

Participation Guidelines for Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

Attached are two documents from Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). These are two consortia of States that have come together to develop new alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAASs) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These consortia of States received funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support the States' efforts. As of spring 2016, the following States are administering the assessments developed by one of the two consortia:

- **DLM**¹: Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin
- **NCSC**²: Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, DC, Idaho, ~~Indiana~~, Maine, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee

Other States are administering a State-specific AA-AAAS outside of the two consortia, including: Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, ~~New Mexico~~, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, Virginia, and Wyoming.

The excerpts on the following pages provide information about the participation guidelines each consortium defined for the 2014-2015 school year. The full participation guidelines can be found at:

- http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/dlm_participation_guidelines.pdf
- http://www.ncscpartners.org/Media/Default/PDFs/Resources/NCSC-Participation-Guidance_Rev_Nov_2014.pdf

Both sets of guidelines reference the term “adaptive behavior” and define it broadly. The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities also defined this term in a manner that is well-known in the field, so it is also included on the subsequent pages.

¹ Washington implements a State-specific portfolio assessment based on DLM essential elements.

Dynamic Learning Maps™ Participation Guidelines

Participation in the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment requires a yes answer to each of the following questions. Each state participating in the Dynamic Learning Maps will determine whether its IEP teams must select alternate assessment as the appropriate option for all subjects or whether teams may decide a student's participation separately for each subject.

Check your state's DLM webpage to see if your state provided customized participation guidelines.

Participation Criterion	Participation Criterion Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No)? Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability	<p>Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.</p> <p><i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i></p>	Yes / No
2. The student is primarily being instructed (or taught) using the DLM Essential Elements as content standards	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level DLM Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.	<p>The student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature and b. uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings. 	Yes / No

The following are not allowable (or acceptable) considerations for determining participation in the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment.

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated student's disruptive behavior
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system
12. Administrator decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process

NCSC Participation Guidelines

The criteria for participation in the [NCSC Alternate Assessment] reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate in this assessment. Thus, a student who participates in the [NCSC Alternate Assessment] participates in this assessment for all content areas.

In addition, evidence for the decision for participating in the [NCSC Alternate Assessment] is **Not Based** on:

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education services
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated disruptive behavior
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system
12. Administrator decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No)? Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability	Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. <i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i>	Yes / No
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level CCSS and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	Yes / No

The student may participate in the [NCSC Alternate Assessment] if all responses above are marked Yes.

The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities defines “adaptive behavior” as follows, as found on its website as of March 16, 2016 (see <https://aidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.VumwkTdf272>).

Adaptive Behavior

Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives.

- Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction.
- Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.
- Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone.

Standardized tests can also determine limitations in adaptive behavior.