

10 or more students taking the Alt Assessment

District Name: Aberdeen Public School District 06-1

Rationale: The Aberdeen Public School District strives to keep students in district. We have specialized programming for students with severe behavioral needs, cognitive needs, and autism needs. Our structured learning programs are offered at all levels and provide Project TEACCH principles, as well as implementation of applied behavioral analysis strategies, addresses adaptive behavior needs, and the instruction/curriculum is driven by South Dakota Core Content Connecters. Our higher population can also be attributed to an increase in families moving to a larger city to have their child serviced and the fact that we do offer intensive, structured learning programs that can meet our students' needs in the least restrictive way, without having to move to an out-of-district placement.

For a student to be appropriate for consideration as a candidate for the alternate assessment, the student's IEP team considers the following:

- The student's demonstrated cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior in school, work, home and community environments are significantly below chronological age expectations, even with program modifications, adaptations and accommodations.
- The student's course of study is primarily functional and life skills oriented.
- The student requires extensive direct instruction and/or extensive supports in multiple settings to acquire, maintain and generalize academic and functional skills necessary for application in school, work, home and community environments.
- The student demonstrates complex cognitive disabilities and poor adaptive skill levels determined to be significantly (at least two standard deviations) below chronological age expectations by the student's most recent individualized eligibility determination which prevents the student from meaningful participation in the standard academic core curriculum or achievement of the appropriate grade level expectations.
- The student's disability causes dependence upon others for many, if not all, daily living needs, and the student is expected to require extensive on-going support in adulthood.
- The student's inability to complete the standard academic curriculum at grade level is not primarily the result of: (a) poor attendance, excessive or extended absences, (b) lack of access to quality instruction, (c) social, cultural, linguistic, or economic differences, (d) below average reading or achievement levels, (e) expectations of poor performance, (f) the anticipated impact of the student's performance on the school/district performance scores, and (g) the student's disability category, educational placement, type of instruction, and/or amount of time receiving special education services.

District Name: Belle Fourche

Rationale: Our district serves many students with significant cognitive impairments. The decision to administer the alternate assessment to some of our students is made after careful consideration and thorough review of all available information (including evaluations, classroom performance, teach/parent input and previous performance on the alternate assessment, if applicable).

District Name: Brandon Valley School District

Rationale:

According to federal and state guidelines, students that meet eligibility for special education services due to a significant cognitive impairment are eligible to take the alternate assessment. The Brandon Valley School District (BVSD) follows state and federal administrative rules when identifying students who are eligible to take the alternate assessment. The BVSD reviews special education evaluation results used to identify students with a cognitive impairment. Based on special education evaluation information, IEP teams (including parents), determine whether the individual student should take the alternate assessment due to a cognitive impairment, or if the student could take the Smarter Balanced assessment measuring grade level standards. Due to the nature of the student's disability and focus of their instruction, the majority of the IEP teams determine that the alternate assessment is the most appropriate test to measure proficiency and progress. It is an IEP team decision whether a student should take the alternative assessment based on all relevant data the team has to review. Data is reviewed during annual IEP meetings to determine whether a student is eligible and should continue to take the alternate assessment. The BVSD also reviews individual student alternate assessment data yearly, and determines if there are students with a cognitive impairment that could take the regular Smarter Balanced assessment on a case-by-case basis based on their performance on the alternate assessment and other available performance data.

During the 2016-2017 school year, the BVSD had identified 23 students between grades 3-8 and 11 who met the criteria for a cognitive disability and were eligible to take the alternate assessment instead of the Smarter Balanced assessment. This resulted in 1.08% of our students taking the alternate assessment. The BVSD complies with the administrative rules that apply to students who are eligible to take the alternative assessment. The IEP team will make the decision to determine eligible students based on assessment information, parent input, and school performance. The BVSD will continue to review student data to determine what can be done to reduce the number of students taking the alternate assessment.

District Name: Brookings School District 5-1

Rationale: The Brookings School District offers programs and supports that allow us to keep students with higher needs in our district. We have specialized programming for students with severe Autism and Cognitive/Adaptive needs. We have programs that provide implementation of applied behavioral analysis strategies, that address adaptive behavior needs, with instruction/curriculum that is driven by South Dakota Core Content Connectors. Our district attracts families from surrounding areas, who consider moving to our community because of the special education programs we offer.

