodation, and so therefore it does not need to be noted in ADAM. If you have a student who has breaks noted in their IEP or 504 plan and you want to make sure the Proctor knows this, you can check that information and the student's profile in ADAM, but you do not need to for the frequent break one. Frequent breaks are not noted on the on the individual score report and because it's not a VTCAP accommodation in the same way that something like Text to Speech might be

considered an accommodation. If you have any questions about if you want to be marking it or not, you can again reach out to us rather and ask about a specific situation, but in general, they do not need to be indicated, but they can be if it's an accommodation in their IEP or 504 plan.

All right. And Mabika's going to talk briefly about independent schools.

## Slide 22

**Mabika, Goma** 26:10

Thank you. So we get a lot of questions from independent schools asking who is responsible for testing the student that they have, and there have been some confusion on that, so. First of all, I would like to clarify that independent student that are in independents that are not publicly funded are not required to test, but they can test if they want, if they choose to.

And secondly, those students that are in independent schools and that are required to test - the school is responsible for rostering and testing them. And also we've noticed that there are some schools, independent schools that did not have students to test last year and have students this year, so they are not in ADAM. So when if you are in that situation, you contact either Cognia or me and we will create an ORG for you so that you have an account set up in ADAM and also there are requirements that you have to follow about training, and you have to train your personnel and you have to train yourself before starting testing. That's what I wanted to clarify. Hope this helps. I'll bring it back to you. Heidi Jo.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 27:41

Yes, and we have a few more slides from last week's, or from the PowerPoint from a couple weeks ago, as well with more information about independent schools that you can refer back to or, as Mabika said, you can reach out.

## Slide 24

All right, so now it's our open question time. I yes, I see the one for accommodation levels for multilingual students if a student is an English learner student.

They we do have some accessibility features. They fall kind of under the designated support-type level of supports. The big ones would be if you have a student who is

literate in Spanish, French, Chinese, Swahili, no. Swahili or Somali? Shoot, forget off the top of my head. Arabic.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 28:39

Swahili, OK, then we do have this available. The VTCAP is available in those languages. Otherwise, English is the language of the assessments. However, the text-to-speech is available to those students as a designated support that will read the test items to the students and the directions, but not the reading passages in the ELA. I'll put the reference for the all that list of the designated support accessibility features for English learners and let me grab that.

**Hass, Amanda** 29:16

Yes, that's great. Yeah, we have a whole document about multilingual English learners.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 29:20

And I got that there. Let me throw that into the chat.

Question from Lisa regarding "homeschooling students that will not be participating in VTCAP. Do they need to do anything other than code them as other"? I'm not sure about that. We'll look at that question, Lisa, unless Lauren or Stephanie know it off the top of their head. I can't remember what our source of truth is for our list of homeschool students, but I'll write that down and get that.

And then Jennifer is asking "about Proctor Sandbox to play in". Do we do we have one of those? That's a Lauren and Stephanie question.

**Stephanie Ada** 30:34

Yeah, we do, actually. We have a training administration that's available to perform all the tasks that you would normally perform in an admin within ADAM, and that's where you can play around with Proctor dashboards rostering students and all that stuff.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 30:56

Are there directions on how to access that?

**Stephanie Ada** 31:03

Let me actually pull a screenshot. The directions to interact with it would be the exact same as a regular administration, it's just where to locate it in ADAM. So I'll pull a screenshot of that really quick.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 31:14

All right, thanks.

**Stephanie Ada** 31:15

Sure.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 31:21

I think it's Stephanie a minute or two there to bring that up for us.

## Slide 23

As she's doing that, if anybody has any other questions that they'd like to come off mute and say, or if they'd like to type in the chat, more than welcome to.

Excellent. And I see that Stephanie added that screenshot of where to access the sandbox version to play around with it a little bit. And I'll try to add this to the PowerPoint before we upload it so it gets included (Note: Added as slide 22) in that reference material. Thanks, Stephanie.

**Stephanie Ada** 32:25

Sure.

## Slide 25

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 32:31

Then I'm going to forward ahead here to our last few slides, but if people have questions, feel free to continue to ask them. If you would like to be connected as part of our assessment listserv, I would assume many of you are already on that, but you might have new folks in different roles and your schools that they that you'd like to add them that can click the link there and sign up for it. You can also send an e-mail

to us, and I can add you manually to it. You'll get updates for our quarterly newsletter and then if there's any statewide assessment or accountability information or things that come out.

