What do I need to do to get ready for the fall test window?

DLM webinar #1 – August 21, 2025

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Objectives:

- To understand what the Dynamic Learning Maps is
- To understand the concept of Least Dangerous Assumption and the role it plays in Assessment Decisions
- To understand who takes the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment
- To understand how to gain access to Educator Portal for the fall and spring DLM test windows.

Agenda:

3:00-3:30 What is the Dynamic Learning Maps

3:10-3:30 Least Dangerous Assumption and Verifying DLM Eligibility

3:30-3:40 Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment

3:40-3:50 Educator Portal and Required Training

3:50-3:55 Resources

3:55-4:00 Questions

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What is the Dynamic Learning Maps?

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All Children Can Meet High Standards

- The Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Alternate Assessment Consortium provides accessibility by design and is guided by the core beliefs that all students are to have access to challenging, grade-level content, and that test administrators must adhere to the highest levels of integrity both in providing instruction and in administering the assessment based on this challenging content.
- All children participate in state accountability assessments.

Instructionally Embedded Assessments

- Allow students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate what they know and can do in a cyclical approach to their instruction, assessment, and evaluation They build a bridge from grade-level content standards to grade-specific academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who often have multiple disabilities.
- Encourage the cyclical approach by giving teachers the opportunity to choose an Essential Element(s) and the linkage level, develop and deliver instruction for the chosen Essential Element(s), and then assess the student when the teacher determines the student is ready.
- Provide teachers, parents, and other IEP members with timely information about a student's performance.
- Helps teachers make appropriate instructional decisions.

Benefits

- Allows students to receive instruction that is highly relevant to them and assessments that are appropriate for them.
- Informs IEP teams of a student's strengths and needs, allowing celebration of successes and assistance with planning future instruction.
- Helps teachers gauge student progress in relation to state academic standards.
- Enables schools to document academic growth.

DLM Essential Elements

- Essential Elements are specific statements of the knowledge and skills linked to general education grade-level expectations identified in college and career readiness standards.
- They build a bridge from grade-level content standards to grade-specific academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who often have multiple disabilities.

Beliefs

- Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are a highly diverse population who learn through multiple pathways.
- Students taking the DLM alternate assessment require extensive, direct instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains.
- These students learn academic content aligned to grade-level content standards but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.

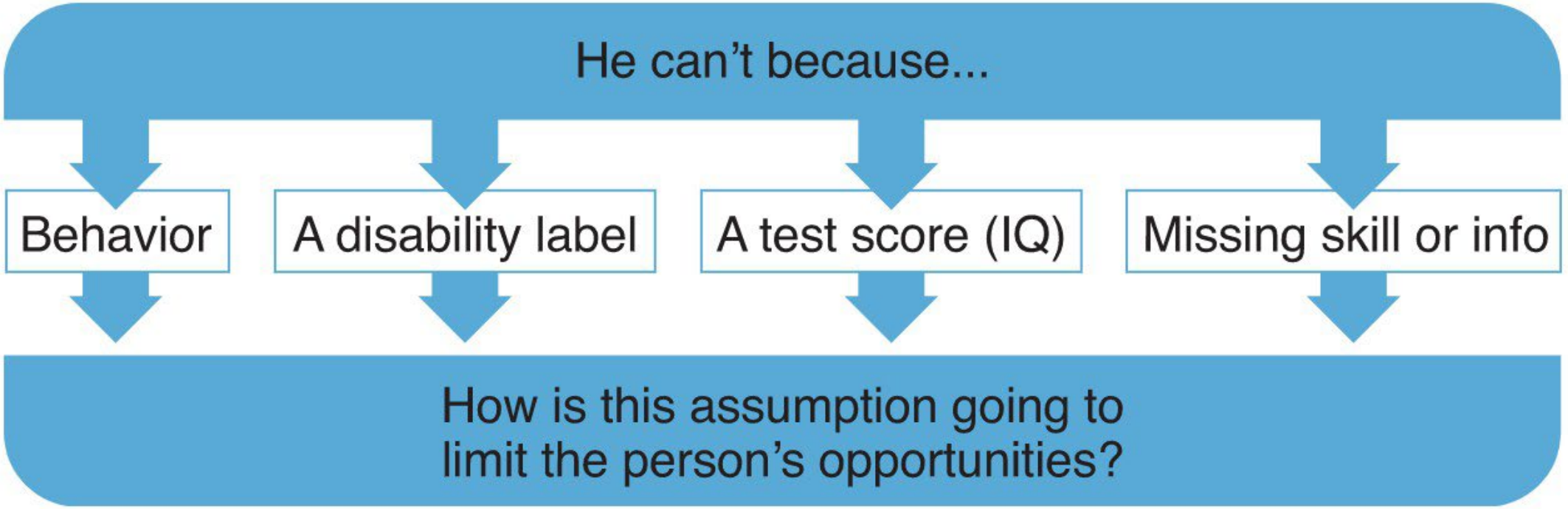
Least Dangerous Assumption

Theory of Presuming Competence

- Theory of Presuming Competence: Least Dangerous Assumption
- "...in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions ought to be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on the likelihood that students will be able to function independently as adults. Furthermore, we should assume that poor performance is due to instructional inadequacy rather than to student deficits."
- – Anne Donnellan, 1984 as quoted by Cheryl Jorgensen, 2005

Least Dangerous Assumption – TIES Center Tip #6

TIES Center: Tip #6 Using the Least Dangerous Assumption in Educational Decisions



Least Dangerous Assumption- points to ponder

1. Do all people have different talents and skills?
2. Is intelligence measured accurately and reliably enough to base students' educational programs and future goals on test results?
3. Do children learn best when they feel valued, when people hold high expectations for them, and when they are taught and supported well?

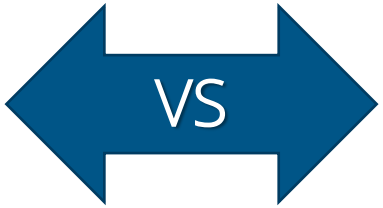
3 Principles of the least dangerous assumption

If you are going to fail, fail because you believed in the student not because you placed an artificial limit on the student.

Chris Bugaj: The Least Dangerous Assumption

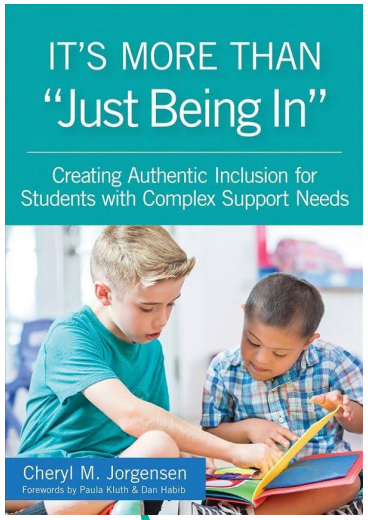
The least dangerous assumption is to have high expectations for all students.

What if we assume students CAN learn, so we give them every opportunity, and it turns out they CAN"T?



What if we assume students CAN"T learn, so we don't give them every opportunity, and it turns out they CAN?

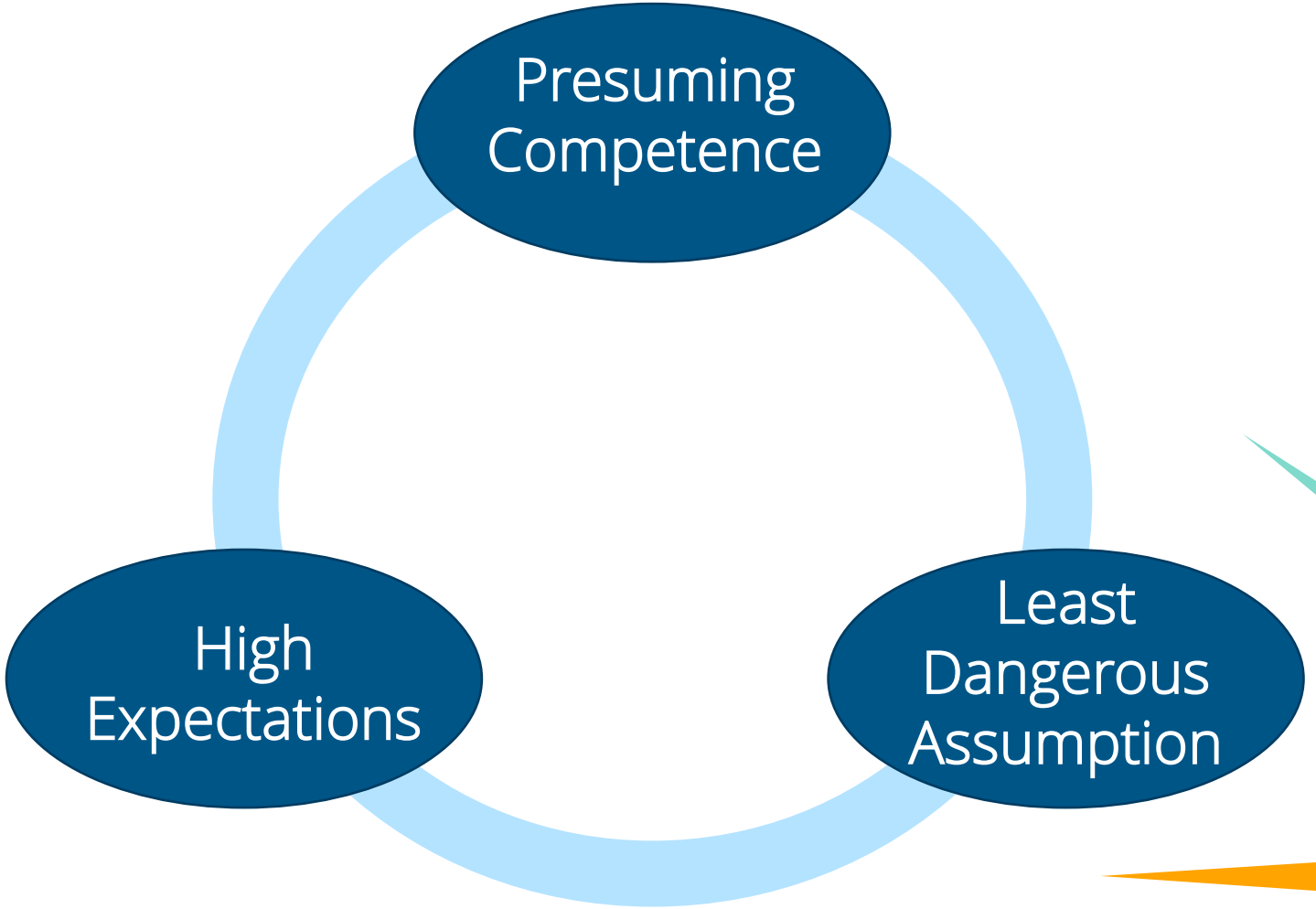
Flawed assumptions



- Intelligence is something that can be reliably measured.
- Students with intellectual disabilities cannot learn general education academic content……so there's no benefit to being in general education classes.
- The choice between a student being in general education or getting their needs met is an either/or situation.

