



New Meridian

Interpretive Guide for MAST Through-Year Reports

Student Reports

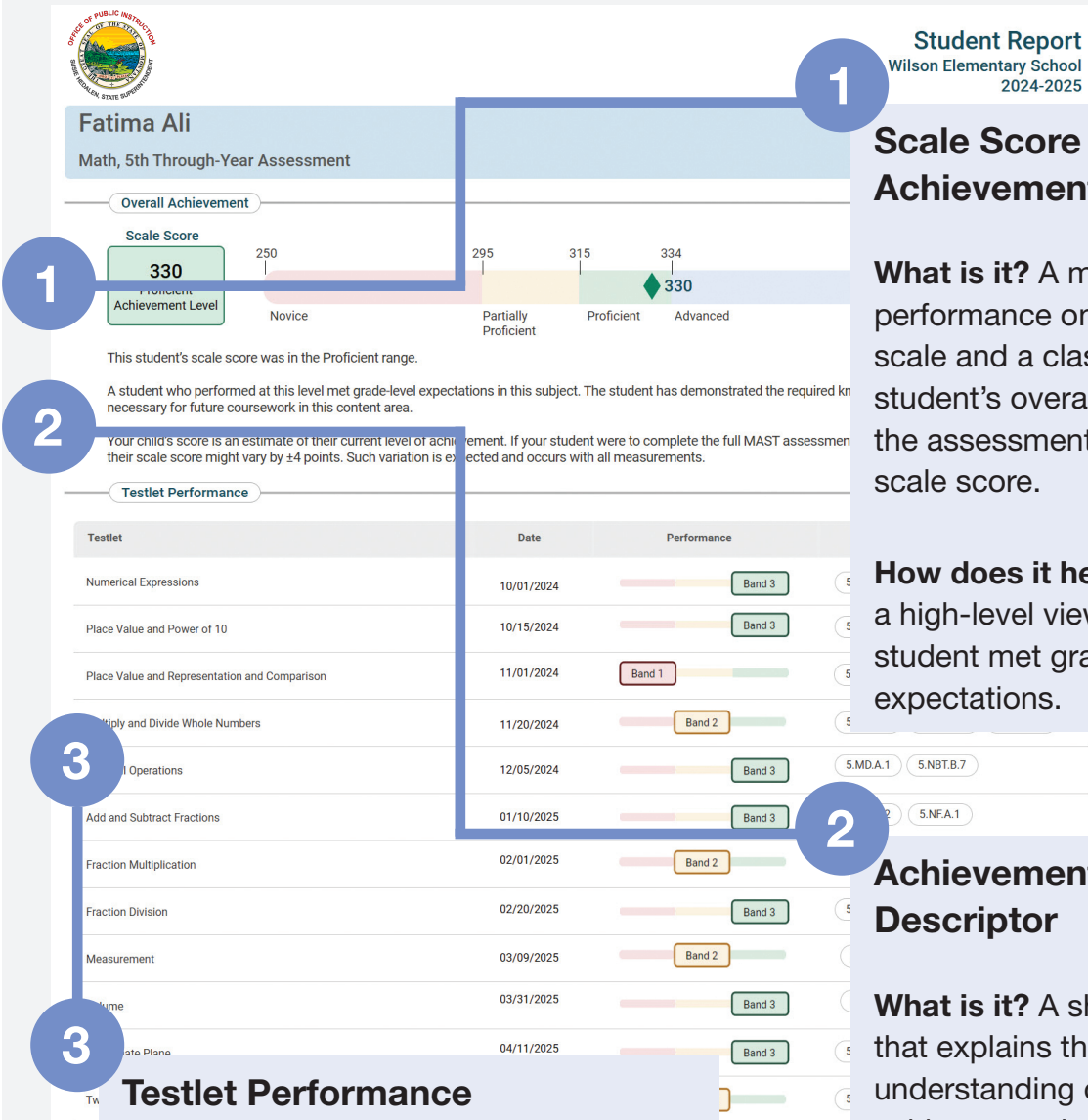
The MAST Through-Year reports provide summative scale scores and achievement levels based on a student's performance across all testlets administered within the academic year. The reports also include a summary of a student's performance on each individual testlet. Each through-year report:

- ✓ **Summarizes results from all testlets administered throughout the academic year.**
This view provides an overall summary of a student's academic performance.
- ✓ **Provides average summative scale score and achievement levels used for state accountability, alongside district performance, throughout the year.**
The report is designed not only to meet reporting requirements but also to provide information on each testlet that contributes to the overall summative scale score and achievement level.

