



PA SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE CODES 2025-26

PA DLM Assessment Coordinators (AC) are required to enter Special Circumstance Codes (SCCs) 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. SCCs detail why students did not participate or complete the assessment. **NEW for 2026** - SCCs can now be entered at the student, subject, and/or test session (testlet) level. **All codes must be entered before the test window closes on May 1, 2026.**

Special Circumstance Codes by Level

Level	Requirements	Example
Student Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must be enrolled. • Student does not need to be rostered. • First Contact Survey does not need to be submitted. • SCC may be applied before the assessment window opens or at any time during the window. 	Parent religious opt-out or refusal for all subjects
Subject Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same requirements as Student Level. • Each subject may have the same or a different SCC. 	Student will participate in one or more subjects but not all
Test Session (Testlet) Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student must be enrolled and rostered. • First Contact Survey must be submitted. • Assessment window must be open. 	Student began testing but did not finish (e.g., student not showing adequate effort)

Keep in mind the rules about these codes:

- Entering a SCC does not prevent further testing. To prevent erroneous testing for students who are not participating (e.g., religious opt out) consider entering the code at the student level and removing the student from a teacher’s roster. This will prevent the teacher from accidentally testing a student that is not permitted to participate.
- Students who no longer qualify to take the PA DLM (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 SCC. See Step 2C: [PA DLM Data Management for Assessment Coordinators \(AC\)](#)
- Refer to the screenshots later in this document associated with each level for step-by-step instructions on entering SCCs.

The table on p. 2 contains the list of the SCCs used in Pennsylvania for the spring assessment window. PA DLM ACs select from these codes in Educator Portal.

CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
03454	Medical waiver	Student has a medical emergency <i>or</i> condition that prohibits them from participating in the assessment during 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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 LEA. • 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. • <i>Refer to and use Exit Code if a student is deceased.</i>
13813	Chronic absences	Student had an extended absence through most or all of the assessment window.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability: Students who are non-assessed or assessed in a limited capacity due to chronic absences may 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) participated in statewide assessment at parent/guardian request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability: Students who are home-schooled and request to participate in the state assessment will not be included in accountability for the school.

CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
13820	Parent refusal	<p>Parent/guardian refuses to allow student to participate in statewide assessment for non-religious reasons.</p> <p>This is <u>not</u> 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation: This code should be used for parent refusal reasons other than religious beliefs (e.g., a student is in a fully virtual environment <i>and</i> offered the opportunity to be assessed during the assessment window <i>and</i> 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	<p>Student attempts the first, full testlet at the lowest level (initial precursor) in each subject area and provides no response to any items.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>Student refuses to engage with the assessment or engages in disruptive or injurious behavior at any point during the assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability: Students who are non-assessed 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.

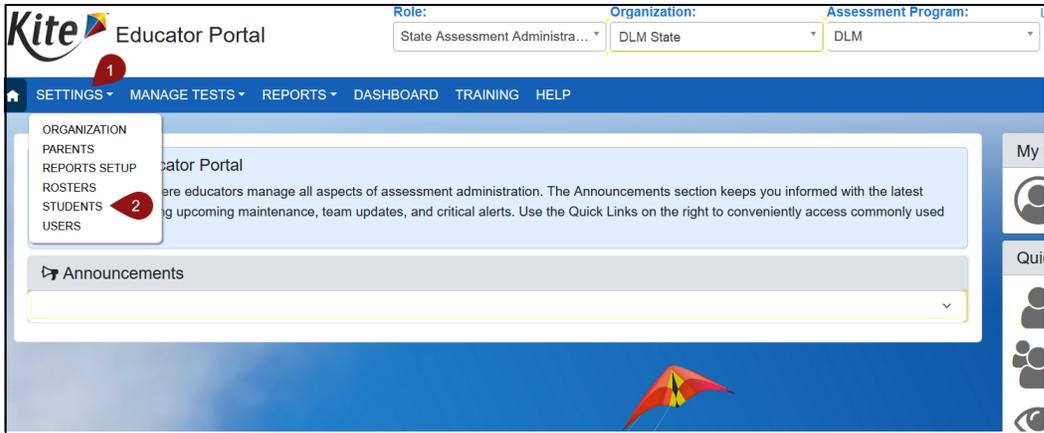
CEDS Code	CEDS Special Circumstance	PA Definition/Crosswalk	Additional Considerations
10001	State Use 1	<p>Parent/guardian refuses to allow student to participate in statewide assessment for religious reason.</p> <p>This is a Chapter 4 Parent Religious Opt Out. See the procedure to be followed in the DLM Assessment Coordinator Manual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<p>Student does not test for reasons that do not fit the description of any of the other Special Circumstance Codes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Test administration irregularities - the PA DLM AC must report any test irregularities (e.g., administering a testlet to the incorrect student) to the Bureau of Special Education. Contact lihampe@pa.gov or lhauswirth@pa.gov to report incorrect test administration procedures or anomalies. Do not use the student name or any other personally identifiable information when sending an email.

