

Alternate Assessment Participation

Participation in Assessment

Federal law includes all students in assessment and accountability. Thus, all students receiving special education services are included in all state and district-wide assessments. The IEP team determines how students receiving special education services participate in assessments, not whether they participate. The majority of students receiving special education services take general state assessments. However, if a student receiving special education has also been designated as a Student with the Most Significant Cognitive Disability (SMSCD), then that student may take alternate state assessments. This document guides IEP teams in making a decision for alternate assessment.

State assessments are aligned to the state standards. The IEP team (which includes parents and possibly students as defined by 34 CFR 300.321) determines which standards and assessments are applicable to the student's continued educational progress at their level of challenge. IEP teams consider whether a student should receive instruction in the general education academic content aligned with the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS) or instruction in academic content aligned with the Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES), recognizing that each student's educational program is based on their unique needs. The alternate achievement standard descriptors on the WYES are aligned to the same grade-level content standards, but may represent less breadth, depth, and complexity from the WYCPS. The IEP team also determines classroom supports and instructional accommodations as well as accommodations in classroom assessment and state summative assessments. If taught with the WYCPS, with/without classroom accommodations, then the student takes the general summative assessment with/without accommodations determined by the IEP team. If taught with the WYES and derivations of the WYES, then the IEP team must consider if the student is eligible to take Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS). Wyoming's alternate assessment is called the WY-ALT which is aligned to the Wyoming Extended Standards. This must be documented in the IEP, including accommodations for assessments. IEP teams should consider that participation in the alternate assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma.

To determine participation in alternate assessments, the IEP team must designate a student as a "student with the most significant cognitive disability" (SMSCD). This determination is made by the IEP team using the guidance in this document. The IEP team determines if a student has documented evidence of a cognitive disability that significantly impacts a student's adaptive behavior, academic skills, and intellectual functioning. It is important to note, some students who have a cognitive disability WILL NOT require instruction based on WYES and WILL NOT take an AA-AAAS. It is also important to note that a student with an eligible category of cognitive disability per Wyoming's Chapter 7 rules is not the same as determining that a student is designated as SMSCD for participation in alternate assessments. Only those students with unique and complex needs that significantly impact adaptive skills, academic skills, and intellectual functioning should take alternate assessments. This is an individualized determination made by the IEP team using the designation definition of SMSCD and participation criteria. A flowchart is included below for educators to gather evidence and determine if the participation checklist should be used in the IEP team meeting.

Alternate Assessment Decision Making Flowchart

The student is eligible to participate in alternate assessments if all responses below are YES.

Does the student have an identified disability and a need for special education services? **NO** → Student participates in general assessments.

YES ↓

Does the student have unique and complex needs with impaired cognitive abilities that significantly impact adaptive behavior, academic skills, and intellectual functioning? **NO** → Student participates in general assessment with or without accommodations.

Evidence indicates a cognitive disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning, all academic areas, and some adaptive behavior skills. Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives.

YES ↓

Does the student require extensive, direct individualized instruction using adapted materials and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains at their appropriate level of challenge? **NO**

Evidence indicates extensive modifications to the general curriculum (classroom objectives, materials, and/or activities) and substantially adapted materials with repeated step-by-step instruction to access and generalize skills across multiple content areas and multiple settings.

YES ↓

Does the student demonstrate learning from Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES) with substantial adjustments and supports to appropriately challenge the student? **NO**

Evidence indicates goals and instruction are linked to the enrolled grade level extended standards and the student shows measurable gains with individualized adaption of standards for complexity, depth, and breadth to address the students unique and complex needs.

YES ↓

Student may participate in the Alternate Assessments and IEP Team should discuss considerations on the Participation Checklist.

In addition, evidence for the decision is based on a broad review of evidence and **NOT** on any one of the following:

- Expected poor performance on the general assessment.
- Impact of scores on the accountability system.
- Administration and/or parent decision.
- Low reading achievement level.
- Anticipated emotional distress during general assessment.
- Anticipated disruptive behavior during general assessment.
- Need for accommodations to participate in the general assessment (i.e., assistive technology, AAC).
- Academic and other services the student receives.
- Educational environment or instructional setting.
- Percent of time receiving special education services.
- A specific disability category for special education eligibility.
- Poor attendance or extended absences.
- Native language, social, cultural, or economic difference.
- English Learner (EL) status.
- Graduation path (i.e., diploma or certificate of completion).

