

Site Technology Readiness Checklist for Deploying LAS Links Online Assessments



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CHECKLIST INTRODUCTION

This document is a guide for sites implementing LAS Links Online assessments. It is structured to be used by Technology Coordinators and other educators within schools and districts as they prepare to administer LAS Links Online using DRC INSIGHT.

The checklist is designed to identify various factors that a site should address to provide a positive student online testing experience. Understanding that sites may approach online testing differently and that roles and responsibilities at sites may vary, sites should feel free to adapt the activities in this checklist to their site's specific needs.

The checklist is organized by *recommended* timeframes and categories of the activities.

Timeframes

- 2-3 Months Before Testing
- 1-2 Months Before Testing
- 2-4 Weeks Before Testing
- 1-2 Weeks Before Testing
- Day of Testing

Categories

- Communication
- Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics
- Technology – Testing Device Setup
- Technology – Network Configuration
- Technology – COS Service Device Setup
- Training

The checklist also includes suggestions for one-to-one testing sites, for testing students attending virtual/online schools and for testing students from multiple sites around the district into a consolidated testing site.

One-to-One Environments

Suggestions for one-to-one testing device sites where each student has their own device that will be used for test administration with DRC INSIGHT.

Consolidating Students Attending Virtual/Online Schools or From Multiple District Sites

Suggestions for delivering online testing using DRC INSIGHT for virtual or online schools and for districts consolidating students from multiple schools into a central alternative testing site. These alternative testing sites can vary from existing district locations to gathering students at public facility, such as libraries, community centers, and hotels.

Teachers, Test Administrators, Technology Coordinators, District Assessment Coordinators, EL Directors, Principals, Curriculum Directors, and others to work together as a site planning team. This site planning team should start meeting at least three months before the start of testing.

As you use this checklist, remember to update it regularly to ensure that it reflects the current status of the technological resources at your site.

CATEGORIES OVERVIEW

Communication

To facilitate a successful online testing experience for all students, it is important that all staff and personnel have a clear understanding of the testing process and the expectations associated with each team member's assignment.

Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics

Proper planning is key to a successful test administration. Spending time scheduling and planning site logistics will reduce surprises and should result in a smoother test administration.

Technology

Tasks in this category fall into three subcategories:

- Central Office Services (COS) Service Device Setup
- Testing Device Setup
- Network Configuration

The activities in this category help staff identify eligible devices, determine network capacity, ensure the site has required peripherals and infrastructure to administer the assessment, understand the total number of students the testing site and districts can serve, and deploy the technology appropriately.

Training

The activities in this category relate to the training and preparation of everyone involved in delivering and taking the test: students, educators, and technology staff.

Students should have opportunities to use the technologies that will be employed during testing and become comfortable with the technology.

Educators should receive the training and support necessary to effectively and routinely employ the technology used during testing.

Technology staff need to understand the technology infrastructure requirements and what is necessary to properly install and configure the environment to facilitate a good student testing experience.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

2-3 Months Before Testing

Communication

- Identify key staff that will be involved in the administration of LAS Links Online testing.
- Meet with staff involved with online testing to create understanding and awareness of the LAS Links Online assessment. In the meeting, review the roles and responsibilities associated with online assessments, discuss how each will be addressed within the site, and assign roles and responsibilities to the various team members. Consider including the following personnel:
 - Technology Director
 - School Technology Support
 - Other Technical Support Staff
 - District Test Coordinator
 - EL Director
 - EL Coordinators
 - Building Principals
 - Guidance Counselors
 - Test Administrators
 - Department and Teacher Leaders
 - Clerical Support (facilitate logistics and document planning notes and procedures)
- Discuss district and school technology needs with the District Test Coordinator.
 - Review district and school technology capacity to administer testing online.
 - Confirm that the hardware required for the school is available and that the available bandwidth for the school is sufficient.
 - Use the ELL Testing Site Capacity Estimator, found on DRC INSIGHT Portal to help determine bandwidth requirements
- Share the testing plan and schedule of testing dates (master schedule) with the district to help them build a master testing schedule. This is important if the district is providing Internet services to the site or hosting the COS Service Device to enable the district to predict and monitor bandwidth use.

Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics

- Develop an Action Plan that outlines the steps to successfully implement online assessments and use this Action Plan to assign and track specific tasks. Cover the following topics in the Action Plan:
 - Identifying device options for testing
 - Verifying that student data is correct in DRC INSIGHT Portal
 - Identifying and preparing data sources for DRC INSIGHT Portal uploads
 - Uploading data into DRC INSIGHT Portal and the data sources required for these uploads
 - Creating test sessions
 - Verifying students are in appropriate testing sessions
 - Scheduling rooms, equipment, and space
 - Installing and configuring the COS Service Device
 - Performing initial testing device setup for workstation software
 - Performing daily device setup for updates
 - Printing test tickets
 - Performing System Readiness Checks before each major testing cycle
 - Using Test Demos and Practice Tests for each testing domain
 - Handling student transfers – both in and out of the site
 - Resetting test sessions access
 - Submitting incomplete test sessions
 - Inactivating/reactivating tests
 - Collecting, tracking, reporting and resolving technical issues
- Review the Technology documentation on DRC INSIGHT Portal, including system requirements, to get familiar with the site and the resource materials available to support testing.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

- Identify which buildings will be used for online testing, taking into account movement of staff, personnel, and equipment.
- Estimate the number of students testing at each testing site. Use these estimates to determine how many students will test each day and spread tests throughout the testing window to reduce the number of concurrent testers. Keep in mind that other activities occurring at the site may affect access to testing device and/or may limit available network bandwidth. Use this information with the testing plan and schedule testing dates to build the site's master schedule.
- Identify areas of the building where testing will occur and communicate this information to the Technology Director for approval. Testing locations should be consistent through the testing window.
- Upon receipt of DRC INSIGHT Portal account credentials, log in to the DRC INSIGHT Portal and agree to the security terms.
- Test DRC INSIGHT Secure Application and COS Service Device downloads on sample devices that meet the recommended system requirements.
- If there is a system-wide pop-up blocker policy in place that prevents individuals from editing their pop-up preferences, request that DRC INSIGHT Portal be added as an exception to allow for its pop-ups. DRC INSIGHT Portal leverages pop-ups for PDF reports that are essential to viewing reports and completing tasks in DRC INSIGHT Portal.

Training

- Review the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide and the Supported System Requirements*, found in the DRC INSIGHT Portal under General Information > Documents.
- Go to DRC INSIGHT Portal > General Information > Documents and/or On-Demand Videos to access step by step directions documents and On-Demand navigation videos and plan for the topics relevant to your role.
- If applicable, schedule any onsite or web-based training with DRC.

Technology – Testing Device Setup

- Determine the number of devices available that meet the recommended specifications.
- Identify and reserve access to the testing devices.
- Verify test sites have the appropriate equipment, including:
 - Power strips
 - Power cords
 - Mice
 - Headsets with microphones
 - Keyboards
 - Other peripherals
- Review the Headset Specifications, found on the DRC INSIGHT Portal, to determine if sufficient headsets that meet minimum requirements are available and working. If not, advise District Test Coordinator about acquiring additional headsets.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

1-2 Months Before Testing

Communication

- Update stakeholders at regular intervals about topics like:
 - Testing windows
 - Training schedules
 - Technology setup status
- Share the updated testing plan and schedule of testing dates (master schedule) with the district.
- Verify that the Internet Service Provider (ISP) for the site/district is aware of the testing and that they will see a large amount of traffic going to DRC addresses.

Training

- Go to DRC INSIGHT Portal > General Information > Documents and/or On-Demand Videos to access step by step directions documents and On-Demand navigation videos and plan for the topics relevant to your role.

Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics

- Start planning testing schedules and finalizing overall testing numbers. Break testing down into days in the window. Allow several days at the end of the test window for makeup testing. Use this information to update the site's master schedule, as needed.
- After the COS Service Device and DRC INSIGHT Secure Application are downloaded, installed and configured, perform an end-to-end test of the system using a test practice for each domain. Perform this test before the environment is available to students for their test practice sessions.
- Verify that the contact information is available and up to date for all support contacts at the test site in the event issues occur during setup or testing.

Technology – COS Service Device Setup

- Download and install the COS Service Device software installer from DRC INSIGHT Portal to a non-student testing device.
 - A COS Service Device is strongly recommended for LAS Links Online testing.
 - A COS Service Device should be installed on a dedicated device (physical or virtual).
 - A COS Service Device for content hosting and content management can be installed at either the school or district, based on your Wide Area Network (WAN) setup and capacity.
 - The closer the COS Service Device is on the network to the student, the better.
 - Verify that the COS Service Device meets the recommended system requirements.
 - Refer to the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide Volume II: Central Office Services (COS)*, found in the DRC INSIGHT Portal under General Information > Documents, for additional guidance.

