



New Meridian

MAST Accessibility Guide

Grades 3–8

2024–2025 School Year

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Introduction

Overview of the Accessibility Guide

This document is intended to provide guidance for Montana school district personnel who must make decisions about testing all students, including special student populations, on the Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) program for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics (math). All students, including students with disabilities and English learners, are required by state and federal law to take part in the state assessments with or without accommodations. Generally, if a student can receive instruction, then they are also able to participate in state assessments. All students enrolled in accredited schools are expected to take part in state assessments in one of three ways:

1. Participate in general population assessments without accommodations.
2. Participate in general population assessments with accommodations.
3. Participate in alternate assessments when the participation criteria are met.

Special student populations include students identified as eligible and receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and students who are identified as English learners (EL).

This document also provides information regarding general education students who may require additional supports when taking standardized assessments. These guidelines describe the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations available for the MAST ELA and math assessments.

The specific accessibility features (i.e., universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations) approved by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) are subject to change in the future if additional tools, supports, or accommodations for the assessments are identified based on experience and research findings. Student eligibility for accessibility features is added through the state student information system known as Achievement in Montana (AIM)/Infinite Campus. The AIM/Infinite Campus system is designed to collect demographic, enrollment, program participation, and assessment data for each student.

The OPI uploads the student data file from AIM/Infinite Campus into the Kite Educator Portal. (See the *Data Management Overview* section in the Kite Educator Portal.) Kite then distributes this information to the Kite Student Portal, the online platform used for MAST testing. To protect student data privacy, districts are responsible for turning on any accessibility tools within the Kite Educator Portal. Specific data within an IEP is not transferred from AIM into Kite.

See the [Kite Educator Portal Manual](#) and the [Kite Student Portal Manual](#) for more information on these systems.

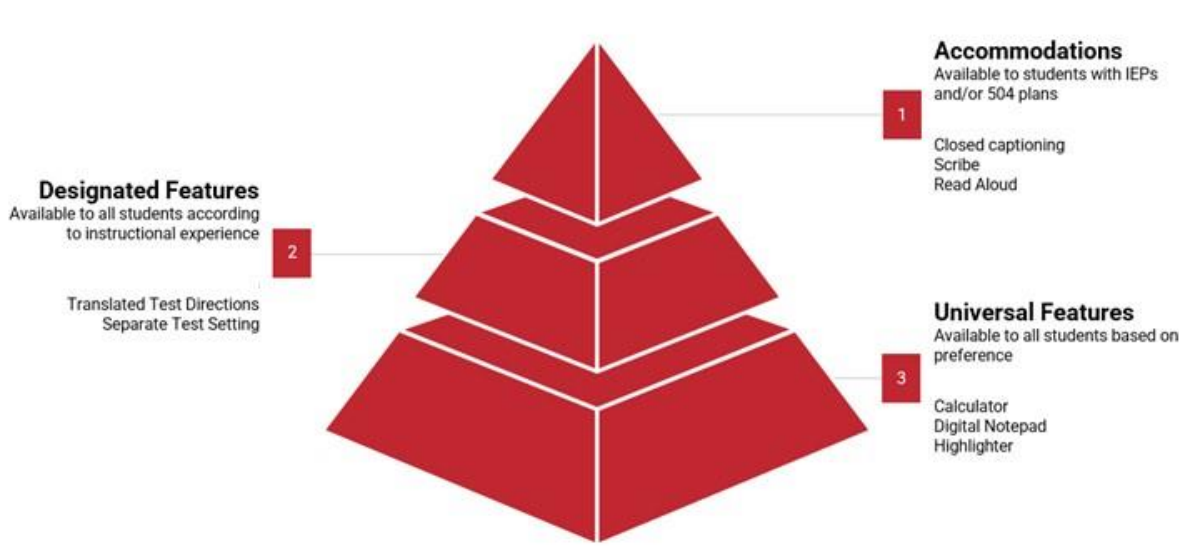
Intended Audience

This document is intended for district- and school-level personnel and decision-making teams, including Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 and English language development teams, and other teams supporting students as they prepare for and implement the MAST program.

The guidelines provide information on universal tools available to all students and on how to select appropriate designated supports and accommodations for those students who need them. The guidelines are also intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions made in instruction and assessment.

Model for Accessibility Features

All students have universal accessibility features available to them. Some students may have certain characteristics and needs for access that require the use of accommodations when they participate in the MAST program. See Montana’s three-tiered approach below.



Universal Tools (Standard Assessment Tools)

The MAST program offers several embedded digital tools in the Kite Student Platform, as well as non-embedded resources that districts may offer outside of the testing platform. Universal tools are available to all students and can be chosen by students based on their preferences. Universal tools are *not* considered assessment modifications. Assessments where students have utilized universal tools produce scores that count as participation toward the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Embedded Universal Tools

The tools listed in the table below are available to all students in the Kite Student Platform. For detailed descriptions of tool functionality, see the *Standard Assessment Tools* section of the Kite Student Portal Manual. The default setting for all universal tools is OFF.

