

[Insert Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

[Insert School] is preparing for the annual administration of the [Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Statewide Assessment]. As listed on our school calendar, students in [Grades 3-8, and 11] will take the assessment on [Insert Dates/Date Range]. State and federal law require all students in our school to participate in this state grade-level assessment for school accountability and academic achievement reporting purposes.

Participation in this test is important. State assessments are based on the progression of skills and knowledge that are needed at particular grades to ensure students graduate college and career ready. Teachers use the statewide assessment as one of the many tools to understand student performance or competencies consistent with the challenging academic achievement standards for science (how much a child knows at the end of the year) and to identify which students are not making sufficient progress toward, and attaining, grade-level proficiency on such standards. Teachers use these student results to identify academic needs and adjust instructional plans accordingly. Our school uses state assessments to determine if we have reached the state educational goals, to identify areas for improvement, and to address any equity issues.

The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) English Language Arts (ELA)/Mathematics Alternate Assessment is aligned to alternate academic achievement standards for these content areas for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The test is delivered via the student portal as part of the Kite Suite, and has accessibility built into the assessment itself, in addition to individualized student needs. Testing time is expected to be 5-15 minutes for each testlet the student takes.

Educators use the Dynamic learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment System to assess what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities know and can do in the DLM assessed subjects. The DLM Alternate Assessment System provides accessibility by design and is guided by the core beliefs that all students should have access to challenging, grade-level content, and that based on this challenging content, assessment is given to students in a meaningful way. This assessment is unique in its design and students can be assessed based upon their skills throughout the school year in smaller “testlets”.

[After Testing,] our school will provide you with your child's individual score report. Our district has implemented a policy to deliver score reports to families that protect student privacy and provide timely access so parents, teachers, and principals can work together to address specific academic needs identified from this assessment. We also provide an interpretive guide with the score report to help you understand your child's performance and progress and can be accessed on the [Montana State Page for DLM Assessments](#), or directly within the [Understanding Your Child's Individual Score Report](#) resource.

Our school's state assessment results will be available to the public after administration of the Montana Science Assessment and can be accessed on the Office of Public Instruction's state longitudinal data warehouse, [GEMS Student Achievement Dashboard](#). You can also visit Montana's [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) Report Card](#) to see how our school compares to other schools across Montana in a variety of different measures.

Here are some things to note about state assessments:

- Your child's grades will not be impacted by their scores on the state tests.
- Your child's privacy will be protected. State and federal laws, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), ensure these data remain confidential.
- Students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), Section 504 plans, or English Learner plans will be assessed based on individual student needs, consistent with all state and federal laws and regulations.

Here are some things you can do to help:

- Encourage your child to do their very best in everything they do in school, including this instructionally embedded assessment.
- Make sure your child gets plenty of sleep the night before each test and has a healthy breakfast.
- Support your child by explaining the purpose of the tests and helping with homework and test reviews.

We appreciate your partnership in helping [Insert School] fulfill the state requirement for assessment and supporting

Insert School Letter Head Here

your child to do their best. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about alternate statewide assessment this year. Questions can be directed to [School Contact] at [Contact Information].

Sincerely,

[Principal's Name]