

Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Flowchart

For student with a current IEP and enrolled in grades 3-8 or 10

Consider These:

Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test, Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment, individual/group - administered achievement tests, and district-wide alternate assessments, and English language learner (ELL) language assessments, if applicable

Data from scientific research-based interventions, progress monitoring data, results of informal assessments, teacher collected data and checklists

Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials, work samples from school- or community-based instruction

Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post-school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan, if applicable

1. Do the student's records indicate a disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior?*

*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

Yes ↓

2. Would the student be appropriately challenged by goals and instruction linked to the enrolled grade-level Indiana Content Connectors and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging?

Yes ↓

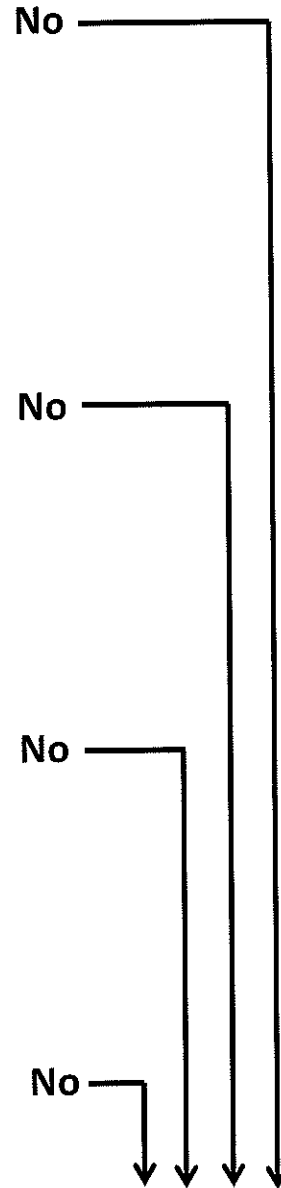
3a. Does the student require extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature?

Yes ↓

3b. Does the student use substantially adapted materials with individualized methods of accessing information in alternate ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across academic content?

Yes ↓

Student may participate in the Indiana Alternate Assessment



Student must participate in the Indiana General State Assessment with or without accommodations.

Criteria for Determining Participation in the Alternate Assessment in Lieu of the General Education Assessment (Participation Guidelines)

The SEA must establish and ensure implementation of clear and appropriate guidelines for Case Conference Committees to apply in determining when a child's significant cognitive disability justifies assessment based on alternate achievement standards 34 CFR 200.6 (a)(2)(iii)(A)(1)

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) determines, based on the criteria provided and the student's individual and unique needs, whether a student with disabilities will participate in general education assessments with or without testing accommodations, or in the alternate assessment with or without accommodations. The alternate assessment is based on alternate achievement standards/content connectors. The CCC must be informed that the decision to participate in an alternate assessment means the student will have limited or modified exposure to the grade level standards that may have a significant impact on the student's academic outcomes and post-secondary opportunities.

When the CCC concurs that all three of the criteria below accurately characterize a student's current educational situation, an alternate assessment should be used to provide a meaningful evaluation of the student's current academic achievement.

Participation Criterion	Participation Criterion Descriptors
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability.	Review of student record indicates a disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
2. The student is primarily being instructed using the Indiana Content Connectors.	Goals listed in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level Indiana Content Connectors and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary 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.

Decisions for determining participation in the alternate assessment **must not** be based solely on any of the following:

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 distress
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/Augmentative and Alternative Communication) to participate in assessment process

In a given year, a student must participate in either all general education assessments or all alternate assessments, not parts of both.

Participation Decision for Indiana's Alternate Assessment (ISTAR) Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***Who decides that a student should participate in the Indiana Alternate Assessment?***

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) makes the determination of how a student will participate in statewide assessments. The CCC must follow the Indiana Participation Guidelines if they are to assign a student to participate in the Indiana Alternate Assessment. No one member of the CCC makes this decision. Parents, teachers, and administrators make the decision based on evidence and adherence to the Indiana *Criteria for Determining Participation in the Alternate Assessment in Lieu of the General Education Assessment*.