Jorgenson, C.M.(2018). "It's More Than 'Just Being In': Creating Authentic Inclusion for Students with Complex Support Needs."

Improving Student Outcomes



Questions to Ponder

Rosie - video

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Purpose of Alternate Assessments

IDEA Sec. 300.160 Participation in Assessment

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IDEA

Sec. 300.160 Participation in assessments

(a) General. A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and districtwide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs.

IEP Requirement for Alternate District-Wide and State Assessment

1. It needs to reflect that the student will take an alternate district assessment (and what the teacher is going to do or use for this) and/or state assessment.
2. Why the student isn't able to take the regular district/state assessment. Ex. The student has a most significant cognitive disability and would not be able to complete or access the district/state assessment with accommodations. The student is currently untestable using standardized test. Currently the student is working from the grade-level Essential Elements which are at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.
3. Why the alternate district/state assessment is appropriate. Ex. The student is working from the grade-level Essential Elements at the distal precursor level.
4. For students taking the alternate assessment, each goal must have at least 2 benchmarks/objectives.

Verifying DLM eligibility

DLM Participation Guidelines and resources

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Steps for Verifying DLM eligibility

- Review each students IEP.
- Does the IEP indicate the student takes an alternate state assessment?
- Does the student have at least 2 benchmarks/objectives for each goal?
- Complete the DLM participation guidelines to ensure student is still eligible for the DLM.
- Review the student's previous year-end individual reports. Does this student still need to be assessed on the DLM or can they be transitioned to the general assessment?
- The year end report will not be available until after your test coordinator rosters your students to you for the 2025-2026 school year.

KSDE DLM Participation Guidelines

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GUIDELINES

Dynamic Learning Maps

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES FOR KANSAS

The criteria for participation in Kansas' Alternate Assessment/Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) reflect the pervasive nature of a student with a **most significant cognitive disability in the state**. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams must select the alternate assessment as the only option for **ALL** subject content areas assessed.

The following aren't allowable (or acceptable) considerations for determining participation in the DLM Alternate Assessment.

1. A specific disability category or label.
2. Poor attendance or extended absences.
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference.
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.
5. Academic and other services student receives.
6. Educational environment or instructional setting.
7. Percent of time receiving special education.
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status.
9. Low reading level/achievement level.
10. Student's anticipated disruptive behavior.
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system.
12. Administrator decision.
13. Anticipated emotional duress.
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., text to speech, assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process.

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July 2023

KSDE DLM Participation Guidelines- pg 2

Name of Student:_____ Date: _____

The student is eligible to participate in the DLM if ALL responses below are marked YES.

CRITERIA	YES	NO	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
1. Cognitive assessment data supports a **most significant cognitive disability** (intellectual disability). PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning. **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.**	☐	☐	
2. Adaptive assessment data supports a **most significant deficit** in adaptive behavior. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact adaptive behavior (those skills and behaviors essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life). **Typically functioning 2 ½ or more SD below the mean.**	☐	☐	
3. The student is primarily being instructed (or taught) using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: Present levels and measurable goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level DLM Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student. All goals must have at least 2 benchmarks/objectives.	☐	☐	
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in ALL grade-and age-appropriate curriculum at a reduced depth, breath and complexity. PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS: The student: **a.** Requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is neither temporary nor limited to specific content areas. **AND**	☐	☐	
b. Uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	☐	☐	

Review of the eligibility criteria #1

1. Cognitive assessment data supports a most significant cognitive disability (intellectual disability).

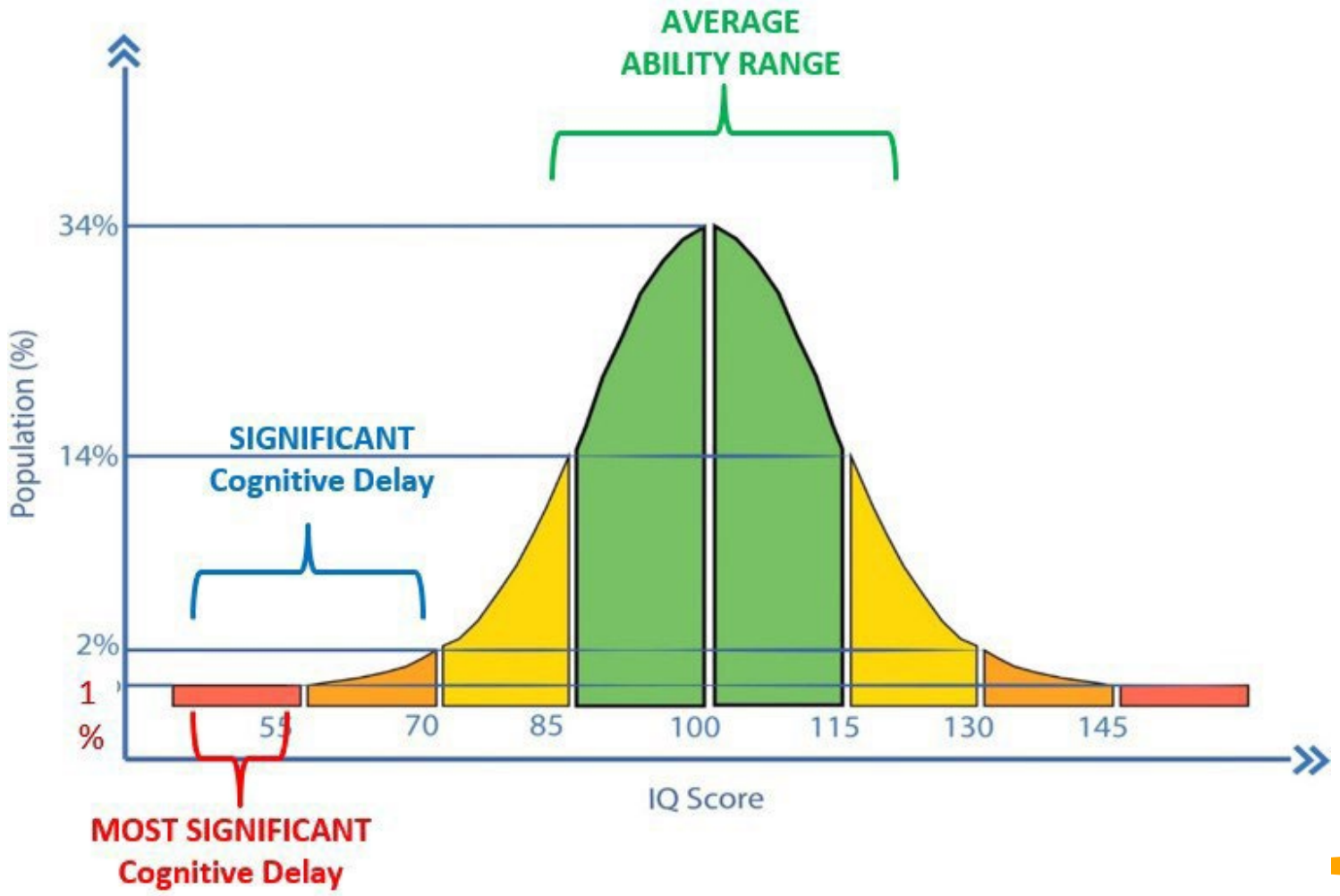
PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS:

Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning. Typically functioning 2 ½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.

Student must have a deficit in the student's ability to plan, comprehend, and reason

While a student with only a specific learning disability, speech impairment, or emotional disability may have significant academic challenges, he or she has the intellectual potential to reach grade-level expectations. The description of specific learning disability, speech impairment, and emotional disability and the definition of significant cognitive disability present conflicting information.

