DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

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Director of Alternate Assessment
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Be mindful of confidentiality.

ADE representatives are unable to determine eligibility – Federal Law specifically gives this responsibility to IEP teams.
MSAA

MSAA is designed to assess students with significant cognitive disabilities.

This Alternate Assessment measures academic content that is aligned to and derived from the state’s content standards.

This test contains many built-in supports that allow students to take the test and communicate what they know and can do as independently as possible.

MSAA is administered in the areas of ELA and Mathematics in Grades 3-8 and 11.
MSAA AND THE 1% CAP

New regulation from ESSA changed the 1% Cap calculation

Calculating the percentage is based on the number of students participating in MSAA

Alternate Assessment Test Coordinators are responsible for monitoring participation percentage and training IEP teams on determining eligibility.
INFORMATION FROM NCEO

NCLB regulation in 2003 allowed for up to 1% of total tested population counted as proficient in Title I Accountability.

Participation data from 2000-2001 Biennial Performance Reports justify that figure:
- 21 states reported less than 0.5% of total population.
- 14 states reported between 0.5% and 1.0%.
(Only 38 states had sufficient data to report numbers.)
ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

1. Does the student have a significant cognitive disability? What evidence supports this?

2. Is the student learning linked to grade level state content standards?

3. Does the student require extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-appropriate curriculum?
SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITY

Evidence of a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior

Use results from:
- Cognitive Testing
- Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
- Achievement Tests
- Classroom or District Assessments
- English Language Assessments, if applicable
INSTRUCTION IN STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

Instruction is based on Arizona Content Standards and/or Core Content Connectors

Standards are taken from the student’s grade level

IEP goals and objectives align to State Standards

Teacher is using researched-based instructional strategies and interventions
INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION AND SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORTS

School and community based instruction

Documented instructional needs and supports for the student to make measurable academic gains

Present levels of academic and functional performance indicate the need for extensive direct individualized instruction
CONSIDERATIONS NOT TO USE

- Disability category
- Attendance/absences
- Language/social/cultural differences
- Services received
- Setting/placement
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- Anticipated results of general assessment
- Low reading/achievement level
- Disruptive behavior
- Impact on accountability
- Administrator decision
- Anticipated emotional duress
- Need for accommodations
COMMON QUESTIONS

Is my student eligible for alternate assessment?

What are the cutoff scores for eligibility?

What do I do with students who transfer from out of state?

Can I opt out of testing?

How late in the year can students be added to the alternate assessment system?
## WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?
### MSAA DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Disability</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Disabilities</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Impairment</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disability</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairment, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Deaf, Deaf/Blind</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Disability</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Language Impairment</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISABILITY CATEGORIES AND ELIGIBILITY

ID Categories - indicates a cognitive disability

Autism - to be eligible, the student should have consistently low scores on cognitive and academic testing as well as low scores on adaptive rating scales

SLD - indicates that there is NOT a significant cognitive disability

SLI - does not indicate low cognitive, academic, or adaptive scores
MORE CATEGORIES

Multiple – depending on individual student needs, these students may meet eligibility criteria.

TBI – again, depends on individual needs.

ED – behavioral needs are not part of eligibility criteria.

OHI – often with an ADHD diagnosis.

No special education category guarantees eligibility for alternate assessment.
PRACTICE

The following examples are not meant to be a quiz to test your knowledge of eligibility.

These scenarios are designed to help identify the discussions needed during eligibility determination.

If you are watching the recorded webinar, be prepared to pause the recording to have discussions with your group or to jot down your thoughts when considering eligibility.

These examples are not based on real students. Likeness to any student is purely coincidental.
EXAMPLE – 1

A student qualifies for alternate assessment in a different state. The student is placed in a similar setting as in the previous state. The student moved during the testing window. The student has a current IEP that is due for annual revision in September.
EXAMPLE – 2

The student’s special education category is SLD. The student is performing at least 2 grade levels below his current grade in math. The student displays aggressive behavior when presented with difficult academic tasks. Secondary disability is SLI.
EXAMPLE – 3

The MET team completed an initial evaluation in February for a student in Grade 4.

- The student qualifies for special education with an Autism category.
- The student will be receiving special education services in the resource room.
- Parents are supportive of the student taking alternate assessments.
EXAMPLE – 4

The Grade 8 student has a special education disability category of MOID.

The student has delays in all academic areas as well as adaptive, communication, and social skills.

The student participates in community based learning.

The student has taken alternate assessments for 5 years.
EXAMPLE – 5

The student took AzMERIT last year (in Grade 3) and did not do well.

The student received a Level 1 on both AzMERIT ELA and Math.

The student has IEP goals and objectives for Math, ELA, speech, OT, and social skills.

Last year, the student attempted to answer only a few questions before saying she was finished with the test.
QUESTION AND COMMENT SESSION
ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT UNIT

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