

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Students must participate in the state assessment through one of the following:

- the regular state assessment for the student's grade, without accommodations,
- the regular state assessment for the student's grade, with accommodations, or
- the alternate state assessment for the student's grade.

Who is eligible to take the Alternate Assessment of Illinois Learning Standards Aligned to the Essential Elements?

The alternate assessment is intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These students have intellectual functioning well below average (typically associated with an IQ below 55) that exists concurrently with impairments or deficits in adaptive functioning (i.e. communications, self-care, home living, social/interpersonal skills, use of community resources, self-directions, functional academic skills, work leisure, health and safety). The reference to "typically associated with an IQ of below 55" is to help distinguish between students with cognitive disabilities and significant cognitive disabilities from students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This means that many students with cognitive disabilities will not qualify for the Alternate Assessment of the Illinois Learning Standards Aligned to the Essential Elements. By default, they must take our regular state assessment with or without accommodations. The inclusion of the words "typically associated with" allows for some district/ school flexibility. It is by no means an absolute requirement.

Students taking the alternate assessment may be identified under a variety of educational categories, including cognitive disabilities, autism, multiple disabilities, and traumatic brain injury.

Who is not eligible for consideration to take the Alternate Assessment of the Illinois Learning Standards Aligned to the Essential Elements?

Students who strictly have academic, language, social/emotional, physical or sensory disabilities without co-occurring intellectual functioning well below average.

As determined by the IEP, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may take the alternate assessment if participation in the state's regular assessments is not appropriate, even with accommodations, and they meet all of the criteria below.

Participation Criteria	Participation Criterion Descriptors	Yes	No	Reason(s) for Yes or No Response
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>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. The student's instruction is linked to grade level content and reflective of the Illinois Learning Standards Aligned to the Essential Elements.	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level Illinois Learning Standards Aligned to the Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable 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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

IMPORTANT NOTE: The IEP team's decision that a student will take the Alternate Assessment Aligned to Alternate Standards cannot be based on the following factors; however, the existence of one or more of these factors does not prevent a student from taking the Alternate Assessment Aligned to Alternate Standards if they meet the other participation criteria:

- The student's achievement is significantly below that of same-age peers, even when compared to other students with disabilities.
- The student has an IEP.
- The student has a certain special education eligibility label or receives certain services.
- The student has excessive or extensive absences.
- The student has social, cultural, or economic differences.
- The student has English Language Learner (ELL) status.
- The student may not perform well on the regular assessment.