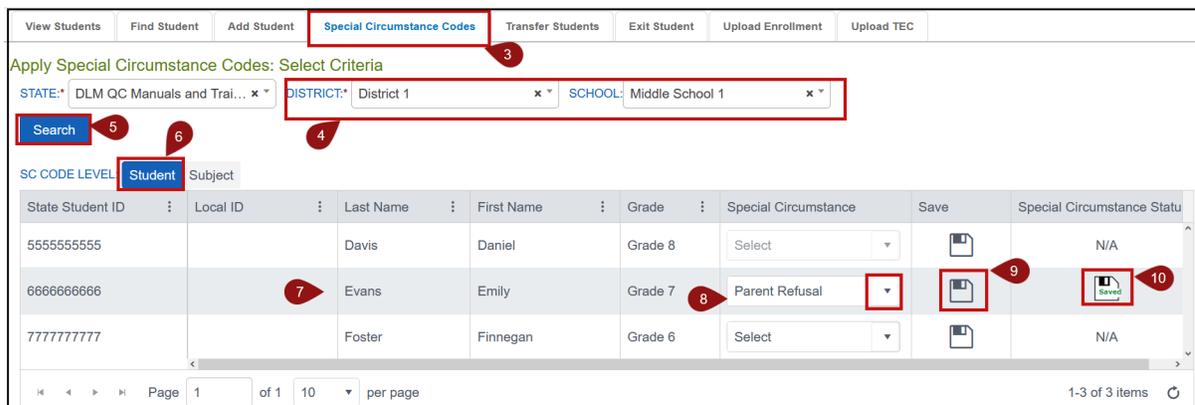
PROCEDURES TO APPLY A SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE CODE AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

The PASA AC may apply a DLM special circumstance code at the student level as soon as the student is enrolled.

- 1) Select **Settings**.
- 2) Select **Students**.



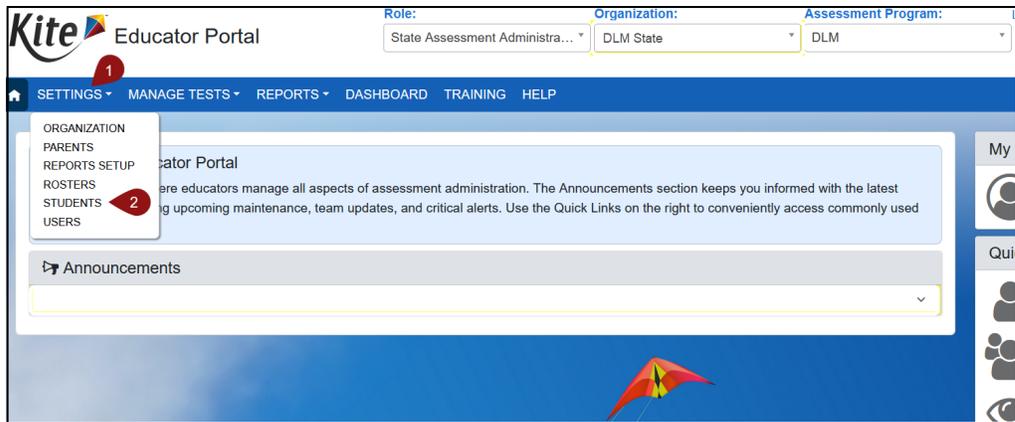
- 3) Select the **Special Circumstance Codes** tab.
- 4) Filter for the organization (e.g., district).
- 5) Select **Search**.
- 6) **Student** is the default level that displays. The student grid will display all enrolled students for the organization along with the Special Circumstance grid.
- 7) Select the applicable student.
- 8) Select the drop-down arrow to choose the desired special circumstance code.
- 9) Select the **Save** icon.
- 10) The **Special Circumstance Status** column displays **Saved**.