Annotated Score Reports

The student through-year reports provide a summative scale score and achievement level that summarize overall performance. In addition, each of the reports in ELA and Math provides additional information about how students did during the year. In both subjects, the reports provide results on each testlet in terms of three performance band levels. In Math, the testlets are reported out alongside the academic standards each testlet aligns to. In ELA, two subscores are provided, one for reading comprehension of literary texts and one for reading comprehension of informational texts. The ELA report also includes results from the ELA performance task.

Student Math Through-Year Report



Scale Score and Achievement Level

What is it? A measure of student performance on a standardized scale and a classification of that student's overall performance on the assessment, based on their scale score.

How does it help? This provides a high-level view of whether the student met grade-level expectations.

Achievement Level Descriptor

What is it? A short description that explains the typical skills and understanding of students at each achievement level.

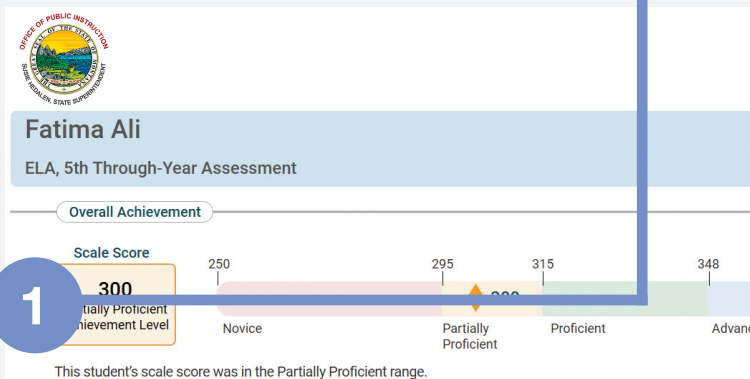
How does it help? ALDs give more detail about what the student's achievement level means.

Testlet Performance

What is it? A summary of how the student performed on each testlet given throughout the year. Each testlet is scored using a three-band system that reflects how the student performed compared to peers on a similar testlet.

How does it help? This helps identify specific areas of strength and need.

Student ELA Through-Year Report



1 Scale Score and Achievement Level

What is it? A measure of student performance on a standardized scale and a classification of that student's overall performance on the assessment, based on their scale score.

How does it help? This provides a high-level view of whether the student met grade-level expectations.

This student who performed at this level partially met grade-level expectations in this subject and needs support to develop skills necessary for future coursework in this content area.

A child's score is an estimate of their current level of achievement. If your student were to complete the full MAST assessment again, without any additional learning, their scale score might vary by ± 5 points. Such variation is expected and occurs with all measurements.



2 Achievement Level Descriptor

What is it? A short description that explains the typical skills and understanding of students at each achievement level.

How does it help? ALDs give more detail about what the student's achievement level means.

Subscores reflect performance in specific reading areas across the year: Literary Text Reading Comprehension is a measure of the ability to analyze literary texts. A higher subscore indicates a higher level of performance.

Testlet Performance

Testlet	Date	Performance
Beginning of Year - Informational	10/01/2024	Band 1
Beginning of Year - Literary	10/15/2024	Band 3
Middle of Year - Informational	11/20/2024	Band 2
Middle of Year - Literary	12/05/2024	Band 3
End of Year - Informational	02/01/2025	Band 2
End of Year - Literary	02/01/2025	Band 3

3 Testlet Performance

What is it? A summary of how the student performed on each testlet given throughout the year. Each testlet is scored using a three-band system that reflects how the student performed compared to peers on a similar testlet.

How does it help? This helps identify specific areas of strength and need.

4 Reading Comprehension Results

What is it? Two subscores that show how well the student understands and analyzes different types of texts

How does it help? These subscores help isolate reading comprehension skills on literary and informational texts.

Student ELA Through-Year Report, Page 2

Fatima Ali

ELA, 5th Through-Year Assessment

Performance Task

Performance

5

0 7 8

Dimensions	Date
Expression - Organization	11/01/2024
Expression - Purpose / Development	11/01/2024
Knowledge of Language and Conventions	11/01/2024

5

Performance Task

What is it? An extended writing assessment scored across three dimensions: *Organization*, *Purpose/Development*, and *Language and Conventions*.

How does it help? The task offers a deeper look at the student's writing skills as demonstrated on the performance task.

MM/DD/YYYY

1. Scale Score and Achievement Level

Each through-year report includes a summative **scale score**, an associated **achievement level**, and a descriptor that provides an overall review of a student's academic performance relative to grade-level expectations. The scale score summarizes a student's overall performance on the assessment. The scale ranges from 250 to 400, where 250 is the lowest possible score and 400 is the highest possible score. A student's scale score is shown on a color-coded bar that indicates the score required for each achievement level.

The scale score allows for meaningful comparisons across different test forms and over time. This score is especially useful for understanding how close a student is to reaching or exceeding grade-level expectations.