Student Eligibility



Most Significant Cognitive Disability = typically 2 ½ SD or more below the mean

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Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool

- The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM is: the student has a most significant cognitive disability (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean).
- It may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of intellectual functioning as shown in the tool.
- No one characteristic should solely determine whether intellectual functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment

Intellectual Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Not limited	Mild Cognitive Limitations	Moderate to Significant Cognitive Limitations	Most Significant Cognitive Limitations
Verbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to language skills)			
Verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 - 64)	Verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)
Nonverbal Intelligence/Cognition (related to visual-spatial skills)			
Non-verbal intelligence in average range or above (85 IQ or above)	Non-verbal Intelligence 1 to 2 SD below mean (84-71)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (70 – 64)	Non-verbal Intelligence 2.5 SD or more below mean (63 or lower)
Thinking/Reasoning/Problem-Solving			
Reasoning and problem-solving skills at age-level or within average range on an assessment.	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to carry out reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to complete reasoning and problem-solving tasks	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require reasoning and problem-solving
Executive Function/Attention/Memory			
Cognitive planning and working memory at age-level or within average range on an assessment	Minimal assistance (e.g., general education interventions/supports) needed to support cognitive planning and working memory	Requires special education services, including modifications and levels of scaffolding to support cognitive planning and working memory	Dependent on others for completing tasks that require cognitive planning and working memory
Learning			
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Learning general standards or mastering target or successor linkage level EEs with increasing levels of assistance from special education services and supports	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Review of the eligibility criteria #2

2. Adaptive assessment data supports a most significant deficit in adaptive behavior.

PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS:

Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact adaptive behavior (those skills and behaviors essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life). Typically functioning 2 ½ or more SD below the mean.

Limit a student's ability to apply social and practical skills such as personal care, social problem-solving skills, dressing and eating, using money, and other functional skills across life domains

It is unlikely to see these deficits in a student with a high incidence disability only, such as a specific learning disability, speech impairment, or emotional disability.

Behavior: What's the difference?

Adaptive Behaviors (Life Skills)

A collection of skills people use to function in everyday life.

Examples:
Personal care skills
Independent living skills
Social skills
Communication
Self-direction

Maladaptive Behaviors

Behaviors which inhibit a person's ability to adjust to different situations.

Examples:
Ritualistic behaviors
Self-injurious behaviors
Aggressive behaviors
Non-Attentive behaviors
Attention-seeking behaviors
Addictive behaviors

Slide Borrowed with permission from Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool

Adaptive Functioning Tool

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Adaptive Behavior Scale

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Overall adaptive behavior score in average range or above (standard score 85 or above)	Adaptive behavior 1 to 2 SD below mean (ss 84 - ss 71)	Adaptive behavior 2 to 2.5 SD below mean (ss 70 – ss 64)	Adaptive behavior 2.5 SD or more below mean (ss 63 or lower)

Conceptual

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
Age-level expressive and receptive communication skills	Communicates expressively and receptively with minimal prompting/assistance	Beginning to communicate wants/needs/preferences using assistive technology (augmentative device or symbols)	No formal communication system
Learning grade level academic skills	Learning grade level academics with general education supports	Mastering target or successor linkage level EEs; learning grade level academics with increasing levels of assistance	Making progress on the Essential Elements (EEs) with moderate/maximal levels of supports

Social

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction is needed on responsibility, following rules, interpersonal skills	General instruction addressed through MTSS and general education interventions for responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Systematic, direct instruction in responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills	Prescriptive, systematic, direct instruction relating to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills (Prescriptive is specifically designed for one particular student based on his or her needs.)
Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show student has adequate to excellent social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student would benefit from general classroom social skills instruction.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs systematic instruction to improve social skills.	Assessment and observation of skills related to responsibility, following rules, and interpersonal skills show the student needs individually planned instruction designed to match his/her skills and weaknesses.

No curricular intervention needed	Social skills curriculum appropriate for whole classroom is sufficient.	Structured social skills curriculum designed for small groups, including direct instruction, is needed.	Individualized, step-by-step planned curriculum with extensive modeling and practice is essential.
At mastery prior to instruction	Large group instruction with differentiation is sufficient	Small group instruction with differentiation is needed	Individualized one-on-one instruction is needed

Practical

Not Limited	Mild to Moderate Deficits	Moderate to Significant Deficits	Most Significant Deficits
No instruction needed on daily living skills or community living skills	Minimal assistance/supports for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely be successful living independently and holding a job	Requires moderate assistance/supports to complete daily living skills and community living skills (e.g., meal prep, phone use, housekeeping); student will likely be successful in supportive living	Dependent on others for daily living skills and community living skills; student will likely need 24 hour supports as an adult

- The Kansas criteria to participate in the DLM is: the student has significant deficits in adaptive behavior (defined as typically functioning 2 ½ or more standard deviations below the mean).
- It may be more helpful for the IEP team to consider a continuum of adaptive functioning rather than a yes or no response.
- No one characteristic or rating should solely determine whether adaptive functioning is at a level that suggests the AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment.

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Review of the eligibility criteria #3

3. The student is primarily being instructed or taught using the DLM Essential Elements as content.

PARTICIPATION CRITERION DESCRIPTORS:

Present levels and measurable goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level DLM Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.

Teaching that includes hands-on materials, demonstrating concepts along with verbal directions, new tasks broken into small steps, prompting or shaping accurate performance, multiple opportunities and examples, and repeated student practice beyond disabled peers. Usually perform significantly below grade-level proficiency (an elementary student may perform 3 or more grade levels below age appropriate peers, while a high school student may perform 7-9 grade levels below age appropriate peers.

Review of the eligibility criteria #4

4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in all grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.

   a. Requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is neither temporary nor limited to specific content areas.

   b. Uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.

IEP goals are both functional and academic in nature.

Instruction appears very different from the instruction of their age-appropriate peers.

Requires daily individualized instruction in every academic area that is on a substantially different level of rigor than peers with disabilities.

Often requires an alternate curriculum, modified tasks, modified requirements, and frequent prompting that differs from his or her peers receiving special education services.

KSDE DLM Participatio Guidelines- pg 3

CRITERIA	YES	NO	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
5. **Parent/legal education decision-maker notification includes discussion of ALL of the following areas.** • The differences between the alternate achievement standards and academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled, including any effects of State and local policies on the student's education resulting from taking an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards; **AND**	☐	☐	
• That the student's achievement will be measured based on alternate achievement standards; **AND**	☐	☐	
• How the student's participation in alternate standards and assessment(s) may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma; **AND**	☐	☐	
• That the student will not be prevented from attempting to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma. **AND**	☐	☐	
• The LEA provided the parent(s)/legal education decision-maker with ALL of the above information in an understandable and uniform format and in a written language or oral translation that the parent(s)/legal education decision-maker can understand.	☐	☐	

Please sign and date that all criteria have been discussed.

Parent/legal education decision-maker: _____ Date: _____

Parent/legal education decision-maker: _____ Date: _____

Supporting evidence – Shared/reviewed the Alternate Assessment Notification with Parents/legal Education decision-maker

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KSDE DLM Participation Guidelines- pg 4

What is a most significant cognitive disability?

The term "**most significant cognitive disability**" isn't a separate category of disability. It is a designation given to a small number of students with disabilities **for purposes of participation in the statewide student assessment program.** This subgroup of students referred to in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as having the "most significant cognitive disabilities" constitutes **less than 1%** of the student population. The students are:

1. Within one or more of the existing categories of disability under IDEA (e.g., Intellectual disability, autism, multiple disabilities), and

2. Whose cognitive impairments and adaptive behaviors may prevent them from attaining grade-level achievement standards even with extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports.

Learner Characteristics

- A most significant cognitive disability with **co-existing deficits in both communication and adaptive behavior**. Typically functioning 2 1/2 or more SD below the mean.
- A most significant cognitive disability impacts learning, memory, judgment and processing which impacts learning acquisition.
- Perform substantially below grade level expectations on the academic content standards for the age-appropriate grade they are enrolled, even with the use of accommodations and modifications.
- Require extensive, specially designed individualized instruction, and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum (at a reduced depth, breath and complexity).
- Requires more time for:
  - **a.** Processing
  - **b.** Opportunities to generalize language.
  - **c.** Time to learn and process language.
  - **d.** Alternate ways to communicate including augmentative.
  - **e.** Alternative communication to supplement or replace speech or writing.

Educational Considerations

- IEP teams are responsible for making the determination of a **most significant cognitive disability** for the purpose of participation in statewide student assessments.
- Requires the IEP team to complete the DLM Participation Guidelines for Kansas form.
- Requires a "yes" answer to **ALL** participation criterion on the DLM Participation Guidelines for Kansas.
- DLM is used as the assessment tool in **ALL** content areas during the statewide student assessments.
- The IEP goals and benchmarks/objectives are aligned to the enrolled grade-level DLM Essential Elements. All goals must have at least 2 benchmarks/objectives.
- The IEP addresses knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for the student.
- Instruction using the Essential Elements reduces exposure to the full depth, breadth, and complexity of the **GENERAL** curriculum.
- Students performing "at target" or "advanced" on both English language arts and mathematics on the DLM year-end report may need transitioned to the general assessment with appropriate accommodations in order to be appropriately challenged.
- Students instructed on general education content standards aren't eligible for the DLM assessment.
- Parents/legal education decision maker are notified of the potential implications for participating in the alternate assessment.