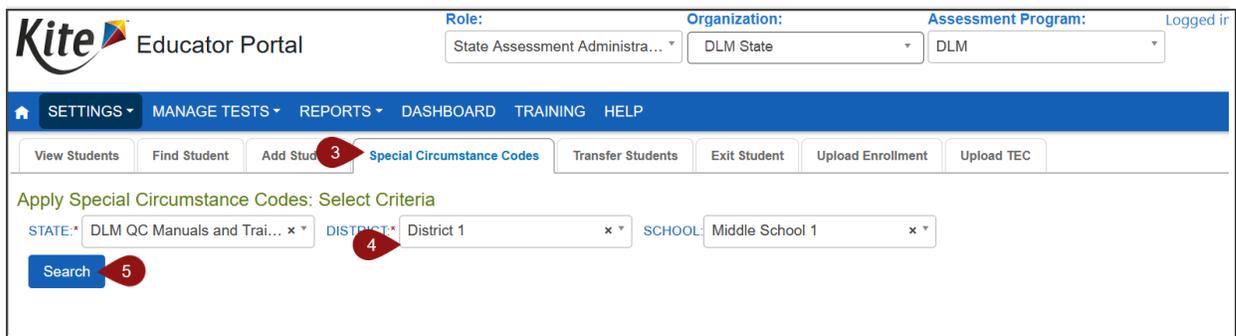
PROCEDURES TO APPLY A SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE CODE AT THE SUBJECT LEVEL

The PASA AC may apply a DLM special circumstance code at the subject level as soon as the student is enrolled.

- 1) Select **Settings**.
- 2) Select **Students**.

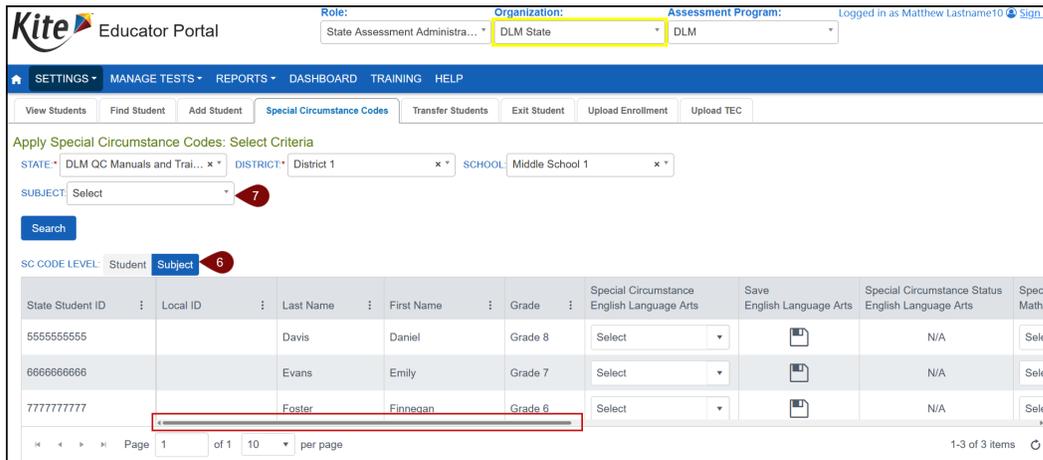


- 3) Select the **Special Circumstance Codes** tab.
- 4) Filter for the organization (e.g., district).
- 5) Select **Search**.

