ILLINOIS ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

2004-2005 Technical Manual for the Portfolio Assessment

Prepared by Measured Progress, Inc.

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Purpose and Design

Introduction

During the 2004-2005 school year, approximately 7900 students participated in the statewide assessment system through the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA). The IAA measures the progress on the Illinois Learning Standards of a small percentage of students who were unable to participate in the general statewide assessments, even with accommodations. Students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were assessed in reading and mathematics. Students in grades 4 and 7 were assessed in science. Students in grade 11 were assessed in reading, mathematics, and science.

This manual provides technical information about the 2004-2005 IAA. It addresses the development, implementation, scoring and technical issues involving reliability and validity of the assessment. The *Illinois Alternate Assessment: Guide to Interpretation*, not included here, provides further information on test results.

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Assessment Development

Starting in 1998 a task force composed of administrators, higher education personnel, teachers, and parents in cooperation with special education experts and the Illinois State Board of Education developed guiding principles and recommendations for the development and implementation of an alternate assessment. By June 1999, the following guiding principles had been adopted:

1. All children can and do learn and will be part of the assessment process.
2. Illinois Learning Standards set high expectations for all students. High educator expectations are linked clearly to student achievement. Illinois educators must have high expectations that children with disabilities will learn skills that will lead to meaningful life outcomes.
3. The links among assessment, instruction, and curriculum are central to the education process. The links must be considered when making individual educational decisions that have lifelong effects on the learner's future.
4. Since performance standards that define "how good is good enough" are being developed for the Illinois Learning Standards, alternate performance indicators must be established which link the alternate assessments to the standards.
5. In keeping with the language and intent of IDEA 97, the participation of students with disabilities in the assessment and accountability system promotes involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.
6. An accountability system for students involved in alternate assessments will be part of the state accountability system.
7. Educators in Illinois are equally accountable for assessing, documenting, and reporting educational achievement and teaching effectiveness for students with disabilities.

8. The State Board of Education has adopted eligibility guidelines for those students with disabilities who participate in state- and district-wide accountability systems through alternate assessment.
9. An ongoing system of technical support will be needed to implement the participation of students with disabilities in regular state and local assessments and in alternate assessments.

The Guidelines for Participation discussed in Principle #8 can be found in Table 1. It is important to note that the IAA is intended for a small percentage of students who are addressing the Illinois Learning Standards at a level significantly below grade-appropriate benchmarks.

Table 1. Guidelines for Participation

Step 1 For a student to be considered for the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA) for the content areas assessed in the grade level this year, the student's IEP team must determine that **all** of the following criteria are met:

- The accommodations needed by the student to participate in the regular assessment would seriously compromise the validity of the test.
- The performance indicators in the designated content area(s) are significantly different from the age/grade-appropriate benchmarks of the Illinois Learning Standards. Therefore, the regular assessment, even with appropriate accommodations, is not appropriate.
- The student requires intensive, frequent, individualized instruction in a variety of settings (e.g., school, community, workplace, etc.) to acquire, maintain, or generalize skills and demonstrate performance of those skills.

Step 2 The decision to include the student in the alternate assessment should not be based solely on the fact that:

- the student has an IEP or is in a specific disability category;
- the student's instructional reading level is below the grade level of the regular assessment to be administered;
- the student is not expected to perform well on the regular assessment;
- the student is expected to experience duress under testing conditions;
- there is high probability that the student will demonstrate disruptive behaviors during the regular assessment; or, accommodations will not be provided to enable the student with disruptive behaviors to access and participate in the regular assessment.

The Guiding Principles resulted in the development of certain assessment components, a scoring rubric, and alternate performance indicators. In the spring of 2000, after discussing different assessment options, the decision was made to utilize a progress model involving a portfolio-based system. The components of the portfolio were defined: an introduction to the reviewer, parent survey, table of contents, and two entries for each content area. A rubric for scoring the portfolios was also developed at this time.

In the summer of 2000, a group of educators from around the state developed the alternate performance indicators (APIs) for the Illinois Learning Standards. These alternate performance indicators provided suggestions to teachers as to how to connect instruction for their students with significant disabilities to the state standards.

Statewide implementation occurred during the 2000-2001 school year. Based on feedback from Illinois educators and the actual portfolios themselves, revisions were then made to the required components and to the rubric for the 2001-2002 assessment.