And then as I said, our next office hour is going to be on Wednesday, April 8th from 2:00 until 3:00. That's two weeks from now. You'll reach our assessment mailbox at [AOE.statewideassessment@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.statewideassessment@vermont.gov).

And you can also contact the Vermont Service Center or the MSAA Service Center directly by phone or by e-mail as well.

Let's see here a question from Jennifer reads, "The Text to Speech reads fragments of text to the student outside of the passages. Is there a way to set it so that it reads the entire question and answer choices?"

**Stephanie Ada** 33:58

Aside from Text to Speech being a designated support where it just reads direction lines in the passage and the questions, I might need more information on this. Maybe like the student ID so that I could look into it a little closer.

**Jennifer O'Neill** 34:17

OK. Thank you. I was going say: I'll unmute. Yeah, it's so we're finding that on it seems like the default setting for Text to Speech, it should be that it reads the question and the distractors, the answer choices.

But right now it reads, it's very fragmented, so it'll read fragments of the text, right? So it'll read like the question, and then you have to highlight it and then and then so I was wondering if there was a way that the default setting could be changed, that it reads the entire question and the answer choices or?

**Stephanie Ada** 35:01

Yeah, normally we would expect it to read everything. So which subject and grade are you looking at?

**Jennifer O'Neill** 35:04

I'd have to go back in and look. It was something that I talked about with my

coordinators and they brought it to my attention and I was like, oh, so I'd have to go back in and look.

The other question I had around, and you dropped the screenshot. So I'm there, but I'm not really seeing around the sandbox for teachers to play in. I'm not really seeing where to access like that proctor dashboard because I just deal with all the teachers. You know we we've had teachers really super anxiety when they get into that that live test. So, I see the infrastructure trial on mine, I, you know, but I'm not seeing like where's that sandbox that they can play in. Yeah. And I'm using, I'm using like a, you know, the word sandbox, but it's like something that they can interact with prior to the test going live.

**Stephanie Ada** 36:14

Yeah, sorry, I think I just had some connectivity issues for a second, but you can create a proctor group. I think it's the proctor dashboard you're wanting to view. So, you could either create a proctor group yourself, and then enter like you could roster students into it, the same students that you would usually use. This is just a training practice environment. Or, you could just access an existing Proctor group that you might see. If you click on the ellipses next to Proctor groups and go to view, you can just access one that might be already created and enter the Proctor dashboard for that one.

**Jennifer O'Neill** 36:50

OK, think I'm following OK.

**Stephanie Ada** 36:52

OK, I'm going to drop my e-mail if you want to e-mail more details about that text to speech issue and then CC whoever is whoever else from AOE and Cognia is on this call as well. Then I can look into it a little more.

**Jennifer O'Neill** 37:09

Great. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 37:10

I don't know the real VTCAP, but I did go through the some of the practice tests and I'm wondering is this referring to like if it says a question like which sentence from the passage best illustrates that John was sad in this in this text or something, and then it'll read like 3 or 4 sentences from the passage. Is that what it's referring to or is it for something else?

**Jennifer O'Neill** 37:42

I think it's for something else. Yeah, I yeah, I have to get clarity from him. So, to be continued.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 37:50

Perfect. Sounds good.

And thank you, Stephanie, for adding your e-mail in the chat there. There's any other questions?

And I have on the list that we're going to double check on the homeschool student question for Lisa, and that Jennifer's going to get back to us about Text to Speech stuff.

**Stephanie Ada** 38:43

Actually, would it help if I just walked through that training admin with the Proctor dashboard really quick?

**Stephanie Ada** 38:51

Oh, actually, I don't know if I can share.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 38:54

Uh, you have more permissions. I don't want you to share something by accident that we can't post publicly.

**Stephanie Ada** 39:00

OK.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 39:01

Maybe if you have a chance, we can talk about if you can do a maybe an individual, like a couple minute walk through, and then we can post that separately.

**Stephanie Ada** 39:08

OK, sounds good.

**Bartlett, Heidi Jo** 39:14

Well, if anybody has any additional questions, you know, feel free to stay on and ask. Otherwise, thank you for joining us today and we hope to see you again, or reach out if you have any questions in the meantime.