ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR MANUAL 2022-2023

ELA, MATH, AND SCIENCE

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Version YE

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

When this manual is updated, the Revision Date will also be updated. A summary of changes is included in the Appendix under Document History.

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FINDING HELP

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

HINT: Print this page and keep it handy!

Table 1

Where to Find Help

Local Technology Representative	State Education Agency	The DLM Service Desk* 1-855-277-9751 (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 requirements 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 if it was not closed using appropriate procedures

**When contacting the DLM Service Desk:*

- **Do not send any Personally Identifiable Information** (PII) for a student via email or Educator Portal 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. Check with your assessment coordinator to find out what student information can be legally emailed or submitted using Live Chat.
- Do send:
  - your contact information (email address and name)
  - your school's name (include the district if contacting state-level personnel)

- error messages, including the testlet number if applicable to the problem
- the Service Desk ticket number when following up on a previously submitted issue

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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, proctors, 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 administrator
- Regional coordinators in states that have regions
- 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 on the DLM website.

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS VERSION

Information about these topics has been added or enhanced in this version.

Table 2

What's New

Topic	Starting Page
Updated timeframe for a testlet reset from 72 hours to five business days	2
Important information about a grade change after testing has started	13
Information about an enhancement to Kite® Student Portal that will allow additional displays (monitors and projectors) to be connected to a computer	24
Updated information about braille forms; three choices available for selection for Braille Ready Forms (BRFs)	37
Updated language	Throughout

To learn about updates to test administration resources such as this manual, subscribe to Test Updates on the DLM website.

INTRODUCTION

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

The DLM Consortium has defined four participant roles in test delivery. 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. Resources specifically written for data managers and technology personnel are available on each state's page on the DLM website. The roles and responsibilities of the people administering testlets are addressed in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.

Table 3

Tasks for Participant Roles

Title	Task Summary
Assessment Coordinator	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 the district. Some states also have regional coordinators with which the district assessment coordinator communicates. The information in this manual also pertains to regional coordinators. The assessment coordinator is responsible for the following: a. Overseeing the assessment process b. Managing educator roles and responsibilities c. Developing and implementing a comprehensive training plan d. Developing a schedule for assessment e. Monitoring and supporting assessment preparations and administration f. Developing a plan to facilitate communication with parents/guardians and staff
Data Manager	The data manager is presumed to work at the district or building level but may be at a higher level. The key duty of the data manager is to maintain educator, student, and roster data. The assessment coordinator and data manager work together throughout the year. These roles may be interchangeable in some states.

Title	Task Summary
Technology Personnel	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 have or need access in Educator Portal. The technology personnel are responsible for the following: a. Preparing the network b. Ensuring internet access is available and adequate for assessment c. Installing Educator Portal on educators' computers d. Preparing assessment devices for assessment administration
Test Administrator	The test administrators are educators with the role of teacher in Educator Portal. Test administrators are responsible for the following: a. Working with Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams b. Selecting and entering the accessibility supports for each student into the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile c. Completing the First Contact survey for each student d. Completing 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 these pages 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 for more information to quickly navigate to topics in this guide or to access other 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 4. Before Beginning Assessments
Table 5. Instructionally Embedded Assessments (Optional)
Table 6. Spring Assessment Window
Table 7. Prepare for Next Year

Table 4

Before Beginning Assessments

☑	Tasks	Resources
	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
	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
	3. Work with the State Assessment Administrator to activate accounts equal to the District Test Coordinator level.	

☑	Tasks	Resources
	4. Agree to the annual security agreement in Educator Portal. Users will have no access in Educator Portal until they agree to the security agreement each year. Review the Security Agreement extract in Educator Portal to monitor the test administrators' agreement.	See the section Complete Security Agreement in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Educator Portal
	5. Register for the DLM Test Updates that are emailed during the year.	Test Updates
	6. Participate in DLM district-level trainings. State administrators may also provide their own training for assessment coordinators.	The DLM website, **States** | state page | filter for Assessment Coordinator | **District Staff Training Resources**

☑	Tasks	Resources
	7. Manage district and school staff roles and responsibilities. a. Identify staff to fill the roles of technology personnel and data manager as needed. Designate backup personnel for each role. b. Identify educators who will serve as test administrators for the DLM alternate assessment. c. Make sure each person is aware of their roles and responsibilities and the timeline of events, including firm deadlines for required steps. d. Make sure the technology personnel, data manager, and test administrators understand the DLM assessment policies, procedures, and state-specific policies.	Checklists for data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators from role-specific manuals
	8. Develop and implement a comprehensive training plan or implement your state's training plan for district staff and test administrators. 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. Facilitate Required Test Administrator Training (if assigned by the state). d. Monitor educator completion of all parts of Required Test Administrator Training and the security agreement by using the Training Status extract and the Security Agreement 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 for instruction.	Checklists for data managers, technology personnel, and test administrators from role-specific manuals The DLM training for data managers and technology personnel Required Test Administrator Training See the section Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Training Plan, page 31 of this manual

☑	Tasks	Resources
	9. Prepare for assessment implementation. 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. 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.	Test Updates Educator Portal EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE See the section Prepare for Assessment Implementation, page 34 of this manual
	10. Monitor and support assessment preparations and administration. a. Remind technology personnel, data managers, and test administrators about important deadlines. b. Ensure every student who is supposed to participate in the DLM alternate assessment is enrolled in Educator Portal and rostered to the correct test administrator for the appropriate subjects for the student's grade. NOTE: If a student's grade changes after 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. c. Support test administrators and data managers in conducting data verification and revision within the two windows: the optional instructionally embedded assessment window for English	Educator Portal EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Participation guidelines on the DLM website Your state page on the DLM website Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status

☑	Tasks	Resources
	language arts, mathematics, and science and the required spring assessment window for the same subjects. d. Use the First Contact Survey extract or the Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract to verify each student's First Contact survey has a completion date. e. Monitor completion of the PNP Profile using the PNP Settings extract. f. Assist test administrators with technology preparations (e.g., making sure assistive devices are compatible with Student Portal) and readying the assessment environment (e.g., computer lab scheduling) as needed. g. Use the practice and released testlets to ensure computers are configured correctly, i.e., the minimum screen resolution required for Student Portal is 1,024x768. Other computer requirements are found at the Kite Suite on the DLM website. h. Monitor the Current Kite System Status at the Kite Suite. i. Ensure students' usernames and passwords are printed. Usernames and passwords are secure and should be securely destroyed after completion of testing.	Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets on the DLM website

☑	Tasks	Resources
	11. Develop a plan to facilitate communication with parents/guardians and other district and building staff, or follow your state-developed communication plan. Schedule meetings as necessary. a. Consider what parents/guardians and other district and building staff will need and want to know about the DLM assessments. b. Determine the frequency of communication to various audiences. c. Deliver communication to various audiences according to the timeline in the communication plan. d. Relay new information from the DLM Alternate Assessment Consortium and the state to other appropriate district and building audiences as needed.	The DLM website | **About DLM** | **DLM Assessments** | Information for Parents See the section Develop a Communication Plan with Parents/Guardians, page 39 of this manual

Table 5

Instructionally Embedded Assessment Window (Optional)

☑	Tasks	Resources
	1. Monitor and support test administration. a. Facilitate communication between the DLM staff and other district and building staff during the assessment window(s). b. View the helplet video Using the DLM Instruction and Assessment Planner to learn how to use the Instruction and Assessment Planner for the optional instructionally embedded assessments. Follow the step-by-step guidance in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE. c. Monitor column P in the DLM Test Administration extract to observe assessment activity during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. d. Remind test administrators that student results during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window are not factored into the student's end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports. Also, the results are not predictors of a student's performance during the required spring assessment window. e. Serve as the first point of contact for test administrators, answering questions about the assessment. Troubleshoot issues as they arise. Serve as the point of contact for the DLM Service Desk.	TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE Educator Resource Videos

Table 6

Spring Assessment Window (Required)

☑	Tasks	Resources
	1. Substantiate assessment readiness. a. Verify that student demographic information is correct. b. Verify the PNP Profile is completed and saved, as needed. c. Ensure the First Contact survey has been submitted. Students will not be assigned testlets unless the First Contact survey is completed and submitted. d. Use the First Contact survey file in Educator Portal to monitor responses for each student and the date and time the survey was submitted.	TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE
	2. Monitor and support test administration. a. Facilitate communication between the DLM staff and test administrators during the assessment window. b. Ensure testing is completed before the end of the assessment window. Use the DLM Test Administration Monitoring extract. c. Serve as the first point of contact for test administrators, answering questions about the assessment. Troubleshoot issues as they arise.	

