



Key Points

- ❖ Every spring, the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment is administered to assess academic performance in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- ❖ Individual student results are generated for each subject tested at a student's grade level.
 - Grades 3-9 participate in ELA and Math tests.
 - Grades 4, 8 and 10 also participate in Science.
- ❖ Results are available online in Anchorage School District's student information systems:
 - Teachers: PULSE
 - Parents: Q Parent Connection:

<https://parentconnect.asdk12.org>

Parents may also request a paper copy of their child's score report by contacting the Front Office Staff at their child's school.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is DLM?

A: Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) is a multi-state consortium that provides standards and alternate assessments for Alaska's students with significant cognitive disabilities.

DLM assesses alternate achievement standards, called Essential Elements, which provide access to grade-level content at access points that are appropriate to students' cognitive development. The DLM assessment is also adaptive so that students can demonstrate their skills at an individualized level.

To view DLM sample questions, visit DLM's released testlets page: <http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/about/tests/releasedtestlets>

Q: Why do students participate in alternate assessment?

A: Alternate assessment is included in state regulation as part of the comprehensive assessment system to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities, and to meet accountability requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Students who participate in alternate assessment contribute to their school's participation rate in statewide assessments.

Participation in DLM Alternate Assessment is noted on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP team determines participation annually with guidance and criteria from the State of Alaska.

Q: How do DLM results inform educators and parents about student learning?

A: Information from a DLM score report will provide a brief snapshot of a student's learning in a given year. DLM results provide only one piece of evidence of what a student knows and can do. Educators and parents should also consider progress on IEP goals and objectives, participation and growth in the curriculum, and other adaptive, behavioral, social, and life skills a student is working on in their educational programming.

IEP teams can include the overall results of the DLM Alternate Assessment when describing educational performance in the IEP. Teams can also use the results to identify relative areas of strength and relative areas of need within conceptual areas of the assessed subjects.

Q: What are key components of the DLM results?

A: Results will provide a performance profile with (1) Overall Results and (2) Conceptual Areas:

(1) Overall Results are described as one of four performance levels: **Emerging**, **Approaching the Target**, **At Target**, or **Advanced**. A Level 3, or **At Target**, means that a student has met the alternate achievement standards in that subject and grade level.

1 EMERGING:	The student demonstrates emerging understanding of and ability to apply content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements.
2 APPROACHING THE TARGET:	The student's understanding of and ability to apply targeted content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements is approaching the target .
3 AT TARGET:	The student's understanding of and ability to apply content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements is at target .
4 ADVANCED:	The student demonstrates advanced understanding of and ability to apply targeted content knowledge and skills represented by the Essential Elements.

(2) Conceptual Areas are groups of related academic concepts and skills. Results for conceptual areas are reported as a percentage of skills on which a student has demonstrated mastery. *Please note:* DLM does not specifically list which skills have been mastered.

Q: What are some important messages for parents?

A: Be positive and supportive of the student. As with any test result, remember that a student may sometimes have inconsistent performance, such as demonstrating a skill during instruction but not during the assessment, or from one assessment attempt to another. If there are concerns about low performance, remember that the DLM assessment has high expectations and provides linkage levels to grade-level content standards, including at the **Emerging** Level.

For a student in the **Advanced** Level, consider that he or she is performing toward the upper range of the Essential Elements alternate achievement standards, but may not necessarily be ready for grade-level standards and assessments, therefore IEP teams should continue to follow State guidance for participation in Alternate Assessment.

Q: Where can I find more information on the DLM assessment and results?

A: Additional resources can be located at the following sites:

Anchorage School District Special Education Support Central (ASD Employee Log-In Required):
<https://share.asdk12.org/support/spedsupport/>

State of Alaska Alternate Assessment site:
<https://education.alaska.gov/sped/alternate/>

Dynamic Learning Maps Alaska site:
<http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/alaska>

