

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 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"/>	

Participation Criteria	Participation Criterion Descriptors	Yes	No	Reason(s) for Yes or No Response
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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:

- Disability category
- Educational environment, or instructional setting
- Poor attendance or extended absences
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- Academic or other services a student receives
- Students' instructional reading level being below grade level
- Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
- Administration decision
- Anticipated impact of student scores on the accountability system
- Anticipated disruptive behaviors
- Anticipated emotional duress
- English Learner (EL) Status
- Native language/social, cultural, or economic status
- Need for accommodations (such as assistive technology or augmentative and alternative communication) to participate in the general assessment