Note: Sites that have a COS Service Device installed for other state test administrations delivered by DRC can share the same COS Service Device to host LAS Links Online assessment content.

Technology – Testing Device Setup

- Inventory technology peripheral equipment (headsets, mice, iPad stands, keyboards, etc.) to verify there are enough for the number of students testing at the same time. Plan to have additional equipment on hand at each site as a back-up.
- Download, install and configure the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application for new testing devices and ensure that existing devices have the current version of the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application.
 - For Windows, macOS, and Linux, download the software from DRC INSIGHT Portal.
 - For iOS go to the App Store.
 - For ChromeOS go to the Chrome Store.
 - For Windows 10 in S mode go to the Microsoft Store.

See the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide Volume III: DRC INSIGHT*, found in the DRC INSIGHT Portal under General Information > Documents, for additional guidance.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

- Perform a System Readiness Check on the testing devices to ensure that they are configured correctly.
- Test the headsets and microphones with the testing software. Confirm that they pass the System Readiness Check, that you can take a Speaking Test Practice, and that you can hear the recording. Adjust microphone volume levels as necessary.
- Try out seating arrangement in testing areas. Verify that students will be seated far enough apart so that when they will be taking the Speaking Test that they cannot hear each other while recording and to properly balance testing devices among available access points.

Technology – Network Configuration

- Confirm with the technical support staff that a network assessment (LAN, WAN, and ISP) has been performed and that the capacity is in place to support the number of students testing at one time. Use the ELL Testing Site Capacity Estimator to help determine bandwidth requirements.
- Verify that the firewall and filters on the computer network are configured correctly to allow communication with the online servers and that the correct URLs are allowed (see the Network Requirements for Testing Computers section in the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide Volume I: Introduction to Online Testing*, found in the DRC INSIGHT Portal under General Information > Documents).
- If possible, have technical staff use network traffic shaping to give LAS Links testing traffic a priority over other network traffic.
- Complete a wireless site survey to ensure that there is sufficient wireless coverage in testing areas. Review the *DRC Online Testing Network Evaluation and Troubleshooting Guide*, found in the DRC INSIGHT Portal under General Information > Documents.
 - Review coverage and verify that students can take the test in the same area of the building at one time (device density).
 - Account for Internet bandwidth and other network traffic at the site at the time of testing, including LAN (wireless and wired) traffic and WAN traffic.
 - If you have an open network or available guest network, account for any cell phones and other devices that students, administrators, and teachers have connected (e.g., cell phones, laptops, tablets).
 - Review possible sources of wireless interference, including microwaves, phones, satellite receivers, LCD televisions, speakers, and nearby networks.
- Verify that there are no network web session timeouts that would prevent a two-hour test from being completed.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

2-4 Weeks Before Testing

Communication

- Work with district technology staff, District Test Coordinators, and School Test Coordinators to develop a support plan to handle testing issues.

Technology – Testing Device Setup

- Confirm with the District Technology Coordinator that all installations have been completed (COS Service Device and DRC INSIGHT Secure Application) and run a System Readiness Check.
- Test the devices used for the Speaking Test. Verify that the headset and microphone work and are configured currently. Test speaking by starting a Speaking Test Practice and record and play back a speaking response.

Technology – Network Configuration

- After test dates have been selected, check to see if other activities are scheduled in the building at the same time that will also require network bandwidth, especially in areas where the same wireless access points will be used for testing.

Training

- Allow students time to practice taking the tests so they are familiar with the testing application before they take the test.
- Allow students time to practice and ensure they are comfortable speaking in to headsets before they take the Speaking Test.

1-2 Weeks Before Testing

Communication

- Reconfirm the final testing plans/schedule with the District Test Coordinator.
- Send a reminder email to staff to avoid using the network for bandwidth-intensive projects during the testing dates.

Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics

- Conduct a final technology walkthrough before the first day of testing.

Technology – COS Service Device Setup

- From the Central Office Services application within the DRC INSIGHT Portal, navigate to Content Management and confirm the testing content for the test administrations are checked and that the correct content has been downloaded to the COS Service Devices.

