



## About Us:

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System Consortium is made up of 13 states and additional partner agencies developing the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System, a computer-based assessment for the 1% of the K-12 public school student population with significant cognitive disabilities for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate.

Led by the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation at the University of Kansas, DLM is funded through a five-year grant awarded in late 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The assessment will be implemented during the 2014-2015 school year.

The DLM Consortium is one of two multistate consortia to receive federal grants to create a next-generation alternate assessment linked to Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts for the 1% population. DLM member states are involved during every phase of DLM-AAS development.

### DLM Consortium States

Iowa • Kansas • Michigan  
Mississippi • Missouri  
New Jersey • North Carolina  
Oklahoma • Utah • Virginia  
Washington • West Virginia  
Wisconsin



## Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System: Advancing Alternate Assessment

The Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System (DLM-AAS) is a comprehensive assessment system designed to more validly measure what students with significant cognitive disabilities know and can do.

Until recently when federal laws mandated that all students be assessed, students with significant cognitive disabilities were not included in large-scale assessment. Furthermore, despite advances in technology, it has not been common practice to assess students within this population using a computer.

DLM-AAS will mark the first time this student population is assessed using online, computer-based, large-scale state assessments.

Based on research into how students learn and utilizing the latest advances in assessment technology, the DLM-AAS will be able to adapt to individual student needs based on the student's personal profile.

Also, the dynamic assessment technology will adapt to the student's individual learning pattern during the assessment process and will select assessment tasks based on the student's previous responses. Therefore, the system

### Highlights

- Online and computer based
- Created to assess students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Individualized to adapt to student needs
- Embedded assessments throughout the school year and stand-alone, summative (end-of-year) assessments
- Assessment tasks model best instructional practices
- Based upon a learning map (see page 2)
- To be implemented during the 2014-2015 school year

can adapt to the student's skill level.

Additionally, test content is linked to the Common Core State Standards, educational standards adopted by most states, through the Essential Elements that the DLM Consortium created, thereby allowing for comparable expectations and assessment measures.

Future newsletters will provide more details about key features of the DLM-AAS.

### Who are Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities?

Students with significant cognitive disabilities make up the 1% of the K-12 public school student population for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate. Therefore, these students take an alternate assessment. They are a broad range of students with diverse disabilities and communications needs, and make up about 9% of all students with disabilities.

## Person First Language

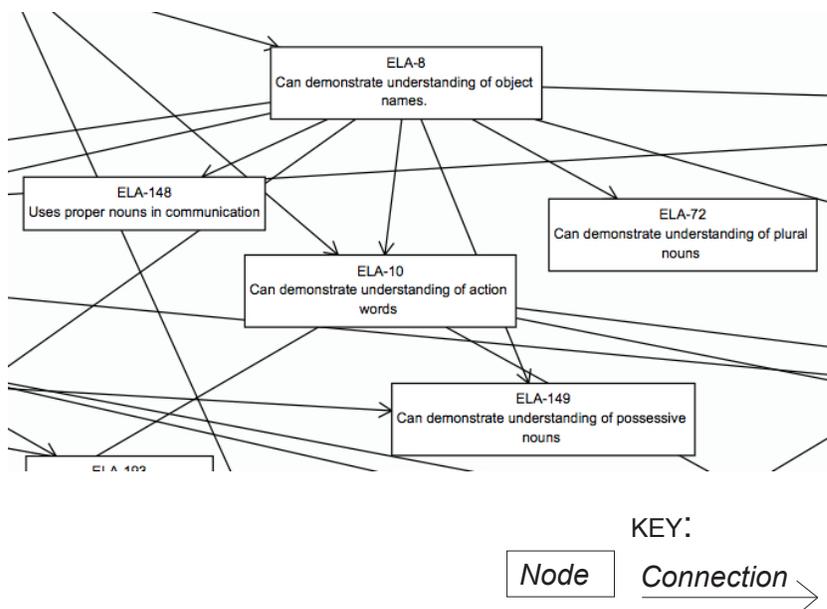
Using Person First Language is a respectful way to speak about people with disabilities by emphasizing the person first, rather than the disability. Using Person First Language highlights the person's value and individuality.

Use terms such as:

- **“People with disabilities”**  
Instead of: the disabled or the handicapped
- **“People with learning disabilities”**  
Instead of: learning disabled
- **“People with significant cognitive disabilities”**  
Instead of: slow, retarded, or mentally retarded
- **“People who have (or have been diagnosed with) . . .”**  
Instead of: People who suffer from or people who are victims of . . .

Source: Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

## What is the Dynamic Learning Map?



Above: A portion of the Dynamic Learning Map, featuring English language arts. The map is made up of more than 4,000 **nodes**, which represent math and English language arts knowledge, skills, and concepts, and more than 5,000 **connections or pathways**, which represent routes students may take in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and concepts.

The foundation of the DLM-AAS is the Dynamic Learning Map, a massive, computerized information network that resides in a computer software program. Assessment content will be based on the map's interconnected skills and pathways.

Although the concept of a learning map is not new, the Dynamic Learning Map is one of a kind because it includes development in both English language arts and mathematics.

This marks the first time anyone has created a learning map this detailed, broad, and complex.

The learning map currently includes more than 4,000 skills

and more than 5,000 connections (pathways) between skills.

“The Dynamic Learning Map is like an educational version of the human genome project,” says Neal Kingston, director of the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, which leads the DLM Consortium. “It’s more extensive than other learning maps because it includes critical early development that occurs before school-based skills.”

The project is funded to focus on mathematics and English language arts, the only two subjects addressed in the Common Core State Standards. All Dynamic Learning Map content is linked to skill development in these areas.

For more information, visit us online at  
[www.dynamiclearningmaps.org](http://www.dynamiclearningmaps.org)

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