

DYNAMIC[®]
LEARNING MAPS

ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR MANUAL

2024–2025

INSTRUCTIONALLY EMBEDDED MODEL STATES

ELA, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE

Publication Date: 07/01/2024

All screenshots, data dictionaries, and templates shown or referred to in this manual are accurate on the Revision Date noted above.

When this manual is updated, the Revision Date will also be updated. An alert will be posted on the Test Updates and DLM News webpage. A summary of changes is included in the Appendix under Document History.

DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS CONSORTIUM

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FINDING HELP

When the information in this manual and resources from your state DLM webpage do not lead to solutions, these contacts can provide additional support.

HINT: Print this page and keep it handy!

Local Technology Representative	State Education Agency	The DLM Service Desk* 1-844-675-4479 (toll-free) or DLM-support@ku.edu
Kite® Student Portal and Educator Portal installation General computer support Internet availability Display resolution Issues with sound, headphones, speakers, etc.	How to use Student Portal and Educator Portal Training requirement Assessment questions Assessment scheduling Test invalidation requirements Student Individualized Education Program (IEP) requirements Test window dates, extensions, requirements, etc. Testlet resets (may take up to five business days)	Data issues (rosters, enrollment, etc.) Unlocking Student Portal

PLEASE REMEMBER, IF YOU CONTACT THE DLM SERVICE DESK:

- **Do not send any Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** for a student via email or Live Chat. This is a federal violation of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). PII includes information such as a student's name or state identification number. Each state has unique PII requirements. Please check with your assessment coordinator to find out what student information can be legally emailed or sent via a Live Chat message in your state.

NOTE: All information in an email or Live Chat is taken into consideration when checking for PII violations. The electronic signature for the sender of an email may identify the district or school in which a student resides. This information, combined with other student identifying information, may constitute a PII violation for your state.

- **Do send:**
 - Your contact information (email address and name)
 - Your school (include the district if contacting state level personnel)
 - Error messages, including the testlet number if applicable to the problem

ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR MANUAL 2024–2025

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AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

The Assessment Coordinator Manual for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment provides assessment coordinators with information to support data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators (e.g., educators, examiners, or teachers) in preparing for the assessment. Assessment coordinators oversee the assessment process and serve as the main point of contact between the following:

- State Assessment Administrators
- Regional Test Coordinators and Regional Users in states that have this role
- DLM Service Desk agents
- District and building educators

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To learn about updates to assessment coordinator resources such as this manual, subscribe to [Test Updates and DLM News](#) on the DLM website.

WHAT’S NEW IN THIS VERSION

Information about these topics has been added or enhanced in this version (Table 1).

Table 1
What’s New

Topic	Starting Page
General edits throughout	N/A

INTRODUCTION

This manual provides information to assist the assessment coordinator in supporting district staff and educators participating in the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessments. This manual also includes a checklist, DLM procedures and policies (e.g., test security), and an outline of responsibilities and roles.

Four participant roles have been defined by the states using the DLM alternate assessment (Table 2). These titles are used throughout the assessment administration manuals and training resources.

- Test administrator
- Assessment coordinator
- Data manager
- Technology personnel

One person may fill multiple roles.

Information about the roles of data manager and technology personnel is included in this manual only as it supports assessment coordinators in their activities. The **DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL** is specifically written for data managers, and the **TECHNOLOGY SPECIFICATIONS MANUAL** is specifically written for technology personnel. These are available on each state's page on the DLM website. The roles and responsibilities of the educators administering testlets are addressed in the **TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL**.

Table 2*Tasks for Participant Roles*

Title	Task Summary
Assessment Coordinator	<p>The assessment coordinator is presumed to work at the district level and is the main point of contact between the state department, the DLM Service Desk, and educators in the district. Some states are divided into regions and have regional coordinators with which the district assessment coordinator communicates. The information in this manual also pertains to regional coordinators.</p> <p>The assessment coordinator is responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Overseeing the assessment processb) Managing educator roles and responsibilitiesc) Developing and implementing a comprehensive training pland) Developing a schedule for assessmente) Monitoring and supporting assessment preparations and administrationf) Developing a plan to facilitate communication with parents or guardians and staff
Data Manager	<p>The data manager is presumed to work at the district or building level but may be at a higher level.</p> <p>The key duties of the data manager are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Maintaining educator, student, and roster datab) Working with the assessment coordinator throughout the year. These roles may be interchangeable in some states.

Title	Task Summary
Technology Personnel	<p>The technology personnel are presumed to work at the district or building level but may have a position at a higher level. The technology personnel do not always need to have access to Educator Portal.</p> <p>The technology personnel are responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Preparing the network b) Ensuring internet access is available and adequate for assessment c) Ensuring educators are using a supported browser on their computers so they can access Educator Portal d) Installing Student Portal on students' devices

Title	Task Summary
Test Administrator	<p>The test administrators are educators with the role of Teacher in Educator Portal.</p> <p>Test administrators are responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Working with Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams b) Selecting, entering, and saving the accessibility supports for each student in the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile c) Submitting the First Contact Survey for each student d) Passing Required Test Administrator Training e) Reviewing and verifying student data f) Instructing students on the Essential Elements g) Preparing students for assessments h) Administering the DLM alternate assessment to students

CHECKLISTS FOR ASSESSMENT COORDINATORS

HINT: Print the checklist for your convenience!

The following checklists detail the critical steps for assessment coordinators to use. Refer to them when reading this manual and preparing the school or district for the DLM alternate assessment. Follow the links provided to quickly navigate to topics in this guide or to access additional resources.

The checklists are organized into four sets of tasks for different parts of the school year. Information about each task is developed in more detail later in this manual.

- Table 3. Before Beginning Assessments
- Table 4. Fall Window
- Table 5. Spring Window
- Table 6. Prepare for Next Year

Table 3

Before Beginning Assessments

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tasks	Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	1) Use the resources on the state’s DLM webpage to become familiar with the DLM Alternate Assessment System, user roles and responsibilities, and the procedures and materials needed to prepare for the assessment, including the DLM support resources.	The DLM website For States state page filter for Assessment Coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/>	2) Activate your Educator Portal account by following the instructions in the Kite® activation email. See the section about User Roles in the DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL to understand the permissions for each role in Educator Portal. (If you already have an active Educator Portal account, skip this step.)	See the section Activate Educator Portal Account in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Educator Portal
<input type="checkbox"/>	3) Work with the State Assessment Administrator to create accounts equal to the District Test Coordinator level.	DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL Manage User Data

☑	Tasks	Resources
☐	<p>4) Agree to the annual security agreement in Educator Portal. Users will have no access to Educator Portal until they agree to the security agreement each year.</p> <p>5) Review the Security Agreement extract in Educator Portal to monitor the test administrators' agreement.</p>	<p>See the section Complete Security Agreement in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE</p> <p>Educator Portal</p>
☐	<p>6) Register for the DLM Test Updates and DLM News that are emailed during the year.</p>	<p>Test Updates and DLM News</p>
☐	<p>7) Participate in DLM district-level training. State administrators may also provide their own training for assessment coordinators.</p>	<p>The DLM website For States state page filter for Assessment Coordinator District Staff Training Resources</p>
☐	<p>8) Manage district and school staff roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>a) Identify staff to fill the roles of technology personnel and data manager as needed. Designate backup personnel for each role.</p> <p>b) Identify educators who will serve as test administrators for the DLM alternate assessment.</p> <p>c) Make sure each person is aware of their roles and responsibilities and the timeline of events, including firm deadlines for required steps.</p> <p>d) Make sure the technology personnel, data manager, and test administrators understand the DLM alternate assessment policies, procedures, and state-specific policies.</p>	<p>Checklists for data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators from role-specific manuals</p>

☑	Tasks	Resources
☐	<p>9) Develop and implement a comprehensive training plan or implement your state’s training plan for district staff and test administrators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Review the checklists for data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators. b) Encourage data managers and technology personnel to attend the district training. c) Review the Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training (if assigned by the state). d) Monitor educator completion of all parts of Required Test Administrator Training by using the Training Status extract in Educator Portal. e) Identify additional training or resource needs specific to local DLM participants and develop resources to address needs. f) Encourage and monitor participation in the DLM professional development modules for instructional help. 	<p>Checklists for data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators from role-specific manuals</p> <p>The DLM training for data managers and technology personnel</p> <p>Guide to Required Test Administrator Training</p> <p>See the section titled “Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Training Plan”.</p>

☑	Tasks	Resources
☐	<p>10) Prepare for assessment implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gather technology personnel and data manager contact information and initiate communication among district staff. b) Serve as the point of contact to the DLM Service Desk. c) Determine how you will receive communications from the state or regional coordinators for information that is specific to your district. d) Monitor creation of Educator Portal user accounts and deactivate accounts for educators who are no longer active in your district. Use the remove function, if available in your state, to permanently remove users who have retired, are deceased, or will never need an account in Educator Portal in the future. e) Follow up as needed to ensure deadlines are met for test administrators to activate accounts and complete training. f) Establish an assessment security plan and monitor adherence to the DLM- and state-specific test security policies. g) Troubleshoot issues as they arise. 	<p>Test Updates and DLM News</p> <p>Educator Portal</p> <p>EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE</p> <p>See the section Prepare for Assessment Implementation in this manual</p>
☐	<p>11) Monitor and support assessment preparations and administration.</p>	<p>Educator Portal</p>

