

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT



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DEPUTY ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT ASSESSMENT

AGENDA

Understand alternate assessment eligibility criteria

Practice applying eligibility criteria

Know how to document alternate assessment eligibility participation decisions

DISCLAIMERS

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

Practice and examples are based on fictional characters and are not intended to represent any specific student.

MSAA

- State assessments provide an opportunity for students to show what they know and can do in relation to grade level standards
- Alternate assessments measure academic content that is aligned to and derived from the state's content standards.
- MSAA is designed to assess students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- MSAA is administered in the areas of ELA and Mathematics in Grades 3-8 and 11 and Science in Grades 5, 8, and 11.

ALT ELPA SCREENER AND SUMMATIVE

- Alternate assessment for AZELLA placement and reassessment
- Based on Alternate English Language Proficiency Standards
- Determines English language proficiency based on language acquisition expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
- Administered in K-12

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

One set of criteria

Federal requirement: criteria developed by state-cannot be changed by the LEA

Annual decision by entire IEP team

Determination by November 30 each year for participation in the spring

Except Alt ELPA Screener – determination must be made within testing timelines

Use Alternate Assessment Eligibility Form:

<https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2024/08/2024-25%20Alternate%20Assessment%20Participation%20Guidelines%20and%20Eligibility%20Determination.pdf>

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

1. Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?
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

Specific cut off scores have not been set.

INSTRUCTION IN STATE CONTENT STANDARDS

Instruction is based on Arizona Content Standards and/or Core Content Connectors and English language proficiency standards if applicable

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

SPECIAL EDUCATION CATEGORIES (MSAA)

2024

ID: 40%

Autism: 40%

Multiple: 12%

OHI: 2%

SLD: 2%

ED: <2%

OI/HI/VI: <2%

SLI: <2%

TBI: <2%

Other: 3%

2025

ID: 38%

Autism: 43%

Multiple: 12%

OHI: 3%

SLD: <2%

ED: <2%

OI/HI/VI: <2%

SLI: <2%

TBI: <2%

Other: <2%

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 behavior 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 – ADHD or other health issue?

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.

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

QUESTIONS TO ASK

What evidence supports eligibility?

What evidence does not support eligibility?

What additional information is needed?

EXAMPLE 1

Grade 7

Primary special education category of autism

Cognitive and academic scores in the high 70s

No adaptive scores

IEP goals around adding with regrouping and decoding multisyllable words

EXAMPLE 2

Grade 2

The student's special education category is Developmental Delay.

The reading goals are around main idea and math goals are around place value.

The student displays aggressive behavior when presented with difficult academic tasks.

EXAMPLE 3

Grade 5

The MET team completed an initial evaluation for a student in Grade 5.

The student qualifies for special education with a Specific learning disability and a secondary disability of hearing impairment.

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 10 student has a primary special education disability category of MOID and a secondary category of SLI.

The student has cognitive, academic, and adaptive scores in the low 60's.

The student participates in community-based learning in addition to the modified grade level curriculum.

The student has taken alternate assessments for 6 years.

EXAMPLE 5

The student took AASA last year in Grade 3 and did not do well.

The student has IEP goals and objectives for reading and OT only.

The student is an English Learner.

The district is over 1% participation.

WHAT GOES IN THESE EVIDENCE BOXES?

The (source) shows that (results), indicating (application to criteria).

SCHOOL YEAR

Parent Notification

Alternate Assessment Participation

Following IEP team review of participation guidelines, the student is eligible for and will participate in the following assessments:

MSAA ELA, Mathematics, and Science

- ☐ Yes School year _____ (List the current school year if this IEP meeting is on or before November 30. List the following school year if the IEP meeting is on or after December 1.)
- ☐ No (The student will participate in statewide achievement tests)

Alt ELPA

- ☐ Yes, the student is eligible for alternate assessments and has been determined an English learner. (The student must also take MSAA if enrolled in a tested grade.)
- ☐ No, the student will participate in AZELLA.
- ☐ No, the student is not an English learner.

Potential Consequences

Are there any effects or local policies that would preclude completion requirements for a regular high school diploma for the student participating in testing?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, explain:

SIGNATURES AND AGREEMENT BOXES

This IEP team has determined the student is eligible to participate in alternate assessments as indicated above. Agreement

Parent(s)/Guardian

Date:

☐

Signature:

Position:

Date:

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Signature:

Position:

Date:

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Signature:

Position:

Date:

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QUESTIONS? - CONTACT ALTERNATEASSESSMENT@AZED.GOV

