

Criteria for Determining Participation in the Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Achievement Standards in lieu of ISTEP+

The SEA must establish and ensure implementation of clear and appropriate guidelines for Case Conference Committees to apply in determining when a child's significant cognitive disability justifies assessment based on alternate achievement standards. 34 CFR 200.6(a)(2)(iii)(A)(1)

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may be assessed with an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The instrument used to assess a student on alternate achievement standards is the Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting, known as ISTAR.

The case conference committee (CCC) determines, based on the three criteria listed below and on the student's individual and unique needs, whether a student with a significant cognitive disability will be assessed on Indiana's Academic Standards or on alternate achievement standards. If the CCC determines that a student will be assessed on alternate achievement standards using ISTAR, the individualized education program (IEP) must describe the reasons it is not appropriate for the student to take ISTEP+, identify ISTAR as the alternate assessment, and include information in support of each of the criteria.

CRITERIA (All three criteria must be satisfied for a student to be eligible to be assessed on alternate achievement standards using the ISTAR.)

1. **Evidence of a Significant Cognitive Disability:** There is empirical evidence (e.g., formal testing results, M-team evaluation results, etc.) of a significant cognitive disability that prevents the acquisition of Indiana's Academic Standards necessary to attain a high school diploma.
2. **Intensity of Instruction:** The student is unable to acquire, maintain, generalize, and apply academic skills across environments even with extensive/intensive, pervasive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings.
3. **Curricular Outcomes:** The goals and objectives listed in this student's IEP focus on progress within functional achievement indicators, and the student's present level of educational performance significantly impedes participation and completion of the general education curriculum even with significant program modifications

EXCLUSIONS

The CCC's determination that the student will be assessed on alternate achievement standards through ISTAR cannot be based on factors other than cognitive functioning. Specifically, the determination cannot be based on factors such as:

- a. Excessive or extensive absences.
- b. Social, cultural or economic differences.
- c. The mere existence of an IEP or identification in a specific disability category.
- d. A specific special education placement or services.
- e. Emotional, behavioral or physical challenges.
- f. Anticipated scores on ISTEP+.
- g. Concern for AYP calculations.

The Indiana Department of Education will utilize these criteria when reviewing or monitoring student education records for the purpose of determining eligibility to be assessed with ISTAR on

alternate achievement standards and including ISTAR data in federal and state accountability determinations.