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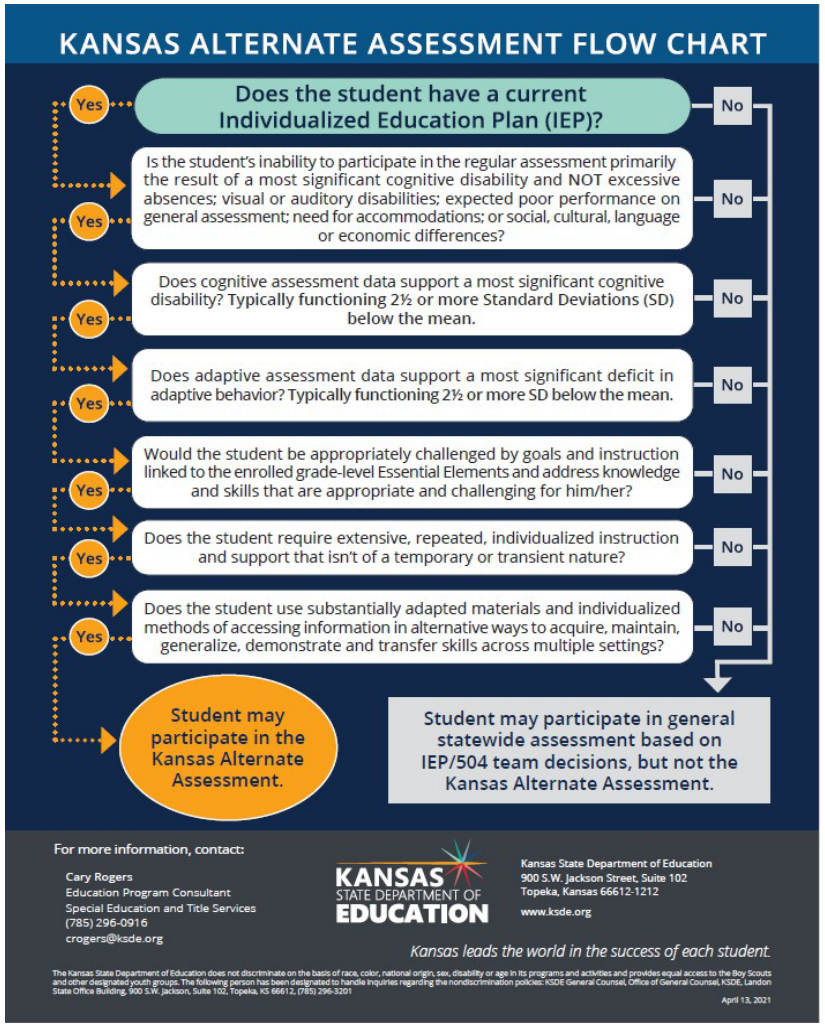
Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart and Rubric for Determining Eligibility for the DLM



KANSAS ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT FLOW CHART

Does the student have a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?
- Yes → Is the student's inability to participate in the regular assessment primarily the result of a most significant cognitive disability and NOT excessive absences; visual or auditory disabilities; expected poor performance on general assessment; need for accommodations; or social, cultural, language or economic differences?
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Is the student's inability to participate in the regular assessment primarily the result of a most significant cognitive disability and NOT excessive absences; visual or auditory disabilities; expected poor performance on general assessment; need for accommodations; or social, cultural, language or economic differences?
- Yes → Does cognitive assessment data support a most significant cognitive disability? Typically functioning 2½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Does cognitive assessment data support a most significant cognitive disability? Typically functioning 2½ or more Standard Deviations (SD) below the mean.
- Yes → Does adaptive assessment data support a most significant deficit in adaptive behavior? Typically functioning 2½ or more SD below the mean.
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Does adaptive assessment data support a most significant deficit in adaptive behavior? Typically functioning 2½ or more SD below the mean.
- Yes → Would the student be appropriately challenged by goals and instruction linked to the enrolled grade-level Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for him/her?
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Would the student be appropriately challenged by goals and instruction linked to the enrolled grade-level Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for him/her?
- Yes → Does the student require extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that isn't of a temporary or transient nature?
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Does the student require extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that isn't of a temporary or transient nature?
- Yes → Does the student use substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings?
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

Does the student use substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings?
- Yes → Student may participate in the Kansas Alternate Assessment.
- No → Student may participate in general statewide assessment based on IEP/504 team decisions, but not the Kansas Alternate Assessment.

For more information, contact:

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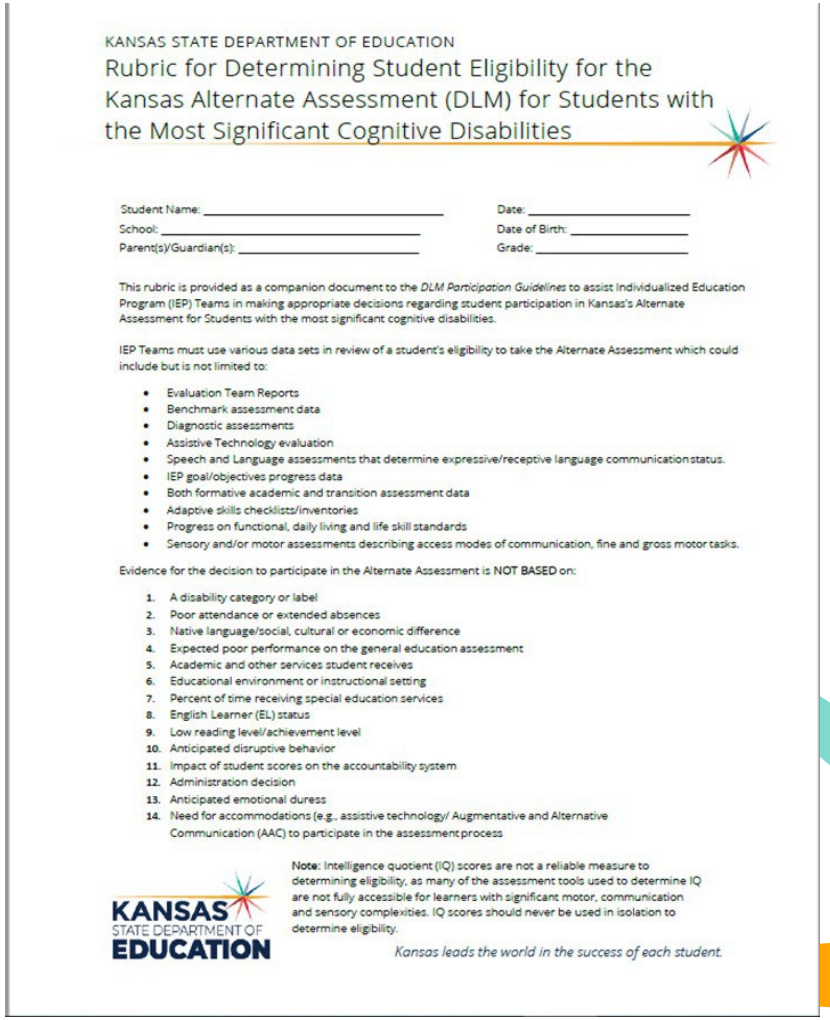
April 13, 2021



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Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Student Name: _____ Date: _____
School: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____ Grade: _____

This rubric is provided as a companion document to the *DLM Participation Guidelines* to assist Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams in making appropriate decisions regarding student participation in Kansas's Alternate Assessment for Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

IEP Teams must use various data sets in review of a student's eligibility to take the Alternate Assessment which could include but is not limited to:

- Evaluation Team Reports
- Benchmark assessment data
- Diagnostic assessments
- Assistive Technology evaluation
- Speech and Language assessments that determine expressive/receptive language communication status.
- IEP goal/objectives progress data
- Both formative academic and transition assessment data
- Adaptive skills checklists/inventories
- Progress on functional, daily living and life skill standards
- Sensory and/or motor assessments describing access modes of communication, fine and gross motor tasks.

Evidence for the decision to participate in the Alternate Assessment is **NOT BASED** on:

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social, cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education services
8. English Learner (EL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated disruptive behavior
11. Impact of student scores on the accountability system
12. Administration decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/ Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) to participate in the assessment process

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Note: Intelligence quotient (IQ) scores are not a reliable measure to determining eligibility, as many of the assessment tools used to determine IQ are not fully accessible for learners with significant motor, communication and sensory complexities. IQ scores should never be used in isolation to determine eligibility.

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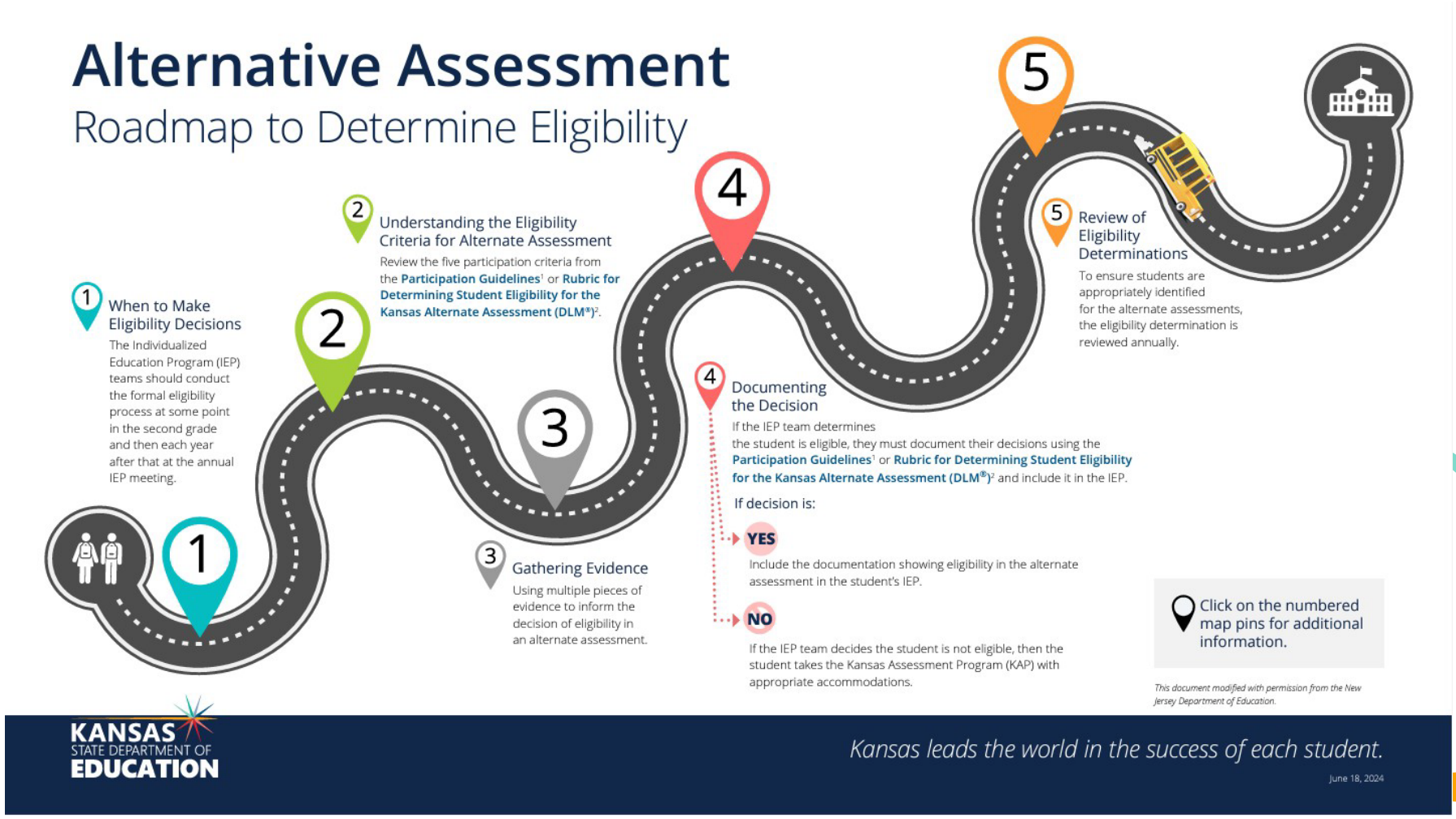
Alternate Assessment Roadmap