□	<p>12) Monitor and support assessment preparations and administration.</p> <p>13) Remind technology personnel, data managers, and test administrators about important deadlines.</p> <p>14) Ensure every student who is supposed to participate in the DLM alternate assessment is enrolled in the correct grade in Educator Portal and rostered to the correct test administrator for the appropriate subjects for the student's grade.</p> <hr/> <p>NOTE: If a student was enrolled in the wrong grade, and it was not corrected before the student started testing, the student will have to begin testing again at the new grade level. All previous testlets may no longer be available.</p> <hr/> <p>15) Support test administrators and data managers in conducting data verification and revision before the fall window opens.</p> <p>16) Use the Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract to verify each student's First Contact Survey has a completion date and each student is on all appropriate rosters.</p> <p>17) Ensure PNP Profile settings are saved and appropriate using the PNP Settings extract.</p> <p>18) Assist test administrators with technology preparations (e.g., making sure assistive devices are compatible with Student Portal) and prepare the assessment environment (e.g., computer lab scheduling) as needed.</p> <p>19) Use the practice and released testlets to ensure computers are configured correctly (i.e., the minimum screen resolution required for Student Portal is 1024 × 768). Other computer requirements are found at the Kite Suite page on the DLM website.</p>	<p>Educator Portal</p> <p>EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE</p> <p>Participation guidelines on the DLM website</p> <p>Your state page on the DLM website</p> <p>Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status</p> <p>Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets on the DLM website</p>
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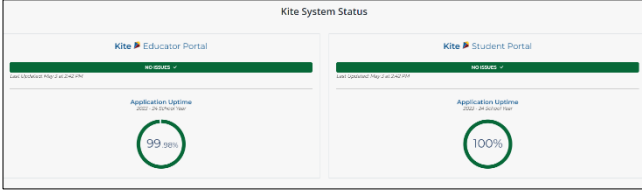
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tasks	Resources
	<p>20) Monitor the Current Kite System Status at the Kite Suite page.</p>  <p>21) Ensure students' usernames and passwords are printed. Usernames and passwords are secure and should be handled appropriately and securely destroyed after completion of testing. Although a student's username remains the same from year to year, when the student is enrolled each year in Educator Portal, the student receives a new password.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>22) Develop a plan to facilitate communication with parents or guardians and other district and building staff or follow your state-developed communication plan. Schedule meetings as necessary.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider what parents or guardians and district staff will need and want to know about the DLM assessments. Deliver communication to various audiences according to the timeline in the communication plan. Relay information from the DLM staff and the state assessment administrator to appropriate district and building audiences as needed. 	<p>The DLM website About DLM DLM Assessments Information for Parents</p> <p>See the section titled Develop a Communication Plan with Parents and Guardians</p>

Table 4*Fall Window*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tasks	Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Ensure everything is ready for the assessment.2) Facilitate communication between the DLM staff and other district and building staff during the assessment window.3) View the helplet video, Using the DLM Instruction and Assessment Planner, to help test administrators learn how to use the Instruction and Assessment Planner. Show them the step-by-step guidance in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.4) Ensure students are enrolled and student demographic information is correct.5) Use the Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract to ensure the First Contact Survey is submitted, and the students are rostered to appropriate subjects.6) Use the PNP Settings extract to ensure suitable PNP settings were selected for each student.7) Monitor the Training extract to ensure that teachers have passed the Required Test Administrator Training.8) Use the Fall Performance Report to monitor assessment activity for an individual student.9) Use the DLM Instructionally Embedded Monitoring extract to monitor assessment activity for all students in a district or building prior to the end of the assessment window.10) Use the DLM Blueprint Coverage extract to monitor blueprint coverage.11) Serve as the first point of contact for test administrators, answering questions about the assessment. Troubleshoot issues as they arise.12) Serve as the point of contact for the DLM Service Desk.	TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Educator Portal

Table 5
Spring Window

☑	Tasks	Resources
☐	<p>1) For English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, the spring window is identical to the fall window. Follow the preceding steps in Table 4.</p> <p>For science, the spring window is different from the fall window. Test administrators download the Testlet Information Page (TIP) and access the test ticket in the Test Management section of Educator Portal, not the Instruction and Assessment Planner.</p> <p>Testlets for all three subjects are administered in Student Portal like they were in the fall window.</p>	<p>TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL and EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE</p>
☐	<p>2) Monitor and support test administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Facilitate communication between the DLM staff and district staff during the assessment window. b) Use the Spring Performance Report to monitor assessment activity for an individual student for ELA and mathematics. c) Use the DLM Instructionally Embedded Monitoring extract to monitor assessment activity for ELA, mathematics, and science for all students in a district or building during and prior to the end of the assessment window. d) Serve as the first point of contact for test administrators, answering questions about the assessment. Troubleshoot issues as they arise. 	<p>See the section in this manual titled Responsibilities for Braille Form Delivery and Testlet Scoring</p>

Table 6*Prepare for Next Year*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tasks	Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	1) Prepare assessment coordinator plans for next year (develop a calendar, design a communication plan, schedule required training, etc.).	(No content)
<input type="checkbox"/>	2) Support test administrators in preparing for the next year (evaluate the PNP Profiles for students, review blueprints for the next grade, etc.). Familiarize teachers with the mini-maps to help with instruction.	TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Blueprints on the state page on the DLM website
<input type="checkbox"/>	3) DLM assessment window dates have been determined through the 2028–2029 school year. Contact your State Assessment Administrator for your state-specific assessment window dates for the coming year.	(No content)

ABOUT THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Educators use the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Alternate Assessment System to assess what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities know and can do in the DLM subjects in Grades 3–8 and one or more grades in high school. The subjects and grades that are assessed in each state are determined by the state’s department of education policy.

The DLM Alternate Assessment System provides accessibility by design and is guided by the core beliefs that all students should have access to challenging grade-level content and that test administrators must adhere to the highest levels of integrity in providing instruction and in administering assessments based on this challenging content.

STUDENTS

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities have a disability or multiple disabilities that especially affect intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviors. When adaptive behaviors are significantly affected, students are unlikely to develop the skills needed to live independently and to function safely in daily life once they reach adulthood. The DLM alternate assessment is designed for students for whom general education assessments, even with accommodations, are not appropriate.

Students taking the DLM alternate assessment require extensive direct instruction and substantial support to achieve measurable gains. They are to receive academic instruction aligned to grade-level content standards, but at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity.

Check your state’s participation guidelines for eligibility requirements.

THE DLM FOUNDATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATHEMATICS

The DLM learning maps are highly connected representations of how academic skills are acquired, as reflected in research literature. Both ELA and mathematics have a fully developed learning map model.

ELA and mathematics are assessed in each grade for Grades 3–8 and one or more grades in high school, depending on state policy. Nodes in the maps represent discrete knowledge, skills, and understandings in either ELA or mathematics, as well as important foundational skills that provide the groundwork for academic

skills. The maps go beyond traditional learning progressions by including multiple and alternate pathways through which students may develop content knowledge. The ELA map has more than 2,000 nodes. The mathematics map has more than 2,300 nodes. More than 150 foundational nodes are associated with both subject maps. More than 10,000 connections are made between the nodes in the two combined maps.

DLM ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The DLM content standards for ELA, mathematics, and science are called Essential Elements. The purpose of the Essential Elements is to build a bridge from the grade-level content standards in each state to the academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

ELA AND MATHEMATICS ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

ELA and mathematics Essential Elements are linked to each state's grade-level standards for instruction and assessment. Each ELA and mathematics learning map has small sections with one or more related nodes that represent critical concepts or skills needed to learn the Essential Element for the subject. These small sections are at different levels of complexity and are called linkage levels.

ELA AND MATHEMATICS LINKAGE LEVELS

The DLM alternate assessment provides testlets for ELA and mathematics at five linkage levels. The Target linkage level is based on nodes that align to the knowledge and skills described by the Essential Element and indicate a student's performance in relationship to the grade-level target. Then, multiple pathways on the map were carefully inspected to identify nodes that link to the Target linkage level, both preceding and extending beyond it.

The least complex linkage level is called Initial Precursor. Testlets developed at that linkage level reflect foundational nodes in the DLM map (e.g., focus attention), which are skills and understandings necessary for learning subsequent academic content. Testlets at this level are typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. These testlets are administered outside of Student Portal by the test administrator, who follows the instructions within the testlet, observes the student's behavior, and then records the student's responses in the testlet in Student Portal.

There are two additional linkage levels between the Initial Precursor and the Target linkage levels: Distal Precursor and Proximal Precursor. These linkage levels reflect

nodes along the multiple pathways in the DLM learning map model that identify significant milestones on the way to the Target linkage level. The Successor linkage level extends beyond the Target linkage level.

Some Distal Precursor linkage level testlets may also be teacher-administered. The Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor linkage levels are typically computer-delivered, although sometimes, depending on the skills being assessed, they also may be teacher-administered testlets.

SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2014, development of a science assessment began in two phases, following the DLM model. Phase I included a 2016 spring operational assessment based on alternate science content standards at three levels of complexity in three grade bands. Phase II, which is in progress, includes the development of a learning map model for science. Additionally, several professional development products supporting science instruction were developed and more are in progress.

SCIENCE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The science Essential Elements are specific statements of knowledge and skills and are linked to each state's grade-level science standards identified in the National Research Council's Framework for K–12 Science Education. These Essential Elements include science and engineering practices.

The science Essential Elements are described in grade-band performance expectations by the end of each grade band instead of standards for each grade level like ELA and mathematics.

- Grade 5 for the 3–5 elementary grade band
- Grade 8 for the 6–8 middle school grade band
- Grade 11 for the 9–11 high school grade band

SCIENCE LINKAGE LEVELS

Since development of the learning map for science is still in progress, some differences occur between science and ELA and mathematics—for example, instead of five linkage levels, science Essential Elements have only three: the Target, the Precursor, and the Initial. The Target linkage level has the highest level of complexity. The other two linkage levels are lower in depth, breadth, and level of complexity.

The learning outcome description for the Target linkage level is aligned to the DLM Essential Element learning outcome description and is also aligned to the learning outcome description for the grade-level science standard.

Observe the alignment in Figure 1 for Grades 6-8.

Figure 1

Mini-Map for a Science Essential Element

Learning Outcome

DLM Essential Element	Grade-Level Standard
SCI.EE.MS.PS2-2 Investigate and predict the change in motion of objects based on the forces acting on those objects.	MS-PS2-2 Plan an investigation to provide evidence that the change in an object's motion depends on the sum of the forces on the object and the mass of the object.

Linkage Level Descriptions

Initial	Precursor	Target
Identify ways to change the motion of an object (e.g., faster, slower, stop).	Investigate and identify ways to change the motion of an object (e.g., change an incline's slope or push/pull to make an object go slower, faster, farther).	Investigate and predict the change in motion of objects based on the forces acting on those objects.

The Initial linkage level is the lowest of the three linkage levels. Testlets at this linkage level are typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. Like ELA and mathematics at the lowest linkage level, these testlets are administered outside of Student Portal by the test administrator, who follows the instructions within the testlet, observes the student's behavior, and then records the student's responses to the testlet in Student Portal.

The Precursor linkage level is between the Initial and the Target linkage level. Students usually take the Precursor and Target linkage level testlets on the computer, although sometimes, depending on the skills being assessed, they can be teacher-administered.

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

BLUEPRINTS

Testing blueprints are a subset of Essential Elements used to develop assessments. The Essential Elements in the blueprints were selected by DLM staff together with state education leaders in states using the DLM alternate assessments.

