



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

A friendly reminder that the third week of testing has concluded. If you haven't already done so, please schedule and complete all assigned testlets during the testing window. Please allow time for student make-up testing. The testing window will close on **April 5, 2024**. Targeted Outreach to districts that haven't started testing have gone out *March 22nd and March 29th*. Targeted Outreach to districts that haven't completed testing will go out *April 3rd*.

Montana MAST Road Show

The OPI is excited to invite you to participate in the upcoming MAST Road Show happening throughout Montana April 2 - 12, 2024. This event presents a fantastic opportunity for districts to delve deeper into the Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) assessment and its statewide implementation for the 2024-2025 school year.

During the MAST Road Show, both the OPI and New Meridian team will offer comprehensive insights into the various components of MAST, including its purpose and design. Tailored specifically for Montana stakeholders involved in grades 3-8 assessments, this in-person event serves as an informative preparatory step for MAST's statewide rollout in the 2024-2025 school year. Save the date for the upcoming event in a location near you. Please [REGISTER HERE](#). We look forward to seeing you there!

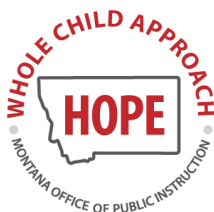
April Focused Monthly Webinar: Gearing Up for SY24-25 MAST

The OPI Assessment Unit offers a 1-hour webinar once a month from September to June annually for a total of 10 webinars during the school year. These focused webinars are designed to support educational practitioners involved in managing district assessments, accountability, and reporting requirements under state and federal law.

Webinars include a 30–40-minute presentation on a time-sensitive assessment topic, a 15 minute "Learning Lab" demonstration of a key assessment task, and end with time for participants to ask the OPI Assessment Team any questions pertaining to state assessments. Join us for our monthly focused webinar on **April 10, 2024 from 3:30-4:30 pm**, where we'll delve into comprehensive information designed to assist districts in preparing for the MAST assessment to replace the Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2024-2025. Please [REGISTER HERE](#). We are excited to provide support to Montana's districts as we lead the way in operationalizing a through-year assessment.

Economic Impact Survey: Assessment Standards

The purpose of this survey ([linked here](#)) is to gather critical information about the economic impact of the proposed amendments to the *Assessment Standards Revisions - Administrative Rule of Montana (ARM) Title 10, Chapter 56*, Subchapter 1. Determining an economic impact for revised standards is in accordance to [2-4-405, Montana Code Annotated \(MCA\)](#).



In order to best assess the *economic impact*, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) has prepared the following summary document embedded in the survey for you to reference as you complete this survey. This summary document details the process for assessment standards revisions, including the formal proceedings of a Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (NRC), and final recommendations the Superintendent of Public Instruction will move forward to the Board of Public Education.

The survey categories include:

- *Assessment Resources*
- *Personnel*
- *Professional Learning*
- *Time*
- *General Feedback*

If you have any further questions, please contact Marie Judisch, Senior Manager of Teaching and Learning, at marie.judisch@mt.gov or 406-444-5883. ***Please submit your feedback via this survey by April 8, 2024.***

Montana OPI Summer Institute

You're invited to the OPI Summer Institute scheduled for **June 17-20, 2024!** Join us for dedicated sessions spotlighting educational innovation with the Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) Assessment—a transformative approach to assessment that aligns with our commitment to enhancing learning and teaching experiences across Montana. As the MAST progresses through its second year of pilot (SY23-24), it represents a significant step towards using assessment to support student learning and achievement. This innovative assessment, structured as a through-year model, is designed to assess content standards aligned closely with the timing of content learning in the classroom. Its primary goals include providing instructional utility and generating a summative score for federal accountability purposes. MAST is on track to operationalize as the statewide assessment for Montana's general populations in grades 3-8 for ELA and Math, scheduled to replace Smarter Balanced in 2024-2025. Registration coming soon on the [OPI Summer Institute webpage](#).

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. This ELA Performance Task testlet is 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 prompt will be specifically designed to target writing and language standards, assessing aspects such as organization/purpose, development/support, and knowledge of language and conventions. ELA Performance Task Rubrics are available: [Grade 3](#) | [Grades 4-5](#) | [Grades 6-8](#).

Math Testlets Affected by Timing in Window 3

During Window 4, districts will proceed with scheduled testlets according to the district's individualized math testing schedule. To address excessive testing times, certain math testlets have been shortened for Window 4. Specifically, items that were found to take longer than expected have been removed, resulting in a reduction in the length of these affected testlets. Please ensure completion of all scheduled math testlets.

Individual MAST Testlet Timing Estimates

A comprehensive list of math testlets, along with their estimated completion times, is available to assist educators in managing their testing schedules. For testlets with sufficient data, the completion time represents the duration it takes for 80% of students to finish (80th percentile timing). For testlets with insufficient data, an expected range for the timing is provided. The provided timing data can be found in the [Individual MAST Testlet Timing Estimate document](#).

Live Listening/Feedback for Testing Window 4 & 5

We have designed user feedback cycles throughout the school year to ensure continuous improvement of the MAST. Live listening/feedback sessions will continue to be scheduled following each testing window. These sessions will serve as an opportunity for users like you to share feedback, suggestions, and experiences to help us enhance the usability of the MAST. Teachers, administrators, test coordinators, IT personnel are all welcome to attend. Please forward the meeting link to all school stakeholders you feel appropriate to attend. We value your input and encourage you to participate in these live listening/feedback sessions.

Session 4: MAST Through-Year Live Listening/Feedback from Testing Window 4

Date: April 9, 2024

Time: 4:00 - 4:30 PM

[Zoom Link](#) | Meeting ID: 874 4401 0663 | Password: 531138

Session 5: MAST Through-Year Live Listening/Feedback from Testing Window 5

Date: May 14, 2024

Time: 4:00 - 4:30 PM

[Zoom Link](#) | Meeting ID: 880 6071 1228 | Password: 352059

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-student connection in the Educator Portal. A [Parent Portal Manual](#) is also available as a resource for parents when trying to access their child(ren)'s score reports within the Parent Portal. A [Parent Portal video](#) is a great resource to share with parents as to how to log in to view their child(ren)'s score reports.

A reminder to understand and share out 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 (InfiniteCampus/ Power school)
- 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.

Dreambox Learning Opportunity for MAST Participants

DreamBox Learning is excited to partner with the State of Montana to support the MAST Pilot for math and reading. You can read more about this partnership in this [Press Release \[dreambox.com\]](#) or find more information [here \[dreambox.com\]](#).

As a result of this partnership, you will have OPI-provided FREE access to award-winning and highly efficacious learning platforms, DreamBox Math and DreamBox Reading Plus. Both programs are designed to adapt problems and questions based on how each student learns. The first step to getting started is to roster your staff and students so they can begin accessing the program. Please contact Natalee Hawks (natalee.hawks@dreambox.com), the Montana PD Specialist, for more information and to schedule a time to discuss DreamBox!

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,
Tressa Graveley
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Window 3 Math Testing Progress

