



Slide 1. The Dynamic Learning Maps[®], or DLM[®], Alternate Assessment System provides individual student score reports for students who completed DLM alternate assessments during the previous school year. This presentation explains how to interpret and use the reports.

Slide 2. The learning objectives are to understand the contents of DLM Individual Student Score Reports and to learn how to use them for planning instruction, developing IEPs, and communicating with parents and others.

Slide 3. The score report includes two parts. The Performance Profile provides broad information about what the student knows and can do in the subject overall. The Learning Profile provides specific information about the skills the student mastered.

Slide 4. The score reports show results for student mastery of linkage levels for Essential Elements. Essential Elements are grade-specific expectations for students taking DLM assessments. Linkage levels are skills for each Essential Element that describe the path of learning to reach each grade-level target.

Slide 5. This is an example of the first page of a Performance Profile for a student who took the grade 5 mathematics assessment.

Slide 6. In the section titled “Overall Results,” the first sentence explains the total number of skills and Essential Elements on which the student was assessed. On the score reports, linkage levels are called “skills.” Mathematics Essential Elements have five linkage levels. This example indicates seven Essential Elements were expected, times five linkage levels, for a total of 35 possible skills.

Slide 7. The second sentence gives the number of skills the student mastered in the subject. In this example, the student mastered 16 skills. The total skills mastered is calculated by adding the number of skills the student mastered for the subject across all assessed Essential Elements, which are shown in the Learning Profile. Thinking of this overall performance as a percent correct (16 out of 35) is tempting, but not quite accurate because students do not take testlets at every linkage level for each Essential Element. Therefore, this student was not necessarily assessed on all 35 skills.

Slide 8. Performance level information is included next in the Performance Profile. The total number of skills mastered in a grade and subject is used to describe each student’s overall performance using one of four performance levels.

Slide 9. This student's mastery of 16 skills is approaching the target.

Slide 10. The next section summarizes the performance for groups of related Essential Elements. In this example, the report shows summaries by claim. Depending on the subject, the report may show summaries for areas or domains instead.

These claim bar charts can help identify broad areas of strength and need within the subject.

For each claim, the report shows the percentage of skills mastered. Under the blue bar, a note states the number of skills mastered and the total number of skills available within that claim. Students are not assessed on all skills for all Essential Elements, but, rather, at a particular skill level for each Essential Element. Therefore, the percentages for the bar charts are not expected to be 100%.

In some cases, students may be assessed on and may master, more skills than required. In such cases, the bar charts will show 100%, and the text will state the student mastered more skills than required.

Slide 11. The Learning Profile provides information about skill mastery that underlies the overall subject information in the Performance Profile.

Slide 12. The text indicates the number of Essential Elements and claims tested. This student was assessed on seven Essential Elements, which accounted for four out of four claims expected to be assessed for grade 5 mathematics.

Slide 13. Each row in the table contains information for one Essential Element. The second column lists the Essential Element code. This page displays information for three Essential Elements. To the left of the Essential Element code is the claim that the Essential Element falls within. Depending on the subject, the first column may instead be Area or Domain.

Slide 14. The numbers across the top of the columns show the levels of skill mastery for the Essential Elements. Again, skills are called linkage levels during the assessment, and the numbers correspond to the linkage levels. For example, level one is the Initial Precursor. The grade-level expectation, or Target, for an Essential Element, is indicated with a target icon. The other skills are on the learning path leading up to the Target skill and extending beyond the Target skill. Again, students are not assessed at every linkage level.

Slide 15. Each box to the right of each Essential Element code is a skill. DLM results are based on student mastery of specific skills.

Slide 16. At the bottom of each page is a key that explains the skill shading. The shading is in color and will appear differently when printed in grayscale.

Green shading indicates a mastered skill. In this example, the student mastered two skills for the first and third Essential Elements listed.

Blue shading indicates the student was assessed on an Essential Element but did not master any skills, as shown for the last Essential Element.

Gray shading is used to indicate any Essential Element on which the student was not assessed. In this example, the student was not assessed on the second, fourth, or fifth Essential Elements.

Slide 17. Students are not assessed on all the skills for an Essential Element.

However, when a student masters a level, they are assumed to have mastered any levels leading to it. For example, this student mastered level two for two Essential Elements, so they are assumed to have also mastered level one skills.

Slide 18. Reports can be read by row, column, or claim. Reading the table by row spotlights the skills the student mastered for a particular Essential Element and any higher skills the student might learn.

Slide 19. Reading the table vertically shows how a student performed at a particular level of mastery across Essential Elements.

Slide 20. The claim information can be used to understand broader trends in student performance. The skills mastered for Essential Elements within the same claim relate back to the claim bar charts shown in the Performance Profile. In this case, four Essential Elements were offered for Claim 3. The student was assessed on two Essential Elements for Claim 3 and mastered level two for the first one but did not master any skills for the other. This relates back to the Performance Profile bar chart showing 2 of 10 skills, or 20%, mastered for Claim M.C3.

Slide 21. For additional resources, visit the DLM website, as referenced at the bottom of the score report.

Slide 22. DLM results can be used in several ways.

Slide 23. One use is developing and monitoring IEPs. The claims on the Performance Profile may help describe the student's present levels of performance and may help inform claims for student goals.

Slide 24. The results can be used to plan for instruction in the next grade's Essential Elements. Compare the skills in the Learning Profile, and especially the Target level, with the Essential Elements for the next grade. Additionally, the claims on the Performance Profile can identify areas of strength and need. The Learning Profile can help determine why claims were identified as needs—that is, whether Essential Elements were not assessed, or the student's performance was low.

Slide 25. The reports may also be used to communicate with parents or guardians. Use the Performance Profile to explain the student's overall performance. Explain that performance is based on expectations for students who are eligible for DLM alternate assessments. Use the claims to describe the student's strengths.

Slide 26. After showing parents the Performance Profile, use the Learning Profile to show specific skills for the claims. The Learning Profile may help expand parents' understanding of students' academic skills and the grade-level expectations at the Target level for each Essential Element.

Slide 27. The score reports may also be used to communicate with other educators, such as when a student transfers schools or classrooms or works with multiple teachers. The score reports provide a common and consistent language among educators so that the student receives the needed support and services.

Slide 28. Some cautions when interpreting reports are listed here.

First, results show information based on how the student answered items on the DLM assessment, which may be different from the student's classroom performance.

Second, results are based on estimates using a limited number of items, and students may show their understanding of these academic skills differently when assessed in other ways.

Third, remember that results are intended to inform instructional decision-making. They are not intended for decisions about retention, placement, or disability eligibility.

Finally, the reports use vocabulary specific to the DLM Alternate Assessment System. Some states use different terms. Especially when talking to parents, be ready to explain how the language in the report translates to the state's vocabulary.

Slide 29. In summary, DLM individual student score reports are designed to communicate what students know and can do. The score reports provide information that can be used to guide instructional decisions and IEP development as well as communicate student results with parents and other educators.