Testing all English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics Essential Elements in the blueprints is required for both the fall and spring windows. Testing all science Essential Elements in the blueprint is optional in the fall window although strongly encouraged. However, in the spring window, testing all the Essential Elements in the science blueprint is required.

The ELA and mathematics blueprints contain Essential Elements from specific ELA and mathematics claims and conceptual areas for each grade. The science blueprints contain Essential Elements from specific science domains and core ideas by grade band. Science blueprints are in two versions.

- Blueprint Science Phase I General (used in most states)
- Blueprint Science Phase I with Biology (used in Delaware, District of Columbia, and Maryland only)

DLM TESTLETS

DLM alternate assessments are called testlets because they are short. Most testlets have three to five items. Together, the items increase the instructional relevance of the assessments and provide a better estimate of a student’s knowledge, skills, and understandings of the Essential Elements than can be achieved by a single item. In the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL, readers will find a description of specific item types used in the testlets and screenshots of testlet pages. Each testlet assesses only one Essential Element except for the writing testlet, which assesses all writing Essential Elements together in one testlet.

Testlet structure differs slightly between subjects based on research of effective instructional practices for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Engagement activities are part of all testlets and are designed to motivate students, provide a context, and activate prior knowledge.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA), MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE

ELA ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

ELA testlets begin with an engagement activity. Reading testlets are designed around texts that are adapted from grade-level themes, but at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity compared to general education grade-level texts. The DLM texts are written to support assessment of the specific knowledge and skills described in the nodes at an appropriate level of challenge.

During a reading testlet, students participate in two readings of a text. The first reading is a shared reading activity that familiarizes students with the entire text and serves as an engagement activity. The second reading includes items that are either embedded within the text or sometimes placed at the end of the text. Embedded

items are most often used because they reduce cognitive load and reliance on long-term memory.

During writing assessments, the test administrator follows a standardized procedure in which the student selects a topic and writes about it. This serves as the engagement activity. The test administrator observes the student's writing and then responds to items about their observations. The engagement activity for the writing testlet is described in detail in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL for each state.

MATHEMATICS ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

Mathematics testlets begin with an engagement activity. It is designed to activate prior knowledge, prepare students for the cognitive process required in the items, and provide a context for the items. The engagement activity does not include any items or require a response. Mathematics testlets are built around a common scenario to investigate related facets of the student's understanding of the targeted content.

SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

For each science testlet, the engagement activity is at the beginning, followed by three to five items. Science engagement activities can be one of four types.

- The first type of engagement activity is simply a single screen with one or two pictures along with a short sentence that introduces the science topic to be assessed. The items in this testlet will not assess the engagement screen itself but instead will assess the Essential Element topic.
- A second type of engagement activity describes a scenario which taps prior knowledge or experience, introduces the concept to be addressed, or provides context for the items. The items in this testlet type will assess information in the engagement activity and in the Essential Element topic.
- A third type of engagement activity may be designed around a science story featuring an experiment or classroom activity that is presented twice with items embedded within or at the end of the second presentation of the activity. The items in this testlet type will assess information in the engagement activity and in the Essential Element topic.
- The fourth type of engagement activity is a short, silent video (up to 30 seconds) and is only found in the upper grade bands and the upper linkage levels. Students will access the short video and then respond to three items that

include still-frame photos from the video. The items assess information both from the video and the Essential Element topic.

NOTE: The entire video clip is completely soundless.

CUSTOMIZATION FOR EACH STUDENT

The First Contact Survey and the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile are collections of data for each student who is enrolled in Educator Portal. After the student is rostered to a teacher, the teacher enters the student's individualized data in Educator Portal, and the system uses the data to customize testlets in each subject.

FIRST CONTACT SURVEY

The purpose of the First Contact Survey is to collect basic demographic information about each student who is eligible for the DLM alternate assessments. In addition to demographic information, the survey includes items on communication, assistive technology devices, motor and sensory impairments, and academic performance. The data is analyzed using a complex algorithm and then used to recommend the linkage level for each Essential Element for each subject at the beginning of the fall window.

The First Contact Survey must be submitted every year and is typically the responsibility of the test administrator, although the district and building assessment coordinators also have permission in Educator Portal to submit it. The assessment coordinator's main responsibility with the survey is to provide guidance to test administrators and to monitor that they have successfully submitted each student's survey before the opening of the fall window. The test administrator will not be able to select Essential Elements for instruction or assessment in the Instruction and Assessment Planner until the First Contact Survey is submitted.

The First Contact Survey is discussed in the Required Test Administrator Training, and all the items in the survey are listed in the appendix of the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.

NOTE: If the First Contact Survey is submitted for a student after the opening of the fall window, the linkage level recommendations for the Essential Elements will be updated after the Instruction and Assessment Planner screen is refreshed.

PERSONAL NEEDS AND PREFERENCES PROFILE

The PNP Profile is where test administrators can choose supports that help make the assessment more accessible for each student. Information in the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL will be very useful to the test administrator when selecting appropriate settings. Not every student will need special settings. The assessment coordinator's responsibility is to provide guidance to test administrators and to use the PNP Settings extract to monitor settings.

The PNP Profile is discussed in the Required Test Administrator Training. Additionally, a short helplet video on the DLM website, [Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile](#), provides detailed training on how to complete the student's First Contact Survey and the PNP Profile in Educator Portal.

Some allowable supports are outside of the system and not marked in the PNP Profile. One of those is to allow additional displays (monitors and projectors) to be connected to a computer. This is useful when needing to use a projector for students with different visual abilities.

Kite® Student Portal will only display on the primary display and the additional screen will have a blank screen or will mirror the primary display. To use an additional display, adjust display settings so that the projector is set as the primary display or for display mirroring. For help configuring this, contact the district technology staff.

DESIGN AND DELIVERY IN THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

USING THE INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT PLANNER FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATHEMATICS

ELA and mathematics assessments are required in the fall and spring windows. The following paragraphs present a high-level overview of the process used by test administrators during the fall and spring windows for the assessments. Specific directions for the test administrator are in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL and the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE. (Science assessments are not required in the fall window and will be discussed later in this manual.)

When the fall window opens, the First Contact Survey and Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile for each student are available in the Instruction and Assessment Planner and can be accessed and submitted.

NOTE: If test administrators want to complete the First Contact Survey or PNP Profile before the opening of the fall window, they can do so outside of the Instruction and Assessment Planner. For step-by-step directions, go to the [EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE](#), and see sections [Complete the PNP Profile](#) and [Complete the First Contact Survey](#).

After the First Contact Survey is submitted, the Kite® system processes the information and recommends a linkage level for each ELA and mathematics Essential Element. Test administrators select Essential Elements and linkage levels to use for instruction and assessment. All can be selected at the beginning of a window or selected one at a time throughout a window.

Each Essential Element has five linkage levels. The test administrator may choose the system-recommended linkage level or select a different one. Best practice is to do what is best for the student. Each linkage level is displayed on cards. Within each linkage level card is a mini-map icon. By selecting the icon, the test administrator can access instructional resources for the Essential Element. The test administrator then provides instruction outside of Educator Portal at the appropriate level of complexity throughout the school year and decides when assessment should occur.

Assessments should be embedded within instruction throughout each window so that instruction prepares for assessment and assessment informs instruction to benefit the student. When the test administrator believes the student is ready for assessment, the test administrator logs into the Educator Portal Instruction and Assessment Planner and assigns the testlet. The test administrator retrieves the Testlet Information Page (TIP) and prepares any materials needed for test delivery. Then, with the student's credentials, the student is logged into Student Portal where the assessment is delivered to the student.

In the spring window, for each Essential Element and linkage level that was tested in the fall window, the system recommends the linkage level for that Essential Element based on the student's performance during the fall window. If the test administrator selects an Essential Element that the student did not test on in the fall window, the system recommendation for that Essential Element will be based on the First Contact Survey. The test administrator may select the system recommended linkage level or may always select a different one.

HINT: Best practice is to assess each Essential Element after instruction has taken place for that Essential Element instead of bunch testing at the end of the window.

SCHEDULING ELA AND MATHEMATICS TESTLETS AND THE DURATION IN MINUTES FOR EACH

The test administrator is responsible for scheduling the assessments. Testlets may be taken separately across multiple assessment sessions as long as the blueprint requirements are met by the end of each window. The amount of time for each individual testlet varies depending on the subject and the student. Total time for the assessments varies depending on the number of Essential Elements a test administrator chooses and the number of times a student is assessed on an Essential Element at the same or a different linkage level. Table 7 provides the approximate number of minutes for each testlet by subject.

Table 7
Duration of Testlets by Subject

Subject	Minutes for Each Testlet
ELA	10–15
Mathematics	5–10

NOTE: The table does not include administrator preparation time for each assessment, which may include gathering materials, preparing for the writing testlet, embossing braille testlets, etc.

ELA AND MATHEMATICS SCORING

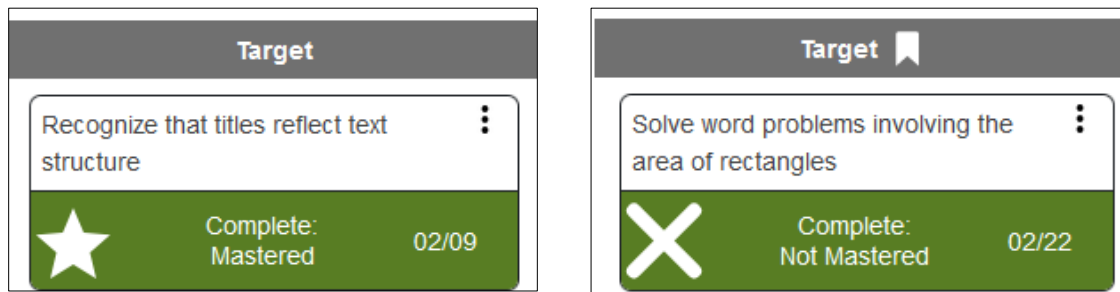
Score results are available right away for individual Essential Elements that were tested. After each testlet is submitted, it is scored and marked Mastered or Not Mastered.

EXCEPTION: Writing Essential Elements are not tested or scored individually. Instead, in each window, all writing Essential Elements in a grade are combined and tested with one testlet. The testlet is scored outside of the system, and results are not available until the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports are published.

For all other testlets, score results are available in Educator Portal in two places: the Instruction and Assessment Planner and the Reports tab.