1. The parent survey was replaced with a parent validation form.
2. Collection period dates were defined.
3. The decision was made to have entries relate to state goal areas.
4. The *Illinois Alternate Assessment Resource Guide for the Illinois Learning Standards*, delineating possible APIs and additional assessment suggestions was developed.
5. Based on the challenges in scoring during that first year of implementation, revisions were made to each dimension of the rubric to increase the reliability of the IAA.

In 2002-2003, a defined list of APIs was introduced to increase content validity. The rubric also underwent significant changes with four of the six dimensions being removed. The remaining two dimensions can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. 2004-2005 IAA Scoring Rubric

	1	2	3	4
Link to the Standards	Evidence is not linked to an identified API through modified grade-appropriate activities.	Evidence is linked through a **single** API through modified grade-appropriate activities.	Evidence is linked through **two or three** APIs through modified grade-appropriate activities.	Evidence is linked through **four or more** APIs through modified grade-appropriate activities.
Student Progress	Student work indicates no progress on the state goal through modified grade appropriate activities.	Student work indicates **isolated** progress on the state goal through modified grade appropriate activities.	Student work indicates progress on the state goal demonstrated either **through increased complexity of performance OR under novel conditions**.	Student work indicates progress on the state goal demonstrated **through increased complexity of performance AND under novel conditions**.

General Procedures

Teachers were required to submit evidence from two collection periods for each entry. The collection periods were defined at the state level to ensure comparability across portfolios. They were as follows:

Collection Period 1: Start of the school year – November 24
Collection Period 2: November 29 – February 18

Two entries were required for mathematics and science. One entry was required for reading. Required state goals were set for each entry and can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Entries by Content Area

CONTENT AREA	State Goal
Reading	1
Mathematics	6 and 7
Science	11 and 12

Evidence was to connect to the state goals through the standards. Tables 4 - 8 provide a listing of the State Goals, Illinois Learning Standards and alternate performance indicators.

Table 4. Reading
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

	Illinois Learning Standards	**Alternate Performance Indicators**
1A	Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selection.	• Associate spoken words with people, objects, or actions. • Develop phonological awareness. • Demonstrate understanding that pictures and symbols have meaning by reading for information. • Identify labels and signs in the environment. • Identify letters of the alphabet. • Make letter-sound matches. • Associate written words or icons with people, objects, or actions. • Identify sight words.
1B	Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.	• Listen and respond to stories. • Look at pictures in books, newspapers, and/or magazines for information. • Predict what will happen next using pictures and content for clues. • Demonstrate understanding of concepts of print (left to right, top to bottom, front to back, etc.)
1C	Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.	• Retell information from a story. • Respond to literal questions about reading material. • Demonstrate understanding of literal meaning of stories by making comments using pictures or words. • Recognize fact versus fiction. • Follow written, pictorial, or symbolic directions. • Link reading materials to personal experiences and knowledge. • Identify feelings associated with reading materials. • Sequence events from a story. (ILS 1C)

Table 5. Mathematics

State Goal 6: Demonstrate and apply a knowledge and sense of numbers, including numeration and operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division), patterns, ratios and proportions.

	Illinois Learning Standards	**Alternate Performance Indicators**
6A	Demonstrate knowledge and use of numbers and their representations in a broad range of theoretical and practical settings.	• Demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence. • Demonstrate object permanence. • Demonstrate an understanding of one. • Recognize numerals. • Rote count. • Count with understanding and recognize "how many" in sets of objects. • Demonstrate the order of whole numbers. • Count by 5's, 10's, and 25's. • Demonstrate an understanding of place value (the base 10 system).
6B	Investigate, represent and solve problems using number facts, operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) and their properties, algorithms and relationships.	• Solve single operation story problems using numbers or manipulatives. • Solve two step story problems using numbers or manipulatives. • Demonstrate fluency of basic facts. • Complete double digit problems using basic operations.
6C	Compute and estimate using mental mathematics, paper-and-pencil methods, calculators and computers.	• Connect numbers to quantities they represent using physical models and representations. • Use mathematical operations to solve problems to make purchases. • Estimate the number of objects in a group before counting.
6D	Solve problems using comparison of quantities, ratios, proportions and percent.	• Recognize task completion when the object(s) of that task have all been used. • Make comparisons of quantities, e.g., "less than", "more than", or "equal to." • Differentiate between parts and whole.

Table 6. Mathematics

State Goal 7: Estimate, make and use measurements of objects, quantities and relationships and determine acceptable levels of accuracy.

