

What are the criteria for participation in a ND Alternate Assessment?

The North Dakota Alternate Assessment 1 (NDAA 1) criteria are as follows:

1. The student's cognitive ability and adaptive behavior prevent completion of part or all of the general education curriculum; AND
2. The student requires extensive, frequent and individualized instruction in multiple settings in order to maintain or generalize skills necessary to function in school, at home, in the community, and during recreation/leisure and vocational activities; AND
3. The students' curriculum is so individualized that neither the general assessment nor the NDAA2 will reflect what the student is being taught.

If all three criteria apply to the student and the NDSA (even with appropriate accommodations) will not provide an accurate measure of what the student knows and is able to do because his/her curriculum is so different, then the IEP Team needs to consider the NDAA 1.

The North Dakota Alternate Assessment 2 (NDAA 2) criteria are as follows:

1. The student has persistent learning difficulties that prohibit him/her from making grade-level academic achievement in the time frame covered by the annual IEP; AND
2. The student's participates in the general education curriculum with ongoing supports and services from special education; AND
3. The student's curriculum is so individualized that the general assessment will not reflect what the student is being taught (even with accommodations).

If all three criteria apply to the student and the NDSA (even with appropriate accommodations) will not provide an accurate measure of what the student knows and is able to do because his/her

curriculum is so different, then the IEP Team needs to consider the NDAA 2.

What accommodations can be used with the state assessment?

The ND State Assessment provides for the use of accommodations during test administration. The NDSA Test Coordinator's Manual – Appendix E. presents and describes approved accommodations as well as those test practices that are not permitted. This manual is updated yearly and is available on the web @:
<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/manual09.pdf>

The NDAA 1 uses no accommodations as this test is, by its very nature, an accommodation. Accommodations are allowed on the NDAA 2. No accommodation should be used unless it is documented in the student's Individualized Education Program and used during general instructions. All accommodations must be allowable as indicated in

In other words, an assessment accommodation should be used if it is based on the student's need. If an accommodation is documented in a student's IEP, is used in the student's education, and is an allowable accommodation, it should be used in assessing that child. This is not to provide an advantage for that student, but to allow equal access to achievement measurements.

Who can I talk to if I have more questions about the North Dakota State Assessment system?

Your local Special Education Unit Office:

(701) _____

ND Department of Public Instruction
Office of Standards and Achievement
(701) 591-0232
TDD: (701) 328-4770
Website: <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/>

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Students with Disabilities and the North Dakota State Assessments

Information for Parents and Educators



2010-2012

Department of Public Instruction
Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent
Standards and Achievement Division
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201
Bismarck ND 58505-0440



The Reauthorizations of the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** of 1997 and 2004 require that all students with disabilities be included in statewide accountability systems. The reauthorization of **Title I legislation (Public Law 107-110), the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**, further reinforces the need to include all students in accountability systems and advances the need for higher levels of academic performance. North Dakota complies with IDEA and No Child Left Behind requirements, which include standards-based reform and greater accountability for all students.

The purpose of this brochure is to answer commonly asked questions and to provide parents with an understanding of how students with disabilities are included in State-wide accountability systems.

What is the purpose of State Assessments?

State assessments are given for the purpose of measuring school accountability. Individual test results provide information to parents and teachers about what the child knows, and is able to do, in reference to the State Content Standards. These standards are levels of expectations for what all North Dakota students should know and be able to do.

Who needs to participate in State Assessments?

All students must be included. Public Law 105-17, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (IDEA '97), requires that each state establish goals for the performance of students with disabilities that are consistent, to the maximum extent appropriate, with the goals and standards for all students established by each state.

Title I legislation in the No Child Left Behind Act mandates that all students be included in accountability systems and that all students reach the level of proficient by the year 2014. Therefore, all students must be included in state assessments with the provision of appropriate and necessary accommodations.

What assessments are included?

North Dakota requires achievement testing through the state assessment system for all grade levels mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act and the ND State Legislature. North Dakota State Assessments are required in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 11. All North Dakota Schools are required to give the State Assessment at these grade levels on an annual basis.

The North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) is the test that is administered with standard procedures to most students. In addition, the state assessment system includes two *Alternate Assessments* for students whose disability is such that the *NDSA* would not measure what the student is being taught even with the appropriate accommodations.

North Dakota provides the following options for participation in the State Assessment. These are:

1. The *NDSA* in the standard manner; or
2. The *NDSA* with approved accommodations; or
3. The *North Dakota Alternate Assessment 1 (NDAA 1)*; or
4. The *North Dakota Alternate Assessment 2 (NDAA 2)* in the standard manner; or
5. The *North Dakota Alternate Assessment (NDAA 2)* with approved accommodations; or
6. A combination of the above options in different subject areas.

Who decides how a student with disabilities is involved in state assessments?

The IEP team decides. Discussion about state assessments must take place at your child's IEP meeting with you, the parent(s), present. The team must document why one assessment option is appropriate and why others are not. Decisions must be documented in the IEP regarding accommodations the student needs for success in the classroom as well as during assessment.

How does the IEP team make the decisions on which assessment option is right for the student?

Several questions need to be asked in order to make an informed decision about what assessment needs to be given or what accommodations need to be provided for a student with disabilities to successfully demonstrate what he/she knows and is able to do.

An *IEP Flowchart for Decisions on Assessment Options* is available @:

<http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/resource/alternate/index.shtml>

Your child's case manager is encouraged to use this document at the IEP planning meeting to assist the team in making the most informed decisions on state assessment options.

What is the North Dakota Alternate Assessment?

There are two Alternate Assessments available now in North Dakota. Both were developed by the ND Department of Public Instruction in conjunction with teachers from across the state of North Dakota. Both are based on the North Dakota Content and Achievement Standards and are intended to measure student performance against those standards in the same grades and content areas required by federal and state law.

The **NDAA 1** is intended for students with severe cognitive disabilities who will be assessed against alternate achievement standards. It includes teacher selected items and prescribed anchor items that require data on student performance and secondary indicators based on best practices for students with severe disabilities.

The **NDAA 2** is intended for students with persistent learning difficulties who will be assessed at grade level against modified achievement standards. It is a 50 item per subject multiple choice assessment.

All students who participate in alternate assessments must be served under IDEA and have current Individualized Education Program (IEPs) plans.