Table 7

Prepare for Next Year

☑	Tasks	Resources
	1. Prepare assessment coordinator plans for next year (develop calendar, design a communication plan, schedule required training, etc.).	
	2. Support test administrators in preparing for the next year (evaluate the PNP Profiles, 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
	3. Contact the State Assessment Administrator for the coming year's test windows. The State Assessment Administrator can provide assessment window dates through the 2025–2026 school year.	

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 high school. The department of education policy in each state determines the subjects and grades that are assessed. 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 supports to achieve measurable gains. They are to receive academic instruction aligned to grade-level content standards, but at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.

Check your state's participation guidelines for eligibility requirements.

The DLM Foundation for English Language Arts and Mathematics

The DLM learning map models 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 3-8 and high school.

Nodes in the maps represent discrete knowledge, skills, and understandings in either English language arts (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 three combined maps.

Science Development

In 2014, five DLM member states began a two-phase development of a science assessment following the DLM model. Since that time, most of the consortium states have joined the effort.

Phase I of science development 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 have been developed and more are in progress.

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 the common core state standards. ELA and mathematics learning map models each have 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 the Initial Precursor linkage level reflect foundational nodes in the DLM map, which are skills and understandings necessary for learning subsequent academic content (e.g., focus attention). Testlets at this level are typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. Initial Precursor testlets are administered 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.

Two additional linkage levels are 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 en route to the Target linkage level. The Successor linkage level extends beyond the Target linkage level.

The Distal linkage level testlets may also be teacher-administered. The 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 Essential Elements

The science Essential Elements are specific statements of knowledge and skills and are linked to grade-level expectations 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 the learning map model for science is not fully developed at this time, some differences occur between science and ELA and mathematics; for example, science Essential Elements have only three linkage levels instead of five.

The Target linkage level is the highest for science. Testlets at the Target linkage level are written at the level of the Essential Element and are aligned to each state's grade-level science standards. The other two science linkage levels are lower in depth, breadth, and complexity than the Target linkage level.

The Initial linkage level is the lowest and is typically intended for students who do not yet have symbolic communication. Testlets at this linkage level are teacher-administered. The Precursor linkage level is between the Initial and the Target linkage level. The Precursor and Target linkage levels are usually computer-delivered, 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 Consortium state education leaders along with DLM staff. In the required spring assessment window, students are tested over all Essential Elements in the blueprints for each subject.

The ELA and mathematics blueprints contain Essential Elements from specific ELA claims and conceptual area 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 1 General (used in most states)
- Blueprint Science Phase 1 with Biology (used in Delaware, District of Columbia, and Maryland only)

DLM Testlets

Assessments are short and are called testlets; they include three to nine items, depending on the subject. Together, the items increase the instructional relevance of the assessment and provide a better estimate of a student's knowledge, skills, and understanding of the Essential Elements than can be achieved by a single assessment 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 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 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 and writes about a topic, which 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.

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/or

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, and/or provides context for the items. The items in this testlet type will assess information in the engagement activity as well as 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 from both 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 about a student entered in Educator Portal by the test administrator to whom the student is rostered. The data is used to customize the testlets for each student.

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 the 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 assign the linkage level for each Essential Element for each subject at the beginning of the spring 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 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 they have successfully submitted each student's survey before the opening of the assessment window. The test administrator will not be able to administer an assessment 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 after the opening of the spring assessment window, the linkage level assignment of the first Essential Element to be tested may be delayed up to 24 hours from the time the survey is submitted.

PERSONAL NEEDS AND PREFERENCES PROFILE

The Personal Needs and Preference (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 a recent enhancement to Kite® Student Portal to allow additional displays (monitors and projectors) to be connected to a computer. This is useful for instances such as using a projector for students with different visual abilities.

Kite Student Portal will now 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, you will need to make sure display settings are adjusted so that the projector is set as the primary display or for display mirroring. This will only work on the most current version of Kite Student Portal. For help setting this up, contact your technology staff.

DESIGN AND DELIVERY IN THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Optional Instructionally Embedded Assessments

Instructionally embedded testlets are available for students to practice in a special optional window during the fall and winter months. Test administration tasks are in the Instruction and Assessment Planner section of Educator Portal.

The system uses the First Contact survey data as described earlier. However, in this optional window, the level of complexity for each Essential Elements is **recommended**, not assigned. The test administrator can accept the recommendation or select another. Also, complete coverage of the test blueprints is **not** required. Testing results are **not** included in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

Required Spring Assessment Window

Required testlets are delivered during the spring assessment window. The administrative tasks are in the Test Management section of Educator Portal. The system uses the same First Contact survey data as it did in the optional window for each Essential Element. However, in this window, the system **assigns** the order in which the Essential Elements are tested and **assigns** the linkage level of each Essential Element.

The linkage level of the first Essential Element being assessed is determined from data in the First Contact survey. The testlets are adaptive, and the linkage level assigned to subsequent Essential Elements being tested is based on the performance results from the previous testlet.

The system may take up to 15 minutes to deliver the student's next testlet in a subject. 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. After the student submits a testlet in a subject, while the system generates the next testlet and the Testlet Information Page for that subject, the student could be administered a testlet in another subject. The actions taken should always be what is best for the student.

Scheduling and Duration in Minutes for Each Testlet

The test administrator is responsible for scheduling testing. Testlets may be taken separately across multiple assessment sessions as long as the blueprint requirements in each subject are met by the end of the required spring assessment window. The amount of time for each individual testlet varies depending on the subject and the student. Table 8 provides the approximate number of minutes for each testlet by subject.

Table 8

Required Spring Assessment Duration by Subject

Subject	Average Overall Duration in Minutes
English language arts	70–90
Mathematics	35–60
Science	45–135

NOTE: The times listed do not include test administrator preparation time for the assessments, which may include embossing braille testlets, gathering materials, printing picture-response cards, etc.

Number of Essential Elements Tested During the Spring Assessment Window

Table 9 shows the number of operational testlets required during the spring assessment window to test all Essential Elements in the blueprint. It is organized by grade for each subject area.

Table 9

Number of Expected Testlets by Grade and Subject

Grade	ELA Testlets	Mathematics Testlets	Science Testlets	Field Test Testlets
3	9	8	9	0 or 1
4	9	8	9	0 or 1
5	9	8	9	0 or 1
6	9	7	9	0 or 1
7	9	7	9	0 or 1
8	9	8	9	0 or 1
9	9	7	9*	0 or 1
10	9	8	9*	0 or 1
11	9	6	9*	0 or 1
12	9	0	9*	0 or 1

*In states testing end-of-instruction biology in high school, students will receive 10 total testlets.