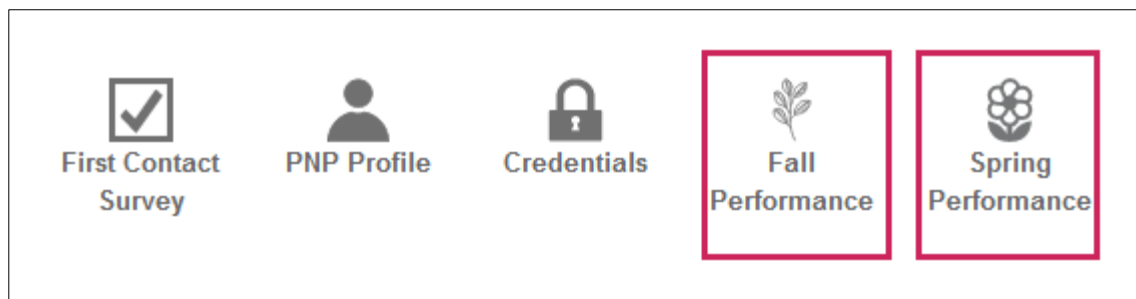
INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT PLANNER

While a window is open, after submitting the testlet in Kite Student Portal, refresh the Instruction and Assessment Planner. The testlet results (Mastered or Not Mastered) are available on the Essential Element card.



Also, while a window is open, after submitting the testlet and refreshing the Instruction and Assessment Planner, a PDF of the performance report is generated and can be reviewed, downloaded, and printed by selecting the appropriate icon.

- Select the leaf icon for the Fall Performance Report.
- Select the flower icon for the Spring Performance Report.

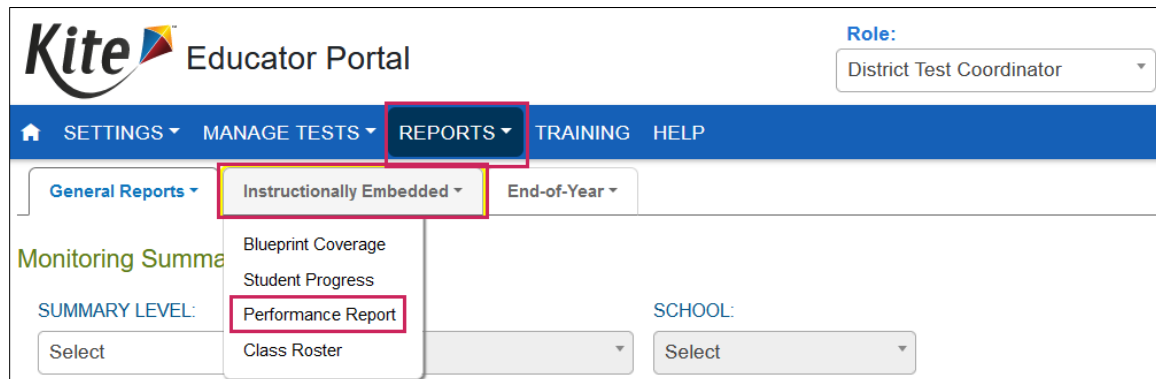


REPORTS TAB

Between the fall and spring windows, the Instruction and Assessment Planner is closed. However, the Fall Performance Report can be accessed under the Reports tab as shown in Figure 2. It remains available there until the last week of July. Go to Reports | Alternate Assessment | Instructionally Embedded | Performance Reports.

Figure 2

Performance Report



After the spring window opens, the Spring Performance Report is available in the Instruction and Assessment Planner. It is also available in the Reports tab. Follow the steps stated for the Fall Performance Report.

Detailed instructions on how to access these reports can also be found in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE, in the section Access Reports and Data Extracts.

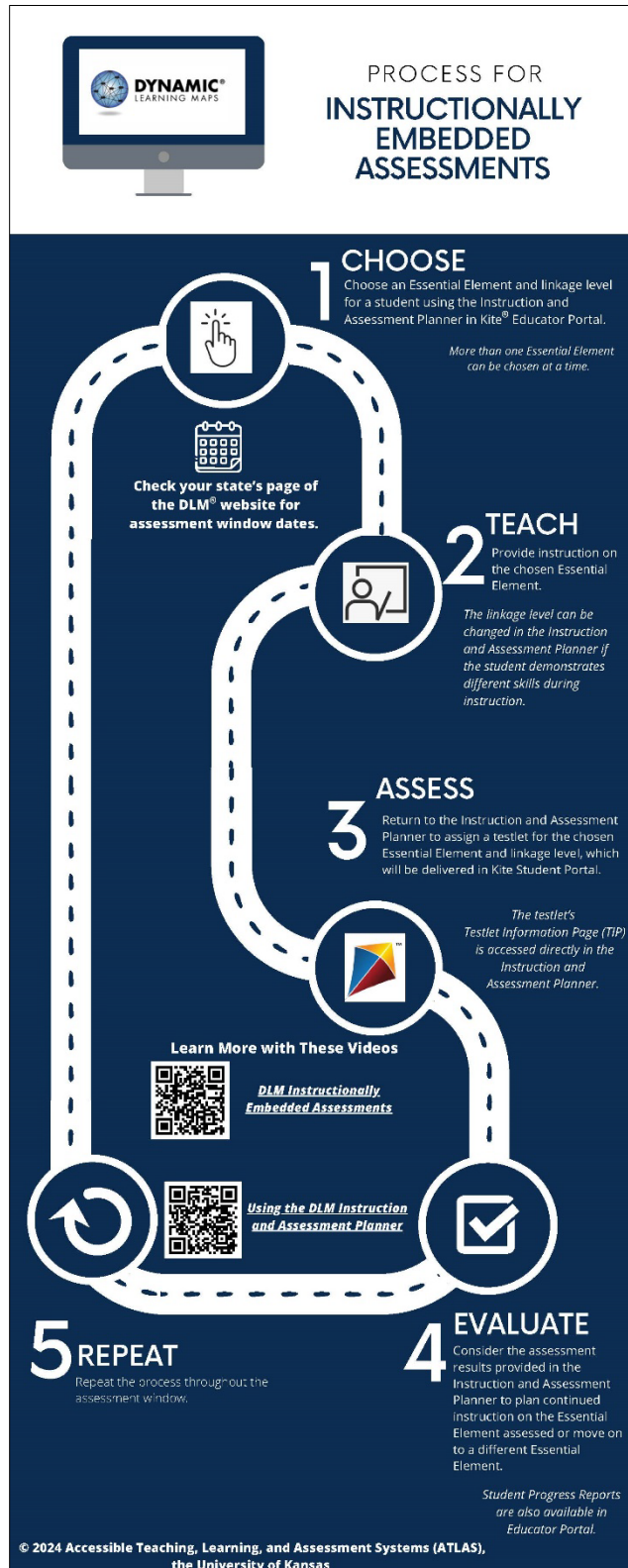
Results from both windows are combined and are provided in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports that become available during the summer months.

The test administrator may continue further instruction on the Essential Element at the same linkage level, at a different linkage level, or can begin instruction on a different Essential Element. The process is a cycle that is repeated until the blueprint requirements are met during the fall window and again during the spring window. The scores from both windows contribute to the students' end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

Figure 3 is a graphic representation of the process cycle of instruction, assessment, and evaluation for ELA and mathematics in each window.

Figure 3

The Process for Instructionally Embedded Assessments



FIELD TESTING FOR ELA AND MATHEMATICS

Field test testlets for ELA and mathematics are delivered in both windows after the blueprint requirements are met. The student may receive zero or one field test in each subject. The linkage level of the field test testlet may be one level above, one level below, or the same linkage level as the operational testlet that was taken for that Essential Element.

NOTE: Check your state's DLM webpage to see if your state tests DLM science.

SCIENCE

Science testlets are delivered in the fall and the spring windows in Student Portal. Test administration of science has some similarities to the test administration of English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, but it also has several differences. Additionally, the administration of science testlets in the fall is different than in the spring window.

SCIENCE TESTING IN THE FALL WINDOW

During the fall window, science testlets are available; testing is optional but strongly recommended. In the fall window, the procedures for ELA and mathematics and the process cycle shown in Figure 3 also apply to science. The test administrator

- chooses the science Essential Elements
- chooses the recommended linkage level or selects another one
- provides instruction
- administers the assessments

SCIENCE SCORING IN THE FALL WINDOW

After each testlet is submitted, the results (Mastered or Not Mastered) display for the tested Essential Element in the linkage level card on the Student View Page of the Instruction and Assessment Planner. Testlet results are also displayed in the Fall Performance Report. The results of the optional science testlets during the fall window do not contribute to the student's end-of-year Individual Student Score Report and should not be considered predictive of spring assessment results.

SCIENCE TESTING IN THE SPRING WINDOW

Testing the entire science blueprint is required in the spring window, using nine or 10 testlets.

NOTE: Students take a total of 10 testlets in three states where biology is assessed in high school (DE, DC, and MD).

The Testlet Information Page (TIP) and test ticket for science testlets, including science field test testlets, are in the Test Management section of Educator Portal in the spring window. In the Instruction and Assessment Planner, a hyperlink displays for science, and when selected, the Test Management section opens. The system assigns the Essential Elements from the science blueprint, and the system assigns the linkage level for each Essential Element based on the First Contact Survey. Neither the assigned Essential Elements nor the linkage levels can be changed.

In the following two screenshots, the student's name and credentials are fictitious. The first screenshot (Figure 4) is what a user with the Teacher role would see in the Instruction and Assessment Planner during the spring window for science. The second screenshot (Figure 5) is a science testlet with the test ticket and the Testlet Information Page in the Test Management screen in Educator Portal in the spring window.