	Illinois Learning Standards	**Alternate Performance Indicators**
7A	Measure and compare quantities using appropriate units, instruments and methods.	• When provided with an activity or object of preference, will request "more." • Locate and access familiar objects in the environment. • Use nonstandard tools to measure length, volume, and weight. • Use standard tools to measure length, volume, and weight.
7B	Estimate measurements and determine acceptable levels of accuracy.	• Show understanding of and use of comparative words. • Identify coins and their values. • Add the values of coins. • Estimate the amount of money needed for a purchase. • Tell time on a standard clock to the nearest hour, half hour, ¼ hour.
7C	Select and use appropriate technology, instruments and formulas to solve problems, interpret results and communicate findings.	• Select appropriate tools for measuring tasks. • Recognize environmental cues that signal onset of routine events. • Use a watch, clock or personal schedule when transitioning between activities. • Use calendar to manage daily activities. • Determine area using concrete materials.

Table 7. Science
State Goal 11: Understand the processes of scientific inquiry and technological design to investigate questions, conduct experiments and solve problems.

	Illinois Learning Standards	**Alternate Performance Indicators**
11A	Know and apply the concepts, principles and processes of scientific inquiry.	• Use senses to explore and observe materials and natural phenomena. • Respond to auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile, etc. stimuli. • Describe an observed object or event. • Collect data in an activity using appropriate technologies. • Predict the outcome of a scientific experiment. • Sort/match/categorize based on physical attributes. • Pose questions that can be answered through scientific investigation. • Recognize and continue patterns.
11B	Know and apply the concepts, principles and processes of technological design.	• Use objects for their specific function. • Use trial and error to solve problems. • Utilize a variety of devices incorporating technology. • Record and describe data using appropriate technologies. • Compare observations or data collected individually or in a group. • Report the results of an investigation using appropriate technologies. • Use scientific tools such as thermometers, balance scales, and magnifying glasses for investigation.

Table 8. Science
State Goal 12: Understand the fundamental concepts, principles and interconnections of the life, physical and earth/space sciences.

	Illinois Learning Standards	Alternate Performance Indicators
12A	Know and apply concepts that explain how living things function, adapt and change.	• Recognize and make requests to get personal needs met. • Sequence life stages. • Differentiate between living and nonliving things. • Investigate and categorize living things in the environment.
12B	Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.	• Recognize and respond when foreign objects are introduced into the student's typical environments. • Match animal and plants with their habitats. • Describe, compare, and tend to the basic needs of living things.
12C	Know and apply concepts that describe properties of matter and energy and the interactions between them.	• Identify when there is a need for heat or light. • Recognize and give examples of forms of energy. • Identify and describe three states of matter. • Make comparisons among objects that have been observed.
12D	Know and apply concepts that describe force and motion and the principles that explain them.	• Demonstrate understanding of cause and effect. • Identify, describe, and demonstrate types of movement. • Describe the effects of forces in nature (e.g. wind, gravity and magnetism).
12E	Know and apply concepts that describe the features and processes of the earth and its resources.	• Demonstrate intentional responses to weather related changes (e.g., temperature, wind, and precipitation). • Identify and describe geographic features of the Earth. • Use common weather-related vocabulary (e.g., rainy, snowy, sunny, windy). • Participate in recycling in their environment.
12F	Know and apply concepts that explain the composition and structure of the universe and Earth's place in it.	• Identify and describe components of the solar system. • Identify and apply basic concepts associated with night/day and/or seasons.

Evidence of the standards-based learning could include such things as student work products, graphs, charts, photographs, audiotapes, and videotapes. Teacher notes explaining the context of the evidence was also encouraged.

Scoring

Security procedures

All scorers were required to sign a confidentiality and nondisclosure form. Although with the IAA there are not issues of needing to ensure that question items are kept secure, a lot

of personal student information is revealed. The importance of maintaining this information confidentially is emphasized. All scoring materials were maintained within the scoring center during the scoring process. The flow of materials was controlled at all times.

A security checkpoint was located at the front entrance of both facilities. All visitors to the scoring centers were accompanied by contractor staff.

Staffing procedures

Measured Progress utilized multiple recruitment plans for scoring in March and April of 2005, including the following:

- Placing advertisements in the area's more widely circulated newspapers
- Distributing applications at fall IAA trainings
- Sending mailings to all IAA coordinators
- Utilizing a local temporary employment agency, and
- Contacting scorers from the previous year.

