Overview of Instructionally Embedded Assessments Part 1 Script

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Welcome to Overview of the Instructionally Embedded Assessments. This video is the first in a two-part series and provides an overview of instructionally embedded assessments.

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Topics covered include what is an instructionally embedded assessment, how are they managed through the use of the Instructional Tools Interface or ITI system, and their intended purpose and use as part of the DLM Alternate Assessment System. Part two in the video series provides the step-by-step procedure for using the Instructional Tools Interface in Educator Portal.

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The instructionally embedded assessments test one Essential Element (or EE) at one Linkage Level per testlet and are developed using the same process and procedures that are followed in the development of all other DLM assessments.

Instructionally embedded assessments are administered after instruction is provided on an Essential Element. Essential Elements available for assessment are in the blueprints.

Within the options provided and the requirements for conceptual area coverage, educators choose which Essential Elements will be taught and assessed during the instructionally embedded phase. Choices should be based on a student's learning targets and grade level, as well as any state specific expectations.

Please refer to your state-specific guidance for further clarification as to whether or how these instructionally embedded assessments will count toward a student's final results for the year.

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Instructionally embedded assessments can be used to identify a student's knowledge, skills and understanding relative to the grade-level targets, or Essential Elements.

They can also be used to check a student's readiness for the next step in academic instruction, such as a higher Linkage Level or a different Essential Element.

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In the use of embedded assessments it is important to caution against certain practices.

Instructionally embedded assessments are not intended to be used to determine a baseline for a student. When you choose an Essential Element, the system recommends a Linkage Level. The system offers recommendations based on data about the student and about the learning map. At the beginning of the year, the recommendations are based on the student's First Contact (FC) survey.

At this point, you have the option to accept the system's recommendation or to choose an alternative Linkage Level. The system offers recommendations based on data about the student and about the learning map.

If you prefer to see where a student is with regard to an identified Essential Element, you might want to start by selecting one Linkage Level lower than the level recommended by the system. In this way you can confirm a student's understanding before picking the Linkage Level recommended by the system.

For this year, it is important to remember that there are a limited number of testlets available during the instructionally embedded assessment window. There will be at least one testlet available per Essential Element and Linkage Level. While some Essential Elements may have more testlets available, there is no guarantee that multiple testlets will be available.

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Instructionally embedded assessments are designed to be administered following instruction on the Essential Element. They should not be used to teach the skill or as part of a repeated testing event. **By doing so, you are only probing for prior knowledge.**

And finally, instructionally embedded testlets are not benchmark or interim tests. The results are not predictive of how a student will do at the end of the year, and teachers should not use results for this purpose.

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Instructionally embedded assessments are managed through the Instructional Tools Interface, or ITI, in the test management section of the Educator Portal.

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The Instructional Tools Interface is the tool that interfaces between the instruction the student has been receiving and the testing that provides data for the teacher to use to determine the next instructional steps.

Let's review the general process for using the Instructional Tools Interface. This graphic identifies the steps involved in the process. The blue steps are those that happen outside of the system and the steps identified in red are documented in the ITI system. For more detailed information on using Instructional Tools Interface, please refer to the "How to Use the Instructional Tools Interface" video available on the DLM website.

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Educators have many options for the testlets students receive during the instructionally embedded assessments. Although the system will make recommendations, the educator is able to select the Essential

Element and Linkage Level for the student from among all the Essential Elements on the blueprint. Decisions should be grounded in academic priorities for the student, including priorities set in the IEP.

Educators should review the blueprints for each of their students grade-levels. After reviewing the blueprints, the teacher selects Essential Elements for instruction. Some states have state-specific blueprints. Check your state DLM webpage for more specific information regarding your state's specific blueprint requirements.

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Essential Elements represent grade-level targets for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are embedded in the learning maps. The Essential Elements are related to small clusters of nodes (or specific skills) within the maps. These are called mini-maps. Here is an example of a mathematics mini-map with nodes for one Essential Element identified by their Linkage Levels.

Each testlet spans a portion of the learning map that contains nodes at one Linkage Level. Each Linkage Level contains one or more nodes related to an identified Essential Element. Linkage Levels precede, correspond to, or go beyond the expectation expressed in the Essential Element.

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During instructionally embedded assessments, the educator selects the Linkage Level for each Essential Element. The Linkage Level should provide an appropriate level of challenge for the student and should represent a good instructional target. The system recommends a Linkage Level for each student, but the test administrator may override that choice during the instructionally embedded assessment window.

As previously indicated, it is not ideal to choose a Linkage Level that is too low – one the student has already mastered. For more information on choosing a Linkage Level, educators may want to reference the longer description of each Linkage Level provided in the Instructional Tools Interface. States may also provide more guidance about how to choose the best Linkage Level for the student.

For a list of nodes for each Essential Element, refer to the Tested Essential Elements PDFs document located on the Educator Resource Page.

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When making the choice of EEs and Linkage Levels for instruction, educators will want to not only ensure balance between access and the instructional targets, but also the relationships between skills at Linkage Levels across the essential elements. Educators will find this extremely helpful for planning instruction for multiple students.

When working with multi-grade level classes, educators will want to review the blueprints for the grades of the students in their classroom and consider skills that build upon each other. Educators may want to select skills that may be covered in lessons for multiple students.

Educators are encouraged to use the mini-maps for Essential Elements as a guide for building lessons and instructional units for group instruction. Educators will also want to review the Claims and Conceptual Areas when choosing Essential Elements for instruction and lesson planning. Using these resources will promote alignment between instruction and assessment.