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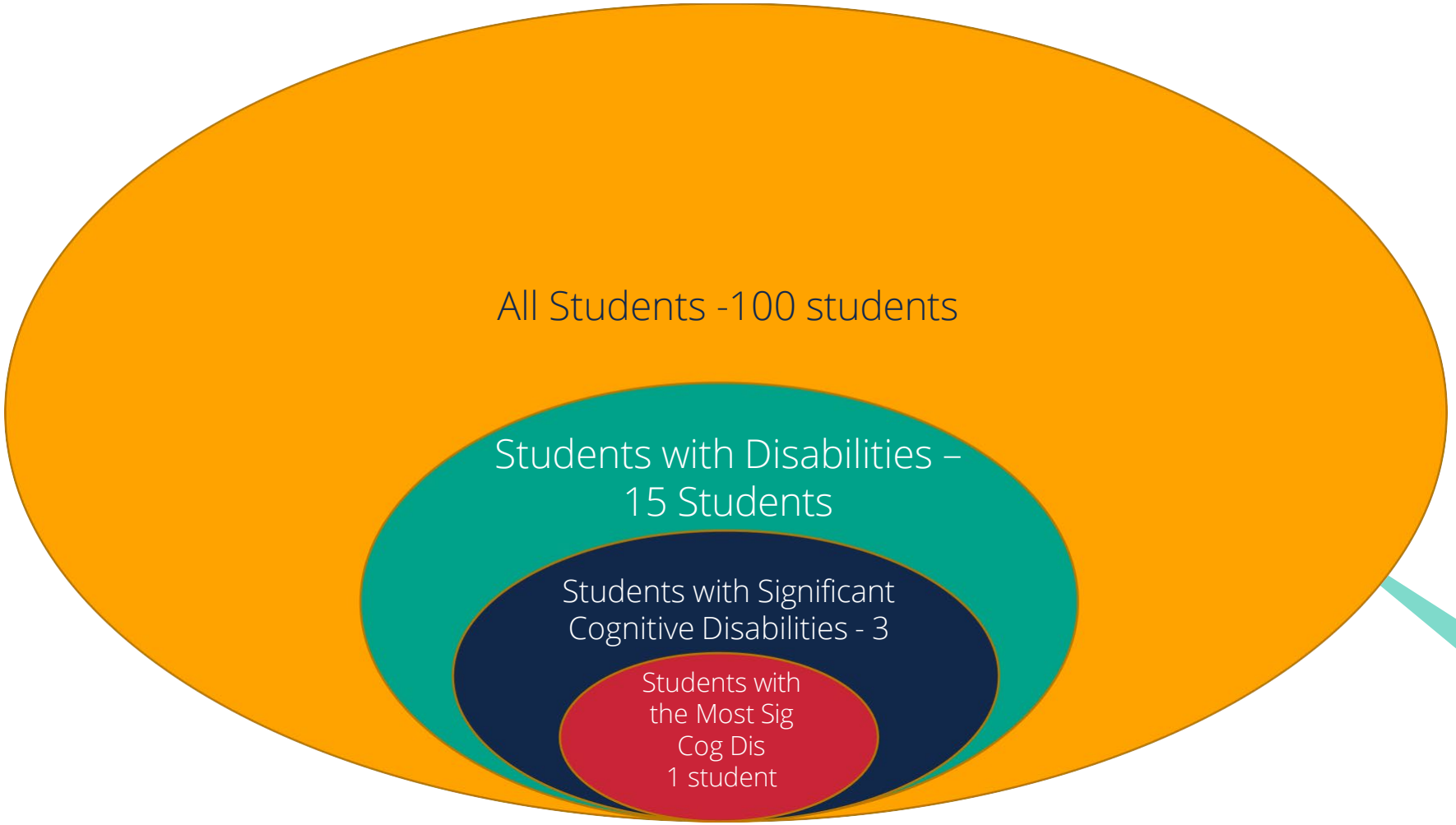
My student qualifies for the DLM

- Find out who your district test coordinator is.
- Provide your district test coordinator with the name(s) of students who qualify for the DLM, the student(s) grade level, primary exceptionality from the IEP, and the subjects your student will be taking in the DLM. (Note: students who take the DLM take it in all subject areas for that grade level. A student can not take a DLM in ELA and general assessment in math.
- Let your district test coordinator know if you do not have an Kite Educator Portal account or if you are new to the DLM. You will not be able to complete the required training until this is done.
- Your district test coordinator can get you access to Kite Educator Portal as a teacher for the DLM assessment. They will also be the individual to upload your students and roster files that link your students to you in each subject area.

My student no longer meets eligibility requirements for the DLM

- IEP or IEP amendment must be done to remove the alternate assessment
- Contact your district test coordinator to remove the student from the DLM and add the student to the KAP
- We ask teams to take care of this in the fall before administering any DLM testlets if possible.
- If a student has to be exited after beginning the DLM, that is fine. We want the right students taking the right test.
- Discuss what accommodation the student needs in order to access grade level academic content.

Statewide 1%



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Additional Guidance Documents

- Participation Guidelines (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart (PDF)
- Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) (PDF) (Companion document to the DLM Participation Guidelines)
- IEP Team Resource Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment (PDF)
- Alternative Assessment; Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (PDF)

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

Testing Schedule: Fall Test Window and Spring Test Window

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DLM Dates

DLM Dates	Date open	Date closed
Required training	August 5. 2025	April 24, 2026
Fall testing window	September 8, 2025	December 19, 2025
Spring testing window	February 3, 2026	April 24, 2026

Who tests?

Test Window	ELA	Math	Science	HGSS
Fall Test Window	Grades 3-8, 10	Grades 3-8, 10	Optional Grades 5, 8, 11	Only required 1 time per year (not in Kite)
Spring Test Window	Grades 3-8, 10	Grades 3-8, 10	Grades 5, 8, 11	Grades 4, 7, once in HS

DLM Test Administrator Checklist

August-September 8, 2025

✓	Task	Resource
	Verify DLM participation guidelines for each student	*Participation Guidelines* (PDF)
	Sign up for DLM test updates	*Subscribe to DLM Test Updates*
	Sign up for KAA listserv	**To sign up, send this information:** **Subject line:** KAA Listserv **Body of message:** Email address, First Name, Last Name, USD Number, USD Name, **Send to this address:** *cary.rogers@ksde.gov*
	Notify district test coordinator of student, primary exceptionality, grade, and subjects for DLM	
	Login to Educator Portal (role- teacher; assessment program- DLM)	*Educator Portal* Contact district test coordinator if you do not have access
	Sign security agreement in Educator portal	*Educator Portal*
	Complete required Test Administrator Training (2 1/2 hours - new teachers; 1 1/4 hour - returning teachers) Must pass with 80% and print certificate	*Educator Portal* *Test Administration Manual (pdf)* *Guide to DLM Required Test Administrator Training for Instructionally Embedded Model States* Educators with the Teacher role should access Dynamic Learning Maps® (DLM®) Required Test Administrator Training in the training section of Kite® Educator Portal
	View and check student data and rosters	*Educator Portal*
	Complete/Update PNP Profile for each student	*Educator Portal* *Accessibility Manual, Educator Portal User Guide*
	Complete/update first contact for each student (**make sure the primary exceptionality matches the IEP**)	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*
	Have Kite Student Portal loaded on all testing devices	The new client will be required for this testing year.