Field Test Testlets

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

Testing results from field test testlets are **not** included in the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

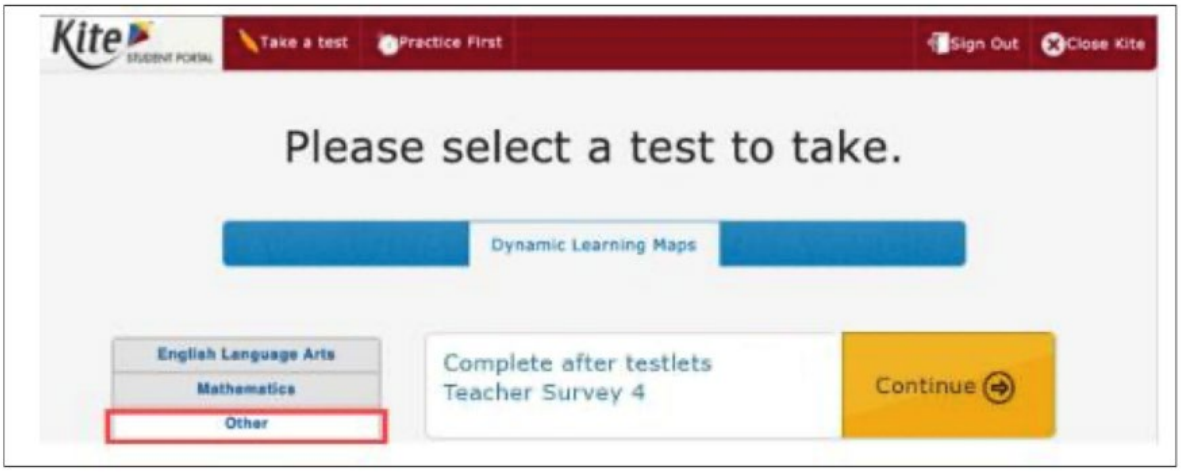
Annual Spring Teacher Survey in Student Portal

Each year in the spring window, a teacher survey is available. 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. Teachers access the survey in Kite Student Portal upon the student's first login during the spring assessment window. The survey is located under the **Other** tab, as shown in Figure 1. Best practice is for the student to complete all the testlets before the teacher responds to the survey questions.

The survey includes four blocks of items. The first, third, and fourth blocks are fixed sections that all teachers will complete. 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 the test administrator.

Figure 1

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 and students 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 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 AND EDUCATOR PORTAL

The Kite system 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.

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.

Educators and staff do **not** have accounts in Student Portal. Students have their own unique username and password. Either the student signs in, or their test administrator signs in for the student.

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. 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. Resources are provided by the DLM Consortium, and state-specific resources may also 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 10 lists DLM resources and their main purpose. These resources are available on most state webpages.

Table 10

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 district and school staff for assessment
Data Management Manual (PDF)	Supports the data manager in gathering, editing, and uploading data via Educator Portal for users, students, and rosters
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 in the DLM Training Courses website
Guide to Practice Activities & Released Testlets (PDF)	Supports the test administrator in accessing practice activities in Student Portal using demo student accounts

Resource	Purpose
TECHNOLOGY SPECIFICATIONS MANUAL (PDF)	Supports the technology personnel in preparing schools for the technology needs of the DLM alternate assessment
TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL (PDF)	Supports test administrators in preparing themselves and their students for assessments; expands the knowledge base for the assessment coordinator on specific topics
Test Updates Page	Provides important updates on test administration activities Go to the Test Updates page of the DLM website to register to receive alerts when new resources become available.

PREPARE FOR THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW

The key duties of the assessment coordinator are the following:

- Ensure students are enrolled and rostered correctly
- 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/guardians and staff

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.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PLAN

Fall District Training and Helplet Videos for Assessment Coordinators, Data Managers, and Technology Personnel

- A prerecorded Fall District Training video is available on each state's page on the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) website. This 45-minute training combines information for assessment coordinators, data managers, and technology personnel into one training session to prepare for the assessment windows. It is available on each state's page on the DLM website. The training includes PowerPoint slides, transcripts, a Frequently Asked Questions document, and is closed-captioned. At the end of the training, participants are offered an opportunity to register for a live-chat question and answer session at a scheduled time.
- Many one- to five-minute helplet videos are available on how to do specific tasks in Educator Portal, such as Getting Started in Educator Portal and Completing the First Contact Survey and PNP Profile to help test administrators complete the PNP Profile and the First Contact survey. The helplet videos are closed-captioned.

HINT: All resources listed above are located on the DLM website; none are in Educator Portal.

Resources for Test Administrators

In addition to the previously described resources, the DLM Consortium provides required training modules, professional development instructional support, and supplemental training helplets for test administrators. Table 11 compares these three categories.

Table 11

Available Training and Professional Development

Required Test Administrator Training	Professional Development for Instruction	Supplemental Training
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.	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 with foundational presymbolic communication. e. Watching the professional development modules is strongly recommended. f. State and district administrators may recommend or require specific modules. g. State administrators decide which format(s) to offer—self-directed, facilitated, or both.	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 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.

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.

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 one-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. The returning training course has one post-test at the end.

Participants in the returning course have only one opportunity to pass the post-test with a passing score of 80% or higher before administering the DLM alternate assessment. If participants do not pass the 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.

NOTE: Sometimes, state administrators require all test administrators to take the new training course additional years.

Professional Development for Instructional Support

Professional development for instruction is strongly encouraged. If wishing to incorporate professional development for instruction into a district training plan, the DLM Consortium offers a variety of content and multiple methods to access the materials.

- Online professional development learning modules have been created for educators to use. These modules provide information and strategies to help educators instruct students.
- Each online, self-directed module lasts approximately 30-45 minutes and focuses on a single topic related to the instruction of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Post-tests accompany the modules followed by certificates of completion that are emailed to the 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 test administrators.
- Most educators are required to participate in regular, ongoing professional development. Some states give continuing education credits for the DLM professional development modules. If these credits are available in your state, ask the teachers to print each certificate of completion that was emailed to them and provide the documentation to you.
- Access the modules on the professional development website.

The DLM Instructional Supports Facebook page encourages collaboration among educators across the consortium.

PREPARE FOR ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION

To prepare for assessment implementation, consider these tasks:

- ☐ Initiate communication among district staff.
- ☐ Encourage staff to register for Test Updates 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 they are not to email or send via chat any student PII information or secure testing materials.
- ☐ Use Educator Portal extracts and files to monitor assessment administration readiness.
- ☐ Download the User extract to monitor roles and to determine whether an account should be active, pending, or inactive in Educator Portal. Users who should no longer have an active account for the district should be inactivated. They cannot be removed.
- ☐ Use the Training Status extract to monitor whether training was successfully completed.
- ☐ Use the First Contact File to monitor the date and time when each student's First Contact Survey was submitted.
- ☐ Use the PNP Settings extract to monitor each student and whether the settings are appropriate for the student. Note: not every student needs special settings in the PNP Profile.
- ☐ 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.

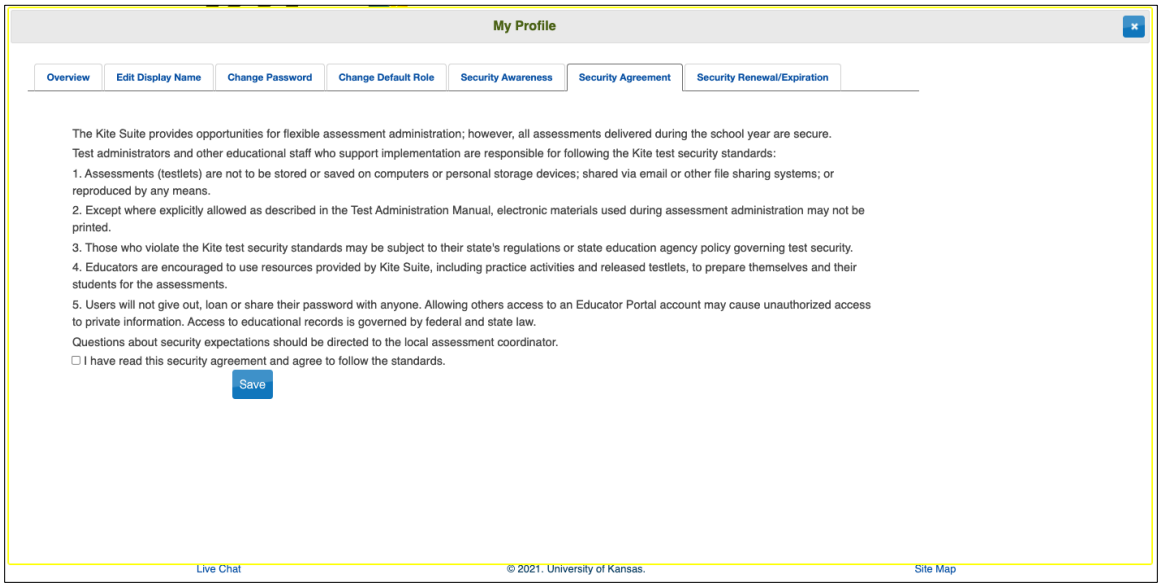
Agree to the Security Agreement

DLM alternate 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 2 displays the text of the security agreement.