Completed applications were screened and only those applicants who were certified teachers were contacted for interviews. All scorers held bachelors degrees, approximately half also had masters degrees.

Benchmarking

In late February, scoring training materials were prepared. Portfolios were reviewed from a range of grades and covered all of the assessed content areas. Portfolios under consideration for scoring training were scored two times. Entries scored with a high level of consistency were selected to be used as training and qualification materials. Explanations for scoring were developed for all selected entries. The training materials included a minimum of three entries for each required state goal area. In addition, evidence reflective of each point on the rubric was copied to be included in the training of the scoring rubric. The qualifier materials also included one entry from each required state goal area. Proposed scoring rules were also developed. Scoring rules were reviewed and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Training

Contracting staff in cooperation with teachers and the Illinois State Board of Education developed all training materials, including a scoring manual and entries to be used as qualifiers. Scorer training was conducted on March 5 in Bloomington and March 12 in Arlington Heights. Training consisted of:

- A brief explanation of the statewide assessment system and the IAA
- Detailed instruction on the scoring rubric, including review of evidence
- Scoring entries as a large group
- Delineation of scoring rules
- Scoring entries in pairs
- Scoring entries individually

- Further clarification of the rubric and rules
- Completion of qualifiers
- Logistics training, including movement of materials and completion of scoring sheets

In addition for those scorers who did not meet criterion on the qualifiers, 80% exact and 90% adjacent agreement, further training was provided. A second set of qualifiers was then completed. The few scorers who did not qualify at this point were paired with qualified scorers to score portfolios together under the close supervision of the table leaders. When the table leaders believed that they were ready to move to independent scoring, they scored a portfolio by themselves. That portfolio was scored by a second scorer and then reviewed by the table leader. Scorers unable to meet criterion were dismissed from the project.

Procedures and Responsibilities

Scoring teams consisted of a table leader and 5-7 scorers. Boxes were delivered to the tables containing 10 portfolios. Each portfolio was identified with a unique lithocode number. The following paperwork had to be completed at least once for each portfolio:

- A scannable score sheet
- A score sheet to be kept in the portfolio

Although industry standards encourage the second scoring of portfolios at least 10% of the time, most of the portfolios were second scored with discrepancies resolved by the table leaders.

All 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade portfolios were scored first. Then the 4th and 7th grade portfolios were scored. The 11th grade portfolios, containing all of the content areas, were scored last.

Team leaders were responsible for ensuring that all scoring sheets were completed and for resolving discrepancies when they occurred between 2 sets of scores. In addition, they were the first to be contacted by scorers when they had questions. Table leaders also monitored individual scorer accuracy and provided clarification of the rubric and scoring rules as necessary. If the table leaders were unable to answer any questions, they brought that question to the attention of the scoring directors.

The scoring directors were responsible for delivering all training, ensuring that all necessary supplies were available, and overseeing all aspects of the scoring process. In addition, the scoring directors were responsible for communicating all scoring clarifications that arose from unforeseen circumstances.

Retraining

Scoring directors and table leaders were responsible for ongoing retraining and clarification. Table leaders reviewed portfolios scored by two scorers. This allowed table leaders to watch for drift on the part of individual scorers and to provide retraining on specific aspects of the rubric to individual team members or the entire team as necessary throughout the day. In addition, daily interrater consistency reports were generated for

individual scorers, as well as across all scorers. Through these reports, the scoring directors could identify both individual scorers who may need more support and specific rubric dimensions that may be posing a challenge. Large group retraining occurred as necessary.

Retraining was ongoing throughout the scoring project. The table leaders and scoring directors continued to look for unusual pieces of evidence and entries that were not covered during the initial training. Rule clarifications were shared both verbally and in writing. Maintaining consistency throughout the scoring project was a major priority.

Data management

The contractor was responsible for scanning the score sheets. Every day programs were run on these files to generate:

- Individual interrater consistency percentages for exact agreement and exact and adjacent agreement across all dimensions
- The number of disagreements by dimension for individual scorers
- The number of nonadjacent scores by dimension for individual scorers
- Roomwide interrater consistency percentages for exact agreement and exact and adjacent agreement across all dimensions
- Roomwide interrater consistency percentages for exact agreement and exact and adjacent agreement for each dimension
- The number of portfolios scored

This data allowed the scoring directors to have daily updated information on the status of the project. Necessary adjustments in training, scheduling, and staffing could be made based on these reports.