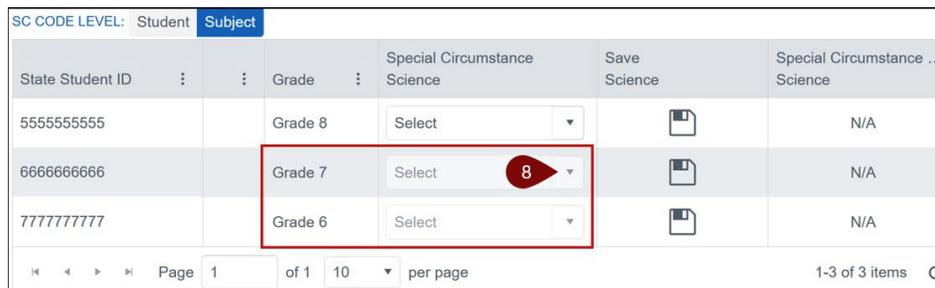


- 6) Select **Subject**.

- 7) The Subject field displays. A drop-down arrow is available in the subject field. The field can be filtered, or it can remain blank/unfiltered. If a subject is not selected, the student grid will display all subjects tested in the state for all enrolled students in the selected organization, along with the Special Circumstance columns for each subject. The user will need to slide the horizontal scroll bar at the bottom of the grid back and forth to view all subjects tested in the state for a student in an individual grade.



- 8) If a subject is not tested in a grade (e.g., science is not tested in Grades 6 and 7 in this example state), then the special circumstances field for science will be grayed out.



- 9) If the subject field is filtered, then only the selected subject (e.g., English language arts) will display, and the left and right scrolling at the bottom of the grid will not be necessary.
- 10) Select **Search**.
- 11) Select the student who needs a special circumstance code applied for the subject.
- 12) Select the desired special circumstance code for the subject.
- 13) Select the **Save** icon.

14) **Saved** is displayed in the **Special Circumstance Status** column.

View Students | Find Student | Add Student | **Special Circumstance Codes** | Transfer Students | Exit Student | Upload Enrollment | Upload TEC

Apply Special Circumstance Codes: Select Criteria

STATE: DLM State x ▾ DISTRICT: District 1 x ▾ SCHOOL: Middle School 1 x ▾

SUBJECT: English Language Arts x ▾ **9**

Search **10**

SC CODE LEVEL: Student Subject

State Student ID	Last Name	First Name	Grade	Special Circumstance English Language Arts	Save English Language Arts	Special Circumstance Status English Language Arts
555555555	Davis 11	Daniel	Grade 8	Medical Waiver 12	13	14
666666666	Evans	Emily	Grade 7	Select		N/A
777777777	Foster	Finnegan	Grade 6	Select		N/A

Page 1 of 10 per page 1-3 of 3 items

CHANGING OR REMOVING A CODE AT THE STUDENT OR SUBJECT LEVEL

- To change a code, simply select a different code, and then select the **Save** icon. In the following screenshot, on the left, the user first selected Catastrophic Illness; but in the right screenshot, the selection was changed to Homebound, then the selection was saved.

Special Circumstance	Save	Special Circumstance Status
Catastrophic Illness...		
Select		N/A
Select		N/A

Special Circumstance	Save	Special Circumstance Status
Homebound		
Select		N/A
Select		N/A

- To remove a code completely, choose the word **Select** at the top of the list, then select the **Save** icon. In the following screenshots, the user removed Homebound by choosing Select, then Save. The Special Circumstance Status reverted to N/A.