Figure 2

Security Agreement



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 unlocked to account and reset the password.

HINT: Help test administrators who have students who are leaving or joining the classroom after the spring assessment window has opened. Work with the data manager so these students have accurate records and receive testlets at their current school. A student who has begun testing in one school and transfers to another can continue testing as soon as the student is enrolled and rostered in the new school. The completed testlets follow the student.

Responsibilities for Braille Test Administration

Assessment coordinators monitor and support the administration of braille forms during the optional and required windows. Uncontracted braille forms are available for ELA and mathematics in the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. In the spring window, uncontracted braille forms are available for ELA, mathematics, and science. However, braille forms are only available for some Essential Elements and only at upper linkage levels. Braille forms are available for

- EBAE
- UEB with Nemeth
- UEB Math/Science

For more information about braille codes, 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 use braille. Therefore, braille is not to 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 assessments to students who are blind or have visual impairments. For more information, see the section Testlets for Students Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments in the Test Administration Manual. Also, read the Accessibility Manual for approaches for working with students who are blind or visually impaired.

Braille Form Delivery

By selecting one or more braille settings in the PNP Profile, the system will assign the appropriate braille form to the student whenever possible. For the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, the braille forms and their Testlet Information Pages (TIPs) are in the Instruction and Assessment Planner for ELA and mathematics. During the spring assessment window, the braille forms and their TIPs for all three subjects are in the Test Management section of Educator Portal.

> NOTE: Science testlets do not have braille forms in the optional instructionally embedded assessment window.

All Braille Ready Files (BRF) are delivered via Educator Portal and must be embossed locally. All testlets, including braille testlets, are adaptive in the spring assessment window. Therefore, the time needed for the system to assign the next testlet and the time needed to complete the embossing process must be calculated into the

assessment preparation time. Go to the section Retrieve Braille Ready File in the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

Table 12 has information about the potential availability of braille forms for each subject, grade, and linkage level and where the forms are delivered for each window.

Table 12

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	The optional instructionally embedded assessment window Spring assessment window	Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal Test Management in Educator Portal
ELA and mathematics	6–8 and HS	Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor	The optional instructionally embedded assessment window Spring assessment window	Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal Test Management in Educator Portal
Science	3–8 and HS	Target	Spring assessment window only	Test Management in Educator Portal

Scoring a Student's Response for Braille Testlets

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 embossed paper version, the student indicates each response choice to the test administrator as is normally done on other braille assignments. The test administrator inputs each student response into the testlet in Student Portal. Responses are then scored by the system in the same way as with non-braille forms.

STUDENT REPORTS

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SCORE REPORTS

The scoring system for the 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 spring assessment window are summarized in the Individual Student Score Reports.

For ELA and mathematics, summative results are based on the tested Essential Elements from the testing blueprint during the spring assessment window. The system combines a student's responses on all operational testlets with information about the structure of the DLM learning map models to determine which linkage levels the student has likely mastered during this window. The information about each linkage level leads to a summary of the student's mastery of skills in each conceptual area for ELA, in each claim for mathematics, and then for each subject overall.

For science, summative results are also based on the tested Essential Elements from the testing blueprint 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 then for the subject of 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 the 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, when school begins again in the fall, the building or district assessment coordinators provide the test administrators with the ISRs for the students they tested the past spring. Directions on how to access the ISRs are described in the section Access Reports and Extracts of the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE.

> HINT: Neither results from testlets taken during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window nor results from field test testlets factor into the Individual Student Score Reports. Only results from operational testlets taken during the spring assessment window are used for the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION PLAN WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The DLM Consortium suggests either developing a plan to facilitate communication between parents/guardians and district staff or following the state-developed communication plan. Schedule meetings as necessary.

Student Portal may be downloaded on a home computer, and parents/guardians may use it with their student at home.

The DLM Consortium provides 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. The DLM Consortium also offers information and resources for parents/guardians 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. They can be downloaded, sorted, and the data analyzed. Using the data, testing readiness can be monitored before the opening of the testing window. During their state's spring assessment window, the assessment coordinator can monitor testing progress and completion.

The following 14 extracts and files are available:

- Current Enrollment extract
- DLM General Research file*
- DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance file*
- DLM Test Administration Monitoring extract
- First Contact Survey file
- PNP Setting Counts extract
- PNP Setting extract
- Parents*
- Roster extract
- Security Agreement Completion extract
- Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract
- TIP Access extract
- Training Status extract
- User extract

*These extracts may only be available at the state level in some states.

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 Extracts.

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 can be found that are supported for administration of the Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) alternate assessment along with instructions for downloading Student Portal.

Local devices attached to these machines, such as interactive whiteboards, are also acceptable. Interactive whiteboards (brand names 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 1,024 × 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 in Student Portal 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 at a student's home. Contact the DLM Service Desk for advice when an internet connection will not be available.

SUPPORTED BROWSERS FOR EDUCATOR PORTAL

The Kite Requirements 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.

KITE PROCEDURES

Use the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE for processes for procedures that take place in Kite Educator Portal (i.e., 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 Test
- Navigate in Kite Student Portal
- Take a Break During Assessment
- Complete the Test
- 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 within 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 the learning of 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 in the DLM maps. Connections are illustrated with arrows in the maps.
core idea	Science: The key organizing principles in science and are taught and learned over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication. 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.
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 assessed are domains. The domains assessed across all grade bands are physical science, life science, and Earth and space science.
Educator Portal	Educator Portal is a secure, web-based application designed to aid teachers and administrative users in the administration of assessments, including student enrollment and monitoring or tracking results. 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 include a short video without audio.
Essential Elements	Essential Elements are the content standards used for assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Essential Elements are reduced in depth, breadth, and the level of complexity, and they build a bridge from the content in the grade-level standards to academic expectations. 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.

First Contact Survey	A survey used to collect background information about students who are eligible for the DLM alternate assessments. The survey goes beyond basic demographic information and includes questions on communication, assistive technology devices, motor and sensory impairments, and academic performance. In the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, data gathered from the core questions from the survey are used to **recommend** the linkage level for each ELA and mathematics Essential Element. In addition to the core questions, data gathered from the science questions are used to **recommend** the linkage level for each science Essential Element. Data gathered from the core questions plus data from the writing questions are used to **recommend** the linkage level for the writing testlet. In the spring assessment window, data gathered from the core questions are used to **assign** the linkage level for the student's first ELA and mathematics testlets. Data gathered from the core questions plus data from the science questions are used to **assign** the linkage level of the student's first science testlet. In the spring window, data gathered from the core questions plus data from the writing questions are used to **assign** the linkage level for the writing testlet, instead of performance of previously completed testlets.
initialization	The process by which a student's existing information is used to determine the point in the DLM learning map model where the student enters the assessment for the first time.
Instruction and Assessment Planner	A part in Educator Portal where test administrators perform assessment functions for a student during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. Functions include selecting an Essential Element and linkage level for instruction and subsequent testing. Most assessment data about the student is provided in the Instruction and Assessment Planner during this window, including a mastery of a tested Essential Element at a linkage level. Score results are not used for the end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.

instructionally embedded assessment	Occurs during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window in the fall and winter months where instruction and assessment are closely integrated with assessment functions being performed throughout instruction. Functions include educator-selected Essential Elements and linkage levels for instruction and subsequent testing. Most assessment data about the student is provided in the Instruction and Assessment Planner during this window, including a mastery indication for a tested Essential Element at a linkage level. Although a mastery indication is provided, score results do not impact end-of-year Individual Student Score Reports.
Kite Student Portal	Student Portal is a secure testing platform used by students to take testlets. Once launched, Student Portal prevents students from accessing unauthorized webpages or applications during testing. All students taking the DLM alternate assessment will have unique accounts in Kite Student Portal. Test administrators do not have accounts in Student Portal. In addition to operational testing in the Student Portal, practice activities and released testlets can be administered using Student Portal. The login credentials for the practice activities and released testlets are unique to each one. Access the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL for more information about Student Portal.
linkage level	ELA and mathematics: A small section of the DLM learning map model containing one or more nodes that represent critical concepts or skills needed to learn the Essential Element. ELA and mathematics each have five linkage levels: Initial Precursor, Distal Precursor, Proximal Precursor, Target, and Successor. Science: An incremental level of complexity toward the learning target where an assessment was developed for the science Essential Elements. Science has three linkage levels: Initial, Precursor, and Target. Linkage levels for an Essential Element are always related directly to grade-level content standards but at different levels of cognitive complexity. The Target level is most closely related to the grade-level expectation.