Figure 4

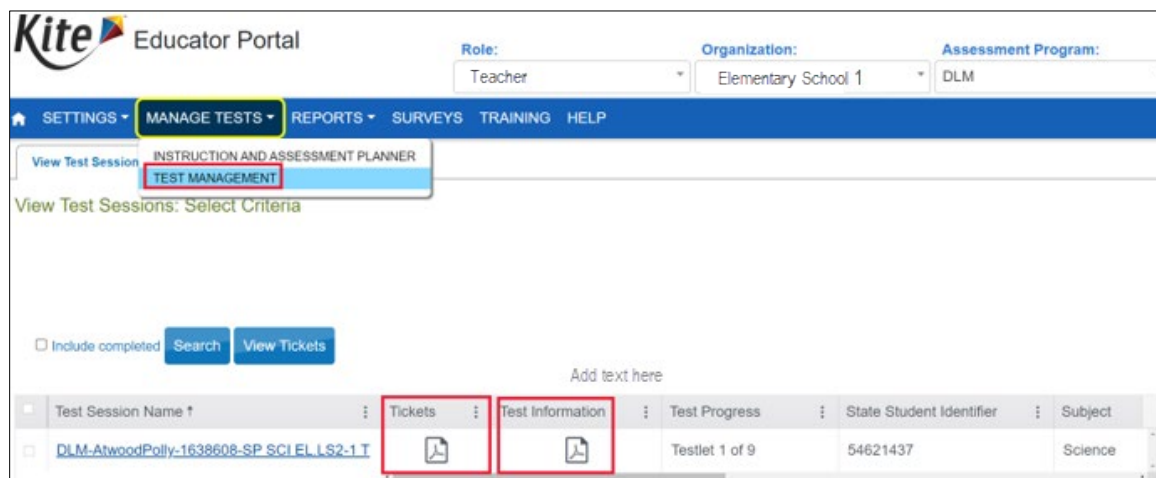
Accessing Spring Science Testlet From the Instruction and Assessment Planner

HINT: A student must be rostered to science at least 24 hours before the spring assessment window opens in order to have a science testlet available on the opening day of the spring window.

Test delivery is adaptive. The linkage level of the first science Essential Element being tested in the spring window is determined solely from the student's First Contact Survey. The linkage level of the second science Essential Element being tested is based on the student's performance on the first testlet, and so the assignment continues with the linkage level being the same, higher, or lower than that of the preceding testlet until all nine or 10 science Essential Elements have been tested.

Figure 5

Accessing Spring Science Testlet in Test Management



SCHEDULING AND DURATION IN MINUTES FOR EACH SCIENCE TESTLET

The test administrator is responsible for scheduling the assessments. Testlets may be taken separately across multiple assessment sessions as long as all science Essential Elements are tested in the spring window. The amount of time for each individual science testlet varies depending on the student, and the time between testlets must be considered.

After a testlet is submitted, the system may take up to 15 minutes to deliver the student's next science testlet. Testlets are intended to be administered across multiple sessions to prevent fatiguing the student and to give the test administrator adequate time to make the necessary preparations based on the TIP for each testlet.

Table 8 provides the approximate number of minutes for each testlet.

Table 8
Duration of Testlets for Science

Subject	Minutes for Each Testlet
Science	5–10

NOTE: The duration does not include test administrator preparation time for each assessment.

SCIENCE SCORING IN THE SPRING WINDOW

The results from science testing in the spring window are not available until they are published in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

NOTE: Science testlet scores from the optional testlets taken in the fall window are not factored into the Individual Student Score Reports.

SCIENCE FIELD TESTING

During the fall window, science field testing can occur any time during the window for any science Essential Element. The TIP is available in the science Essential Element card in the Instruction and Assessment Planner.

During the spring window, the science field test testlets are delivered after the required nine or 10 science operational testlets have been submitted. The student may receive zero or one science field test testlet, and the linkage level may be the same as the operational testlet for that Essential Element, or it could be one linkage level lower or one higher. The TIP is available on the Test Management screen.

Testing results from field test testlets are not factored into the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

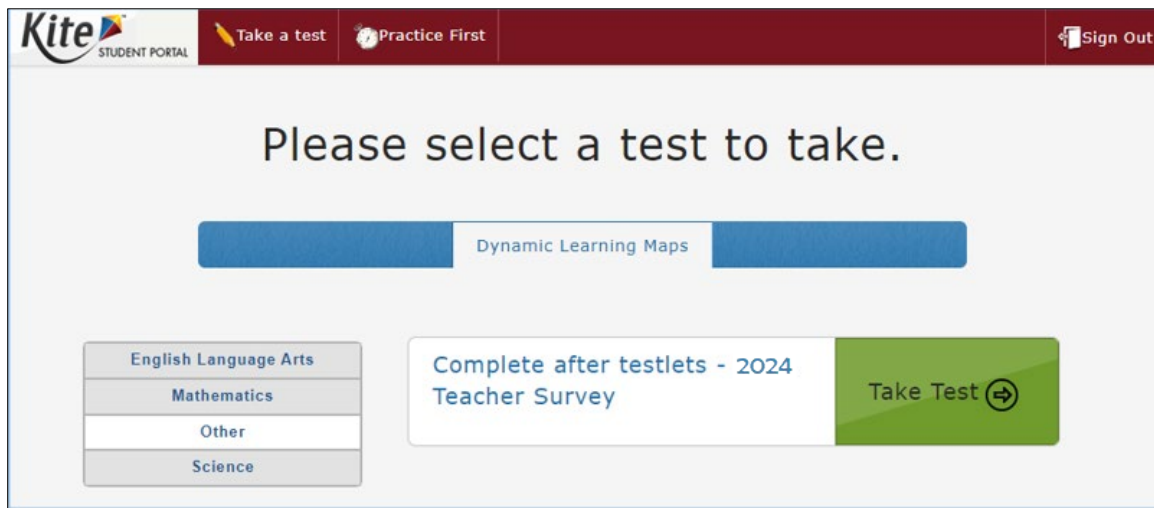
ANNUAL SPRING TEACHER SURVEY IN STUDENT PORTAL

Each year in the spring window, a teacher survey is available in Kite Student Portal. The survey is an essential part of data collection in support of the assessment’s validity argument and the technical evidence submitted to peer review. The first time the student signs into Student Portal, the survey will be available under the Other tab, as shown in Figure 6. Best practice is for the student to complete all the testlets before the teacher responds to the survey questions.

The teacher survey includes three blocks of items. The first and third blocks are fixed sections that all students will receive. The second block is a spiraled set of items that are randomly assigned across all surveys. The assessment coordinator can review the survey questions by requesting them from their state assessment administrator, and the survey questions can also be provided to their test administrators.

Figure 6

Annual Spring Teacher Survey in Student Portal



PRACTICE ACTIVITIES AND RELEASED TESTLETS

The DLM Alternate Assessment System provides practice activities and released testlets to help test administrators prepare for assessments.

Practice activities are designed to familiarize users with the way testlets look in the Kite Student Portal. One activity is for educators and the other is for students.

Released testlets are like the operational DLM testlets in content and format. A released testlet is a publicly available, sample DLM assessment.

Information on accessing practice activities and released testlets using demo student accounts is included in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL. Additionally, this information is found in the [Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets](#).

ABOUT THE KITE SUITE

The Kite Suite provides an online testing interface. It was designed to deliver the next generation of large-scale assessments and was tailored to meet the needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Students and educators each use a different part of the Kite Suite.



Students have accounts in Kite Student Portal.

Kite Student Portal is the customized, secure interface used to deliver the assessment to students. Each year, the most current version of Student Portal must be installed on the student's testing device. A student's username remains the same from year to year, but for security purposes, each year when the student is enrolled in Educator Portal, the student is assigned a brand-new password.

Educators and staff do not have accounts in Student Portal. Students have their own unique username and password. Either the student signs into Student Portal, or their test administrator signs in for the student. The most current version of Kite Student Portal must be used. To install Student Portal and view supported platforms, use the links found on the [Kite Suite](#) page on the DLM website.

Once Student Portal is launched, other websites or other applications cannot be accessed during the assessment. Student Portal on iPads has an auto-lock feature that prevents students from using other apps while Student Portal is in use.

Practice activities and released testlets are also available in Student Portal using demo usernames and passwords.



Staff and educators have accounts in Kite Educator Portal.

Educator Portal is the administrative application through which staff and educators manage student data and retrieve reports and extracts. Users can access Educator Portal online using a supported browser, which can be found on the [Kite Suite](#) page on the DLM website. For information on how to work within Educator Portal, see the [EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE](#) on the DLM website.

HOW TO USE THE DLM WEBSITE

Additional resources for test administrators, assessment coordinators, data managers, and technology personnel are available on the DLM website. Also, state-specific resources may be available.

To access resources for each state and role, follow these steps:

- 1) Access the [DLM website](#).
- 2) Hover over For States in the blue banner to reveal a dropdown list of states.
- 3) Select your state.

HINT: Bookmark the page or save it to your favorites for quick access later.

RESOURCES ON THE DLM WEBSITE

Table 9 lists DLM resources and their main purpose. These resources are available on state webpages.

Table 9

Purpose of DLM Resources

Resource	Purpose
ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL (PDF)	Provides guidance on the selection of accessibility supports available for use when testing in Student Portal This manual is appropriate for any educator who supports students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR MANUAL (PDF)	Supports the assessment coordinator in preparing regions, districts, and school staff for assessment
DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL (PDF)	Supports the data manager in gathering, editing, and uploading data for users, students, and rosters in Educator Portal
EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE (PDF)	Supports educators in navigating Educator Portal to access assessment information, including student data and reports
Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training (PDF)	Guides test administrators through required training modules and post-tests and how to access them from the Training tab in Educator Portal
Guide to Practice Activities & Released Testlets (PDF)	Supports the test administrator in accessing practice activities in Student Portal using demo student accounts
TECHNOLOGY SPECIFICATIONS MANUAL (PDF)	Supports the technology personnel in preparing schools for the technology needs of the DLM alternate assessment

Resource	Purpose
TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL (PDF)	Supports test administrators in preparing themselves and their students for assessment; expands the knowledge base for the assessment coordinator on specific topics; shows how to use Student Portal
Test Updates	<p>Provides important updates on test administration activities</p> <p>Go to the Test Updates page of the DLM website to register to receive alerts when new resources become available.</p>

PREPARE FOR THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS® (DLM®) ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW

The key duties of the assessment coordinator are the following.

- Ensure students are enrolled in the correct grade and rostered to the correct test administrator.

NOTE: If a student was enrolled in the wrong grade and the grade is corrected after the student started testing, the student will have to begin testing again at the new grade. All previously completed testlets may no longer be available.

- Oversee the assessment process, including managing staff and educator roles and responsibilities.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive training plan.
- Develop a schedule for assessment implementation.
- Monitor and support assessment preparations and administration.
- Use the extracts and reports to monitor testing progress.
- Develop a communication plan with parents or guardians and staff.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PLAN

RESOURCES FOR TEST ADMINISTRATORS

Required Test Administrator Training for test administrators is accessed from the Training tab in Educator Portal. Also, on the DLM website for each state, other supplemental resources are provided for test administrators. These are in the form of short helplet videos, e.g., [Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile](#). Professional development modules are available to help with instructional support and are in both self-directed and facilitated formats.