The scale score is based on the students' performance on testlets taken throughout the year. Instead of relying on a single end-of-year score, this approach captures how the student is performing across key content areas as they are taught throughout the year. This approach is similar to how many teachers grade by adding up scores across quizzes and exams to produce a final grade, but here the quizzes and exams are testlets and the final grade is the summative scale score and achievement level.



- The scale score is reported with an error band, showing how a student's score might vary if they retok the test without additional learning. The variation shows how precise the score is and should be considered in any decision-making.
- Assessment scores are only *one* source of information about student academic achievement. Other information, such as classroom observations and student work, should be considered when making decisions using individual assessment scores.

Understanding Achievement Levels

A student's **achievement level** is determined by where the student's scale score falls within the 250–400 range. There are four achievement levels:

- **Novice:** A student who performed at this level did not meet grade-level expectations in this subject and needs considerable support to develop the required knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for future coursework in this content area.

- **Partially Proficient:** A student who performed at this level partially met grade-level expectations in this subject and needs support to develop the required knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for future coursework in this content area.
- **Proficient:** A student who performed at this level met grade-level expectations in this subject. The student has demonstrated the required knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for future coursework in this content area.
- **Advanced:** A student who performed at this level exceeded grade-level expectations. The student has demonstrated mastery of the required knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for future coursework in this content area.

The achievement levels are based on cut scores that divide up the scale scores. For example, a score of 390 falls into the Advanced level. These cut scores were created by Montana educators during a standards-setting process, ensuring that each level reflects meaningful expectations for student learning in the state. Cut scores for each grade and subject are included in Appendix A.

If a student has not completed enough items to calculate a valid summative score, an overall scale score and achievement level will not be reported and that section will be left blank on reports. In these cases, the student report will still be available and will include information for each completed testlet.

2. Achievement Level Descriptor

Each achievement level is accompanied by an **Achievement Level Descriptor (ALD)**. An ALD is a brief summary of the knowledge and skills typical of students performing at that achievement level. ALDs can help educators, students, and families understand student performance in relation to grade-level expectations. More information about each ALD is available in the links in Appendix B.

3. Testlet Performance

A student's summative score in both Math and ELA is based on performance from all of the testlets administered throughout the school year. The Testlet Performance section includes information about each testlet that the student completed in the year, including the testlet name, administration date, the achieved performance band, and the assessed standards (Math only). Performance bands do not directly indicate an overall achievement level, but can help identify testlets that students performed better on or needed additional support.

Understanding Performance Bands

A student's performance band is represented by a bar that is divided into three parts: Band 1, Band 2, and Band 3. A student's overall performance is categorized by how their score compares to others.

- **Band 3:** A student with a score in this band performed in the highest third of the students in the state who took a similar testlet.
- **Band 2:** A student with a score in this band performed in the middle third of the students in the state who took a similar testlet.
- **Band 1:** A student with a score in this band performed in the lowest third of the students in the state who took a similar testlet.



The performance bands are temporary. During the 2025–26 school year and after, **performance levels** will replace **performance bands**. These levels, defined by Montana educators, will provide a detailed description of skills and abilities at varying levels of performance.

In some cases, students may not receive a standard performance band for a testlet. Testlets marked as **“Exempt”** indicate that the student was exempted from taking that testlet, and no score was assigned. Testlets marked exempt are not included in calculating the through-year scale score. If a student was eligible and required to take a testlet but did not attempt it, the testlet is marked as **“Did not attempt”**. Testlets that were not attempted earn no credit but are included in calculating the summative score to reflect that the student did not demonstrate understanding of the assessed content.

Taken together, the individual testlet performances provide a through-year view of student learning. By using performance bands across multiple testlets, educators and families can better understand when learning occurred, where a student showed consistent strengths, and when support may have been needed.

4. Reading Comprehension

In addition to the overall ELA scale score and achievement level, the ELA report includes two reading comprehension results that consist of subscores for Literary Text Reading Comprehension and Informational Text Reading Comprehension. These subscores are reported on a scale from 0 to 90 and reflect the student's ability to understand and analyze each type of text. Each subscore is based

just on the items that relate to that kind of text, literary or informational, while the summative scale score includes all items. A higher subscore indicates stronger performance in that reading domain. While these scores are not used to determine the overall achievement level, they offer insights into the student's specific strengths and areas for growth.

5. Performance Task

The ELA through-year report also includes results from the Performance Task, which assesses a student's ability to produce extended written responses. This task is scored across three key dimensions: Written Expression – Organization, Written Expression – Purpose/Development, and Knowledge of Language and Conventions, and the scores are combined for a total score out of 8 points based on the Writing Score Rubrics for Grade 3, Grades 4 and 5, and Grades 6 through 8. The Performance Task provides a more in-depth view of students' writing skills, offering insights that complement the information gathered from the reading-focused testlets.