materials	Any objects, manipulatives, and tools used during an assessment. Materials Collection lists are specific to a 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 model 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	Student-specific information that informs Kite Student Portal about an individual student's personal needs and preferences for each testlet. The PNP Profile includes information the system needs to make the student's user interface in Student Portal compatible with their accessibility needs. The PNP Profile includes information about display enhancements, language and braille, and audio and environmental supports. Educators who know the student provide the information in the profile found in Educator Portal.
plan	The test administrator creates a plan in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal only during the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. A plan includes an Essential Element, a linkage level, and a testlet for ELA, mathematics, and science.
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. An SAA can transfer students between districts, assign the District Test Coordinator role, inactivate users, and have access to all student reports and extracts.

state education agency	A state department of education.
stem	The beginning part of the item that presents a problem to solve or an item 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.
Student Activity Table	A page 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 the optional instructionally embedded assessment window. The data in the Student Activity Table populates based on the test administrator's actions on the Student View Page for each student (i.e., how many testlets were administered). The table also includes three icons providing easy access to the First Contact survey, PNP Profile, and the student's credentials.
Student View Page	A page in the Instruction and Assessment Planner in Educator Portal that displays details about one student at a time for each Essential Element and linkage level. During the optional instructionally embedded assessment window, test administrators use the Student View Page for several instruction and assessment actions for each student (i.e., creating a plan and assigning a testlet). The system will display information about the student's testing progress and will indicate whether the student achieved mastery of an Essential Element at the linkage level tested.
technology-enhanced items	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 at upper linkage levels.

testlet	A short assessment that begins with an engagement activity and include three to nine items, depending on the subject. 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 delivered one at a time in each subject. They are either teacher-administered or computer-delivered and they are adaptive, except for the writing testlet, which is always delivered last and its linkage level assignment is not based on performance of previous testlets. More specific information is found in the TEST ADMINISTRATION MANUAL.
Testlet Information Page (TIP)	A PDF that is unique to each testlet and provides specific information to guide the test administrator in delivering the assessment. The Testlet Information Page (TIP) for each testlet lists the materials needed or describes the attributes of the materials needed specific to a testlet. The materials listed in the TIP are especially needed for the teacher-administered testlets at the Initial and Distal Precursor linkage levels in ELA and mathematics, and the Initial linkage level for science. The TIP for testlets at the Initial level for science has picture response cards that must be printed before testing. Best practice is to print them in color. Computer-delivered testlets require fewer materials than the teacher administered testlets.

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
07/01/2022	Updated timeframe for a testlet reset from 72 hours to five business days	2
07/01/2022	Important information about a grade change after testing has started	13
07/01/2022	Information about an enhancement to Kite® Student Portal that will allow additional displays (monitors and projectors) to be connected to a computer	24
07/01/2022	Updated information about braille forms; three choices available for selection for Braille Ready Forms (BRFs)	37
07/01/2022	Updated language	Throughout

Religious Opt –Out

Participation in statewide assessments is a federal and state requirement for all students. Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pa. Code (22 Pa. code 4.4) provides for the right of any parent/guardian to excuse his/her child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing materials, he/she finds the assessment to be in conflict with his/her religious beliefs. This is the only regulatory allowance for a parent/guardian to excuse his or her child from the statewide assessments. A religious exemption cannot be denied; however, it can only be granted if all of the following steps are completed.

1. The student must be enrolled for testing so there is an official record of eligibility for the PASA. The enrollment record is also needed so the Assessment Coordinator can document officially that the student was not assessed due to religious beliefs. A religious exemption cannot be granted until after the parent/guardian(s) have reviewed the vendor released examples.

2. The Dynamic Learning Maps vendor produces publicly released PASA 'testlets', which serve as a tool for parents to view the type of content assessed on the PASA. The testlet examples can be accessed at: Instructional Resources for YE Model States | Dynamic Learning Maps. The parent/guardian is no longer required to view the publicly, released test materials on school grounds with an administrator present. It is strongly recommended that a school administrator/PASA Assessment Coordinator discuss with the parent/guardian the PASA outlining key features of the assessment allowing students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to show what they know and can do.

3. If after reviewing the assessment the parent/guardian(s) does not want their student to participate, he/she must write a letter to the Superintendent or Executive Director requesting a religious exemption.

4. At the end of the testing window, the Assessment Coordinator indicates in the student's DLM Kite portal record that the student was not assessed and

selects the appropriate special circumstance code. This information is reported to the state and affects accountability.

Parent Refusal (not based on religious beliefs)

There is no allowance for this type of exclusion in Pennsylvania regulation. Even though Pennsylvania does not recognize parental refusal as an allowable exclusion, if a parent/ guardian refuses to have their child participate in the assessment and does not provide a reason in accordance with Chapter 4 rules, the IEP team must continue to identify the student as participating in the PASA and enroll the student in the KITE portal. At the end of the testing window, the PASA Assessment Coordinator must follow the procedure for non-assessed students and select the appropriate special circumstance code.

LEAs must be aware that religious exemptions and parent opt outs are factored into participation rates and will negatively affect school accountability.

PASA DLM Test Security Affidavit for Support Staff and Related Service Personnel

This document serves as the PASA DLM Test Security Affidavit for individuals that may be present during test administration (i.e., paraprofessional, interpreter, behavior specialist, related service personnel) and do not have an active role in the PASA DLM Kite portal. All PASA assessors are required to complete an online test security affidavit via the DLM Kite Educator portal prior to accessing student assessments.

This document identifies specific actions which are inappropriate and violate, in spirit and intent, a secure statewide alternate assessment. It is provided in coordination with security procedures put forth by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education and published in the *Pennsylvania School Code* and the *PASA DLM Test Administration Manual*. Failure to adhere to test security procedures may result in disciplinary action and/or revocation of the teaching certificate by the Pennsylvania State Department of Education.

1. To disclose secure test items or student responses before, during, or after the assessment
2. To review, read, or look at test items or student responses before administering the assessment, except under conditions outlined in the *PASA DLM Test Administration Manual*
3. To give students answers to test questions using verbal or nonverbal cues before, during, or after administering the assessment
4. To alter student responses
5. To alter the test procedures stated in the *PASA DLM Test Administration Manual*
6. To allow students to use additional aids other than what the Accessibility Manual allows
7. To have secure test materials in one's personal possession outside of the allowable procedures outlined in the *PASA DLM Test Administration Manual*
8. To leave secure test materials in non-secure locations and/or unattended by professional staff
9. To take or post pictures of *PASA* test materials on a social media or other public sites
10. To fail to report a test security violation

By signing below, I certify that I have read the above policy and agree to abide by established *PASA* test security procedures.

_____

Name Date

_____

District Position

*The signed copy of this form must be kept on file by the PASA Assessment Coordinator and be available upon request.

Revised 2021

English Learner (EL)- PA Specific Guidance

Students in their first year in the United States are not required to participate in state assessments for English language arts. They are, however, required to participate in the math and science assessments. This includes the PASA. For any language other than English, an interpreter may be used to present the PASA during the first three years that a student is categorized as an EL (English Learner) in U.S. schools.

PA SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE CODES 2022–2023

PASA Assessment Coordinators (AC) are required to enter special circumstance codes in Kite® Educator Portal for students with special characteristics (e.g., home-schooled) or for those who **do not complete the assessment** during the testing cycle. Keep in mind the following facts about these codes:

- Students must be enrolled and rostered in the Kite Educator Portal with the First Contact Survey completed before they can be coded with any special circumstance code.
- A special circumstance code needs to be added to one testlet in each subject area, even if more testlets were administered in the subject.
- Students who no longer qualify to take the PASA (e.g., taking the PSSA or Keystone) should be exited from the Kite Educator Portal using the directions to exit a student rather than a special circumstance code. Exit codes and directions for exiting a student can be accessed in the Data Management Manual.