RESOURCES FOR DISTRICT STAFF

All training resources for district-level roles are located on the [DLM website](#); none are in Educator Portal.

A prerecorded video, Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Training for District Roles, is available on each state's DLM webpage and should be viewed each year. This training is interactive and includes a short, closed-captioned introductory video for

each role followed by self-directed components that explain the role further and link to pertinent resources. Also, an optional resource, Check For Understanding, concludes the training for each role. The district training does not have a quiz.

Additionally, many one- to five-minute helplet videos are available on how to do specific tasks in Educator Portal, such as Adding and Editing Students. The helplet videos are closed-captioned.

Table 10 compares these three categories of support.

Table 10*Available Training and Professional Development*

Required Test Administrator Training	Professional Development (PD) for Instruction	Supplemental Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All test administrators must pass the Required Test Administrator Training modules with a score of 80% or higher. b) Critical content for managing and delivering the DLM alternate assessment is covered. c) State administrators decide which format(s) to offer for new test administrator training: self-directed, facilitated, or both. d) All returning test administrator training is self-directed only. e) Test administrators will not be able to deliver testlets until training is successfully completed, and the test administrator then selects the certificate button. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All PD modules are strongly recommended. b) The modules support academic instruction for students who take the DLM alternate assessment. c) Most modules are created for students at the Target linkage level. Teachers who have students who take testlets at the lower linkage levels will need to adjust the module information for them. d) Several modules are available for students at the lowest linkage levels and for those with foundational presymbolic communication. e) State and district administrators may recommend or require specific modules. f) State administrators decide which format(s) to offer—self-directed, facilitated, or both. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All supplemental training is strongly recommended. b) Supplemental training addresses a variety of DLM materials and system navigation topics. c) Supplemental training includes short helplet videos—typically one to five minutes long on one topic. A couple of longer presentations are also available. d) Supplemental training modules do not include a quiz.

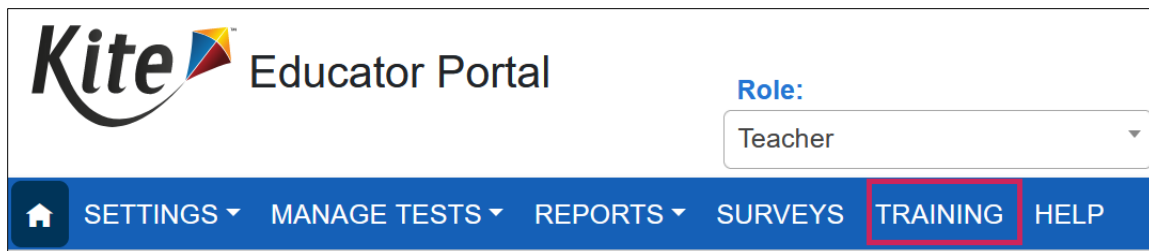
Required Test Administrator Training

Training is required for all test administrators who will administer the DLM alternate assessments. In addition to test administrators, other educators such as the district and building assessment coordinators may be required to take the training. State policy determines the roles that are required to take the courses, the courses that are offered, and the format of the courses. The training covers all three DLM subjects, test security, and information about Educator Portal.

After a test administrator signs into Educator Portal, they access the Required Test Administrator Training course on the home screen by selecting the Training tab as shown in Figure 7. It will then display the Required Test Administrator Training course.

Figure 7

Training Tab in Educator Portal



All users who are assigned the Teacher role in Educator Portal are referred to as test administrators and must annually take the Required Test Administrator Training. The first year, they must take the course for new test administrators, and they must successfully complete four modules with a passing score of 80% or higher on each module's post-test before being allowed to administer the DLM alternate assessment. Participants may repeat the modules and the post-tests multiple times if needed until a passing score is achieved. Total training time is estimated at about 2.5 hours unless modules and post-tests are taken more than once.

If a test administrator is unable to complete all four modules in one sitting, after completing one or more modules, they can sign out. Then, when ready to begin again, they sign back into Educator Portal, select the Training tab, and begin the next available module.

During subsequent years, the state administrators decide whether to require returning test administrators to complete the 2.5-hour new training course again or take the shorter 1-hour returning training course. The returning course is in four sections, and each section corresponds to one of the four modules from the new test administrator training course. Each section has one post-test.

Participants in the returning course have only one opportunity to pass a post-test with a passing score of 80% or higher. If participants do not pass a post-test, they will be directed back to the module from the new training course that corresponds to the section(s) where they incorrectly answered items. Participants may repeat any of the modules and post-tests from the new training course multiple times if needed until a passing score is achieved.

In states where the returning training course is offered, user records in Educator Portal are used to identify a returning test administrator. If a test administrator administered the DLM alternate assessment in the past, but not in the immediately preceding year, that test administrator will be placed in the new course again.

In both the new training course and the returning training course, state administrators may also include additional training modules, such as professional development modules, which will add to the training time.

After the test administrator successfully completes the required training, they will see a new section titled, "Congratulations!" In that section will be the course completion certificate, which is named "2024–25 DLM Test Administrator Certificate." Selecting the certificate link will open it in a new tab. If the test administrator does not select their certificate link, their name will not appear on the Training Status extract as having completed training.

HINT: Use the [Guide To DLM Required Test Administrator Training](#) located on the DLM website for complete directions and information on the required training course.

Professional Development for Instructional Support

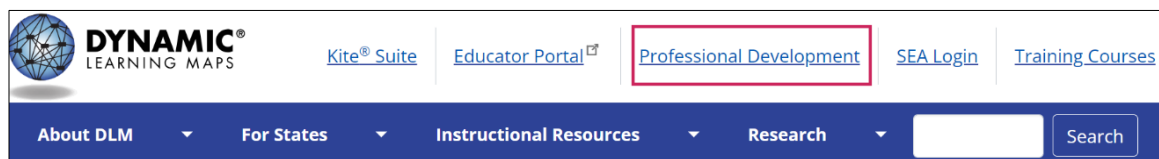
Professional development for instruction is strongly encouraged. A variety of content and modules are offered that can be incorporated into a district training plan. An individual educator can take a module as a self-directed course or with a group as a facilitated course.

- Self-directed modules are online and last approximately 30–45 minutes. Each module focuses on a single topic related to the instruction of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A post-test accompanies each of the modules, and a certificate of completion is emailed to the successful participant.
- Facilitated modules for groups cover the same content as self-directed modules. The facilitator is provided with materials to support them in addressing

a group of educators. A post-test also accompanies each of these modules, and a certificate of completion is emailed to the successful participants.

Most educators are required to participate in regular, ongoing professional development. Some states give continuing education credits for the DLM professional development modules. After passing the post-test for each module, educators are emailed their certificate of completion and should provide the certificate to the appropriate staff to receive continuing education credits, if available in your state.

- Access the modules on the [Professional Development](#) website.



- Educators across states that use the DLM alternate assessment are encouraged to collaborate by joining the [DLM Instructional Supports Facebook group](#).

PREPARE FOR ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION

To prepare for assessment implementation, consider these tasks.

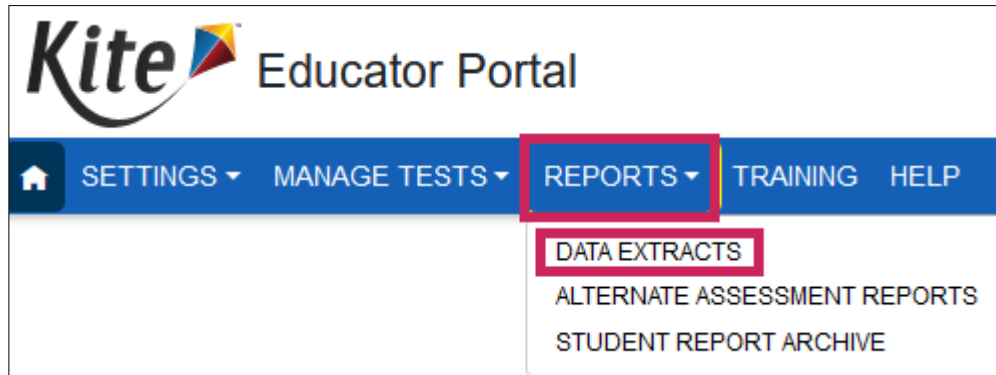
- ☐ Initiate communication among district staff.
- ☐ Encourage staff to register for [Test Updates and DLM News](#) on the DLM website.
- ☐ Determine how communications will be facilitated between state department staff, other district and building staff, and test administrators.
- ☐ Ensure educators understand the student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) policy for your state and that they are not to email or send via Live Chat any student PII or secure testing materials.

NOTE: All information in an email is taken into consideration when checking for PII violations. The electronic signature for the sender of an email may identify the district or school in which a student resides. This information, combined with other student-identifying information, may constitute a PII violation for your state.

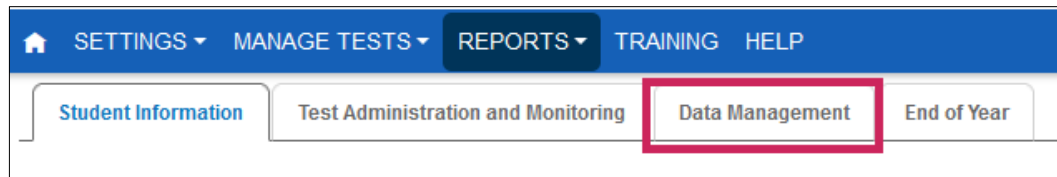
- ☐ Ensure students who are transferring into or out of a classroom after the spring assessment window has opened have accurate records and receive testlets at the appropriate school.

NOTE: A student who begins testing in one school and transfers to another can continue testing as soon as the student is enrolled in the new school and rostered. All completed testlets follow the student.

- Use Educator Portal extracts and files to monitor assessment administration readiness.
 - Go to the Reports tab in Educator Portal. Select Data Extracts.



- Select the Data Management section.



- Access the User extract to monitor roles and to determine whether an account should be active, pending, or inactive in Educator Portal.
 - Inactivate users who should no longer have an active account for your district.
 - Use the Remove function, if available in your state, to completely remove users who are retired, deceased, or would never need an account in Educator Portal in the future.
 - Access the Security Agreement Completion extract to monitor whether the security agreement was accepted and signed.

- Access the Training Status extract to monitor whether training was successfully completed. About 30 minutes after a teacher has completed the required test administrator training and has selected the certificate button, their completion status will be updated on the Training Status extract. To have the most up-to-date data, the New File button **must always** be selected.

