



Subject: Year 2 MAST Form B Summative Pilot: Important Updates and Next Steps

Welcome to Year 2 of the MAST Pilot! We are thrilled to have you on board for this groundbreaking initiative in Montana. In partnership with our testing vendors, New Meridian and the University of Kansas Assessment & Technology Solutions (ATS), we are committed to ensuring a seamless testing experience for all involved.

To help you prepare for the upcoming MAST Form B Summative assessment, scheduled for **April 15 to May 10, 2024**, the OPI has curated a comprehensive collection of essential resources and information.

Press Release

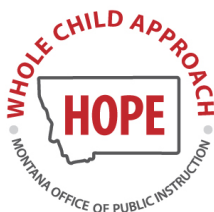
Superintendent Arntzen announces the transition away from the federally mandated end-of-year summative assessment Smarter Balanced. The MAST program is scheduled to fully replace the current statewide end-of-year assessment beginning with the 2024-2025 school year. Read the press release [here](#).

MAST Through-Year vs. MAST Form B Pilot Districts

There are two subgroups of the MAST Pilot—MAST Through-Year and MAST Form B Summative districts.

The **MAST Form B Pilot** program offers districts the chance to experience an end-of-year assessment and get a preview of the through-year assessment in a more traditional summative format. **Districts will test in the final testing window only—April 15 - May 10, 2024.** Because of the summative format, curriculum collection and alignment will not occur. As part of this program, districts will have access to the Kite testing platform, allowing them to interact with the testlet content and design. This opportunity allows districts to familiarize themselves with the assessment process before statewide implementation in the 2024-2025 school year. It's important to note that full participation in the MAST Form B Pilot will not require districts to take the Smarter Balanced Assessment, and there will be no impact on accountability measures. This opportunity aims to provide valuable insights and feedback to improve the assessment system for all stakeholders involved.

MAST Through-Year Pilot districts are fully committed to participating in the innovative through-year design. These districts have already submitted their curriculum, ensuring seamless alignment of the MAST testlets with the local scope and sequence. As part of the pilot program, districts will have the opportunity to administer the MAST assessments during all five test windows scheduled throughout the year. By participating in the MAST Through-Year Pilot, districts will no longer be obligated to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment, and their accountability measures will remain unaffected. This pilot program revolutionizes the assessment experience for districts and provides valuable insights into student progress throughout the academic year.



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.

Curriculum Alignment

The MAST Form B Summative assessment for districts **does not** require the submission of curriculum or a district's scope and sequence to align the testlets. This is because all the testlets will be provided to your MAST Form B district within a single testing window. However, it is important to note that curriculum alignment will become relevant once the MAST Through-Year operationalizes as the statewide assessment to replace Smarter Balanced in grades 3-8 in math and ELA for the 2024-2025 school year.

Assessment Requirements for Grades 3-8

Students in grades 5 and 8 will still be required to complete the Montana Science Assessment (MSA). Qualifying students with significant cognitive disabilities will continue to take the available alternate assessments. The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) serves as the alternate math and reading/language arts assessment for academic achievement reporting in Grades 3–8. Similarly, the Alternate Montana Science Assessment (AMSA) serves as the alternate science assessment for academic achievement reporting in Grades 5 & 8 specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Accommodation Crosswalk Document

During this year's MAST Pilot Extended Field Testing, there is no MAST accommodation dropdown available within Infinite Campus for entering students' accommodations. The [MAST Accommodations & Accessibility Crosswalk Document](#), which can be accessed on the OPI MAST webpage, will provide guidance on how to translate Smarter Balanced accommodations into MAST PNPs (Personal Needs Profile) within the Kite Portal. The MAST [Test Administration Manual](#), [Kite Educator Portal Manual](#), and [Kite Student Portal Manual](#) are included to help contextualize the accommodation crosswalk document. Further training and support will be provided as we get closer to the spring testing window.

Double-Testing Waiver

We're excited to announce that on August 10, 2023, the OPI was granted a Field Test waiver by the United States Department of Education. This means that with your full participation in the SY23-24 MAST Through-Year Pilot, participating students would not be burdened with taking both the Smarter Balanced Assessment and MAST.

Montana Educators' MAST Contributions

Montana educators are playing a crucial role in the development and enhancement of the MAST assessment. A team of highly dedicated and passionate teachers from across Montana have come together as part of the MAST Educator Cadre to contribute to test item writing and review. The expertise and valuable insights provided by Montana's educators are essential in ensuring the MAST assessment's quality and relevance. Through their active involvement, Montana educators are significantly shaping the MAST assessment process, ultimately benefiting students throughout the state.

The dedication of Montana's educators to the field of education and their willingness to contribute to the improvement of the MAST assessment is greatly appreciated by the OPI. Their commitment to the success and growth of Montana students is truly commendable. There will be further opportunities for educators to participate in Educator Cadres. Please stay updated by regularly checking the [OPI MAST webpage](#).

Next Steps

At this time, there are no actionable steps to complete on your end. We will communicate next steps as we near the MAST Form B Summative testing window scheduled April 15 - May 10, 2024. Feel free to check out the [OPI MAST webpage](#) and the monthly [OPI Compass newsletter](#) for MAST Through-Year and MAST Form B Summative announcements and news.

Sincerely,
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