The following table contains the list of the special circumstance codes used in Pennsylvania for the spring assessment window. PASA ACs select from these codes in Educator Portal. Directions for entering the special circumstance code appear after the table.

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CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
03454	**Medical waiver**	Student has a medical emergency or condition that prohibits them from participating in the assessment for the duration of the assessment window. This can include recent, serious illness or injury, conditions that leave a student medically fragile, or other medical conditions that place the student at risk if assessed (e.g., risk of infection, mental health crisis).	• In order to mark the student as not assessed due to a "medical waiver," a note from a doctor excusing the student from participation or hospital documentation must be on file with the local education agency. • **Explanation:** Medical reasons associated with this special circumstance may vary but must align with the PA Definition/Crosswalk. • **Accountability:** This code allows schools to omit such students when calculating student participation rates. This will ensure that schools whose accountability status might be affected by such situations will not be improperly designated. • *Refer to and use Exit Code if a student is deceased.*
13813	**Chronic absences**	Student had an extended absence through all of the assessment window.	• **Accountability**: Students who are non-assessed due to an absence without make-up will have a negative effect on the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.
13815	**Home-schooled for assessed subjects**	Student in Home Education Program (Home-Schooled) participates in statewide assessment at parent/guardian request.	• **Accountability:** Students who are home-schooled and request to participate in the state assessment will not be included in accountability or attribution for the local education agency.

CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
13820	**Parent refusal**	Parent/guardian refuses to allow student to participate in statewide assessment for nonreligious reasons. This is **not** a Chapter 4 Parent Religious Opt Out. There is no regulatory allowance for parents to excuse their child from testing outside of Chapter 4 guidance.	• **Explanation:** This code should be used for parent refusal reasons other than religious beliefs (e.g., a student is in a fully virtual environment *and* offered the opportunity to be assessed during the assessment window *and* parent refuses participation.) • **Accountability:** Students who are non-assessed due to parent refusal will have a negative effect on the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.
13823	**Student not showing adequate effort**	Student attempts the first full testlet at the lowest level (Initial Precursor) in each subject area and provides no response to any items.	• **Accountability:** Students are considered to have participated in the assessment and will not have a negative effect on the school's participation rate. The student will receive the lowest performance level designation and may have a negative impact on the school's performance level indicator.
13826	**Student refusal**	Student refuses to engage with the assessment or engages in disruptive or injurious behavior at any point during the assessment.	• **Accountability:** Students who are nonassessed due to a student refusal may have a negative effect on the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.

CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
13830	**Other reason for ineligibility**	Student tested in the wrong grade.	• **Accountability:** Students who are tested at the wrong grade will negatively affect the schools' participation rate and have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.
13831	**Other reason for nonparticipation**	Parent/guardian refuses to allow student to participate in statewide assessment for religious reason. This is a Chapter 4 Parent Religious Opt Out. See page 51 of the DLM Assessment Coordinator Manual for the procedure.	• **Accountability:** Students who do not participate in the assessment due to parental refusal will negatively affect the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.
09999	**Other**	Student does not test for reasons that do not fit the description of any of the other special circumstance codes.	• **Accountability:** Students who do not participate in the assessment will negatively affect the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.

CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
13835	**Administration or system failure**	An issue with administering the assessment or a computer system failure that could not be resolved and invalidated the assessment. If using this code, the PASA AC **must** contact the Bureau of Special Education (BSE), Special Education Adviser Lisa Hampe at lihampe@pa.gov and provide details.	• **Explanation:** In most cases, an internet or system issue can be resolved by attempting to resume the testing at a later time and will not invalidate the assessment. Likewise, if an assessor assigned to the student is not able to administer the assessment (e.g., unexpected leave), the assessment should be reassigned to another assessor. This code should only be used if a unique situation occurred that could not be remedied (after contacting the BSE), and test invalidation occurred as a result. • **Accountability:** Students who do not participate in the assessment due to test administration or system failure will negatively affect the school's participation rate and can potentially have a negative impact on the school's accountability status.

Directions for entering Special Circumstance Codes in the Kite Educator Portal are below.

Accessing Special Circumstance Codes

Special circumstance codes are specific to test sessions in the spring assessment window only. The codes are descriptive words (e.g., Medical Waiver or Parental Refusal). A special circumstance code can be applied to, edited, or removed from a test session in a subject at any time during the state's spring assessment window, **but the action must be performed before the window closes**.

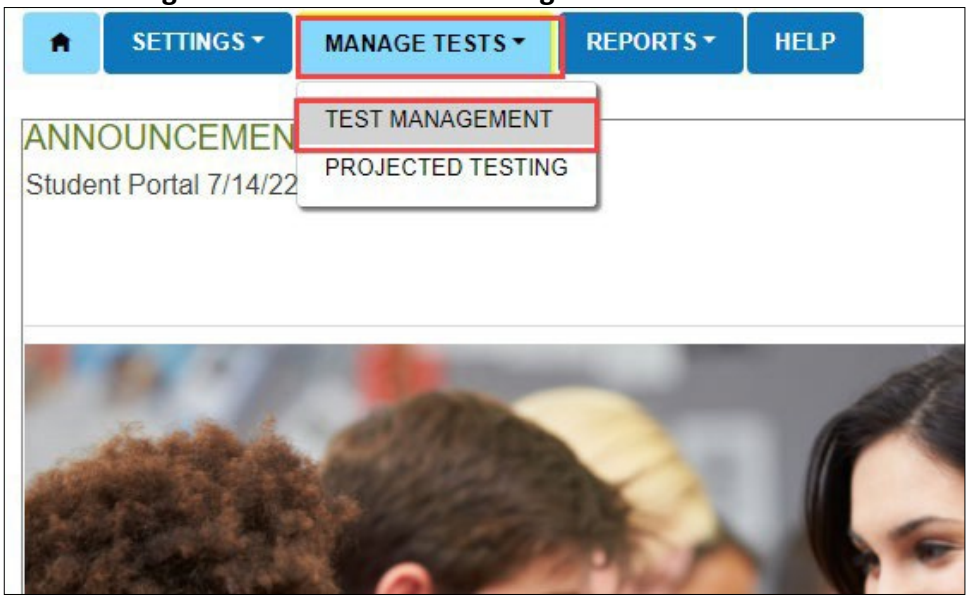
The code must be entered for the test session for each applicable subject. In other words, if a student is not testing in any subjects, a code must be applied to a testlet in each subject to which the student is rostered. If later the code must be edited or removed for all subjects, the action must be performed for the code that was entered. The actions must be taken before the close of the spring assessment window.

NOTE: Entering a special circumstance code does not prevent further testing.

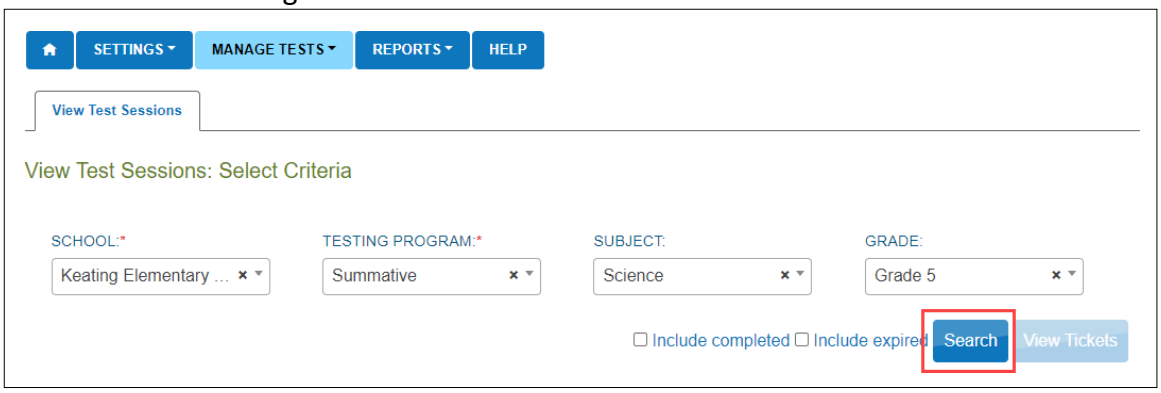
Entering A Special Circumstance Code

Follow these steps to enter the special circumstance code for a student in the spring assessment window.