Student Information	Test Administration and Monitoring	Data Management	End of Year
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Data Extracts

Note: Data extracts may include **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)**, take appropriate precaution to **protect** saved files.

Extract	Description	Requested	File	Action
Security Agreement Completion	Security Agreement status by organization			New File
Training Status	List of DLM users by organization and their training completion status			New File
Users	Educator Portal users and their associated role(s).	11/15/2022 09:56 AM	csv	New File

- Select the Student Information section.

Home SETTINGS MANAGE TESTS REPORTS TRAINING HELP
Student Information Test Administration and Monitoring Data Management End of Year

- Access the First Contact Survey extract to review the settings by student.
 - Access the PNP Settings extract to monitor whether suitable settings were selected for each student. Not every student needs special settings in the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile.
 - Access the Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract to monitor the date and time when each student's First Contact Survey was submitted and whether the student has been rostered to all appropriate subjects.
- Establish an assessment security plan and monitor adherence to the DLM and state-specific test-security policies. Consider these tasks when developing a plan.
- Designate the assessment location(s); a quiet, private environment is best.
 - Adhere to state and district policies for assessment security.
 - Troubleshoot issues if security issues arise.

AGREE TO THE SECURITY AGREEMENT

DLM assessments are secure. Each year, during the first week of August, the security agreement from the previous year expires. All Educator Portal users must renew their DLM security agreement when they first sign into Educator Portal. They will not have access to any data in Educator Portal until this step is completed. The security agreement covers five security policies.

Figure 8 displays the text of the security agreement.

Figure 8

Security Agreement

The Kite Suite provides opportunities for flexible assessment administration; however, all assessments delivered during the school year are secure. Test administrators and other educational staff who support implementation are responsible for following the Kite test security standards:

1. Assessments (testlets) are not to be stored or saved on computers or personal storage devices; shared via email or other file sharing systems; or reproduced by any means.
2. Except where explicitly allowed as described in the Test Administration Manual, electronic materials used during assessment administration may not be printed.
3. Those who violate the Kite test security standards may be subject to their state's regulations or state education agency policy governing test security.
4. Educators are encouraged to use resources provided by Kite Suite, including practice activities and released testlets, to prepare themselves and their students for the assessments.
5. Users will not give out, loan or share their password with anyone. Allowing others access to an Educator Portal account may cause unauthorized access to private information. Access to educational records is governed by federal and state law.

Questions about security expectations should be directed to the local assessment coordinator.

☒ I have read this security agreement and agree to follow the standards.

Save



If DLM staff discover that a user's account is being retrieved and used by someone other than the account owner, that account will be considered compromised. It will be sequestered until a state assessment administrator notifies the DLM Service Desk to unlock the account and reset the password.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BRAILLE TEST ADMINISTRATION

Assessment coordinators should monitor and support the administration of braille forms during the required fall and spring windows. Braille forms are available for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in the fall window. In the spring window, braille forms are available for ELA, mathematics, and science. However, the forms are only for some Essential Elements and only at upper linkage levels.

DLM uncontracted braille forms are available in

- EBAE
- UEB with Nemeth
- UEB Math/Science

For more information about braille, go to the [Braille Authority of North America \(BANA\)](#) website. The BANA position statement “Terminology: UEB Math/Science and UEB with Nemeth” was adopted in September 2020 and is available in a PDF on their website.

The DLM alternate assessment tests the student's knowledge and understanding of the Essential Elements and not the student's ability to read braille. Therefore, braille should not be selected for emerging braille readers. Test administrators select the braille form in the student's PNP Profile.

When a braille form is not available, test administrators will need to use other approaches to deliver assessment to students who are blind or have visual impairments. For more information, go to the section Testlets for Students Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL. Also, consult the ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL for approaches to help test administrators work with students who are blind or visually impaired.

Braille Form Delivery and Testlet Scoring

By selecting a braille form in the PNP Profile, the system will assign a braille form to the student whenever possible. All Braille Ready Files (BRFs) are delivered via Educator Portal and must be embossed locally. Therefore, the time needed for the testlet embossing process must be calculated into the assessment preparation time.

During the fall and spring window, the braille forms for ELA and mathematics and their Testlet Information Pages (TIPs) are accessed in the Instruction and Assessment Planner.

NOTE: Science testlets do not have braille forms in the fall window.

During the spring window, all science testlets are adaptive, including the science braille forms. The braille forms are accessed in the Test Management section of Educator Portal. When the system assigns a braille testlet, the system also delivers a computer-based equivalent version in Student Portal for the test administrator to use. As the student takes the testlet on the braille paper version, the student indicates each response choice to the test administrator. The test administrator inputs each of the student's responses into the testlet in Student Portal. Responses are scored by the system the same way as with non-braille forms.

For science braille forms in the spring window, once a science braille testlet is submitted and scored, the next testlet will become available in about 15 minutes. If the next testlet is also a BRF form, it will need to be downloaded, embossed, and delivered to the student as previously described. Go to the section Retrieve Braille Ready File in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE for additional information.

The TIP for a braille file has only a cover sheet since a braille testlet includes only text and no images. A short helplet video, [Science Test Tickets and TIPs in the Spring Window](#), provides guidance on where to find the TIP and test ticket for the science assessments in the spring assessment window.

Table 11 has information about the potential availability of braille forms for each subject, grade, and linkage level for each assessment window and where the BRF is accessed.

Table 11

Braille Form Delivery by Subject and Grade

Subject	Grades	Linkage levels	Windows	Where braille form is delivered
ELA and mathematics	3–5	Target and Successor	Fall and spring windows	Instruction and Assessment Planner
ELA and mathematics	6–8 and high school	Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor	Fall and spring windows	Instruction and Assessment Planner
Science	3–8 and high school	Target	Spring assessment window only	Test Management section of Educator Portal

STUDENT REPORTS

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SCORE REPORTS

The scoring system for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment works differently than scoring for traditional alternate assessments. Students are not given raw scores, percentage correct scores, or scale scores. Instead, all operational results from the fall and spring windows are summarized in the Individual Student Score Reports.

For ELA and mathematics, summative results are based on the Essential Elements on the blueprint that were selected and assessed in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in both the fall and spring windows. The system combines a student's responses on all operational testlets with information about the structure of the DLM learning map to determine which linkage levels the student has likely mastered during these windows. The information about each linkage level leads to a summary of the student's mastery of skills in each conceptual area for English language arts (ELA), in each claim for mathematics, and for each subject overall.

For science, summative results are based on the tested Essential Elements from the science blueprint that are assessed only during the spring assessment window. The information about each linkage level leads to a summary of the student's mastery of skills in each science domain and for science overall.

Individual Student Score Reports, commonly called ISRs, become available to the state assessment administrator in mid-June to mid-July, depending on when each state's spring assessment window closed. Each state will also decide which Educator Portal roles will have direct access to the ISRs in Educator Portal. In most states, the building or district assessment coordinators provide the test administrators with the ISRs for the students they tested in the past year.

Directions on how to access the ISRs are described in the Access Reports and Extracts section of the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

HINT: Results from science testlets taken during the fall window are not factored into the ISRs. Also, field test testlet results for all subjects are not factored into the student's ISRs for any subject.

DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

The assessment coordinator should follow the state-developed communication plan, or they should develop a district plan to facilitate communication between parents or guardians and district staff. Schedule meetings as necessary.

Inform parents and guardians that they can download Student Portal on their home computer and use the DLM practice activities and released testlets at home with their student.

DLM staff provide a Parent Notification Letter as an editable Word document, which is available in English and Spanish. These resources are available to download and edit to fit the needs of a state or district. Information and resources for parents and

guardians are also provided on the DLM website | [About DLM](#) | [DLM Assessments](#) | [Information for Parents](#).

DATA EXTRACTS

Many extracts and files are available in a CSV format in Educator Portal. The extracts can be downloaded, sorted, and the data analyzed. Using the data, testing readiness can be monitored before the opening of the testing window. During a state's fall or spring window, the assessment coordinator can monitor testing progress and completion.

The following extracts and files are available. They are divided into four categories for easier access. The number of extracts and files varies by state.

STUDENT INFORMATION

- Current Enrollment
- First Contact Survey File
- PNP Settings Count
- PNP Settings
- Parents*
- Roster
- Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status

TEST ADMINISTRATION AND MONITORING

- DLM Blueprint Coverage Summary
- DLM Instructionally Embedded Monitoring
- DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File**
- TIP Access

DATA MANAGEMENT

- Security Agreement Completion
- Training Status
- Users

END OF YEAR

- DLM General Research File**

*In some states, Parent Portal is not available.

**In some states, these extracts may only be available at the state level.

Comprehensive information about the extracts and files and detailed directions on how to access them in Educator Portal are described in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE in the section Access Reports and Extract.

KITE® STUDENT PORTAL AND EDUCATOR PORTAL

KITE ASSESSMENT DEVICES

Ensure the most current version of Kite Student Portal is installed on each student's testing device.

On the [Kite Suite](#) webpage, a list of devices and installation instructions can be found that are supported for administration of the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment along with instructions for downloading Student Portal. Some common troubleshooting steps are in the installation instructions.

Local devices attached to these machines, such as interactive whiteboards, are also acceptable. Interactive whiteboards (brand names include SMART, Promethean, etc.) may be used during assessment and attached to a supported device. The same hardware, software, and screen-resolution constraints apply. The projector associated with the interactive whiteboard must project the computer screen at a resolution no lower than 1024 × 768 pixels. For more information on assessment devices, contact the district technology personnel.

Students can use their assistive technology during assessments. The best way to ensure a particular assistive device is supported is to test the assistive device using a released testlet in Student Portal. The DLM Service Desk may also provide some assistance.

ENSURE INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

An internet connection is required to deliver assessments using Student Portal. Test administrators may ask about opportunities available for assessments where an internet connection is not available (e.g., a homebound student). The district or school may provide hotspots to use when internet access is not available where a student is located. Contact the DLM Service Desk for advice when an internet connection will not be available.

SUPPORTED BROWSERS FOR EDUCATOR PORTAL

The [Kite Suite](#) webpage has information about choosing a supported browser that will work well with Educator Portal. For more information on district-specific browsers and technology, contact the technology personnel in your district.