Technology – Testing Device Setup

- Perform a System Readiness Check on all testing devices.
- Log into a Test Practice on each student computer.
- Verify that volume and microphone levels are set correctly before the test. Students **cannot** adjust the volume on their computer after they launch the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application. Headsets with no inline volume control must be checked for volume level before launching the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application.

Training

- Ensure that testing staff have the site's COS Org Unit ID(s) and know how to register testing devices, if prompted.
- Ensure that Test Administrators and Test Coordinators are familiar with the technical troubleshooting information provided on the DRC INSIGHT Portal, under General Information > Documents.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

Day of Testing

Communication

- Send a reminder email to staff to avoid using the network (LAN, WAN, and Internet) for bandwidth-intensive projects during testing.

Site Planning, Scheduling and Logistics

- Speaking Test interruptions – Check with building administration regarding the timing of building bells, alarms or announcement that may go off during the test session.
- Speaking Test quality – Reduce the background noise in the room as much as possible to limit interference during students' responses.

Technology – COS Service Device Setup

- On the Service Device tab of Central Office Services application, ensure that the COS Service Device status is "Functional".
- On the Content Management tab of Central Office Services application, confirm the testing content for the necessary test administrations are checked and that the correct content has been downloaded to the COS Service Devices.

Technology – Testing Device Setup

- Test each device at the beginning of the day (including charging equipment as applicable).
- Perform a System Readiness Check on at least one testing device.
- Verify that no background processes are running on testing devices during testing.
- If a testing device is set to accept operating system updates automatically, verify that it has the most current version of the operating system before the test session starts. It is best to avoid any software updates occurring during a test.
- Ensure that testing devices are far enough apart to avoid interference or distractions.
- Chrome devices launch very quickly. If students are using a Chrome device for testing, wait for the device to successfully connect to the network before launching the DRC INSIGHT Secure App. If DRC INSIGHT is launched before the device connects to the network, the student will receive an Internet Connection Error (ICE). If this occurs, after the connection is established, relaunch DRC INSIGHT.
- If a portable device will be used on battery power, verify that the charge will last for the duration of the test.

Note: It is recommended that all devices be plugged in to power during the test.

Technology – Network Configuration

- Technology staff should verify that the wireless access points are fully operational.
- Require anyone in the testing room(s) and anyone sharing the testing room's wireless access point to turn off any wireless devices not used for testing.
- Stagger the logins to the testing system. For example, have 10 to 15 students per room log in to the system over one-minute intervals.
- If a room is having difficulties testing, verify the connection speed from a device in the testing rooms, ideally when the other devices are using the Internet. Run a Speed Test using www.speedtest.net to a server in Minnesota. Results showing less than 3 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds per testing device indicate there may be insufficient available bandwidth.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

ADDITIONAL TIPS

One-to-One Environments

The following are suggestions for one-to-one testing device sites where each student has their own device that will be used for test administration with DRC INSIGHT.

- Ensure that test tickets are secure at all times.
- Confirm the allowable testing days of the week and allowable testing hours for the administration to help assess the risk of a student testing outside of their scheduled test session.
- Consider adding the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application immediately before the testing session and remove it immediately after.
- Do not allow the testing device to leave the testing room until it is verified that the test was submitted (using Reports on the DRC INSIGHT Portal).
- All COS Configurations should be configured to host testing content on local or district COS Service Devices that are only accessible from the district domain. This will prevent access to the test from outside of the district network.
- Confirm the district networks restricts remote access to only allow controlled administrative access from outside the network.
- Since most of these devices are also used for other day-to-day instruction, collecting the devices after each day of testing throughout the test window may not be a practical measure to ensure students are not testing outside of the testing facility. Instead, consider the following options:
 - Do not add test devices to an active COS Configuration until the test session and have students manually add the testing device to the COS Configuration when the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application is launched. Then remove the testing devices from the COS Configuration after the test session is complete.
 - Moving testing devices between the active COS Configuration and a “dummy” COS Configuration with a non-functional COS Service Device that will fail the System Readiness Check when the DRC INSIGHT Secure Application is launched.
- Use the online testing status reports available from the DRC INSIGHT Portal to monitor the security of online test administrations. These reports allow tracking of testing activity for a given test administration and provide tools to monitor and research unusual login patterns that occur during the administration of online assessments. This information can also be used to audit for test activities outside the expected testing times.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

Consolidating Students Attending Virtual/Online Schools or From Multiple District Sites

The following are suggestions for delivering online testing with DRC INSIGHT for virtual or online schools and for districts consolidating students from multiple schools into a central alternative testing site. These alternative testing sites can vary from existing district locations to bring students together at public facility, such as libraries, community centers, and hotels.