Special Circumstance	Save	Special Circumstance Status
Homebound		
Select		N/A
Catastrophic Illness Or Accident		N/A
Homebound		
Teacher Cheating or Mis-admin		
Chronic Absences		

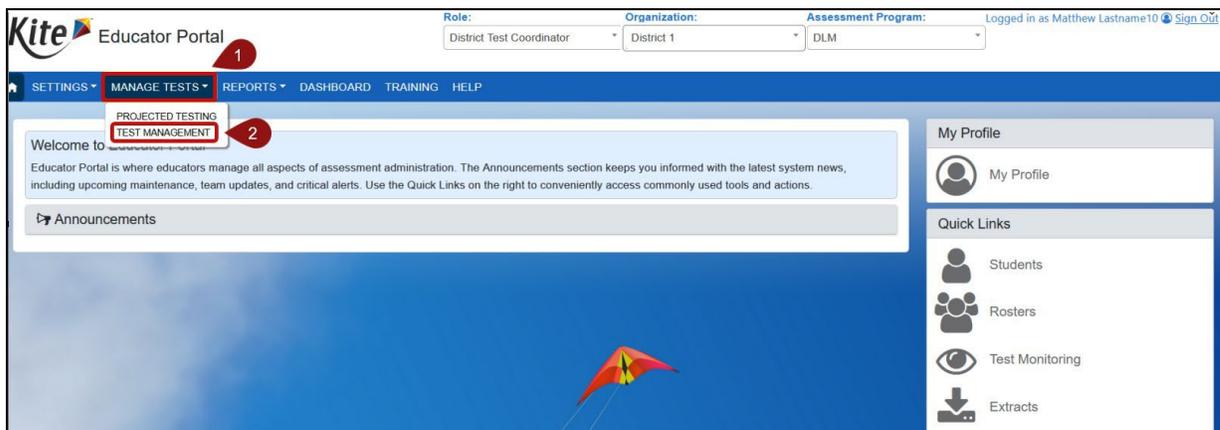
1-3 of

Special Circumstance	Save	Special Circumstance Status
Select		N/A
Select		N/A
Select		N/A

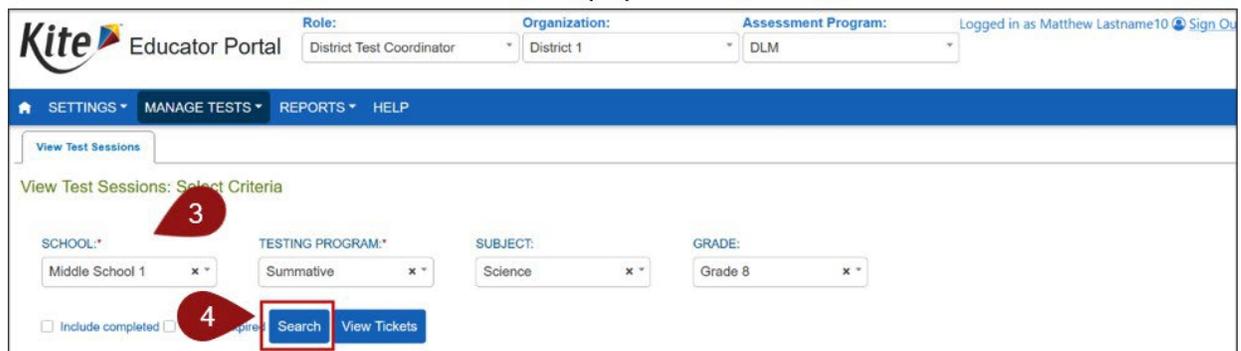
PROCEDURES TO APPLY A SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE CODE AT THE TEST SESSION/TESTLET LEVEL

NOTE: In the spring window, a SCC can be applied to a testlet in either the assigned, but untested status or in the completed status.