Tool Name	Description	Subject
Calculator – Basic	Performs the basic four functions: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.	Select math testlets in grades 6–8
Eraser	Removes highlighting and striker marks from the screen.	Math & ELA
Expandable passage/questions	On items that have a passage and question, students can drag the divider bar or select options to full-screen the question, passage, or both.	ELA
Guideline	Follows the pointer and lightly highlights the text of a reading passage line by line. On tablets, drags an icon attached to the highlight line through the passage.	Math & ELA
Help	The Help text bubble explains how to answer the question based on the question type.	Math & ELA
Highlighter	Selects text on the screen and highlights the selected text using a pink background.	Math & ELA
Mark for Review	Marks a question for later review.	Math & ELA
Masking - Custom	Masks or covers parts of an assessment. A black box displays for the purpose of moving over and resizing areas of the screen.	Math & ELA
Notes	Displays a rectangle on the screen that allows a student to take notes.	Math & ELA
Pointer	Selects content in the assessment.	Math & ELA
Single Switch Support	Uses keystrokes to navigate and select options.	Math & ELA
Spell Check	Tool for checking the spelling of words in student responses.	ELA performance tasks
Striker	Places a line through a multiple-choice answer choice that is not desired.	Math & ELA
Screen Magnification	Magnifies (zooms) the screen 2.0X, 3.0X, 4.0X, or 5.0X	Math & ELA

Non-Embedded Universal Tools

Some universal tools outside of the testing platform may be provided locally by the school or district.

Tool Name	Description	Subject
Breaks	Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals, or after the completion of a single testlet if multiple are being administered in one session. Students may be allowed to take breaks as needed to reduce cognitive fatigue. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.	Math & ELA
Calculator – Basic	The provision of a battery-operated handheld calculator may be appropriate. If a calculator is provided, proctors must ensure that the device is functional, has working batteries, and that the student is familiar with how to use it. Students may not use calculators on their phones, iPads, or other electronic devices. Students may not share calculators.	Select math testlets in grades 6–8
English Glossary	Grade and context appropriate definitions of specific construct-irrelevant terms are shown in English on the screen at the end of the passage.	ELA & ELA performance tasks
Dictionary	An English dictionary may be provided for the performance tasks.	ELA performance tasks
Library	Reference Sheets.	Available for grades 5–8
Scratch Paper	Students may use blank scratch paper to make notes, write computations, record responses, or create graphic organizers. A whiteboard with a marker may be used as scratch paper. After the testing session, scratch paper must be collected and destroyed, and whiteboards fully erased.	Math & ELA
Thesaurus	An English thesaurus may be provided for use with the performance tasks.	ELA performance tasks

Designated Supports

Designated supports are available for use **by any student for whom the need has been identified by an educator** (or team of educators) and agreed to by the parent/guardian and student. The designated supports described in this section are not modifications. Designated supports yield valid scores that count as participation in assessments that meet the requirements of ESSA when used in a manner consistent with these guidelines.

It is recommended that a consistent process be used to determine supports for individual students. All educators making decisions should be trained in the process and be made aware of the range of available designated supports. Designated supports need to be identified prior to assessment administration. Embedded and non-embedded designated supports must be entered into the Personal Needs Profile (PNP) in the Kite Educator Portal. **Any embedded designated supports must be set in Kite at least 24 hours prior to testing.**

Embedded Designated Supports

The designated supports listed in the table below are available to students in the Kite Student Platform. For detailed descriptions of tool functionality, see the *Assessment Tools* section of the Kite Student Portal Manual. The default setting in Kite for designated supports is OFF unless it is set in Kite for a student. Some designated supports can be set by a user in the student’s PNP or by the student when they begin testing. See the ‘**’ for this designation.

Tool Name	Description	Recommended Use	Subject
Contrast Color**	Sets a text color (foreground) and background color with foreground/background options for grey/black, yellow/black, green/white, and red/black.	For students with attention difficulties, visual impairments, or other disabilities.	Math & ELA
Color Overlay**	Displays a light-colored background on the screen with options for blue, yellow, grey, red, and green.	For students with attention difficulties, visual impairments, or other disabilities.	Math & ELA
Masking – Answer Choices	Shows each multiple-choice response option as masked. To close or remove the masked areas, select the X for each box.	For students with attention difficulties, visual impairments, or other disabilities.	Math & ELA