The Brookings School District uses data review processes to ensure that the students participating in the Alternate Assessment demonstrate the need for this option. IEP teams review a student's eligibility by looking at curriculum, classroom and instructional evidence. Assessment data is

reviewed as well as current academic and functional performance, goals, short-term objectives or post-school outcomes. Considerations for specific communication needs, language assessments (EL), and supports needed for a student to achieve measurable gains are discussed. Multiple pieces of evidence help the IEP teams to make an informed, appropriate and individualized decision for each student on an annual basis.

District Name: Chamberlain 7-1

Rationale:

IEP teams take the consideration of statewide assessment very seriously and must determine whether the general assessment is the most appropriate for the student by reviewing the student's present levels of ability, academic achievement, and functional performance (PLAAFP).

The PLAAFP provides team members with a precise list of the student's strengths and needs. The team discusses how the student will access grade-level curriculum and the degree of modification required for the student to have the opportunity to learn grade-level curriculum.

If the statewide assessment is not appropriate for a student, the IEP team provides justification in the student's IEP. The Chamberlain School District has a high number of students with cognitive disabilities whose ability falls in the severe to profound range of functioning and whose achievement is many grade levels below their peers. These students are consistently unable to provide consistent, correct responses during instruction consistently over time to maintain academic gains at the same level as their same-age peers.

District Name: Harrisburg School District

Rationale: The Harrisburg School District follows the guidelines provided by the South Dakota's Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines. Appendix D of these guidelines is completed for every student that is being considered for the Alternate Assessment to show the student meets the requirements. Harrisburg's percentage of students with cognitive impairments who meet the requirements for the Alternate Assessment happens to be higher than the 1.0 percent limit. This number may be due to a number of factors including our district's close proximity to Sioux Falls and the resources available in the Sioux Falls area or due to the availability of specialized programs that we are able to offer within our own district. Regardless, each IEP team determines the need for the alternate assessment on an annual and individual basis.

District Name: Huron School District

Rationale: The Huron School District strives to keep students in district. We offer programs for students with severe disabilities and needs. Our Developmental Learning Classrooms and Social Skills Classrooms at all levels across the district implements individualized instruction, specific behavior interventions, adaptive behavior strategies and instruction and curriculum driven by the South Dakota Core Content Connecters. We also serve a vast array of ESL students that have moved in with additional needs. We strive to educate all students in our district with the programs offered, least restrictive environments and providing services locally instead of out of district placements. We offer programs that can meet the intensive and structured learning environments for students in the least restrictive way in order for them to not move to an out of district placement. The Huron School District annually reviews the criteria for the Alternative Assessment at each IEP meeting to determine if individual students meet the criteria. The IEP teams use the Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions on the Alternate Assessment of South Dakota Content Standards and looks at data to see if students continue to meet the criteria.

District Name: Meade 46-1

Rationale: Meade School District has many students who qualify as cognitively disabled and received intense special education services. We have examined the testing results for the prior two years as well as analyzed the information on individual students who are cognitively disabled. We feel that we have an ethical responsibility to advocate for these students by administering the alternate assessment based on their individual abilities even though we exceed the 1% cap.

District Name: Oglala Lakota County 65-1

Rationale:

Oglala Lakota County 65-1 has more than 1.0 percent of its student population tested on the Alternate Assessment.

Provided below is the justification of why our District exceeds the 1.0 percent Alternate Assessment participation even using the following:

- Even with the assistance in using the *South Dakota Guide for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions on the Alternate Assessment* our District has over 1.0 percent of student population tested on the Alternate Assessment
- Determination of a significant cognitive disability has been identified using student records that prevents students from meaningful participation in grade level standards
- Common Core State Standards are being linked to goals and instruction in student IEP's
- IEP Teams are using the three eligibility criteria to identify a student who meets these criteria for Alternate Assessment

- IEP Teams are gathering evidence to support decisions for Alternate Assessment
- Curriculum related to instruction, observations, and classroom work is noted for students
- State and District Assessments past and present are reviewed
- IEP Present Level of Performance is used for consideration of achievement and functional performance

In addition, the following are factors related to 1.0 percent of student population being tested on the Alternate Assessment

- Low socio economic status with majority of students receiving free and reduced lunches
- Disability of Downs Syndrome
- Multiple Disabilities resulting in higher challenges
- Drug and alcohol related incidents compounding disabilities
- Lack of early intervention
- Medical related issues

District Name: Rapid City Area Schools

Rationale:

Rapid City Area Schools has exceeded the 1% Alternant Assessment participation rate due to minimal amounts or ways to monitoring the IEP assessment data on a real time basis. Teachers in the special education programs have only been given minimal feedback on the requirements of the 1% Rule thus our exceeding the 1% Rule.