Reliability

Reliability is essentially a question of generalization (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001). To the extent one can generalize results of an assessment across items, time, conditions, and scorers, that assessment can be considered reliable.

The IAA addresses the issues of items, time, and conditions within the actual design and implementation of the assessment. The assessment allows the teacher to ensure that students are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they are learning as opposed to what they don't know.

Recognizing that students with significant disabilities have a great deal of difficulty generalizing across items, the scoring dimension, Student Progress, directly addresses this challenge. Students who are able to demonstrate their learning through a variety of items score higher than those students who can only demonstrate their learning through a limited number of items.

The IAA minimizes the impact of temporary, sporadic factors, such as sickness, by its on-going nature. This increases the likelihood that the data as a whole is reflective of typical performance. In the presentation of learning data through multiple points a minor

fluctuation in a progress trend does not have the same negative impact that it could have on a one day assessment.

The assessment designers recognized the third issue of reliability and that deals with the extent to which the results can be generalized across settings. Recognizing the importance of students being able to perform skills in multiple settings and acknowledging the challenge of this type of generalization for students with significant disabilities, the Student Progress dimension reflects the goal for students to generalize across settings.

The last issue of reliability to be addressed here concerns the generalizability of results across scorers. In Table 9, interrater agreements for Scorer 1 and Scorer 2 for individual dimensions within and across entries and content areas are presented. In addition, overall interrater agreements are provided for individual entries, for content areas, and across all content areas. For the 2004-2005 assessment, it is important to note that this overall data reveals interrater agreements above the industry standard of 90% exact and adjacent agreement. Average exact interrater agreement was approximately 78.85% with a range of 70.89% to 85.97%. Average adjacent and exact interrater agreement was approximately 95.26% with a range of 90.29% to 99.49%.

As a school and district assessment, the performance levels assigned to a student's performance is of utmost concern. Accountability decisions are based on the percentage of students at a Level 3 and Level 4. Table 10 shows the interrater agreement of Scorer 1 and Scorer 2 based on the performance levels assigned to students. Table 11 shows the interrater agreement of Scorer 1 and Scorer 2 on assigning the student a performance level of 1 or 2 and a performance level of 3 or 4.

Additional interrater agreement data by grade is available upon request. Interrater agreement data analyzing interrater agreement for Scorers 1 and 3 and for Scorers 2 and 3 is also available. When interpreting the latter data, it is important to keep in mind that Scorer 3, a table leader, only reviewed those dimensions for which Scorers 1 and 2 did not agree.

Table 9. Interrater Consistency

CONTENT AREA	N	DIMENSION SCORE	% EXACT AGREEMENT	% ADJACENT AGREEMENT	% EXACT + % ADJACENT AGREEMENT
Reading Entry 1	4998	Student Progress	70.89	20.67	91.56
	4998	Link	82.09	17.23	99.32
	9996	Across all dimensions	76.49	18.95	95.44
Mathematics Entry 1	4945	Student Progress	72.72	18.48	91.20
	4945	Link	84.87	14.52	99.39
	9890	Across all dimensions	78.80	16.50	95.30
Mathematics Entry 2	4945	Student Progress	74.03	17.69	91.73
	4945	Link	85.97	13.53	99.49
	9890	Across all dimensions	80.00	15.61	95.61

Mathematics	9890	Student Progress	73.38	18.09	91.47
	9890	Link	85.42	14.02	99.44
	19780	Across all dimensions	79.40	16.06	95.46
Science Entry 1	3668	Student Progress	77.56	12.73	90.29
	3668	Link	79.91	19.17	99.07
	7336	Across all dimensions	78.74	15.95	94.68
Science Entry 2	3668	Student Progress	75.68	15.24	90.92
	3668	Link	85.74	13.52	99.26
	7336	Across all dimensions	80.71	14.38	95.09
Science	7336	Student Progress	76.62	13.99	90.61
	7336	Link	82.82	16.34	99.17
	14672	Across all dimensions	79.72	15.16	94.89
All Content Areas	22224	Student Progress	73.89	17.31	91.20
	22224	Link	83.81	15.51	99.33
	44448	Across all dimensions	78.85	16.41	95.26