Invert Color Choice	Sets the text color to white and the background color to black. If a color contrast other than black and white is selected, those colors will be inverted.	For students with attention difficulties, visual impairments, or other disabilities.	Math & ELA
Spoken Audio-Text & Graphics	A synthetic voice reads assessment content including instructions, response options, and explanations of visuals like pictures and graphs.	Students who are English language learners or have reading disabilities or visual impairments.	Math & ELA
Spanish Text-to-Speech	A synthetic voice reads assessment content in Spanish, including instructions, response options, and explanations of visuals like pictures and graphs.	Students whose primary language is Spanish or who have reading disabilities or visual impairments.	Math
Magnification	The magnification tool allows a student to enlarge the screen during an assessment. Students can select a magnification level (2.0X, 3.0X, etc.) or use the magnifying glass to zoom in and out.	Students with visual impairments or print disabilities.	Math & ELA

**Also available to students to turn on in the Kite Student Portal.

Non-Embedded Designated Supports

The designated supports listed in the table below are available to students **outside** of the Kite Student Platform.

Tool Name	Description	Recommended Use	Subject
Amplification	The student adjusts the volume control beyond the computer's built-in settings by using headphones or other non-embedded devices.	Students with hearing impairments.	Math & ELA
Bilingual Dictionary	A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be provided for the ELA performance task.	Students whose primary language is not English.	ELA perf. tasks
Color Overlay	Color transparencies are placed over a paper-based assessment.	Students with visual impairments or print disabilities.	Math & ELA
Magnification	<p>The student may adjust the size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, navigation buttons, and mouse pointer) with an assistive technology device or software.</p> <p>Magnification allows increasing size and color contrast, including the size and color of the mouse pointer, to a level not provided by the zoom universal tool, color contrast designated support, and/or mouse pointer designated support.</p>	Students with visual impairments or print disabilities.	Math & ELA

Medical Supports	Students may have access to medical supports (e.g., a glucose monitor) for medical purposes. The medical support may include a cell phone and should only support the student for medical reasons.	<p>Educators must comply with local medical support policies to prioritize student health.</p> <p>Electronic aids must limit app access or be closely monitored by test administrators for security. Separate settings may be needed to prevent distractions and maintain test integrity.</p>	Math & ELA
Noise Buffers	Ear mufflers, white noise, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds.	Students who are easily distracted or have a hearing impairment.	Math & ELA
Read-Aloud Items Only	Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader.	Students who are English language learners or have reading disabilities or visual impairments.	Math & ELA
Read-Aloud Spanish	Spanish text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the administration guidelines provided in the Test Administration Manual.	Students whose first language is Spanish or who have reading disabilities or visual impairments.	Math
Scribe	Students dictate their responses to a human who records verbatim what they dictate. The scribe must be trained and qualified and must follow the administration guidelines.	Students who have motor or processing difficulties or have other impairments that prevent them from utilizing the Kite platform.	Math & ELA*

Separate Setting	Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from what is available for most students.	Students who are easily distracted or may distract other students.	Math & ELA
Simplified Test Directions	The test administrator simplifies or paraphrases the test directions contained in the Test Administration Manual.	Students who have simplified test directions noted in their IEP.	Math & ELA
Translated Test Directions	PDF of directions translated in each of the languages currently supported. An adult can read these to a student. Directions are available on the MAST Program Portal .	Students who are English language learners.	Math

*Does not apply to ELA performance tasks.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during MAST assessments. Accommodations yield valid scores that count as participation in assessments that meet the requirements of ESSA when used in a manner consistent with the guidelines. **Accommodations must be documented in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.**

If a needed accommodation is not listed, or an emergency need has risen, requests for **non-routine accommodations** must be submitted to the OPI from the System Test Coordinator (STC) through the [MontCAS Application > Non-Routine Request Process at least 2 weeks prior to planned testing](#). The OPI must approve all non-routine accommodations used in the state assessments before a student can receive them, as any accommodation not listed has the risk to change what is being measured and may make the student score invalid.

Accommodations should be used in instruction and assessment throughout the year and at least 3 months prior to the assessment. Accommodations that are provided on state assessments must be familiar to the student and must match those supports and accommodations provided for classroom instruction and assessment throughout the school year. Parents/guardians must be knowledgeable about the supports and accommodations planned for their child so they are aware of the conditions under which their child will participate in the assessment.

Decisions about accommodations are made by the IEP or 504 teams. These teams provide evidence of the need for accommodations and ensure they are noted on the IEP or 504 plan.

The IEP team is responsible for ensuring that the IEP is created in the Student Information System (SIS), which syncs into AIM. The district’s STC or designated users with the roles “Building Test Coordinator” or “District Test Coordinator” are responsible for making sure that the accommodations and supports in the IEP or the 504 plan are entered into the PNP settings in the Kite Educator Portal.

A student without a documented IEP/504 in AIM/Infinite Campus is unable to have any accommodations turned on for them in the Kite Educator Portal.



NOTE: Accommodations do not automatically transfer from AIM/Infinite Campus to Kite. School districts are responsible for ensuring that the test settings are properly configured annually.