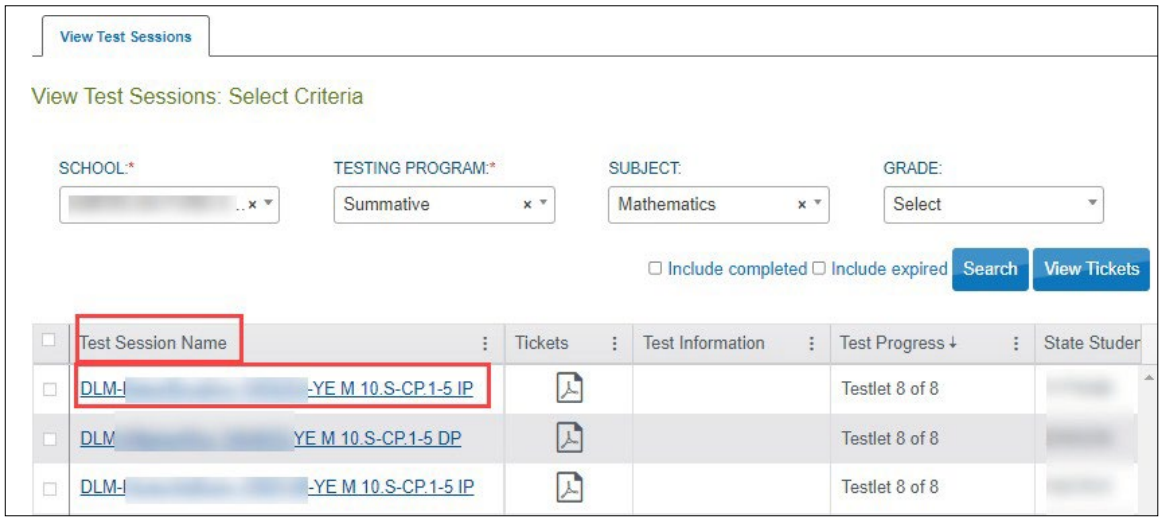
1. Select **Manage Tests** and then **Test Management.**



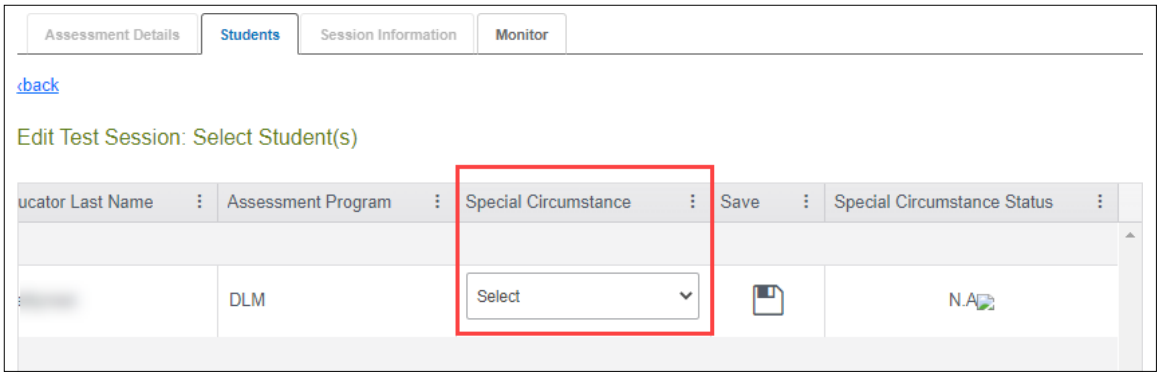
2. Select the following options in these fields:
   - **School:** the appropriate school
   - **Testing Program:** Summative
   - **Subject:** English language arts, mathematics, or science
   - **Grade:** the student's grade



3. Select **Search.**
4. In the **Test Session Name** column, double click the testlet code where a special circumstance code is needed. The code includes the student's name. **Remember, a code must be entered for each subject.**

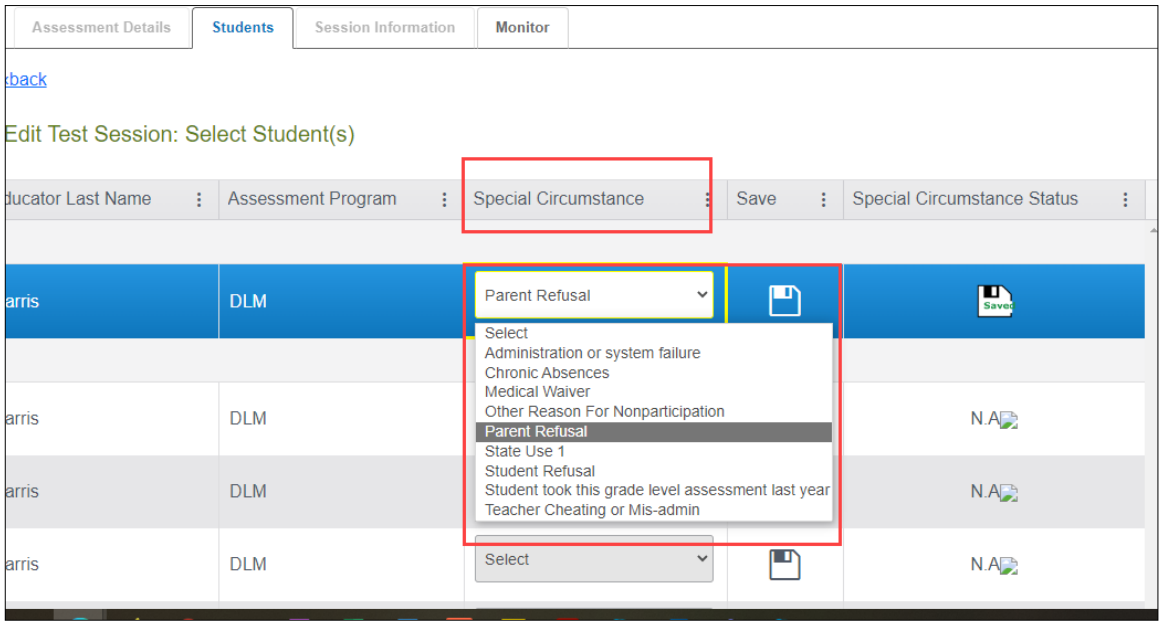


5. The user is automatically taken to the **End Test Session: Select Student** screen. Select the **student** and scroll to the far right.

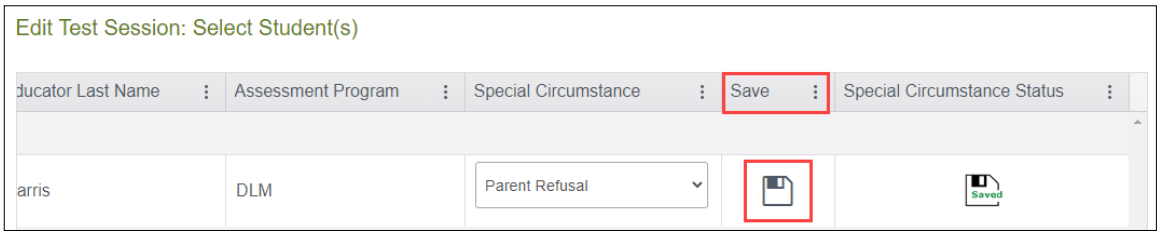


NOTE: Roles that do not have permission to apply special circumstance codes will not have the **Special Circumstance** column.