Participation in Alternate Assessment

Designation:

The IEP team determines participation in alternate assessments with/without accommodations annually using a variety of current assessment data from each content area: English language arts, writing, math, and science as well as diagnostic assessments of intellectual functioning and adaptive skills. After carefully reviewing assessment data each year, the IEP team may determine a designation of “student with the most significant cognitive disability” (SMSCD). SMSCD is a designation given to a small number of students to determine their participation in alternate assessments. This acknowledges the student’s unique and complex needs for participation in instruction, using derivations of the Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES), and the Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS) which is the WY-ALT in Wyoming. Determination is not solely based on cognitive performance nor based on disability categories, such as those used for eligibility for Special Education services.

An SMSCD determination should be based on unique and complex needs that significantly impact a student’s intellectual functioning, adaptive behavior, and academic skills. A student may have adaptive skills well below average in two or more areas: self-care, communication, self-direction, social skills, leisure, home or school living, functional academics, community use, work, and health and safety. An SMSCD would require substantial, constant supports and continued supervision for most activities of daily living including meal preparation, dressing, grooming, personal hygiene, and personal safety.

A student with an SMSCD determination would require extensive, individualized academic instruction for skill acquisition and measurable gains on the WYES at their level of challenge. A student would demonstrate limited understanding of academic and conceptual skills; writing, language, vocabulary, and grammar skills; and numerical concepts, such as quantity, time, and money.

IEP Team Considerations:

The following table outlines questions the IEP team considers each year when determining whether Alternate Assessments are appropriate, grouped under three criteria for designating SMSCD: 1) The student demonstrates cognitive abilities that significantly impact some adaptive behavior, all academic skills, and intellectual functioning; 2) The student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction using adapted materials and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains at their level of challenge; and 3) The student demonstrates learning from Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES) with substantial adjustments and supports to appropriately challenge the student.

Each consideration should be backed by extensive evidence across multiple school years and settings (e.g., home, school, work, community) that shows a clear picture of a most significant cognitive disability designation. Evidence may include evaluation team reports including diagnostic tests, IEP goals and objectives progress data, classroom informal and formal assessment data, work samples, parent reports, examples of curriculum, examples of lesson plans, adaptive behavior scores, cognitive scores, sensory and motor assessments, language assessments (including EL language assessments if applicable), as well as district and state assessment data.

In addition, the IEP team should consider that: 1) there is suitable instructional time prior to test administration, 2) any additional implications of this decision like graduation path and instructional settings were discussed thoroughly.

Exclusionary Factors:

The IEP team decides participation in alternate assessment based on a broad review of evidence and NOT on any one of the following:

- Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.
- Impact of scores on the accountability system.
- Administration and/or parent decision.
- Low reading level or low achievement level.
- Anticipated emotional distress during general assessment.
- Anticipated disruptive behavior during general assessment.
- Need for accommodations to participate in the general assessment (i.e., assistive technology, AAC).
- Academic and other services the student receives.
- Educational environment or instructional setting.
- Percent of time receiving special education services.
- A specific disability category for special education eligibility.
- Poor attendance or extended absences.
- Native language, social, cultural, or economic difference.
- English Learner (EL) status.
- Graduation path (i.e., diploma or certificate of completion).

Even though some of the above exclusionary factors may be relevant to the IEP, the IEP team should not use any of the above non-examples as designation of SMSCD for participation in Alternate Assessments. In addition, the Learner Characteristic Inventory (LCI) that an educator fills out with the IEP team before administering the alternate assessment, should not be used as a diagnostic device. The LCI is for demographic collection and assessment validity evaluation; it is not a decision maker for an SMSCD designation. SMSCD designation occurs when the IEP team demonstrates evidence to answer YES to all considerations below in the Alternate Assessment Participation Checklist.