Recommendations for Use

The through-year school report provides an overall summary of academic performance across the school year. When interpreted alongside observational evidence and other data sources, this report offers valuable insights to support reflection, planning, and future learning. Administrators can use the results in the following ways:

- **Identification of Strengths:** The report highlights areas where a student consistently performed well. These areas of relative strength can inform enrichment opportunities, placement decisions, or confidence-building strategies.
- **Spotting Areas for Continued Support:** Patterns of lower performance, whether in a specific content area or skill, can suggest where a student may benefit from targeted review or support. This information may guide summer learning plans or instructional priorities at the start of the next school year.
- **Planning for the Year Ahead:** The report provides a meaningful summary of student learning over time. For educators, it can serve as a starting point for differentiation and group planning in the fall. For families, it offers a foundation for understanding where their child is succeeding and where they may need extra help.
- **Supporting Conversations:** The report is a valuable tool for family-teacher conferences and transition meetings. It supports clear communication about student progress and sets the stage for collaborative planning as students move into the next grade level.

Definitions

These words and phrases appear on student testlet reports. This glossary is provided to aid in interpreting the data displayed on the student testlet reports.

Achievement Level – A classification that describes overall student performance relative to grade-level expectations. Levels include: *Novice, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced*.

Achievement Level Descriptor (ALD) – A brief summary of the knowledge and skills typically demonstrated by students performing at each achievement level.

Did Not Attempt – Indicates that a testlet was assigned but not attempted.

Dimensions of Writing – The three components assessed in the ELA Performance Task Report: Organization, Purpose and Development, and Knowledge of Language and Convention.

Exempt – An indicator that a student was officially excused from a testlet. Exempt testlets are not scored and are excluded from the calculation of the overall scale score.

Informational Text Comprehension – A subscore in ELA that reflects a student's ability to understand and analyze nonfiction or informational reading passages.

Literary Text Comprehension – A subscore in ELA that reflects a student's ability to understand and analyze narrative and literary reading passages.

Name – Refers to student name.

Performance Band – A categorization of student performance based on their performance relative to other Montana students who took a similar testlet.

Scale Score – A standardized score that summarizes overall student performance on a scale of 250 to 400. Used to determine the student's achievement level.

Standard – A specific academic objective aligned to the testlet content. Results show how many items were correct out of the total aligned to that standard.

Test Date – The date of the assessment.

Appendix A

The following tables display the cut scores used to determine achievement levels on the MAST Through-Year Assessments. Cut scores divide the scale score range (250–400) into four achievement levels: **Novice**, **Partially Proficient**, **Proficient**, and **Advanced**. These levels were established by Montana educators through a standards-setting process to reflect grade-level expectations in ELA and Math. The cut scores were determined during a standards-setting event held in August 2025 and formally approved by the Montana Board of Public Education in September 2025.

MAST Cut Scores – Mathematics (Grades 3–8)

Grade	Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
3	250–294	295–314	315–334	335–400
4	250–294	295–314	315–340	341–400
5	250–294	295–314	315–333	334–400
6	250–294	295–314	315–334	335–400
7	250–294	295–314	315–340	341–400
8	250–294	295–314	315–342	343–400

MAST Cut Scores – ELA (Grades 3–8)

Grade	Novice	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
3	250–294	295–314	315–344	345–400
4	250–294	295–314	315–344	345–400
5	250–294	295–314	315–347	348–400
6	250–294	295–314	315–343	344–400
7	250–294	295–314	315–353	354–400
8	250–294	295–314	315–351	352–400

Appendix B

The following table provides links to the complete set of **Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)** for the MAST Through-Year Assessments. ALDs describe the knowledge, skills, and practices associated with each achievement level: Novice, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Advanced, down to the standard level.

These descriptors were developed by Montana educators to ensure that each level reflects meaningful expectations for student learning in ELA and Math. To make this information easier to navigate, the detailed ALD tables for each grade and subject are available through the links provided below.

Subject	Grade	Link to ALD Table
ELA	Grade 3	[Grade 3 ELA ALDs]
ELA	Grade 4	[Grade 4 ELA ALDs]
ELA	Grade 5	[Grade 5 ELA ALDs]
ELA	Grade 6	[Grade 6 ELA ALDs]
ELA	Grade 7	[Grade 7 ELA ALDs]
ELA	Grade 8	[Grade 8 ELA ALDs]
Math	Grade 3	[Grade 3 Math ALDs]
Math	Grade 4	[Grade 4 Math ALDs]
Math	Grade 5	[Grade 5 Math ALDs]
Math	Grade 6	[Grade 6 Math ALDs]
Math	Grade 7	[Grade 7 Math ALDs]
Math	Grade 8	[Grade 8 Math ALDs]