KITE PROCEDURES

- Use the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE for procedures that take place in Educator Portal (e.g., retrieving the Testlet Information Pages).
- Use the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL for procedures that take place in Student Portal like the following.
 - Access Practice Activities and Released Testlets
 - Start a Testlet
 - Navigate in Kite Student Portal
 - Take a Break During Assessment
 - Complete a Testlet
 - Troubleshoot in Kite Student Portal

GLOSSARY

This glossary compiles definitions and acronyms relevant to assessment for the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment.

Term	Definition
card	A cell on the Student View Page in the Instruction and Assessment Planner for each Essential Element and linkage level. Information about the specific Essential Element and the specific linkage level can be accessed when the user selects the card.
claim	ELA and mathematics: A broad statement about what the DLM Consortium expects students to learn and to be able to demonstrate in English language arts and mathematics. Each claim is subdivided into two or more conceptual areas.
conceptual area	ELA and mathematics: A region within the DLM learning map containing nodes associated with related Essential Elements, representing concepts and skills that support learning the Essential Elements in English language arts and mathematics. Conceptual areas are composed of clusters of connected concepts and skills and serve as models of how students may acquire and organize their content knowledge. Conceptual areas are considered subparts of the overall claims.
connection	ELA and mathematics: The relationship between two nodes (skills) in the DLM maps. Connections are illustrated with arrows in the maps.

Term	Definition
core idea	<p>Science: The key organizing principles in science that are taught and learned over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication.</p> <p>For science, within each domain, three or four core ideas have been selected to use for instruction and assessment. Each of the core ideas is narrowed further into topics.</p>
display enhancements	Options that change the testlet appearance on the student’s device screen, including magnification, overlay color, invert color choice, and contrast color.
domain	Science: The major science content areas that are assessed are domains. The domains that are assessed across all grade bands are physical science, life science, and Earth and space science.
Educator Portal	Educator Portal is a secure administrative application where educators manage student data and retrieve reports and extracts. Users can access Educator Portal using any supported browser via https://educator.kiteaai.org/ . For information on working within Educator Portal, access the DATA MANAGEMENT MANUAL and the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE on the DLM website.
engagement activity	An activity at the beginning of a testlet that describes a scenario, taps prior knowledge or experience, or introduces the concept to be addressed. In English language arts reading testlets, the first reading of the text often serves as the engagement activity. In mathematics and science, the engagement activity provides context for the items. The engagement activity for some science testlets at the upper linkage levels includes a short video without audio.

Term	Definition
Essential Elements	<p>Essential Elements are the content standards used for the DLM alternate assessments. Essential Elements build a bridge from the grade-level standards to academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity. They are specific statements of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-level expectations identified in K–12 grade-level standards for English language arts and mathematics. Essential Elements in science are linked to the National Research Council’s Framework for K–12.</p>

Term	Definition
First Contact Survey	<p>A survey completed by the test administrator for each student. The survey is used to collect background information about students who are eligible for the DLM alternate assessments, and it goes beyond basic demographic information and includes questions on communication, assistive technology devices, motor and sensory impairments, and academic performance.</p> <p>In the fall, data gathered from the survey's core questions together with data gathered from the questions in ELA, mathematics, and science are used to recommend the linkage level for each Essential Element in each subject.</p> <p>The spring window for ELA and mathematics is the same as the fall window.</p> <p>For science in the spring assessment window, data gathered from the survey's core questions together with data gathered from the science questions are used to assign the linkage level for the first Essential Element. After the first tested Essential Element, the linkage level assignment of subsequent testlets is adaptive.</p> <p>For the writing testlet in each window, data gathered from the core questions together with data gathered from the writing questions are used to recommend the linkage level for the writing testlet in both windows.</p>

Term	Definition
Instruction and Assessment Planner	<p>A part in Educator Portal where test administrators perform assessment functions for a student during both the required fall and spring windows for ELA and mathematics. Functions include selecting an Essential Element and linkage level for instruction and subsequent testing. Most data about the student can be accessed from the Instruction and Assessment Planner, including the results of an Essential Element at the tested linkage level and indication of when the blueprint requirements are met for each subject tested. The combined scores from each window are summarized in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.</p> <p>NOTE: Testing science is optional in the fall window, and score results do not impact end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.</p>
instructionally embedded assessment	<p>For ELA and mathematics: A required assessment that is closely integrated with instruction throughout the fall and spring windows. Mastery results are indicated for each Essential Element at a linkage level that was tested, except the writing Essential Elements. Instruction for the student can be adjusted before another testlet is administered.</p> <p>NOTE: For science: An optional assessment that is closely integrated with instruction throughout the fall window only. Mastery results are indicated for each Essential Element at a linkage level that was tested. Instruction for the student can be adjusted before another testlet is administered.</p>

Term	Definition
Kite® Student Portal	<p>Kite Student Portal is the customized, secure interface that test administrators use to deliver the assessment to students. All students taking the DLM alternate assessment will have unique accounts in Kite Student Portal. Educators and staff do not have accounts in Student Portal.</p> <p>The most current version of Student Portal must be used and can be found on the Kite Suite webpage on the DLM website. Once launched, Student Portal prevents students from accessing unauthorized webpages or applications during testing.</p> <p>In addition to operational testing in the Student Portal, practice activities and released testlets can be administered using Student Portal.</p>
linkage level	<p>An incremental level of cognitive complexity toward the learning target where an assessment was developed for the Essential Element. Linkage levels for an Essential Element are always related directly to grade-level content standards but at a reduced depth, breadth, and level of complexity.</p> <p>ELA and mathematics each have five linkage levels: Initial Precursor, Distal Precursor, Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor. These linkage levels are a small section of the DLM learning map containing one or more nodes that represent critical concepts or skills needed to learn the Essential Element.</p> <p>Science has three linkage levels: Initial, Precursor, and Target. Development of the science learning map is in progress currently.</p>

Term	Definition
materials	Any objects, manipulatives, and tools used during an assessment. Materials Collection lists are specific to each window for each subject. The lists are found on each state's DLM website under Educator Resources.
node	ELA and mathematics: A representation in the DLM learning map of an individual skill or conceptual understanding identified in the research in ELA and mathematics.
Personal Learning Profile	A collective term used to describe a student's personal needs and preferences settings entered in the PNP Profile in addition to information about the student entered in the First Contact Survey in Educator Portal.
Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile	<p>A section in Educator Portal where the test administrator selects settings to meet a student's personal accessibility needs and preferences for testing in Student Portal.</p> <p>The PNP Profile includes information about display enhancements, language and braille, and audio and environmental supports. Some settings selected in the PNP Profile are programmed in Student Portal (e.g., magnification). Other selections are provided by the test administrator outside Student Portal (e.g., calculator).</p>

Term	Definition
plan	<p>ELA and mathematics: A plan is an administrative function in the Instruction and Assessment Planner section of Educator Portal during the required fall and spring windows. The test administrator creates the plans, which includes test administrator-selected Essential Elements, linkage levels, and assigned testlets.</p> <p>Science: A plan is an administrative function in the Instruction and Assessment Planner section of Educator Portal during only the optional fall window. The test administrator creates the plans, which includes test administrator-selected Essential Elements, linkage levels, and assigned testlets.</p>
released testlets	A released testlet is a publicly available sample DLM assessment. Released testlets may be used by students and teachers as examples or opportunities for practice. Released testlets are developed using the same standards and methods used to develop testlets that are used in DLM operational assessments. New released testlets are added periodically.
State Assessment Administrator (SAA)	An Educator Portal role assigned to staff at the state education agency who have the highest level of access and permissions in Kite Educator Portal for an external user in their state. An SAA can transfer students between districts, assign the District Test Coordinator role, inactivate and remove users, and have access to all student reports and extracts.
state education agency (SEA)	A state department of education.

Term	Definition
stem	<p>The beginning part of the item (question) that presents a problem to solve or a question to which a student responds. The stem may also include other relevant information in the item. A multiple-choice item is a common example in the DLM alternate assessment, consisting of a stem and a set of response options from which a student chooses.</p>
Student Activity Table	<p>The first screen in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal. The Student Activity Table provides an at-a-glance overview for all students rostered to the test administrator in the subjects in which the students are being tested during either the fall or spring window.</p> <p>The data in the Student Activity Table populates based on the test administrator's actions taken on the Student View Page for each student (e.g., how many testlets were administered and whether the students have met blueprint requirements).</p> <p>The table also includes three icons providing easy access to the First Contact survey, PNP Profile, and the student's credentials.</p>

Term	Definition
Student View Page	<p>A page in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal that displays details for one student in one subject at a time for each Essential Element and linkage level. During both the required fall and spring windows for ELA and mathematics, the test administrator uses the Student View Page for several actions for each student (e.g., creating a plan). The system will display information about the student’s testing progress, including whether the student achieved mastery of an Essential Element at the linkage level tested.</p> <p>While the Student Activity Table displays whether the student met blueprint requirements for the entire subject, on the Student View Page, the system indicates when the student has met blueprint requirements for an individual claim in ELA and mathematics.</p> <p>Testing science in the fall window is optional, and blueprint coverage is not required. Therefore, the blueprint requirements for science will not display on the Student View Page.</p>
technology-enhanced items	<p>Computer-delivered test items that require a specialized interaction, such as select and drag. A technology-enhanced item is any item that is not answered using direct selection. This item type is only used for a few items at upper linkage levels in ELA and mathematics only.</p>

Term	Definition
testlet	<p>A short assessment that begins with an engagement activity followed by items. Most testlets have three to five items. Together the items increase the instructional relevance of the assessment and provide a better estimate of a student’s knowledge, skills, and understandings than can be achieved by a single assessment item. Each testlet assesses only one Essential Element except for the writing testlet, which assesses all writing Essential Elements together in one testlet. Testlets are either teacher-administered or computer-delivered. More specific information is found in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.</p>
Testlet Information Page (TIP)	<p>A PDF that is unique to each testlet and provides specific information to guide the test administrator in delivering the assessment.</p> <p>The Testlet Information Page (TIP) for most testlets at the Initial and Distal Precursor linkage levels in ELA and mathematics lists the materials needed or describes the attributes of the materials needed specific to a testlet.</p> <p>The TIP at the Initial linkage level for science may list objects that must be gathered or picture-response cards that must be printed before testing. Best practice is to print them in color.</p> <p>Computer-delivered testlets usually require fewer materials than the teacher-administered testlets.</p>

STATE APPENDICES

DOCUMENT HISTORY

NOTE: Page numbers are valid ONLY for the date and version noted. They may change in future versions.

Date	Section Name/Summary of Changes	Starting Page
07/01/24	General edits throughout	N/A