September 8 – December 19, 2025

✓	Task	Resource
	Print Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Record for each student according to grade level	*Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record Math and English Language Arts by Grade* (PDF)
	Choose EE's by linkage level to meet the blueprint requirements for that grade and subject.	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*
	Teachers may use the EE by linkage level data for planning and monitoring instruction	*Kansas Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data: Grade 3-Grade 11* (PDF)
	Begin instruction on individual EE's	Refer to *DLM Professional Development Modules*
	Access practice activities and release testlets to familiarize the students with the format	*Guide to Practice Activities and Released Testlets*
	Assign testlet when student is ready Read or print teacher information page	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*
	Administer the required number of testlets per grade and subject to meet the blueprint requirements	*Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record Math and English Language Arts by Grade* (PDF) Kite Student Portal
	Check to ensure blueprint requirements are met on the student activity table on Educator Portal. (essential element status report)	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*

February 3 – April 24, 2026

✓	Task	Resource
	Choose EE's by linkage level to meet the blueprint requirements for that grade and subject.	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*
	Teachers may use the EE by linkage level data for planning monitoring instruction	*Kansas Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data: Grade 3-Grade 11* (PDF)
	Begin instruction on individual EE's	Refer to *DLM Professional Development Modules*
	Assign testlet when the student is ready to test. Read or print teacher information page	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*
	Administer the required number of testlets per grade/subject to meet the blueprint requirements. Science administer all 9 testlets.	*Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record Math and English Language Arts by Grade* (PDF) Kite Student Portal
	Check to ensure blueprint requirements are met on the student activity table on Educator Portal. (essential element status report)	*Educator Portal* *Educator Portal User Guide*

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Fall Window: Sept. 8 - Dec. 19

Essential Elements for ELA and Mathematics

- are selected in the Instruction and Assessment Planner
- are required to be assessed
- have blueprint requirements
- contribute to a student's final, end- of-year Individual Student Score Report

Essential Elements for Science

- are selected in the Instruction and Assessment Planner
- are not *required* to be assessed
- do not have blueprint requirements
- do not contribute to the student's final, end-of-year Individual Student Score Report

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Spring Window: Feb. 3 – April 24, 2026

Essential Elements for ELA and Mathematics

- are selected in the Instruction and Assessment Planner
- are required to be assessed
- involve the same blueprint requirements as were used for the fall window
- contribute to a student's final, end- of-year Individual Student Score Report

Essential Elements for Science

- are not selected in the Instruction and Assessment Planner
- are required to be assessed
- are all assessed for a student's grade band; therefore, no need for blueprint options
- contribute to a student's final, end-of-year Individual Student Score Report

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Kite Educator Portal

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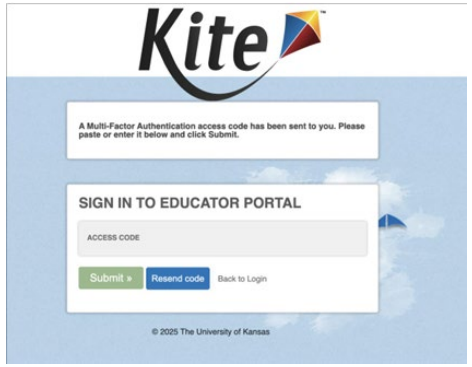
Multifactor Authentication (New)

1. Enter valid username and password.
2. Select Sign In
3. System will send a multifactor authentication access code via email.
4. Enter valid access code.
5. Select Submit.
6. User is logged into the system



*User must enter a valid username and password to receive MFA access code.

*Five attempts to enter valid MFA access code before account is locked.

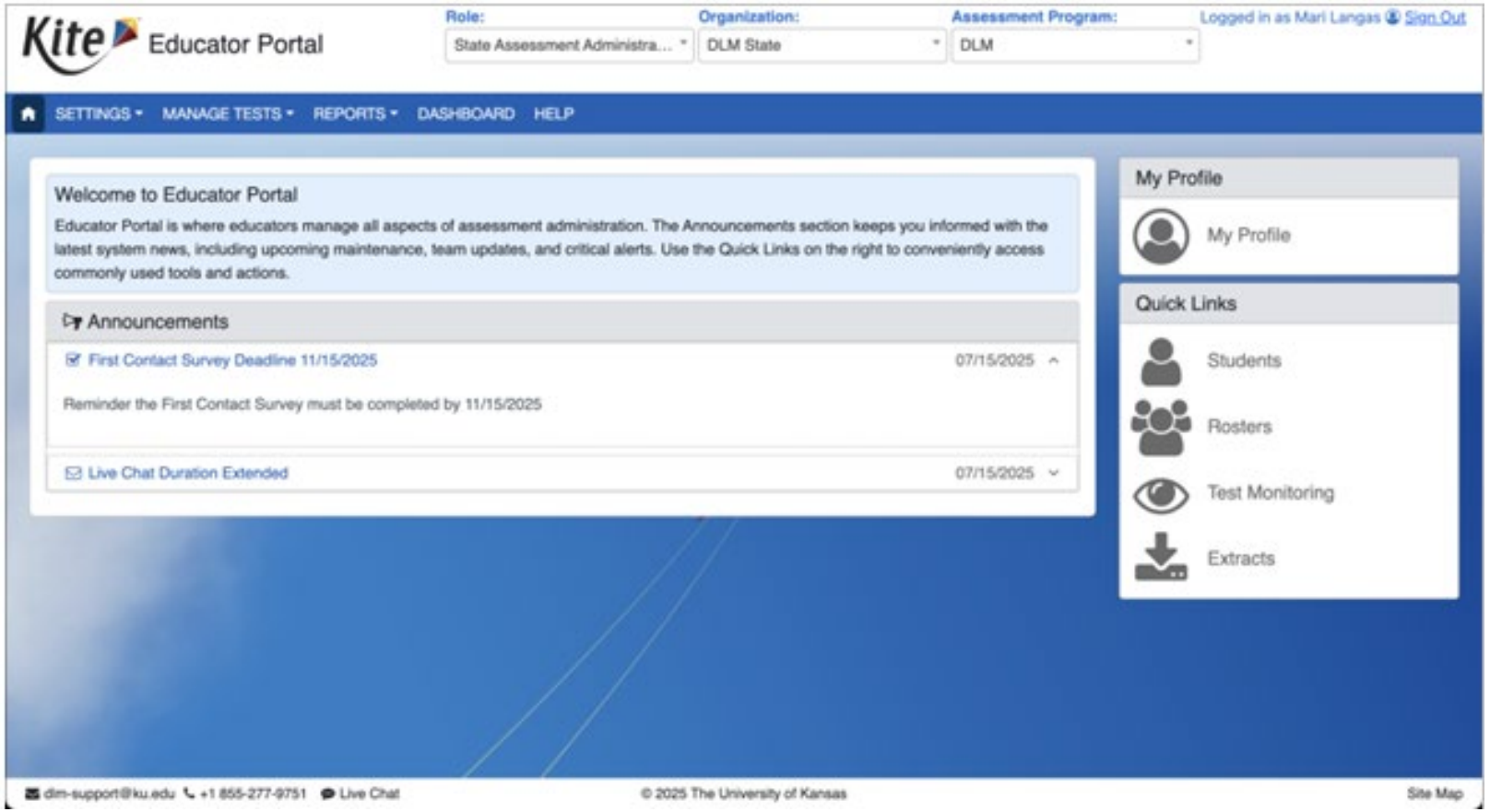
*MFA access code is valid for 30 minutes.

*Option for users to receive MFA access code via SMS will be implemented in a future year

Educator Portal

- Login to Educator Portal If this is your first-time using Kite Educator Portal you will receive an email invitation from Kite-support@ku.edu after your assessment coordinator has added you. Click on the link in your email. You will be directed to set up a password. Usernames are now case insensitive.
- Ensure that you can access "DLM" for Assessment Program and "teacher" for Role.
- If you can't access these, you need to contact your district test coordinator and request access to Educator Portal as a DLM teacher. You will not be able to complete your required training until this is done.

Educator Portal Home Page Update



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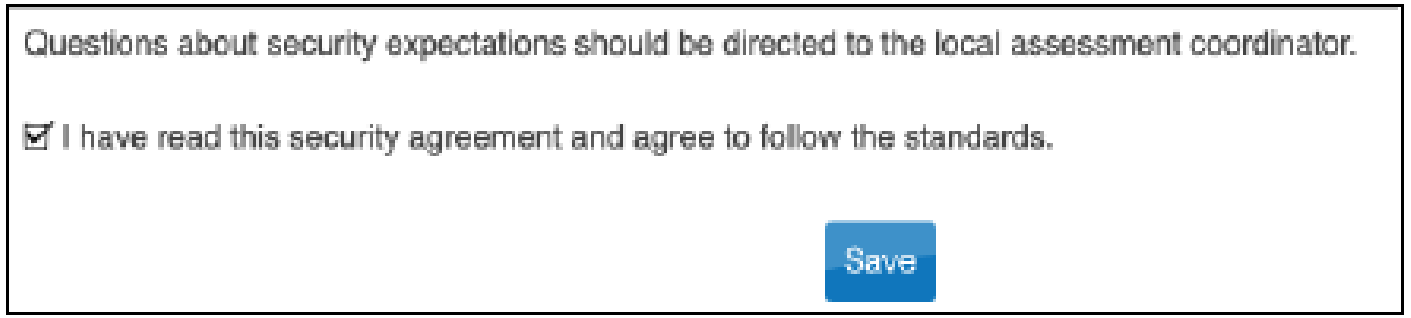
Security Agreement Update

Requires the user to accept the security agreement in order to access Educator Portal

- Users who do not accept the security agreement will not be allowed to access the application.
- The user can accept the terms to move on or stay stuck on the screen.
- After the user accepts the security agreement, they will no longer receive the pop- up message after they log in.



Once the security agreement is accepted, the system will send the required training to Educator Portal within 30 min.

Required training

New Test Administrators

- Four modules (four post-tests) – 3 hours
  - Video
  - PDF PPT slides and transcript (optional)
  - Key points guide (optional)
  - Process activity (optional)
  - Post-test
  - Helpful reminders (optional)
- Optional videos Score Report, First Contact Survey, and DLM instructionally Embedded Assessments
- Facilitated and self-directed options

Returning Test Administrators

- One module (one four-part post-test) - 1 hour
  - Video
  - PDF PPT slides and transcript (optional)
  - Four-part post-test
  - Helpful reminders (optional)
- Optional videos Score Report and First Contact Survey
- Self-directed option only

*course for facilitators – instructions for facilitating the training for new test administrators (if you are an administrator facilitating the training and you don't have access contact me at cary.rogers@ksde.gov
*facilitators need to complete the training via the Facilitators course before gaining access to training materials.