Any embedded test setting modification **MUST** be present in the Kite Educator Portal PNP settings module for it to appear in the student testing interface.

Embedded Accommodations

The accommodations listed in the table below are available to students in the Kite Student Platform. For detailed descriptions of tool functionality, see the *Tools Enabled in the PNP* section of the Kite Student Portal Manual.

Tool Name	Description	Recommended Use	Subject
Signed Items – American Sign Language (ASL)	An ASL video that appears with video test content in the platform.	Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and regularly use ASL.	Math & ELA
Open Captioning	Printed text that appears on the computer screen as audio materials are presented.	Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and may benefit from written text.	ELA
Speech-to-Text	Embedded voice recognition allows students to use their voices as input devices to the computer to dictate responses.	Students who have motor or processing disabilities or an impairment that prevents them from typing a response in Kite.	ELA perf. tasks

Spoken Audio Non-Visual	A synthetic voice reads assessment content including instructions, response options, explanations of visuals like pictures and graphs, <u>and ELA passages.</u>	This accommodation is appropriate for a limited number of students, and its usage must be explicitly stated in a student's IEP/504 plan. Students utilizing text-to-speech will require headphones and be individually tested in a separate setting.	ELA
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Non-Embedded Accommodations

The accommodations listed in the table below are available to students outside of the Kite Student Platform.

Tool Name	Description	Recommended Use	Subject
100s Table	A paper-based table listing numbers from 1–100.	Students with visual processing or spatial perception.	Math
Abacus	This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus.	Students with visual or processing impairments.	Math
Alternate Response Options	Alternate response options include but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, Filter Keys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches.	Students with physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills).	Math & ELA
Signed Items – ASL Interpreter	A human ASL interpreter is provided to the student to interpret items and responses.	Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and regularly use ASL.	For ELA listening items
Braille	A form of the testlets will be available for districts to request. Requests must be approved by OPI through the MontCAS application.	Students who are blind or visually impaired and regularly use braille.	Math & ELA

Color Contrast – Paper	Test content of online items may be printed using different colors.	Students with visual impairments or print disabilities.	Math & ELA
Multiplication Table	A paper-based multiplication table with the numbers 1–12.	For students with this accommodation in their IEP.	Math
Paper Form – Large Print	Paper forms are available for all testlets. Requests must be approved by OPI through the MontCAS application . The form would need to be printed by the district in a larger size.	For students with this accommodation in their 504 plan.	Math & ELA
Paper Form – Regular	Paper forms are available for all testlets. Requests must be approved by OPI through the MontCAS application .	For students with this accommodation in their 504 plan.	Math & ELA
Spanish Paper Forms	Spanish paper forms are available for all math testlets. Requests must be approved by OPI through the MontCAS application .	For students with this accommodation in their 504 plan.	Math
Read-Aloud Passages	Test is read aloud via an external screen reader or a by a trained human reader.	Students with learning disabilities who may or may not also have comprehension difficulties.	Math & ELA
Scribe	Students may dictate their responses to a human who records verbatim what they dictate.	Students who have motor or processing disabilities or an impairment that prevents them from typing a response in Kite.	ELA perf. tasks
Specialized Calculator	Non-embedded, standalone tool for students needing a specialized calculator, such as a braille or talking calculator currently unavailable within the assessment platform.	Students who are unable to use the calculator in Kite for calculator-allowed items need another version such as a braille or talking calculator. Test administrators should ensure that the calculator is available only for designated calculator items.	Select math testlets in grades 6–8
Word Prediction	Word prediction allows students to begin to write a word and	Students with motor or orthopedic impairments that	ELA

	<p>then choose from a list of words predicted from word frequency and syntax rules.</p> <p>Word prediction is delivered via a non-embedded software program. The program must use only single word prediction. Functionality such as phrase prediction, predict ahead, or next word must be deactivated. The program must have settings that allow only a basic dictionary. Expanded dictionaries, such as topic dictionaries and word banks, must be deactivated.</p> <p>Phonetic spelling functionality or speech output may be built into the program and will read back the information the student has written.</p> <p>If further supports are needed for speech output, see the text-to-speech or read-aloud policies. Students who use word prediction in conjunction with speech output will need headphones, unless tested individually in a separate setting. Students may use their own assistive technology devices.</p>	<p>severely impair their ability to provide written or typed responses without the use of assistive technology may use word prediction.</p> <p>Students with moderate to severe learning disabilities that prevent them from recalling, processing, or expressing written language may also use word prediction.</p>	
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FAQ

Q: What actions need to be taken if a student's IEP is not updated prior to the first administration?

A: IEPs should be amended to include MAST accommodations prior to the first administration if possible. If a student's IEP is unable to be updated before MAST testing, please use the 2024–2025 MAST Accommodations Crosswalk to enter PNP settings in Kite.