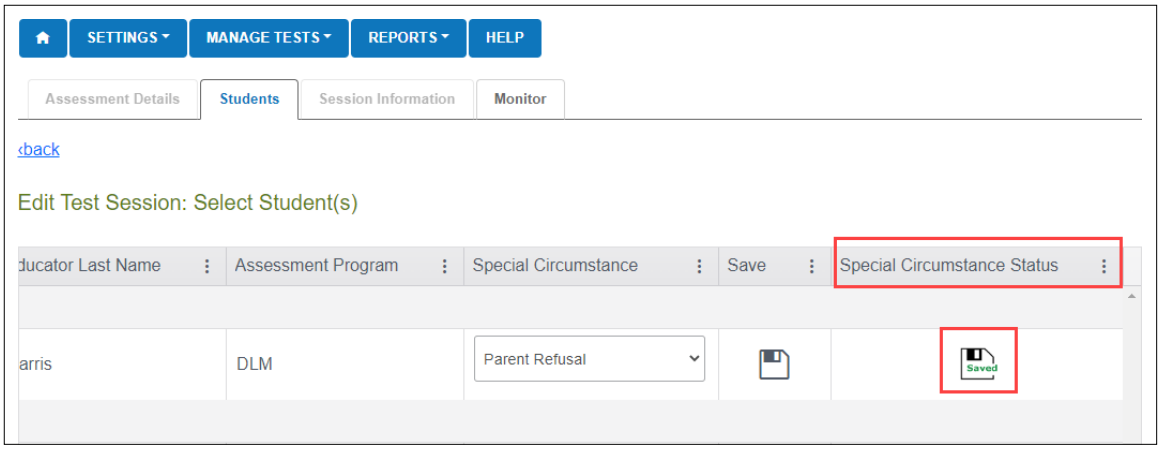
6. Select the arrow in the drop-down menu and select the applicable special circumstance code. In the following example, the user chose Parent Refusal.



7. Select **Save**.

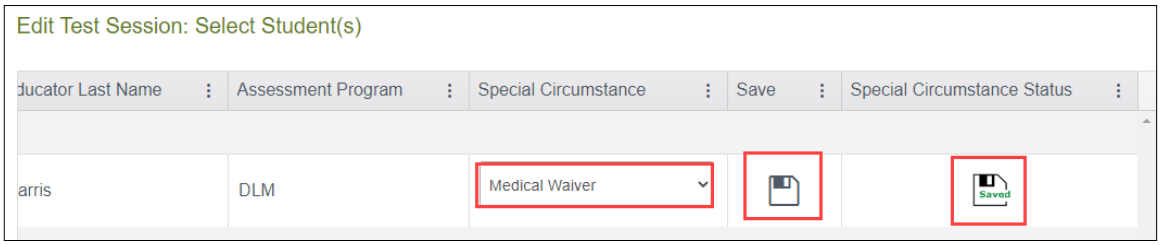


8. The test session and subject are updated as indicated by the icon with the word **Saved** displayed in the **Special Circumstances Status** column.



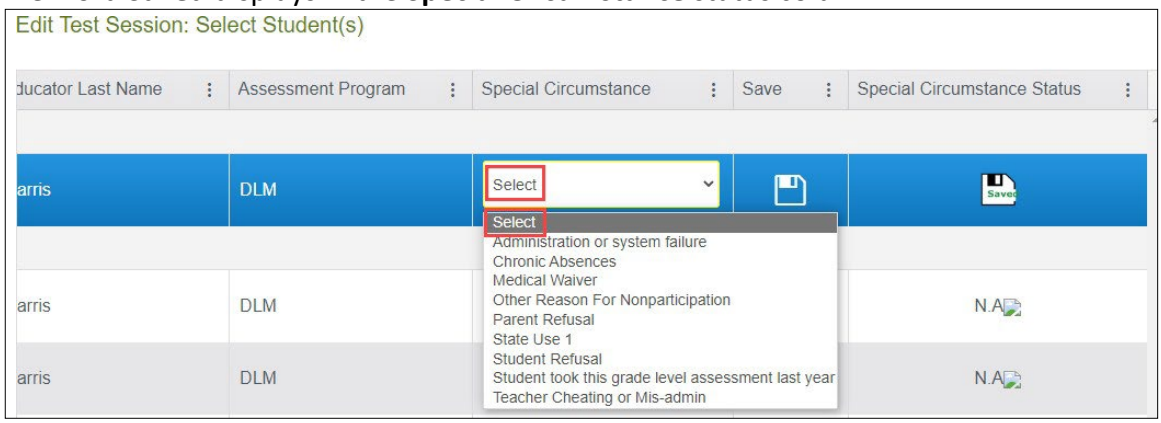
9. To edit an applied code, follow the same steps used to enter a code:

- Go to the **Special Circumstance** drop-down menu.
- Choose a different code. (In the following screenshot, the user changed from Parent Refusal to Medical Waiver.)
- Select the **Save** icon.
- The word **Saved** displays in the **Special Circumstance** status column.



10. To delete an applied code:

- Scroll to the drop-down list of special circumstance codes.
- At the top of the list, choose **Select**.
- Select the **Save** icon.
- The word **Saved** displays in the **Special Circumstance** status column.

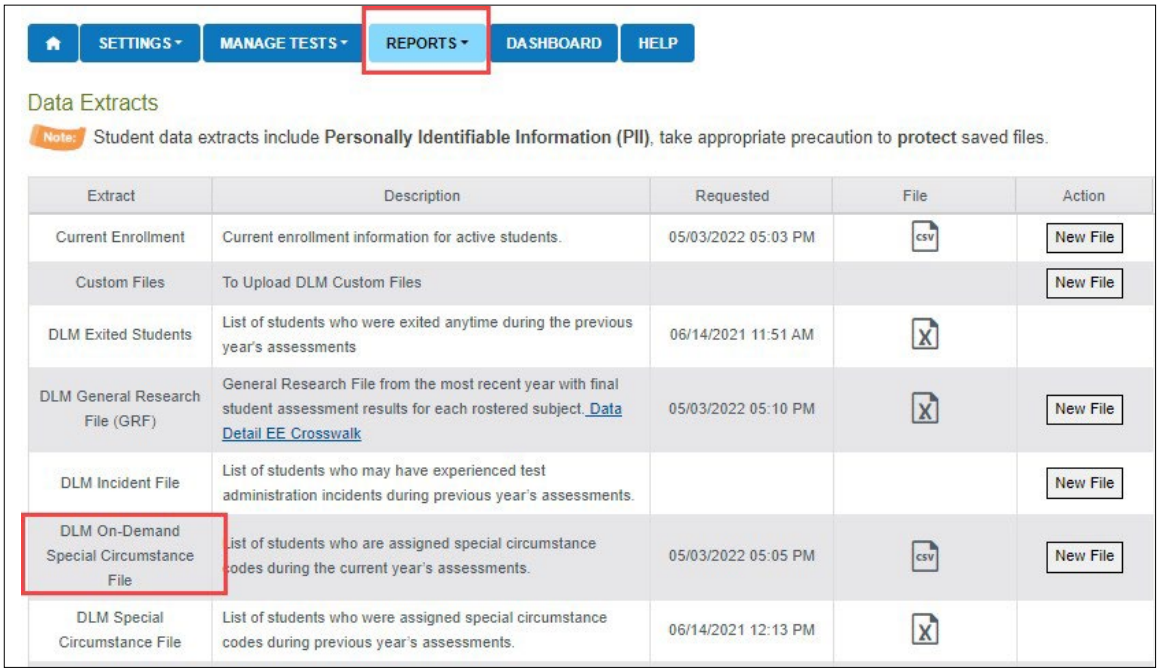


NOTE: A Special Circumstance Code must be entered, edited, or deleted before the close of the spring assessment window.

On-Demand Special Circumstance Code Extract

For states that allow the use of special circumstance codes during their spring assessment window, the DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance extract is available for monitoring the codes that are added during the window (Figure 1). The extract is available to the same roles that have permission to add the codes. To learn how to access this extract, go to the EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE > Access Reports and Extracts.

Figure 1. *Screenshot of the DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File in the list of extracts.*



The DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File is available to the State Assessment Administrator, District Test Coordinator, and the Building Test Coordinator roles depending on state policy. The DLM Special Circumstance File is the end-of-year file for the State Assessment Administrator role only.