Alternate Assessment Participation Checklist

| Criterion | Considerations | Yes | No |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Criterion #1 The student demonstrates cognitive abilities that significantly impact most adaptive behavior, all academic skills, and intellectual functioning. | Does evidence indicate unique and complex cognitive needs that significantly impact some adaptive skills, all academic skills, and intellectual functioning? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does evidence indicate limited understanding of academic and conceptual skills; writing, language, vocabulary, and grammar skills; and numerical concepts that impede progress of the general grade level core curriculum even with extensive accommodations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does evidence indicate substantial, constant supports and continued supervision in adaptive skills that are well below average in two or more areas: self-care, communication, self-direction, social skills, leisure, home or school living, functional academics, community use, work, health and safety? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Criterion #2 The student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction using adapted materials and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains at their level of challenge. | Does the student require extensive modifications to the general curriculum (classroom objectives, materials, and/or activities) and substantially adapted materials to access information? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does the student require extensive, repeated instruction presented in individualized, incremental steps, in multiple settings (e.g., home, school, work, community)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does the student require substantial assistance to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and transfer skills across academic content areas and across multiple settings (e.g., home, school, work, community)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does the student require substantial assistance to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings (e.g., school, workplace, community, and home)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Criterion #3 The student demonstrates learning from Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES) with substantial adjustments and supports to appropriately challenge the student. | Does the student currently show inability to achieve measurable gains on general grade-level standards (WYCPS) even with extensive accommodations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Does the student currently show ability to achieve measurable gains on content linked to the WYES, with adaptation of complexity, depth, and breadth to appropriately challenge the student? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Do student IEP goals and objectives link to the enrolled grade level extended standards for all assessed content areas (ELA and math, and/or writing and science)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| If Yes to ALL Ten Questions | If No to ANY |
|--|---|
| <p>At this time, the evidence supports potential student participation in alternate assessments.</p> <p>Instruction and alternate assessments will be based on the Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES).</p> <p>During the _____ School Year, Student will participate in:</p> <p>Student may participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate classroom/district assessments based on WYES with or without accommodations (K-12+). <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate State Summative Assessments with or without accommodations in IEP. (Gr. 3-10). <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate English Learner Assessment (K-12 if active EL status). <p>Note: With the passage of IDEA in 1997 and its reauthorization in 2004, it is required that both state and districts provide an alternate assessment for students who cannot participate in general state and district assessments.</p> | <p>At this time, the evidence supports student participation in general assessments.</p> <p>Instruction and general assessments will be based on grade-level Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS).</p> <p>During the _____ School Year, Student will participate in:</p> <p>Student will participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> General classroom/district assessments based on WYCPS with or without accommodations. (K-12). <input type="checkbox"/> General State Summative Assessment with or without accommodations. (Gr. 3-10). <input type="checkbox"/> General English Learner Assessment (K-12 if active EL status). <input type="checkbox"/> WorkKeys Assessments (optional Gr. 11-12) <input type="checkbox"/> ACT (11 grade). |

IEP Team Note Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation

- I understand this student will take the WY-ALT summative assessment in place of the WY-TOPP summative assessment.
- I understand that continued participation in the WY-ALT assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma.
- I understand this decision will be reviewed annually.

IEP Team District Representative's Signature _____ Date _____

IEP Team Note Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation

- I understand my child will take Alternate Assessments in place of general assessments.
- I understand that continued participation in the Alternate Summative Assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma.
- I understand this decision will be reviewed annually.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student WISER ID#: _____

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the 1.0 % Threshold?

The 1.0% Threshold relates to the federal accountability requirement that all students be included in state assessment. In the past (the 2003 Elementary and Secondary Education Act), the 1% was a “cap” on the number of children participating in alternate assessment who could be included in proficiency scores for accountability of all students assessed. Presently (since the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act), the 1% represents a threshold for participation in AA-AAAS at 1% of the total tested student population. It is not meant that IEP teams should not provide students with the alternate assessment when appropriate because they are concerned about going over the 1% threshold. Student needs always come first. The federal establishment of the 1% threshold is consistent with research showing that some students assigned to the alternate assessment more appropriately should have been assessed with the general assessment in which all other students participated. States monitor the 1% participation rate and districts may exceed the 1% threshold should they have more students designated as SMSCD taking the alternate assessment. If that happens, states must submit a waiver for going over the 1% in any of the assessed subject areas. (See [NCEO Brief #12-Strategies for Meeting the 1% State-level Cap on Participation in the Alternate Assessment](#)).