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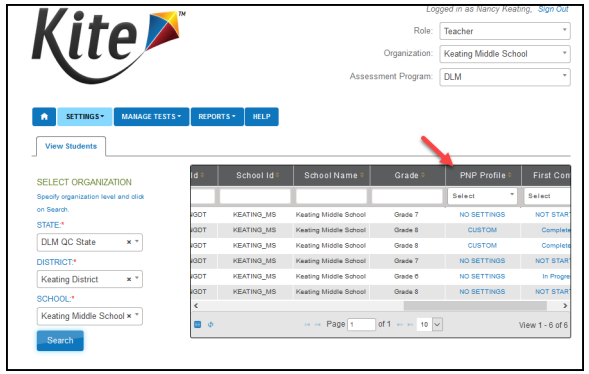
Required training (2)

- Required training is accessed via Educator Portal (single login)
- Refer to the Guide to Required Training on the DLM website. Must pass quizzes with 80% accuracy
- Make sure to click the link that says *2025-26 DLM Test Administrator Certificate* for the successful completion to register. That link will only appear if all required quizzes are completed with a passing grade.

DLM Training for District Roles:

- Optional, self-directed, posted to each state's page of the DLM website
- Multiple lessons by role
  - Data managers
  - Assessment coordinators
  - Technology personnel
  - District and building administrators
- Additional lessons for Quick Vocabulary and What's new

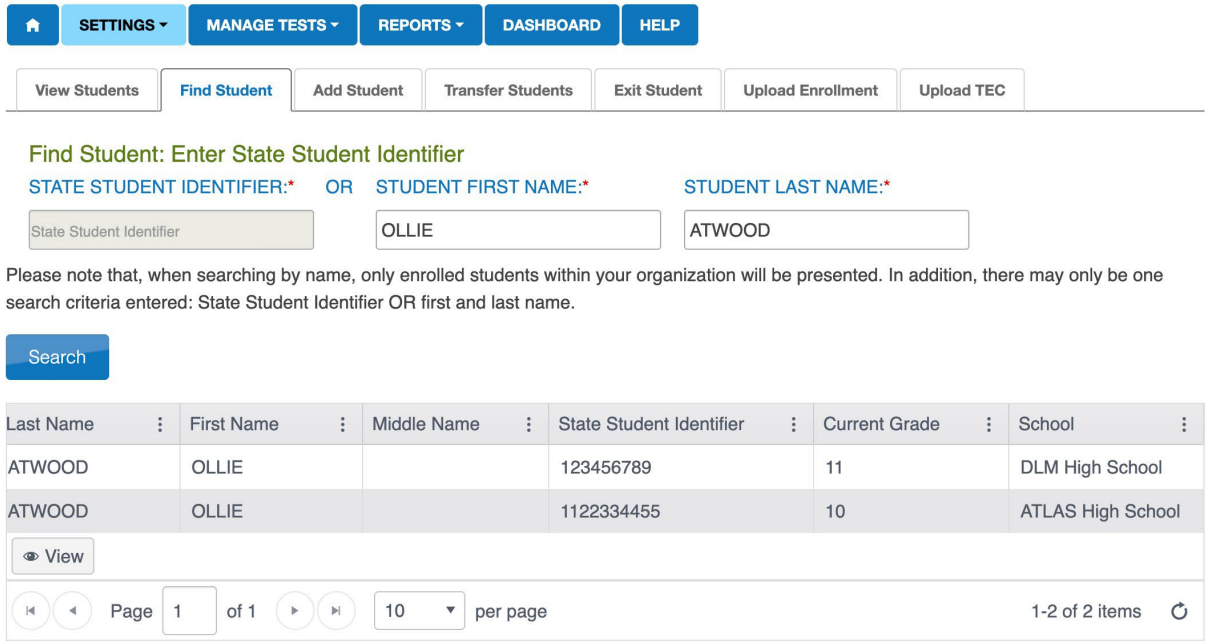
Kite Educator Portal: view students and rosters



- Educator Portal Users Guide (specific to Instructionally Embedded)
- View and check student data and rosters (all students rostered to the correct grade and subjects)
- Complete/update each student's PNP Profile in Educator Portal.
- Complete/update each student's First Contact in Educator Portal (EEs can not be chosen until the first contact is completed).
- Install Kite Student Portal on assessment devices (you must delete KITE client and install Kite Student Portal).

Search by Student Name in Find Student

- Add student first and last name search fields to Find Student for states that opt-in
- Both student first and last name fields are required
- Search by student name only applies to currently enrolled students
- No changes made to search by State Student Identifier



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DLM Data Extracts Organization

Extracts and reports organized into tabbed categories

Student Information	Test Administration and Monitoring	Data Management
Current Enrollment	DLM Instructionally Embedded Monitoring	Security Agreement Completion
First Contact Survey File	DLM Blueprint Coverage Summary	Training Status
PNP Setting Counts	TIP Access	Users
PNP Settings	-	-
Roster	-	-
Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status	-	-
Parent Portal Registration	-	-
Parents	-	-

Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status Extract

- To be eligible for test assignment, a student must:
  - be enrolled
  - rostered
  - First Contact Survey completed

- Student Roster and First Contact Survey Status extract will provide testing readiness information in one place
  - grade student is enrolled
  - all subjects the student is rostered
  - First Contact Survey status and completion date

Resources

IEP Team Resource: Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment

Section 1: Informing All IEP Team Members about the Kansas AA-AAAS
- Tool A: Assessment Information for IEP Team Members

Section 2: Preparing for the Decision about Whether the Student Should Participate in the Kansas AA-AAAS
- Tool B: Intellectual Functioning Tool
- Tool C: Adaptive Functioning Tool
- Tool D: Instruction and Supports Documentation
- Tool E: Previous Test Participation and Performance Documentation
- Tool F: Communication Skills Documentation

Section 3: Discussing Information Relevant to the Assessment Decision During the IEP Meeting
- Tool G: Expectations for the Student's Future
- Tool H: Implications of Participation in General and Alternate Assessment
- Tool I: Intellectual Functioning, Adaptive Functioning, and Previous Participation and Performance Summary
- Tool J: Alternate Assessment Notification

Section 4: Reviewing Decisions about Instruction and Assessment
- Tool K: Aggregation of Assessment Decisions by School and District
- Tool L: Review of Aggregate Decisions by School and District

Appendix – 2 case studies (1 student who would be eligible for the DLM/ 1 student who would not be eligible for the DLM)

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KS Alternate Early Literacy Screener

- The Kansas Alternate Early Literacy Screener is a simple rubric that assesses students' early literacy skills as they relate to skill domains within English Language Arts (print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluency and comprehension). The rubric is meant to be completed for each student with a Significant Cognitive Disability (grades K-3) by their teacher, based on the student's performance on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and every day early literacy instruction within the classroom.

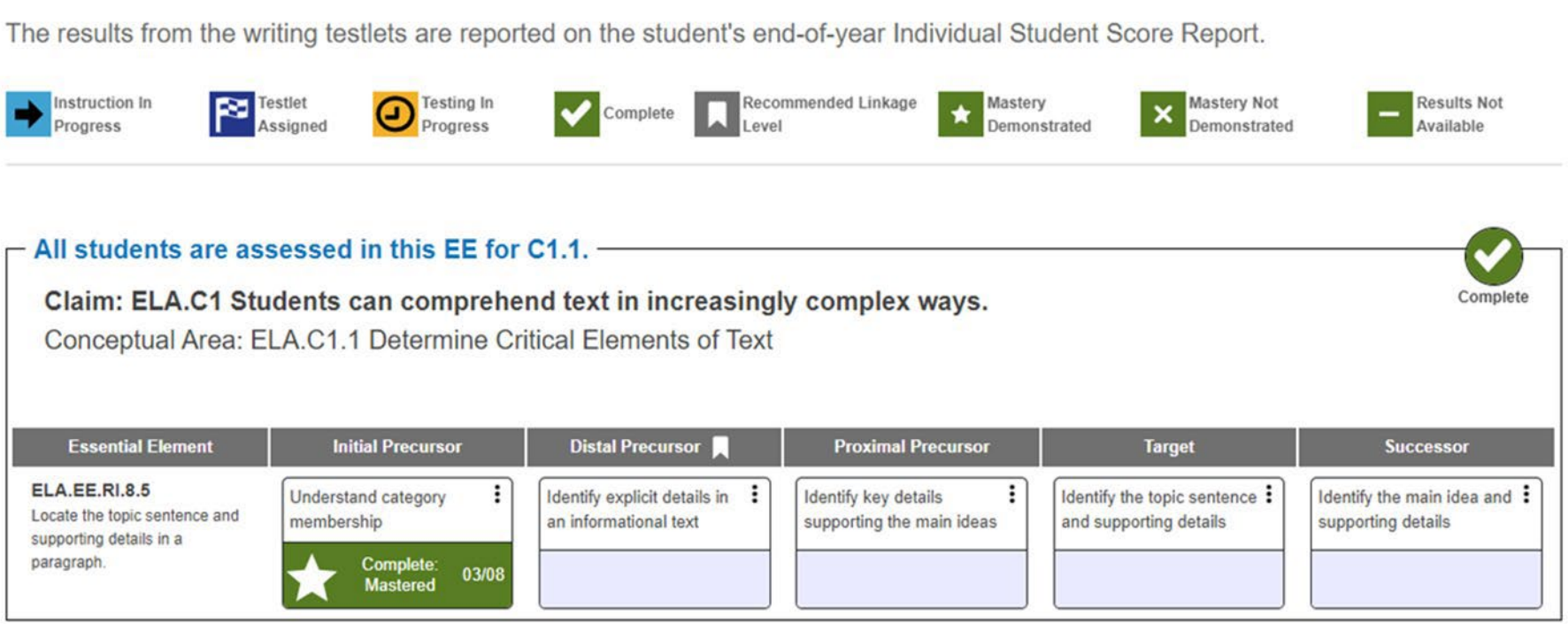
Who takes the Alternate Screener?