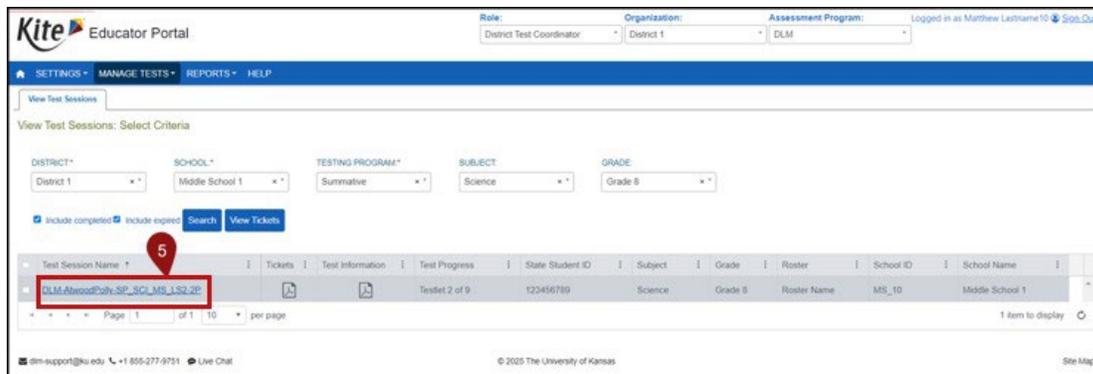
- 1) Select **Manage Tests**.
- 2) Select **Test Management**.



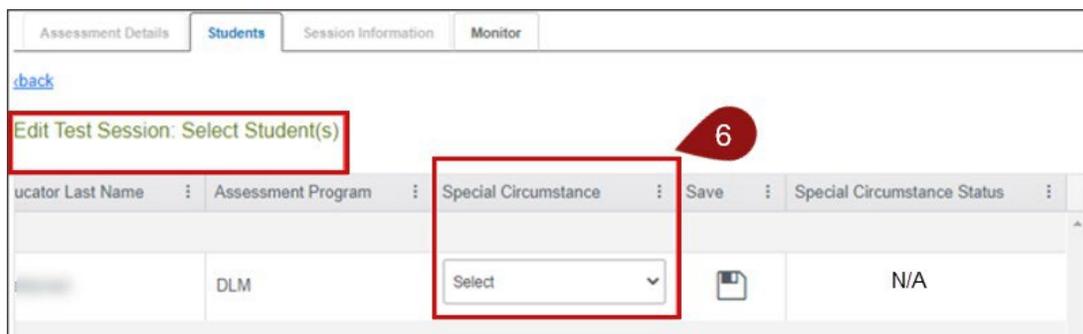
- 3) Enter data in the following fields:
 - **School:** the appropriate school
 - **Testing Program:** Summative
 - **Subject:** English language arts, mathematics, or science. This field can be left blank to display all testlets assigned for all subjects.
 - **Grade:** the student's grade
- 4) Select **Search**.



- In the **Test Session Name** column, double-click the testlet code for the testlet that needs a special circumstance code applied. The testlet code includes the student's name.

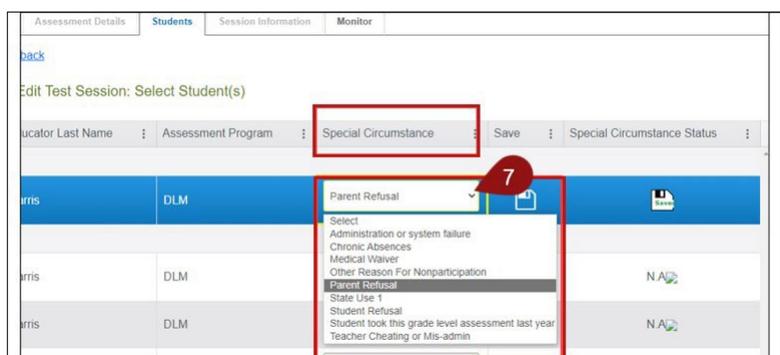


- The user is automatically taken to the End Test Session: Select Student(s) screen. On that screen, select the student and scroll to the far right.



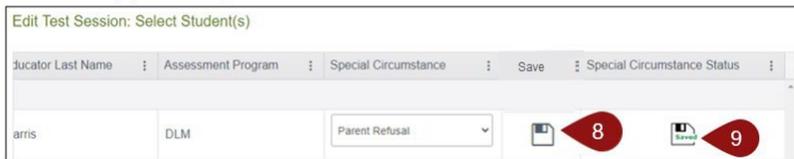
NOTE: The drop-down menu will not appear if a code was added at either the student or subject level, and the menu will not appear for users who do not have permission to apply a special circumstance code.