Table 10. Interrater Consistency for Performance Levels

CONTENT AREA	% EXACT AGREEMENT	% ADJACENT AGREEMENT	% EXACT + ADJACENT AGREEMENT
Reading (n = 4977)	79.85	15.64	95.49
Mathematics (n = 4924)	80.52	17.47	97.99
Science (n = 3653)	80.89	16.68	97.56

Table 11. Interrater Consistency for Level 1 and/or Level 2 and Interrater Agreement for Level 3 and/or Level 4

CONTENT AREA	(1 x 2) + (2 x 1) +(3 x 4) + (4 x 3)
Reading (n = 4977)	85.92
Mathematics (n = 4924)	87.39
Science (n = 3653)	87.16
Overall (n = 13554)	86.82

Validity

Validity addresses whether the assessment measures what it proposes to measure. Two types of validity, content and criterion-related, are discussed in this section.

Content validity involves three concepts: item appropriateness, completeness of the item sample, and the manner of the assessment. For item appropriateness, the domain, the context of the observation, the level of the items, and the method of presentation must be considered. The IAA addresses the domain issue through its requirement that state goals and standards must be addressed through APIs. Possible APIs were provided to teachers for their use; however, for the 2001-2002, teachers were also allowed to generate their own. Based on the portfolios submitted, a threat to content validity was evidenced. To address this concern, the IAA was modified in 2002-2003 to require specific state goals and APIs to be addressed. In order for porfolios to be scored validly, the picture of the student portrayed through the portfolio must truly be reflective of the students' learning throughout the school year. The details of the portrait are dependent on the context of the evidence being clearly conveyed. It is a responsibility of the teacher to ensure the appropriateness of the level of the items within the APIs. Lastly in relationship to item validity, the method of presentation should be both appropriate for the API and the individual student being assessed. Again, identifying the most appropriate method of presentation is left to those whom know the student best – the teachers.

Completeness of the sample implies that the broader the set of items, the stronger the content validity. The IAA recognizes this through the Student Progress dimension. Students who can demonstrate knowledge and/or skills across items score higher than those students who cannot.

One advantage of a portfolio-based assessment system is that the method of assessment should be very closely tied to that used in instruction. This close match between manner of assessment and instruction has a positive impact on content validity.

For criterion-related validity the key question is does what is provided in the portfolio portray an accurate picture of student performance? Does it exemplify all of the student's work? It is important to point out that only the local educators working with a student can address whether or not the portfolio does this. Throughout the implementation training provided throughout Illinois, this is an issue that is strongly emphasized. The scores can only be as valid as the evidence provided.

It is important to note that "Validity is a property of test-based inferences and not a property of the test itself" (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001). Since essentially all questions are local, the issues of validity should continue to be addressed throughout these initial years of implementation and reporting.

Reporting

For the 2004-2005 assessment, Illinois is reporting individual, school, district, and state results.

Reviewing the rubric, the decision was made that the most critical dimension was Student Progress. The dimensions were weighted using the following formula for computing Entry Scores:

Entry Score = (2 x Link to the Standard) + (4 x Student Progress)

This formula resulted in the range for possible Entry Scores to be 6-24.

Minimum Entry Score = (4 x 1) + (2 x 1) = 6
Maximum Entry Score = (4 x 4) + (2 x 4) = 24

Entry scores were typically averaged to determine the Content Area Score. The exception to this rule was as follows:

- For Reading, the Entry Score = Content Area Score.

The Content Area Scores were used to assign a Performance Level for the individual content areas. Prior to cut-off scores being set, Performance Level descriptors had to be generated based on which standards would be set. The descriptors were generated in 2001-2002 by 26 certified special education staff (teachers and therapists) who were familiar with the IAA and the types of students who participated in this for their statewide assessment. Initially key words and phrases were generated that differentiated one level from the next. Using these words, narrative descriptors were set. Through the revision process, the implications of the proposed definitions were discussed. When the group had agreed upon a set of definitions, those definitions were provided to the Illinois Alternate Assessment Taskforce for review and the Illinois State Board of Education for approval.