What are the implications of taking an alternate assessment?

Through the IEP process, parents and students must be informed of the potential implications, if any, for the child if s/he is taught with WYES and participates in AA-AAAS. Continued participation in the alternate assessment impacts student curricula, and may impact the number of credits earned, and thus, the possibility of earning a diploma. Eligibility for alternate assessment is evaluated annually. IEP teams should make sure that parents and students are aware of any implications for their child’s graduation options and thus post-secondary options by participation in alternate assessment. (34 C.F.R. 300.160)

How does the IEP team determine Alternate Assessment participation?

IEP team decisions must be based upon a broad review of evidence showcasing the unique abilities and complex needs of the student. Discussion should include the following:

- Student ability to access the general assessment with or without accommodations as an appropriate and meaningful measure of academic progress at their level of challenge.
- SMSCD Criterion #1: Student cognitive abilities are significantly below age expectations and extensively impact adaptive behavior, academic skills and intellectual functioning across all content areas and across multiple settings (e.g. home, school, work, community).
- SMSCD Criterion #2: Student instructional needs such as extensive, direct, individualized instruction and support to acquire, maintain, and generalize academic and adaptive skills to participate in home, school, work, and community environments.
- SMSCD Criterion #3: Student instructional program in which the student is receiving instruction on the general standards WYCPS and/or the extended standards, and/or content linked to the extended standards with substantial supports and modifications for breadth, depth and complexity.

The IEP team discusses whether the student may be designated as a student with the most significant cognitive disability (SMSCD) and thus participate in alternate assessments. Even though poor attendance, economic difference, or other factors (see above Exclusionary Factors) may be relevant to other areas of the IEP, for SMSCD determination, the team follows Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria. For example, the disability category of Cognitive Disability or Multiple Disabilities in themselves do not automatically qualify the student to receive instruction on the WYES and take the alternate assessment. Some disability categories

have eligibility criteria that may inherently exclude cognitive disability, like Emotional Disturbance, Speech and Language Impairment, and Specific Learning Disability. It is the existence of the three SMSCD criteria that allows the IEP team to consider alternate assessment participation. The number of students who meet the participation guidelines is not limited nor can it be administratively determined. Rather, the IEP team determines how students receive instruction based on the general standards and/or the extended standards and how students are assessed.

What alternate assessments are available for English Learner students (ELs) with a disability?

The ALT-ACCESS for ELLs is an assessment of English language proficiency (ELP) for students in grades K-12 who are classified as English learners (ELs) and are designated as SMSCD. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA 2015) requires that all students identified as ELs be assessed annually for English language proficiency, including students who receive special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) also mandates that students with disabilities participate in statewide and district-wide assessment programs, including alternate assessments with appropriate accommodations when it is documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

Glossary

Academic Modifications:

“A modification as used in this document is an adjustment to an assignment or a test that changes the standard or what the test or assignment is supposed to measure. Examples of possible modifications include a student completing work on part of a standard or a student completing an alternate assignment that is more easily achievable than the standard assignment.” (Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) FAPE Coordinating Office: PACER Center, Inc. www.fape.org). A modification changes what a student is taught or expected to learn, like a modified curriculum or a modified standard. Therefore, a modification on a test would change the validity of that test when comparing the student to others (i.e. norm-referenced standardized state assessment). Modifications are no longer allowed on general state summative assessments, but certain accommodations are allowed on both the general and alternate assessments.

