



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

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. As a way to gather feedback from the *fourth testing window* please consider providing feedback in this [Window 4 MAST Feedback Survey](#).

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

MAST & the Montana Science Assessment

Districts participating in both subgroups of the MAST Pilot are still required to administer the Montana Science Assessment (MSA) to students in grades 5 and 8. Any alternate students you may have enrolled this year will need to take the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) (Grades 3-8 and 11) and the Alternate Montana Science Assessment (AMSA) for Grades 5, 8, and 11 as there is not an alternate version of MAST.

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](#).

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](#).

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

This year MAST Pilot Districts have access to DreamBox Math and Reading programs for students in grades 3-8. NEXT year all public school districts will have access to DreamBox in grades K-12. If you want to learn more about how to get started with DreamBox attend one of our live webinars and earn 1 PDU per session: register [here \[info.discoveryeducation.com\]](http://info.discoveryeducation.com). If you want to chat with Montana's PD Specialist, Natalee Hawks, click [here \[calendly.com\]](#) to find a time. Please email Nhawks@discoveryed.com with any questions.

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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