The standard-setting process completed in 2001-2002 and repeated in 2002-2003 relied on informed judgement of standard-setting panelists. The process itself involved approximately 24 certified special education staff. This group again had a familiarity with the IAA and the students for whom it was designed. Each person was provided with copy of the rubric, a chart on which to indicate proposed cut-off scores, and a packet which provided all possible combinations of dimension scores which could generate each point on the 19 point Content Area Score range. The following steps were followed in the standard setting procedure:

Complete the following steps individually:

1. Review the rubric.
2. Select the minimum dimension scores necessary for:
   Performance Level 1 (by default this was 6)
   Performance Level 2
   Performance Level 3
   Performance Level 4

3. Based on the identified minimum dimension scores, hypothetical Entry Scores could be generated by using the formula previously discussed.
4. Using one of those resulting Entry Scores, find that score in the packet.
5. Review all of the possible dimension score combinations that could generate that Entry Score.
6. If all of the dimension scores appear appropriate for the Performance Level, move backwards in the packet repeating the review process. (ex. With a proposed cut-off score of 10 for Level 2, after reviewing all of the possible dimension score combinations that could generate an 10, the standard setter decides all of those combinations are appropriate for a Performance Level 2. The standard setter would then look at possible dimension score combinations for 9.) Repeat this process until dimension score combinations are found that should belong to the next lower Performance Level.

   If all of the dimension scores do not appear appropriate for the identified Performance Level, i.e. some of the dimension score combinations appear too low, move forwards in the packet until a score is found for which all dimension score combinations appear appropriate.
7. Repeat step 6 for all proposed Performance Level cut-off scores.
8. When all cut-off scores have been set individually, meet in dyads to share proposed cut-off scores, discussing the implications of those cut scores. With the individually generated cut-off scores as the basis, repeat Steps 1 – 7 in dyads.
9. When all cut-off scores have been set in dyads, meet in groups of four to share proposed cut-off scores, discussing the implications of those cut scores. With the dyad generated cut-off scores as the basis, repeat Steps 1 – 7 in the group of four.
10. When all cut-off scores have been set in the group of four, meet in groups of 8 to share proposed cut-off scores, discussing the implications of those cut scores. With the previously generated cut-off scores as the basis, repeat Steps 1 – 7 in the group of eight (or ten).
11. Elect a spokesperson from the group of eight. These three people will be the only three people to address the large group. The other 21 people may speak to their spokesperson who will be responsible for conveying the information to the large group.
12. In a large group, share the proposed three sets of cut scores.
13. For areas of disagreement, discuss the rationale behind the selected scores.
14. Review steps 1 – 7 as necessary until all standard setters come to an agreement for the cut-scores.
15. Submit the final set of cut scores to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Table 12 provides the Performance Level names, descriptors, and cut scores generated by the group of Illinois teachers and therapists and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Table 12. Cut-off Scores for Performance Levels

Performance Level	Description	Content Area Score Range
Attaining	Individualized student work demonstrates extensive progress in the knowledge and skills in the subject through multiple connections to the Illinois Learning Standards. Students exhibit a broad ability to generalize their knowledge and skills.	21 – 24
Progressing	Individualized student work demonstrates moderate progress in the knowledge and skills in the subject through limited connections to the Illinois Learning Standards. Students exhibit a basic ability to generalize their knowledge and skills.	16 – 20
Emerging	Individualized student work demonstrates limited progress in the knowledge and skills in the subject through minimal connections to the Illinois Learning Standards. Students exhibit an emerging ability to generalize their knowledge and skills.	11 – 15
Attempting	Individualized student work does not demonstrate progress in knowledge and skills in the subject through connections to the Illinois Learning Standards. Students do not to generalize their knowledge and skills.	6 - 10

Results

As previously mentioned, this year actual scores were reported. These scores included Dimension Scores, Entry Scores, Content Area Scores, and Performance Levels. School and district summary reports were also generated based on Performance Levels. Table 13 indicates the percentage of students within each Performance Level. Table 14 supplies mean entry scores by state goal area. Table 15 provides sample mean dimension and content area scores by entry.

Table 13. Percentage of Students by Grade Falling into Each Performance Level by Content Area

Reading

Grade	Attempting	Emerging	Progressing	Attaining	Not Available
3	19	17	34	29	0
5	23	14	35	28	0
8	23	16	32	29	0
11	37	14	27	22	0

Mathematics

Grade	Attempting	Emerging	Progressing	Attaining	Not Available
3	16	24	31	28	0
5	18	23	31	29	0
8	20	24	29	27	0
11	28	31	24	18	0

Science

Grade	Attempting	Emerging	Progressing	Attaining	Not Available
4	21	27	25	27	0
7	26	25	21	28	0
11	32	33	21	14	0