Accommodations: An accommodation allows a student to learn material in a different way without changing what the student is learning. So, a content and performance standard can stay the same, but an accommodation changes how a student learns the material. These accommodations are individually determined for a given student by the IEP team. There is a distinction between classroom accommodations on assignments and tests and allowable accommodations on state summative assessments. The IEP team decides the child’s needs for classroom accommodations and chooses from allowable accommodations on state and/or district assessments. Accommodations tend to fall into four types of changes: 1) Presentation Accommodations which allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print; 2) Response Accommodations which allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer; 3) Setting Accommodations which change the conditions of the setting or location; and 4) Timing and Scheduling Accommodations which increase the allowable length of time or the way time is organized to complete an assessment or assignment. [34 CFR 300.42]

Adaptive Behavior and Adaptive Skills:

“Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives. Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction. Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naivete (i.e.

wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized. Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone. Standardized tests can also determine limitations in adaptive behavior.” (American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities <http://www.aaidwi.org>) Ten Adaptive Skills are listed in the SMSCD consideration criteria in this document: self-care, communication, self-direction, social skills, leisure, home or school living, functional academics, community use, work, health and safety.

Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS):

“Alternate assessments are assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). These assessments are intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities SMSCD who are unable to participate in general assessments even with accommodations. To meet federal accountability requirements, the AA-AAAS must be aligned to grade-level content in each subject area: reading/language arts, mathematics, and science.

The achievement of grade-level content by students designated as SMSCD is different from the achievement of other students, but the evidence of their work is compelling. Similar to their peers, these students are able to learn academic content that is clearly linked to grade-level content, but possibly at reduced complexity, breadth, and depth. All students, including students designated as SMSCD, should strive for postsecondary education or training and work when they leave high school. States’ alternate achievement standards must be set to ensure that students who meet them are on track to pursue postsecondary education or competitive integrated employment, as defined in the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).” (<http://www.nceo.info/assessments>).

Education Standards, Grade-Level Standards, Extended Standards, and Alternate Academic Standards:

Education standards describe knowledge or skills that every student should learn and be able to do at each grade level. Education standards are set for each grade beginning with kindergarten and continue through grade 12. The goal of education standards is to help students graduate with the skills they need to succeed in college and in the workforce. Each state sets their own education standards and reviews/updates the standards regularly to meet the education goals.” (Institute of Education Sciences [oned.gov](http://www.ed.gov) Deciphering State Education Standards <http://www.ed.gov>) For students receiving special education services, grade level standards may be heavily modified in the form of extended standards or alternate academic standards so that standards can be accessed at a student’s level of challenge and should be reflected in the annual IEP goals. “Alternate academic achievement standards must be aligned with the State’s grade-level content standards. The standards must be clearly related to grade-level content, although they may be restricted in scope or complexity or take the form of introductory or pre-requisite skills.” In that way, teams can ensure that annual IEP goals “reflect high expectations and are based on the State’s content standards for the grade in which a child is enrolled.” (USDE OSERS Policy Letter, November 16, 2015 <http://www.ed.gov>).

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI):

“The Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI, Kearns et. al. 2006) was developed by the National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) in order to investigate the true learning characteristics of students participating in alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) represent a highly diverse population with varying levels of communication and other complex characteristics that impinge on the assessment design and the interpretations that we want to make about the assessment results. The LCI

is designed to enhance the demographic data collection for the test and when used appropriately, provide additional data to consider in the validity evaluation for AA-AAAS. The LCI should not be used as an assessment device or in any other capacity where decisions would be made about students based on the results.” Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI from National Alternate Assessment Center <http://www.naacpartners.org/publications/LCI.aspx>).

State Summative Assessment:

The state summative assessment is an end-of-year test that measures student performance on the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (general assessment, WY-TOPP) or on the Wyoming Extended Standards (alternate assessment, WY-ALT). Students in grades 3-10 take the summative assessment in English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Writing is assessed in grades 3,5,7, and 9 on the general assessment. Science is assessed in grades 4, 8, and 10 on the general and alternate assessments. Assessment Blueprints outline the content assessed. Both the general assessment and the alternate assessment offer three types of support: 1) universal tools are available for all students; 2) designated supports are available when need is documented by a school-based intervention team, which may include the parent/guardian who is familiar with the student; and 3) accommodations are available when student need is documented in and IEP or 504 plan. These students may also use designated supports and universal tools.

Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disability (SMSCD):

Student with the most significant cognitive disability (SMSCD) is a designation given to a small number of students to determine their participation in Alternate Assessments. This acknowledges the student’s unique and complex needs for participation in instruction, using the Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES), and the Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS). Eligibility is not solely based on cognitive performance nor based on disability category, such as those used for eligibility for Special Education services.

An SMSCD determination should be based on unique and complex needs that significantly impact a student’s adaptive behaviors, academic skills, and intellectual functioning. A student may have adaptive skills well below average in two or more areas: self-care, communication, self-direction, social skills, leisure, home or school living, functional academics, community use, work, and health and safety. A student would require substantial, constant supports and continued supervision for all activities of daily living including meal preparation, dressing, grooming personal hygiene, and personal safety.

A student with the most significant cognitive disability requires extensive, individualized academic instruction for skill acquisition and measurable gains on the WYES at their level of challenge. A student would demonstrate limited understanding of: academic and conceptual skills; writing, language, vocabulary, and grammar skills; and numerical concepts, such as quantity, time, and money.

Wyoming Alternate Assessment (WY-ALT):

The Wyoming’s alternate assessment (WY-ALT) is the state summative alternate assessment that assesses students’ proficiency based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) or the Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES). The WY-ALT allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in an appropriately rigorous assessment. Students in grades 3-10 are tested in English language arts and Mathematics. Additionally, students in grades 4, 8, and 10 are tested in Science. The alternate assessment is designed for a small number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. It is

part of a statewide instructionally supportive assessment system which complies with the requirements of federal accountability law and the IDEA. The results of the WY-ALT, along with other measures of student performance, will enable teachers to provide individualized academic instruction to enable students to achieve high standards of academic performance and improve instructional programs. A student's participation on the alternate assessment is appropriate when the IEP Team determines that the student's academic achievement is best measured by the WYES. (Wyoming Instructional Network: Statewide Alternate Assessment).

Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS):

The Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS) serve several purposes. They articulate a set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do, enabling them to be prepared for college and career success; to live a life that contributes to the global community. Content standards are built foundationally and then in learning progressions. They do not define all that can or should be taught; they simply outline end-of year expectations. Performance Standards are a subset of the Content Standards and specify the specific degree of understanding or demonstration of knowledge and/or skill for a particular content standard. These are divided into four performance level descriptors that demonstrate "how good is good enough": advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. These expectations are communicated to students, parents, educators and all other Wyoming stakeholders, and provide a common understanding among educators as to what students should learn at particular grades. State law requires the standards in each content areas be reviewed every nine years.

Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES):

The Wyoming Extended Standards are Wyoming's alternate academic achievement standards (AAAS). The WYES define the essential knowledge and skills that allow students with disabilities to access the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS) of the general education curriculum. The WYES allows educators to adjust for various levels of difficulty and provide appropriate supports with adaption of complexity, depth, and breadth to appropriately challenge the student. Like the performance standards, the achievement level standards of the WYES have four performance level descriptors that demonstrate "how good is good enough": advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The WYES specify essential grade level learnings designed with SMSCD in mind, and may be used in the general education classroom to scaffold content. Educators employ a wide range of instructional strategies as determined by a student's individual learning characteristics and communication modes and levels through the use of adapted, grade-level appropriate materials. Thus, students who are using WYES may receive instruction in the general education classroom, take the general assessment and meet course requirement to graduate with a high school diploma. Students instructed with the WYES may also receive a certificate of completion. IEP teams decide what pathway (diploma or certificate of completion) best suit student needs. (Wyoming Instructional Network: Statewide Alternate Assessment).

Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress (WY-TOPP):

The Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress is the general state summative assessment that assesses students' proficiency on Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS). It is administered online and is a computer-adaptive assessment, which means it increases or decreases in level of difficulty as a student responds. Only certain accommodations are allowable and must be specified in the IEP or 504). However, there are universal tools that make the test accessible and a team of educators may designate supports for some students (e.g., multilingual learners). Most students receiving special education services take the WY-TOPP either with or without accommodations with access to designated supports and universal tools. We welcome any feedback to make this document stronger.

Please follow this [link](#) to provide suggestions.