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Once the Essential Elements and Linkage Levels for a student have been chosen, the next step is to enter those choices in the Instructional Tools Interface.

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An instructional plan consists of an Essential Element and Linkage Level. A student will have one instructional plan for every Essential Element selected. The student may only have an instructional plan for one Linkage Level at a time for any given Essential Element. Essential Elements, a list of Linkage Levels and nodes, and the mini-map are found in the Tested Essential Elements PDFs located on the Educator Resource Page. This information is also available through the Instructional Tools Interface in Educator Portal for each Essential Element a test administrator chooses for instructionally embedded assessment.

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If you save the plan before you provide instruction that leaves you some flexibility to continue with the plan later or to cancel it as needed. However, once you confirm the plan, the system assigns an assessment to the student. You cannot change or cancel the plan after the assessment is assigned.

It is only possible to have one active instructional plan at a time per student per Essential Element and Linkage Level. A student may have multiple plans across different Essential Elements and Linkage Levels, but once the student has a plan for one Linkage Level for a given Essential Element, this plan must either be completed and the assessment administered, or cancelled, before a new plan can be created for the same Essential Element.

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Once the Essential Element and Linkage Level have been determined, instruction should be provided on these skills.

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Multiple resources to assist with instruction are available via the DLM website through the *Educator Resource* page or the *DLM professional development website* located at dlmpd.com.

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For example, a teacher may want to review the mini-maps for the Essential Elements to see how the nodes break down the instruction into manageable segments. A teacher might develop instructional plans using the nodes and mini-maps, always working on grade level and focusing movement towards the target for the Essential Element.

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Elements. The Essential Elements, mini-maps, nodes, and PD modules all work together to help the teacher prepare the student for the assessment. The document shown here contains tables that cross-reference specific professional development modules to the Essential Elements. The table provides teachers the ability to find the Essential Elements they are using for instruction and the corresponding professional development modules. Many teachers have found this resource to be useful to quickly find modules to help enhance instruction related to the Essential Elements.

This table may be accessed from the Educator Resource Page.

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The DLM professional development website provides PD modules organized by claim or listed alphabetically. In addition, educators will find a materials exchange, text supports and instructional resources available on this site.

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Once the teacher determines that the student is ready for assessment, the instructional plan should be confirmed in the Instructional Tools Interface and then the system will assign the appropriate testlet. Refer to part 2 in this video series for more information.

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Test administrators receive a TIP after each testlet is assigned to a student. Testlet Information Pages (TIPs) provide test administrators with information specific to each testlet. Educators should review the TIP before beginning the student's assessment.

Educators have the flexibility to change their mind about instruction (for instance, to change to a different Essential Element or Linkage Level) up until the point when the assessment is confirmed. A change may be necessary when a student has made considerable growth in the Essential Element and the educator previously selected a lower Linkage Level. It may also be necessary when a student experiences significant regression due to disability or absence.

Once an assignment is confirmed, the student must complete the assignment before another instructional plan for the same Essential Element can be created.

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The Testlet Information Page or TIP provides information you need to know in order to be prepared to deliver the testlet that was assigned to the student. The TIP includes information like what kind of testlet it is, the number of items on it, and materials that may be needed when administering the testlet.

After you have reviewed the TIP and followed procedures in the Test Administration Manual to prepare for an assessment, use the student login information to log into KITE. Then select the testlet for that Essential Element and Linkage Level from the student's list, and administer the testlet.

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The system will have at least 1 testlet available per Essential Element and Linkage Level for the entire blueprint during the instructionally embedded window. While some Essential Elements may have more testlets available, there is no guarantee multiple testlets will be available for every Essential Element and Linkage Level.

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As students take the testlets during the instructionally embedded window, the progress report in Educator Portal begins to provide information for the test administrator. The results on the progress report show mastery at the linkage level selected: initial precursor, distal precursor, proximal precursor, target, and successor. These progress reports are at both the student level and at the class roster level.

The test administrator can review the student's progress report and analyze where more instruction may be needed. After more instruction is provided on an Essential Element, the student can be tested again. If another testlet is not available at the same linkage level, the test administrator may choose a different linkage level or select another closely related Essential Element from the blueprint on which to test.

Progress Reports apply only to the Instructionally Embedded assessment window and do not provide any results for spring assessments.

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This is an example of an Individual Student Progress Report. This report can be accessed through the Reports tab in Educator Portal. Step by step directions are found in the Educator Portal User Guide in the section "Access Reports and Data Extracts".

This report summarizes the progress of a student in one subject area. It only includes information about assessments from instructional plans selected through Instructional Tools Interface. The report displays the conceptual area(s) tested, the grade-level expectation (Essential Element), and description of Linkage

Levels for each Essential Element. For each Essential Element with an instructional plan, the report indicates the Linkage Level of the plan, the status of the plan, and, where applicable, the student's results.

Note: The progress report contains sensitive information, including the student's name, school, grade, and ID number among other data. Each report should be treated as a secure document and handled accordingly.

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DLM blueprints list the Essential Elements that are assessed for that year. It is important to consult the blueprint and your state's guidance when planning instruction for your student(s). Your state or district may have also provided additional guidance about expectations for use of the Instructional Tools Interface including how often to use it, when to enter instructional plans, and which Essential Elements to assess.

Review the Test Administration Manual for information on how results are used based on your state's testing model.

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This concludes the video. Part two in the video series provides the step-by-step procedure for using the Instructional Tools Interface in Educator Portal. The video, titled "How to Use the Instructional Tools Interface" is available on the DLM website.

For more information please see dynamiclearningmaps.org.