- Select the applicable special circumstance code.



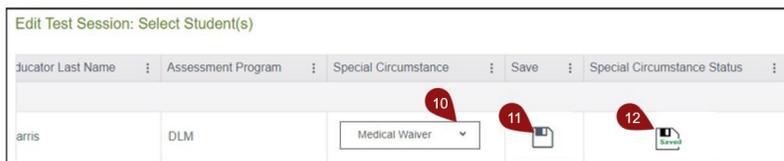
- Select the **Save** icon.

- 9) In the **Special Circumstance Status** column, the Save icon displays with the word **Saved** to indicate the special circumstance code was saved for this test session and subject.



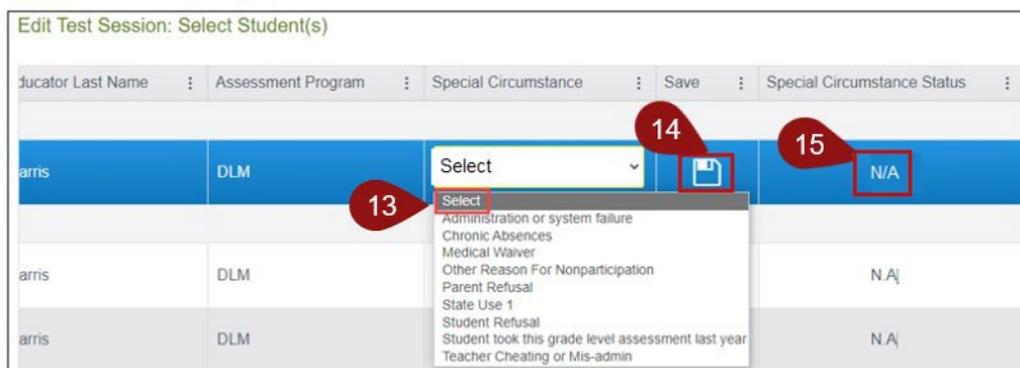
To edit an applied code, follow the same steps used to enter a code:

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



To delete an applied code, follow the same steps used to enter a code:

- 13) Scroll to the drop-down list of special circumstance codes. At the top of the list, choose **Select**.
- 14) Select the **Save** icon.
- 15) The status in the **Special Circumstance Status** column changes to **N/A**.



NOTE: A special circumstance code must be entered, edited, or deleted before the close of the spring assessment window.

DLM ON-DEMAND SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE FILE

The DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance extract is available to the same roles that had permission to add the codes. The on-demand file is available throughout the year for state and district users to monitor the application of special circumstance codes. This file displays the students' demographic information, the special circumstance codes that were selected, the subject, and the Essential Elements to which the codes were applied.

- 1) Go to **Reports**.
- 2) Select **Data Extracts**.
- 3) Select **Test Administration and Monitoring**.
- 4) Find the DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File.
- 5) Select the **New File** action button.
- 6) Each time the New File action button is selected, a new on-demand CSV file populates with the most current data.

Kite Educator Portal Role: District Test Coordinator Organization: District 1 Assessment Program: DLM Logged in as Matthew Lastname10 Sign Out

SETTINGS MANAGE TESTS **REPORTS** TRAINING HELP

Student Information Test Administration **DATA EXTRACTS** ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT REPORTS STUDENT REPORT ARCHIVE

Data Extracts

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

Extract	Description	Requested	File	Action
4	DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File	List of students who are assigned special circumstance codes during the current year's assessments.	MM/DD/YYYY 04:03 PM	6 CSV 5 New File
	DLM Test Administration Monitoring	Testlets assigned, in progress, and completed by subject, and student.	07/31/2024 03:10 PM	CSV New File
	TIP Access	Detail on when a Testlet Information Page (TIP) sheet was last accessed.	05/27/2025 03:54 PM	CSV New File

For more details about the DLM On-Demand Special Circumstance File, review the information about reports and extracts in the **EDUCATOR PORTAL USER GUIDE**.