- Student is in grades Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade; and
- Student has a most significant cognitive disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior; and
- Student is learning content linked to the DLM Essential Elements; and
- Student requires extensive, repeated, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and-age-appropriate curriculum, and
- Determined by the IEP team.

8th Grade

- Report the spring results from **EE.RI.8.5** Field D62
  - 00 - Not assessed
  - 01- Mastery not demonstrated = below benchmark
  - 02 Mastered =at or above benchmark

Instruction and Assessment Planner – Spring Report



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Kansas Early Math Alternate Assessment Rubrics KDG-3rd grade (PDF)

- Similar to the KS Alternate Early Literacy Screener.
- Optional tool for students with a most significant cognitive disability who are not able to engage/access the district math assessment.

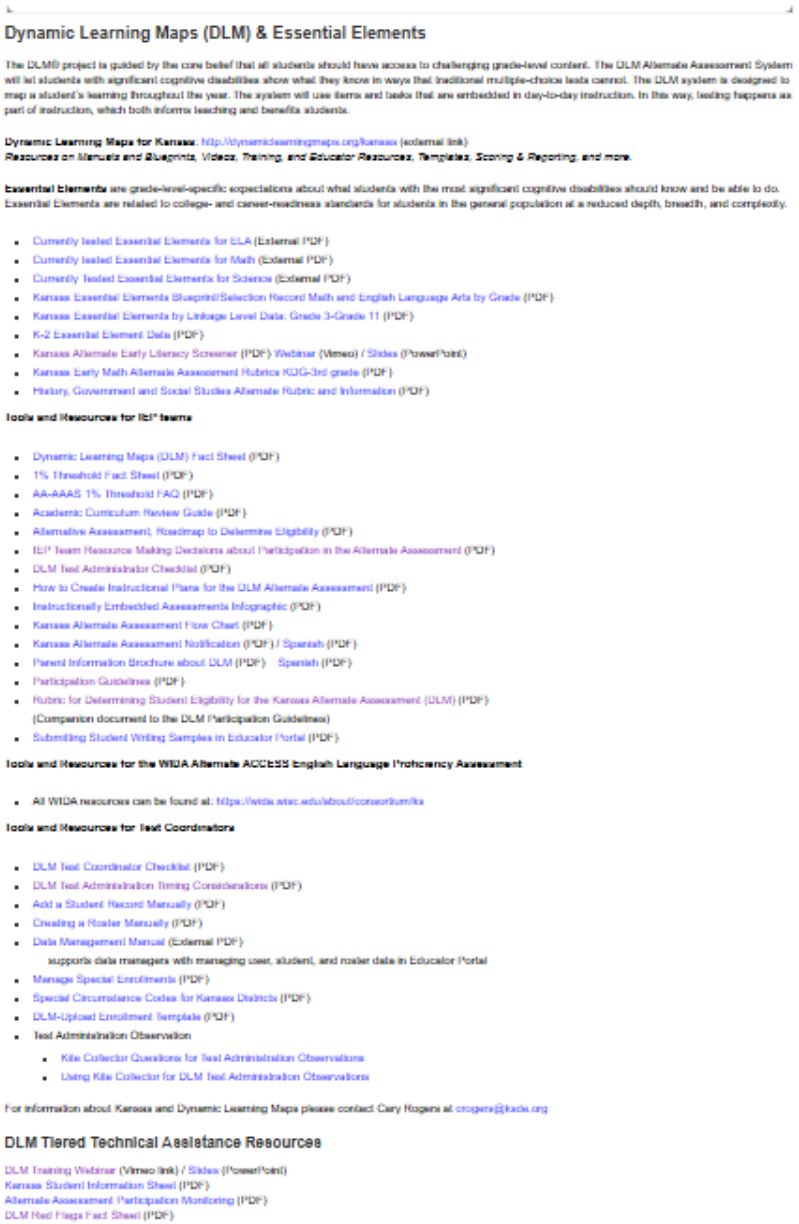
HGSS Alternate Assessment Rubric

- Grades 4, 7, and HS (Grade 10, 11, or 12)
- Classroom based assessment
- The rubric column at the end to put the students score
- Only needs to be completed 1 time per year, but can be completed more and the best score reported

Resource Links

- KSDE DLM webpage
- KSDE Assessment webpage (Assessment page)
- DLM webpage
- TASN website

KSDE DLM website



Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) & Essential Elements

The DLM® project is guided by the core belief that all students should have access to challenging grade-level content. The DLM Alternate Assessment System will let students with significant cognitive disabilities show what they know in ways that traditional multiple-choice tests cannot. The DLM system is designed to map a student's learning throughout the year. The system will use items and tasks that are embedded in day-to-day instruction. In this way, testing happens as part of instruction, which both informs teaching and benefits students.

Dynamic Learning Maps for Kansas: http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/kansas (external link)
Resources on Manuals and Blueprints, Videos, Training, and Educator Resources, Templates, Scoring & Reporting, and more.

Essential Elements are grade-level-specific expectations about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. Essential Elements are related to college- and career-readiness standards for students in the general population at a reduced depth, breadth, and complexity.

- Currently tested Essential Elements for ELA (External PDF)
- Currently tested Essential Elements for Math (External PDF)
- Currently Tested Essential Elements for Science (External PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements Blueprint/Selection Record Math and English Language Arts by Grade (PDF)
- Kansas Essential Elements by Linkage Level Data: Grade 3-Grade 11 (PDF)
- K-2 Essential Element Data (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Early Literacy Screener (PDF) Webinar (Vimeo) / Slides (PowerPoint)
- Kansas Early Math Alternate Assessment Rubrics KGG-3rd grade (PDF)
- History, Government and Social Studies Alternate Rubric and Information (PDF)

Tools and Resources for IEP teams

- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Fact Sheet (PDF)
- 1% Threshold Fact Sheet (PDF)
- AA-AAAS 1% Threshold FAQ (PDF)
- Academic Curriculum Review Guide (PDF)
- Alternative Assessment, Roadmap to Determine Eligibility (PDF)
- IEP Team Resource Making Decisions about Participation in the Alternate Assessment (PDF)
- DLM Test Administrator Checklist (PDF)
- How to Create Instructional Plans for the DLM Alternate Assessment (PDF)
- Instructionally Embedded Assessments Infographic (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Assessment Notification (PDF) / Spanish (PDF)
- Parent Information Brochure about DLM (PDF) Spanish (PDF)
- Participation Guidelines (PDF)
- Rubric for Determining Student Eligibility for the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) (PDF)
  (Companion document to the DLM Participation Guidelines)
- Submitting Student Writing Samples in Educator Portal (PDF)

Tools and Resources for the WIDA Alternate ACCESS English Language Proficiency Assessment

- All WIDA resources can be found at: https://wida.wisc.edu/about/consortium/ka

Tools and Resources for Test Coordinators

- DLM Test Coordinator Checklist (PDF)
- DLM Test Administration Timing Considerations (PDF)
- Add a Student Record Manually (PDF)
- Creating a Roster Manually (PDF)
- Data Management Manual (External PDF)
  supports data managers with managing user, student, and roster data in Educator Portal
- Manage Special Enrollments (PDF)
- Special Circumstance Codes for Kansas Districts (PDF)
- DLM-Upload Enrollment Template (PDF)
- Test Administration Observation
  - Kite Collector Questions for Test Administration Observations
  - Using Kite Collector for DLM Test Administration Observations

For information about Kansas and Dynamic Learning Maps please contact Cary Rogers at: crogers@ksde.org

DLM Tiered Technical Assistance Resources

DLM Training Webinar (Vimeo link) / Slides (PowerPoint)
Kansas Student Information Sheet (PDF)
Alternate Assessment Participation Monitoring (PDF)
DLM Red Flags Fact Sheet (PDF)

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Recorded Early Literacy Instruction for Students Taking the DLM Webinars

- Assessment of Early Literacy Skills (Vimeo)
  - Slides (PDF)
- Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness
  - Slides (PDF)
- Shared and Independent Reading (Vimeo)
  - Slides (PDF)
- Predictable Chart Writing and Independent Writing (Vimeo)
  - Slides (PDF)
  - 2-Is It Writing-Sturm Infographic (PDF)
  - 5-Tips for Supporting Student Writers (PDF)
- Kansas Alternate Early Literacy Screener (Vimeo)
  - Slides

Sign up for DLM test updates Subscribe to KAA listserv

- DLM test updates

  Enter first name, last name, and email into form, then submit.

- To sign up for KAA listserv, send this information:
  Subject line: KAA Listserv
  Body of message: Email address, First Name, Last Name, USD Number, USD Name,
  Send to this address: cary.rogers@ksde.gov

DLM webinars for 20252026

Register for entire 2025-26 Webinar Series

Content is subject to change at any time due to current events
August 21 What do I need to do to get ready for the fall test window? (TASN registration)
September 4 How do I write instructional plans? (pre-recorded) (TASN registration)
October 9 DLM resources – How do I prepare my students for the DLM? (TASN registration)
December 11 DLM fall test window wrap-up What needs to be finished by Dec 20th? (TASN registration)
February 5 DLM spring window (TASN registration)
April 9 DLM wrap-up What needs to be finished by April 24th? (TASN registration)

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 897 7927 3623

Passcode: 947213

One tap mobile: +13462487799,,8977927 3623#,,,,,,0#,,947213# US (Houston)

Questions

Contact Information

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Special Education and Title Services Team
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