Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406-444-3680
www.opi.mt.gov

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE OF MONTANA

Putting Montana Students First A+

Subject: Year 2 MAST Through-Year Pilot: Important Updates and Next Steps
2.9.24 Weekly MAST Newsletter

Montana MAST Through-Year Assessment Summit

We are excited to extend an invitation to the first Montana MAST Through-Year Assessment Summit, scheduled for **February 27, 2024, from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM**. Superintendent Artzen's press release can be found [here](#).

This virtual event is specifically designed for Montana school personnel involved in grades 3-8 assessments as part of the preparations for MAST statewide implementation in the 2024-2025 school year.

Event Highlights:
- Engaging discussions with keynote speakers from Education First, the Center for Assessment, and New Meridian.
- Topics ranging from the foundations of through-year assessments to Montana's MAST implementation.
- Participation-based sessions, role-alike discussions, and a panel on family engagement.
- Insights into educator engagement, score report development, accommodations, and instructional utility.

We believe this summit will provide valuable insights and enhance your understanding of through-year assessments. Please mark your calendar, and we look forward to your presence at this informative and collaborative summit. Navigate to the [MAST KickOff Virtual Event](#) page to find registration information, agendas, presenter bios, and more!

Critical Information for MAST Testing Window 3:
District Options to Address Testing Time

There has been an important update regarding the timing of certain testlets based on feedback received from live listening sessions and post-testing window surveys.

After a thorough high-level data review and analysis, specific testlets that are exceeding the expected time durations have been identified. The affected testlets and their corresponding grade levels are outlined below:

Grade 3:
- Real-World Problems and Patterns
- Place Value and Operations in Base Ten

Grade 4:
- Addition and Subtraction Algorithms

Grade 5:
- Multiply and Divide Whole Numbers
- Add and Subtract Fractions

Grade 6:
- Concepts of Ratios and Unit Rates
- Computational Fluency
- Solve Problems with Area and Volume

Grade 7:
- Ratios and Proportional Relationships
- Solve Problems with Ratio and Proportion

Grade 8:
- Linear Equations in One Variable

As a result, you have the following three options for ***Testing Window 3 only***:
1. Proceed with scheduled testlets as planned in the District Testing Blueprint.
2. Allocate a capped time of 25 minutes for any of the testlets identified above. Test Administrators can pause a student's incomplete testlet upon reaching the capped time.
3. Opt to not administer the testlets identified above for Testing Window 3.

Your district's decision will not impact your reconciled completion rate and participation in MAST. Upon the end of Testing Window 3, student testlets will still generate a student score report on the completed test items.

For those districts with these identified testlets scheduled in windows 4 & 5, we are actively working on a solution to reduce the overall testing time for these affected testlets. We will share information as soon as it becomes available.

Your feedback regarding timing of testlets, gathered throughout extended field testing, is highly valued. It plays a crucial role in shaping ongoing iterations to the MAST. We genuinely appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. Through this collaborative effort, we can enhance and refine the assessment to better meet the needs of all involved and address these timing concerns. Thank you for your continued partnership in the improvement process.

How to Monitor Testlet Completion for Affected Testlets

In light of the recent update regarding certain testlets exceeding expected time durations, guidance is provided below on how to effectively monitor testlet completion for these affected assessments.

If your district chooses to take the testlets as scheduled, testlet completion monitoring can be done in the DASHBOARD tab. If your district decides to allocate a capped time for each testlet, the recommended approach is to monitor testlet completion individually by testlet rather than relying solely on the Dashboard completion percentages. Here are the steps to follow:
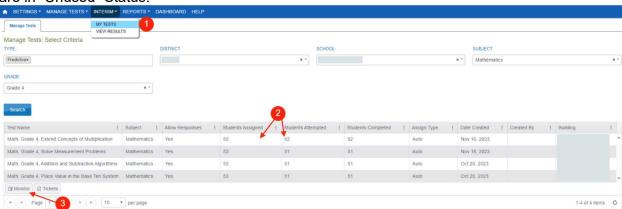
1. Navigate to the INTERIM tab:
  - Click on My Tests.

2. Compare "Students Attempted" to "Students Assigned":
  - For each affected testlet, compare the number of "Students Attempted" to the total number of "Students Assigned" for affected testlets.

