



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

ELA Performance Task in Testing Window 4

In response to the concerns raised by our districts regarding testing time, we have taken proactive steps to address this issue. Specifically, we have worked to remove the ELA Performance Task from testing window #4 for our Through-Year districts this year while in extended field testing. Additionally, we are exploring the possibility of making this testlet optional for any districts that wish to administer them, but it will not be mandatory. For those interested in administering the ELA performance tasks. This testlet will consist of 5 machine-scored items based on the informational MOY reading passage. The writing prompts will be specifically designed to target writing and language standards, assessing aspects such as organization/purpose, development/support, and knowledge of language and conventions.

Feedback for Testing Window 3

We have designed user feedback cycles throughout the school year to ensure continuous improvement of the MAST. As a way to gather feedback from the *third testing window* please consider providing feedback in this [Window 3 MAST Feedback Survey](#).

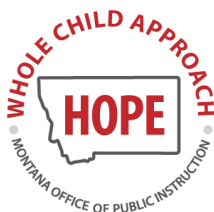
Kite Parent Portal

As part of the Federal Waiver granted to Montana, it is a requirement to disseminate student score reports to parents. We acknowledge that this poses a significant effort for some of our districts, and we have been diligently working to solve this while in extended field testing. We are excited to announce that a Parent Portal will be available with the release of the Testing Window 3 Student Score Reports.

An [updated Educator Portal Manual](#) now includes an *Appendix E* with directions for setting up the Parent Portal in your district. A [Parent Portal Manual](#) is also available as a resource for parents when setting up to access their child(ren)'s score reports within the Parent Portal. The parent link will not be live until student score reports are released **March 1, 2024**. Districts can set up the parent-student connection within the Kite Educator Portal now in preparation. Directions can be found in Appendix E of the Educator Portal Manual.

A reminder to understand and share with your district's stakeholders the important considerations of interpreting MAST Student Score Reports while in Pilot this year. Please refer to the [School Score Report Dissemination Guidance document](#). In this document, you can find guidance on how to interpret the student score reports along with a Parent Template letter to share this important information to parents/guardians.

For the 2023-2024 school year, it is important to note that score reports include data on field test items. It is imperative for schools and families to understand while score reports can provide



insight to how participating students performed on items aligned to topics taught in class, each question is still in the field-testing phase and will undergo further analysis to ensure validity and reliability. Therefore, score reports should NOT be disseminated or saved in the following manners:

- Included in student cumulative files.
- Digitally included in district Student Information Systems (Infinite Campus/ Powerschool)
- Used/included in IEP/504 determination, evaluation, or documentation
- Used to determine or influence student grades

Full MAST Participation

Please refer to the following participation guidance. During the extended field testing of MAST, it is crucial to closely monitor testlet completion. Per the Federal Testing Waiver granted to Montana for the 2023-2024 MAST administration, districts that fully participate in MAST are exempt from taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment. As we enter the last two MAST testing windows, it is imperative to the success of the pilot that full participation is continued.

Through-Year (Form A) Participants:

- Each school participating in the MAST Through-Year Pilot is expected to assess all eligible students at a participation rate of at least 95% in accordance with section 1111(c)(4)(E)(iii) within each administration window.
- Full participation includes completion of all assigned ELA and math testlets assigned according to the submitted school curriculum alignment survey.
- Schools who do not complete assigned testlets with fidelity in at least four out of five windows may be required to take the Statewide Summative Assessment.
 - If individual students are not able to complete assigned testlets in any window due to a medical reason, schools are to report non-participation through the MontCAS Application in accordance with [state assessment policy](#).

If you have students that have transferred out of your district but are still showing in Kite, please reach out to the OPI Assessment Help Desk to get them manually exited 1-844-867-2569 or opiassessmenthelpdesk@mt.gov. *A reminder not to share any student Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in emails or voicemails.*

Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities

The development of an innovative assessment necessitates ongoing user feedback throughout the development cycle. In our endeavor to create MAST, our testing partner, New Meridian, has devised a comprehensive user feedback schedule. This framework will guide the collection, analysis, and integration of user input. By fostering a dynamic feedback loop, we aim to continuously refine the assessment, drawing upon your invaluable insights.

The Montana OPI and New Meridian cordially invite school districts to participate in shaping the future of state assessment. We urge you to lend your voice to this transformative initiative, helping to enhance assessment practices and better serve all students. Here are some ways you can get involved:

1. Educator Item Review & Range-finding Cadres: Teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, and other specialists can directly participate in the test development process through select committees. These committees meet at a specified date and time to review test

content and help determine scoring parameters for performance tasks. These may be held in-person or virtually, depending on the meeting.

2. User Interviews: Share your insights and feedback on various aspects of testlet configuration, reporting, and testlet design through individual interviews.

3. Focus Groups: Join focus groups aimed at discussing specific components of the assessment and providing input for improvement.

To sign up for any of these opportunities, please visit the [MAST Engagement Opportunities website](#). Your participation is invaluable in shaping the future of state assessment.

Montana MAST Through-Year Assessment Summit

The OPI extends heartfelt gratitude to all who attended and actively participated in the MAST Summit. Your engagement and contributions were invaluable in shaping the discourse and driving progress within the educational landscape. By coming together to share insights, experiences, and innovative ideas, we collectively advance towards our shared goal of enhancing assessment practices to better serve students and educators alike. Your dedication and collaboration are truly appreciated, and we look forward to continued partnership in our ongoing efforts to foster excellence in education.

If you would like to access recordings of the MAST Summit sessions, please access the registration email sent to you containing the invitation link to access the live event. Once you're in the platform, you'll find a "replay" button on the left-hand panel. Recordings can also be accessed at this [link](#). Additionally, if you haven't already done so, we encourage all MAST Summit participants to provide feedback through the [MAST Summit Participant Survey](#). Your input is invaluable in helping us improve future events and initiatives. Thank you for your participation and contribution to the success of the summit.

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 testlets delivered; ELA Performance Task optional*)

Testing Window 5: 4/15 - 5/10 (*both Math and ELA testlets delivered*)

Sincerely,
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