2. ***How do we know that a student has a "significant cognitive disability"?***

Most students with significant cognitive disabilities have intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism, but not all do. And, not all students with these disabilities are considered to have a "significant cognitive disability." Students demonstrating academic deficits or difficulties due to learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, and emotional-behavioral disabilities do not qualify for participation in the Indiana Alternate Assessment. Performing 3-4 grade levels below peers without disabilities is not, by itself, evidence of a significant cognitive disability. Academic deficits or difficulties alone do not indicate that a student has a significant cognitive disability. Further, a significant cognitive disability will be pervasive, affecting student learning across content areas and in social and community settings.

Students with autism or intellectual disabilities should be carefully considered for the Indiana Alternate Assessment, but they should not automatically be assigned to the alternate assessment based on their identified disability category. Not all students with autism or intellectual disabilities have a significant cognitive disability. Many students eligible to receive special education and related services under these categorical labels are able to participate in general assessments, with accommodations.

Students receiving special education services who are identified as having orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries, do not necessarily have a significant cognitive disability. Determinations for student participation in statewide assessments must be evidence-centered and made individually for each student by the CCC.

Students demonstrating mild to moderate cognitive disabilities may be more appropriately placed in the general assessment system with accommodations. Anticipated or past low achievement on the general assessment does not mean the student should be taking the Indiana Alternate Assessment.

7. *Is it possible that a decision to participate in an AA-AAS could change as a student gets older?*

Participating in the Indiana Alternate Assessment requires that the student has a significant cognitive impairment and interacts with content that has been significantly modified from that which is provided to the student's typically developing peers. Even though students with significant cognitive disabilities often are identified early, prior to starting school, they may be able to participate in the general assessment during their elementary grades. The CCC should be especially cautious about assigning students with disabilities to an alternate assessment in their early school years. When the level of support needed for the student to participate in the breadth of the Indiana Academic Standards and the general assessment increases, the committee may determine that participation in the Indiana Alternate Assessment is appropriate.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to continue to need supports to live as independently as possible after high school and throughout their adult lives. Students who did not need early intervention services, or who are unlikely to need substantial daily supports in their adult lives, probably do not have a significant cognitive disability and would not be appropriately placed in the Indiana Alternate Assessment.

Available Website Resources:

Indiana Department of Education, Office of Student Assessment: www.doe.in.gov/assessment

ISTAR Alternate Assessment: www.doe.in.gov/assessment/alternate-assessments

Indiana Department of Education, Office of Special Education: www.doe.in.gov/specialed

Project SUCCESS: www.projectsuccessindiana.com

PATINS: www.patinsproject.com

Assessment Vocabulary

English/Language Arts – Grades 3-8 and 10

The purpose of the *Assessment Vocabulary* list is to highlight vocabulary used in assessment items that teachers can use to prepare students for ISTAR as well as to create classroom assessments. While this list is not inclusive of all vocabulary that may appear on the assessment, it is representative of words students may frequently encounter. Language from the academic standards (e.g., summary, theme, claim) is also used in assessment items. Instructional and Assessment Guidance with Content Connections is located here: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/alternate-assessments>. For a list of academic standard language, please see the Indiana Academic Standards 2014 English/Language Arts Glossary located here: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/standards/glossary-grades-k-12-6-4-14-sheet1.pdf>

Key Words	Examples of Use
Best	Which sentence BEST describes how Sue is feeling?
Blank	Which word goes in the blank ?
Choose	Choose the word that BEST completes the sentence.
Completes	Which word completes the sentence?
Correctly	Which sentence is written correctly ?
Detail	Which detail shows that Bill was excited about the contest?
Passage	What is the main idea of the passage ?
Section	What is the section "A Good Idea" about?
Story	What happens FIRST in the story ?
Support(s)	Which detail supports the claim that people should wear bicycle helmets?