

MAP-A/Dynamic Learning Maps Q&A

From MAP-A/Dynamic Learning Maps Weekly Update #20 11-08-2013

email sent out by Nancy Keating, DESE -- November 13, 2013

1. QUESTION: We heard that all of our MAP-A students have to take the field test. Is that true?

ANSWER: We strongly recommend that all MAP-A students and their teachers participate in the field test in all three windows. The following presents some of the value:

- Teachers and students will have the opportunity to practice in the KITE Educator and Student portal free of state accountability consequences. No student, teacher, or district data will be reported for the field test.
- Districts will have more information about their students' needs related to a technology based assessment.
- Most importantly, this population of students will take only a few items during each field test window. In order to build a large bank of items to be ready for August 2014, as many MAP-A students need to participate as possible. In August, teachers will be able to use the items for instruction, as well as for the formative assessments.

2. QUESTION: How many items will be in the test and about how long will the test take?

ANSWER: During each field test window, each student will participate in three English Language Arts (ELA) and three mathematics testlets. There are 12-15 items per subject. Total assessment time for English language arts is about 40-60 minutes. Total assessment time for mathematics is about 30-45 minutes.

- Student testlets are designed so that a student can interact with the system directly and select his or her own answer. If the student cannot advance the screens or enter answers independently, the teacher can navigate the screens and record the student's answers on his or her behalf.
- Multiple testlets may be completed on the same day or may be administered at separate times on different days within the testing window. Tests can be paused as often as needed.

3. QUESTION: What are the dates for the Spring 2014 Field Test for new MAP-A?

ANSWER: Each eligible student will take the online field test in each of the three windows.

- Field Test Window #1 January 15 - January 31, 2014
- Field Test Window #2 March 17 - April 11, 2014
- Field Test Window #3 May 1 - June 7, 2014

Full details may be found in Issue 19, November 1, 2013, of the weekly newsletters.

4. QUESTION: We heard that teachers have to finish 52 modules before the first Field Test window opens on January 15th, and the modules are each an hour and a half long. Is that true?

ANSWER: Eight of the modules are available at this time. Of those eight, one is 90 minutes long. The other seven modules are from 15 to 45 minutes in length. The system allows teachers to "pause" the modules and come back to them as needed. The module that addresses the Essential Elements will be helpful professional development prior to starting the field test.

5. QUESTION: Can our teachers take the modules together?

ANSWER: Yes, a facilitated version of the modules, as well as the self-directed version is provided. A district may use either version for a group of teachers.

6. QUESTION: Our district does not have much time for professional development at this time. How many modules do we have to finish before January 15th?

ANSWER: Teachers do not have to complete any of the modules before participating in the field test.

7. QUESTION: When will we learn the nuts and bolts of the new assessment system?

ANSWER: In December, teachers will have modules and webinars about the assessment system.

8. QUESTION: When we first learned about the current MAP-A assessment we had many hours of training meetings. Why don't we have that for the new MAP-A?

ANSWER: The new MAP-A assessment system designed by DLM is so much easier to use. Administrators and teachers will find that the educator portal has some similarity to iTester for End-of-Course Assessments. The new system is not labor intensive. It provides immediate feedback, can be used for instruction, and the students themselves can actually interact more with the system. Teachers are freed to have more time for instruction because all the work in the DLM system supports instruction. Testlets are instructionally relevant. Students' small progress steps will be tracked for teachers.

9. QUESTION: What happens if we don't participate in the field test?

ANSWER: Your teachers and students will miss out on a wonderful experience to learn about the new system. In addition, your teachers and students will not have an opportunity to provide their feedback about the system.

10. QUESTION: Why can't we learn the nuts and bolts of the system before early December?

ANSWER: Because students participating in the Pilot Test are in the system currently. Once the Pilot window closes, the system will be refreshed, field test items will be added, and training will be provided.

11. QUESTION: Will we have practice items for ourselves and our students?

ANSWER: Yes.

12. QUESTION: How will we register our students?

ANSWER: Registration information will be available in December. Please watch subsequent Friday updates for more information.

13. QUESTION: Is all training online, self-directed?

ANSWER: No. Training comes in three main ways:

- Online self-directed
- Facilitated by the RPDC or administrators in your own district
- Webinars by the Office of Special Education and Assessment

14. QUESTION: Do you actually expect MAP-A students to take online assessments? I have students who are completely uncommunicative and medically fragile.

ANSWER: All Dynamic Learning Maps staff have worked directly with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. All have done research with this population of students. In Missouri, teachers and students from the Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled have been heavily involved in test development. Missouri has 380 students from the Missouri School for the Severely Disabled and from Union R-XII participating in the fall Pilot Test. That is over 12% of the total number of students from all 17 states that are currently in the consortium. MAP-A teachers from Missouri have been involved in item development, item reviews, and development of the Essential Elements. Your students are known. Based on this research, and input from educators, we believe that 90 percent of MAP-A students will be able to access the computer in some way. For the other 10 percent, teachers will be able to scribe and/or facilitate the student's response. [NOTE: *Further clarification provided by Michael Muenks (11/14/13) -- Educators administering the MAP-A do not have a new goal to meet in regard to the 90/10 research data shared in the Q&A. The research data is for informational purposes only. Educators should assist students with the input of answers in the new MAP-A as needed in line with the communication support used by the student used on a regular basis.*]