Table 14. Mean Entry Scores by State Goal Area

State Goal	N	Mean
1	5352	16.53363
6	5292	15.97695
7	5292	16.07559
11	3768	14.59395
12	3768	15.48938

Table 15. Mean Dimension and Content Area Scores of Entries by Content Area

	DIMENSION	DIMENSION MEAN	CONTENT AREA MEAN
Reading Entry 1	Student Progress	2.488042	16.53363
	Link to the Standard	3.290732	16.53363
Mathematics Entry 1	Student Progress	2.373205	16.02627
	Link to the Standard	3.242063	16.02627
Mathematics Entry 2	Student Progress	2.414588	16.02627
	Link to the Standard	3.208617	16.02627
Science Entry 1	Student Progress	2.161624	15.04167
	Link to the Standard	2.973726	15.04167
Science Entry 2	Student Progress	2.250531	15.04167
	Link to the Standard	3.243631	15.04167

Appendix A

Correlations of Content Area Scores

	Reading	Mathematics	Science
Reading	1.00	0.69	0.66
Mathematics	0.69	1.00	0.75
Science	0.66	0.75	1.00

Appendix B

Dimension Score Correlations by Entry

Correlations of Dimension Scores for Reading

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 5352
Prob > |r| under H0: Rho=0

	REA1SPNEW	REA1LINKNEW
REA1SPNEW	1.00000	0.43094 <.0001
REA1LINKNEW	0.43094 <.0001	1.00000

Correlations of Dimension Scores for Mathematics

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 5292
Prob > |r| under H0: Rho=0

	MAT1SPNEW	MAT1LINKNEW
MAT1SPNEW	1.00000	0.39054 <.0001
MAT1LINKNEW	0.39054 <.0001	1.00000

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 5292
Prob > |r| under H0: Rho=0

	MAT2SPNEW	MAT2LINKNEW
MAT2SPNEW	1.00000	0.46806 <.0001
MAT2LINKNEW	0.46806 <.0001	1.00000

Correlations of Dimension Scores for Science

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 3768
Prob > |r| under H0: Rho=0

	SCI1SPNEW	SCI1LINKNEW
SCI1SPNEW	1.00000	0.45036 <.0001
SCI1LINKNEW	0.45036 <.0001	1.00000

Pearson Correlation Coefficients, N = 3768
Prob > |r| under H0: Rho=0

	SCI2SPNEW	SCI2LINKNEW
SCI2SPNEW	1.00000	0.40448 <.0001
SCI2LINKNEW	0.40448 <.0001	1.00000

Appendix C

Frequency of Alternate Performance Indicators

API	COUNT
rea1_1	717
rea1_2	379
rea1_3	520
rea1_4	1554
rea1_5	1188
rea1_6	920
rea1_7	1176
rea1_8	2275
rea1_9	1140
rea1_10	696
rea1_11	353
rea1_12	206
rea1_13	645
rea1_14	2060
rea1_15	112
rea1_16	148
rea1_17	1111
rea1_18	215
rea1_19	156
rea1_20	1139
mat1_1	817
mat1_2	204
mat1_3	591
mat1_4	1686
mat1_5	1102
mat1_6	1384
mat1_7	1261
mat1_8	1381
mat1_9	476
mat1_10	991
mat1_11	196
mat1_12	1679
mat1_13	1306
mat1_14	414
mat1_15	720
mat1_16	133
mat1_17	306
mat1_18	992
mat1_19	297
mat2_1	707
mat2_2	858
mat2_3	391
mat2_4	1226
mat2_5	987
mat2_6	2603

mat2_7	2323
mat2_8	934
mat2_9	2478
mat2_10	464
mat2_11	317
mat2_12	1129
mat2_13	1225
mat2_14	102
sci1_1	449
sci1_2	992
sci1_3	621
sci1_4	680
sci1_5	1655
sci1_6	118
sci1_7	1123
sci1_8	1110
sci1_9	92
sci1_10	447
sci1_11	507
sci1_12	393
sci1_13	153
sci1_14	722
sci2_1	556
sci2_2	818
sci2_3	1268
sci2_4	543
sci2_5	75
sci2_6	1121
sci2_7	598
sci2_8	85
sci2_9	182
sci2_10	348
sci2_11	304
sci2_12	514
sci2_13	176
sci2_14	158
sci2_15	322
sci2_16	246
sci2_17	2048
sci2_18	798
sci2_19	457
sci2_20	983