Verify Network Configuration, Bandwidth and Stability

- Conduct a speed test using www.speedtest.net to a server in Minnesota.
 - Verify approximately 3-5 Mbps bandwidth is available per student.
 - If the testing site has a bandwidth-rate-limiting policy, confirm that it is at least 3-5 Mbps per testing device.
 - Verify the stability of the testing facility's network.
 - Run an extended ping test to wbte.drccdirect.com and look for any packet drops or loss.
 - Identify times of day when the Internet connection is slower than others.
 - Verify all contact information for the facility in the event of any network issues during setup or testing.
 - In addition to a "Guest" network, some facilities offer a more secure wireless network with more bandwidth than the Guest network. Verify whether this is an option at the site.
 - Verify that the facility's networks do not prevent an internal network (LAN) connection from Testing Devices to COS Service Devices.
 - If traffic-shaping policies are available, request priority for DRC INSIGHT online testing traffic.
 - If the facility uses web filtering, verify that any filters on the connection are configured correctly to allow communication with the online servers and that the correct URLs are allowed (see the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide*).
- Note:** Cell hotspots normally do not use web filtering by default.
- Complete a wireless site survey to ensure that there is sufficient wireless coverage in testing areas. Review the *DRC Online Testing Network Evaluation and Troubleshooting Guide*.
 - Review coverage and verify that students can take the test in the same area of the building at one time (device density).
 - Account for Internet bandwidth and other network traffic at the site at the time of testing, including LAN (wireless and wired) traffic and WAN traffic.
 - If you have an open network or available guest network, account for any cell phones and other devices that students, administrators, and teachers have connected (e.g., cell phones, laptops, tablets).
 - If there are multiple wireless access points, verify that testing devices are balanced across them.
 - Review possible sources of wireless interference including microwaves, phones, satellite receivers, LCD televisions, speakers, and nearby networks.
 - Verify there are no network web session timeouts that would prevent a two-hour test from being completed.

If using a cellular hotspot:

- Check cell carrier signal coverage at the testing facility.
 - coverage.sprint.com
 - www.t-mobile.com/coverage/coverage-map
 - www.att.com/maps/wireless-coverage.html
 - www.verizonwireless.com/featured/better-matters/?map=4glte#maps
- Verify that the data plan's data limits will not be exceeded.

SITE TECHNOLOGY READINESS ACTIVITIES

- Cell hotspots typically don't use web filtering by default. Verify that any filters on the connection are configured correctly to allow communication with the online servers and that the correct URLs are allowed (see the *DRC INSIGHT Technology User Guide*).

Verify Test Accommodations

- If accommodations such as Text to Speech (TTS) are needed for some students, make sure that a COS Service Device is installed and registered in your COS Configuration.
- Confirm necessary accommodations are checked and downloaded on the Content Management tab of the COS Configuration.

Note: If students do not require accommodations a COS Service Devices is not required, but still recommended, for bandwidth efficiencies. The COS Configuration can be configured without a COS Service Device, resulting in the student using DRC Content Hosting.

Verify Central Office Services and COS Service Device Configurations

- When using a COS Service Device, ensure the local firewall has been configured correctly to allow testing device connections using port 55222 or the port number selected during installation.
- When configuring the COS Configuration and Location(s), if the actual testing location is not an existing site in the district, the site can be set as the district name or as any designated site name within the district. The site name used by COS is independent of the site the student attends and is not tied to student reports.

Verify Testing Device Configurations

- Verify that all testing devices pass System Readiness Checks.
- Verify headphones are available and functional for any accommodated assessments.
- Verify that testing devices have adequate power to complete the test – it is recommended that power adapters be required during testing.

Verify Practice Tests

- Using the Online Tools Training (OTT) practice tests, run through test functionality and check performance with approximately the same number of students that will test concurrently.

Verify Test Schedule

- Plan for testing to occur within the availability window for the test administration – typically Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. local time.