3. Identify Students Needing Completion:
  - To identify individual students who may still need to complete the testlet, highlight the testlet name.
  - Select "Monitor" under the table to access a detailed view of students who have testlets that are in "Unused" Status.

This approach allows you to closely monitor completion progress at the student level and ensures accurate tracking of testlet assignments. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

Student Survey in Window 3
To develop an enhanced assessment system that caters to the needs of students, teachers, and administrators, while allowing for test administration flexibility, we will be implementing user feedback opportunities. One such opportunity is a student survey. As part of the pilot program, we would like to gather feedback directly from participating students by administering one brief survey consisting of six questions during the third and fifth testing windows. The survey questions will focus on the student's testing experience.

Updated Test Administration Manual
Based on field input and iterations made to the MAST, a comprehensive Test Administration Manual (TAM) review occurs after each testing window to address needed clarifications and any changes in MAST administration. The *__updated Test Administration Manual__* for Window 3 is now available. Changes include the following:

Date	Revised By	Change Description
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Test Design, p.9 and Test Completion 21: Added guidance that students must now answer all items before submitting their test.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Paper Forms, pp.17-18: Updated instructions for submitting paper form requests to clarify steps between NMC and the STC contact.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Additional Materials, p.20: Added a table for ELA testlets with audio assets that require headphones.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Pausing and Resuming Tests, p.21: Clarified guidance for students pausing and resuming tests.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Monitoring Student Testing Status, p.22: Updated guidance to include that multiple testlets can be monitored during a test session in the Kite Educator Portal Test Monitor screen.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Student Surveys, p.23: Updated the student survey windows; surveys will be administered in windows 3 and 5.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Student Scripts, pp.25-29: Scripts have been revised to consolidate test directions and clarify steps. The screenshot and corresponding directions for the Universal Tools in the Kite Educator Portal were updated. The Universal Tool Review is now optional.
1/16/2024	NMC and OPI	Testlet Calculator Availability, p.30: Tables for grades 3-5 were removed, as calculators are not available for any testlets in these grades.

End Test Session Button

There have been inquiries regarding the functionality of the End Test Session Button. Clicking this button in the Test Monitor Screen will force submit all student testlets, transitioning testlets that are "In Progress" or "Unused" to "Completed" status. Once testlets are in the "Completed" status, students will no longer be able to access them.

Testlet Completion Monitoring

Friday, February 9th, signifies the conclusion of the second week of our current three-week testing window, scheduled to close on *Friday, February 16, 2024*. Throughout the testing window, we will continue to send general and targeted completion outreach at determined intervals. These communications aim to remind districts to schedule and complete testlets before the window's closure.

Headphones for Testing

Just a friendly reminder that students should be provided with headphones for testing purposes. This is particularly important as some ELA items include audio content. Additionally, headphones are needed for students that qualify to utilize text-to-speech. Ensuring that students have access to headphones will facilitate a smooth testing experience and help accommodate their individual needs.

DreamBox

Ready to jump in and use OPI provided (FREE) DreamBox Math and Reading programs? You can start at any time of the year to provide students with personalized practice in both areas. Schedule a time to chat with Natalee Hawks here [calendly.com]. You can also view helpful information on our website here [go.dreambox.com]. If you have ANY questions, please reach out to Natalee at nhawks@discoveryed.com.

Testing Windows and Testlet Information

ELA Assessment Components:
- Six (6) Standard Testlets
- One (1) Performance Task (*administered exclusively in the 4th testing window*)

Math Assessment Components:
- Twelve (12) Standard Testlets
- One (1) Math Anchor (*referred to as T13 Anchor Testlet*)

Testing Window 1: 10/23 - 11/10 (*both Math and ELA testlets delivered*)
Testing Window 2: 11/27 - 12/15 (*only Math testlets delivered*)
Testing Window 3: 1/29 - 2/16 (*both Math and ELA testlets delivered*)
Testing Window 4: 3/11 - 4/5 (*Math and only ELA Performance Task delivered*)
Testing Window 5: 4/15 - 5/10 (*both Math and ELA testlets delivered*)

Sincerely,
Tressa Graveley
OPI Assessment Specialist
Tressa.Graveley@mt.gov