District Name: Sioux Falls School District

Rationale:

The Sioux Falls School District (SFSD) is committed to meet the individual needs of each student and demonstrate compliance with Federal regulations and State rules. State Accountability Assessments, including the alternate assessment, are administered according to State guidelines with the student's eligible and required to take the specific assessment. One component of those State guidelines is the eligibility criteria for participation. The SFSD implements the regulatory language that the Individual Education Program (IEP) team determines who takes the alternate assessment. To ensure that the IEP team makes that determination fully informed and compliantly, the SFSD has a variety of ways to train, inform and provide technical assistance to special education teachers and other staff ongoing throughout the school year regarding the State's criteria for participation. A process is in place to review IEP documentation and data specific to participation and eligibility. Across the District the Core Content Connectors are implemented with training regarding their integration in the IEP,

curriculum development and instruction processes. Through ongoing training and technical assistance and consistent messaging the SFSD has been and will continue to work with District staff to ensure accurate information is available to IEP teams who make decisions regarding the alternate assessment and participation. Data regarding alternate assessment participation and student results are reviewed at the building and District levels to assess participation trends as well as individual student progress in learning. The Sioux Falls School District is unique in South Dakota given the rural nature of our State. As a growing, urban District we have seen growth in our general population and students with disabilities. Consistent over many years our District identification rate for students with disabilities tends to run slightly under the national average with the mild disabilities and over the national average for significant (severe) disabilities. In addition to the population who resides within the District boundaries, the Sioux Falls community is the home to multiple specialized private agencies who serve children with disabilities. Some psychiatric residential treatment facilities as well as correctional agencies are in the District boundaries with the District responsible to provide education services to youth placed there. Specialized foster care placements and two large health care systems are also located in district boundary with one specializes in services to children/youth. Consistently throughout the school year the District office and schools are contacted by families moving to Sioux Falls from across South Dakota or from other states seeking education services for students with disabilities and moving to Sioux Falls to access supports in the community as well as school services for their child and/or family.

District Name: Tea Area School District

Rationale:

During the 2016-17 school year, Tea Area School District exceeded the 1.0% Alternate Assessment participation. The District had a high number of students with significant cognitive disabilities. These students were in out-of-district placements as well as in-district while participating in alternate curriculum and programming.

Tea Area School District is thoughtful and diligent in identifying only those most in need of alternate assessment. Our Special Education staff meets at least twice annually with the Special Education Director and Assessment Director to review students' data regarding assessment results, performance, and progress in making the best determination for our students. Evidence is collected and reviewed to ensure that decisions are based on appropriate criteria, and that the evidence supports the decisions made. Tea Area School District is committed to continuous discussions with both in-district and out-of-district special education staff in an on-going effort to meet the needs of our students.

District Name: Todd County School District

Rationale:

The district services approximately 2120 students in twelve attendance centers spread over a 1,500 square mile area. The Rosebud Reservation (Todd County) is the second poorest county in the country (US Census); we have 51% of our population under the age of 18 living in poverty (Kids Count, 2010); and 12.1% of children under the age of five who live in poverty (Kids Count 2010).

Data Review Process:

The district collects data on the number of students that take the alternate assessment at least on an annual basis. Alternate assessment participation/data is reviewed annually and during the review/discussion at annual IEP meetings. The IEP team will review the student's record to determine if there is a significant cognitive disability that impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, goals and instruction are linked to the enrolled grade level CCSS and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate/challenging and requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age appropriate curriculum.

District Name: Watertown School District 14-4

Rationale: The Watertown School District strives to keep students in district. We have specialized programming for students with severe Autism and Cognitive/Adaptive needs. Our structured learning center at all levels provides Project TEACCH principles, as well as implementation of applied behavioral analysis strategies, addresses adaptive behavior needs, and instruction/curriculum is driven by South Dakota Core Content Connectors. Our higher population is also attributed to an increase in move ins and the fact that we do offer intensive, structured learning centers that can meet our students needs in the least restrictive way, without having to move to an out of district placement.