

Districts with less than 10 taking Alt Assessment

Rationale: After reviewing the guidelines on participation decisions for the alternate assessments, the special education teachers use these guidelines and various data to make our decisions. We look at the most recent evaluations and IEP's. Significant cognitive functioning, severe deficits in adaptive skills, present levels, nonverbal students and/or students needing communication devices are also a part of this decision. Students who need extensive support such as modifications, accommodations, repetition, and repeated individualized instruction are also considered. We also look at students with autism with severe intellectual ability who require substantial support (level 3 autism table). We also observe students in various settings of the school, look at student work and the modifications and accommodations needed, and communicate with other teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents.

As for why we have a high participation rate, it is due to the fact we have very high special needs students in our district.

Rationale: Our Special Education Team follows all applicable state and federal guidelines for determining alternate assessment criteria. We thoroughly reviewed every one of the 4 students who took the alternative assessment for the 2016-17 school year, and all met the criterion of significant cognitive disability. As a small district, even one student added to our roster significantly impacts our participation rate. We have highly qualified staff where families with students with significant cognitive disabilities feel confident in the educational programming provided here.

Rationale:

- Our district is small and currently has 2 students that are categorized as cognitive impaired and meet all criteria for the alternative placement test according to data and team input
- Our district is assessing 91 students in the 2017-2018 school year. 1% of this population would be .91 of a student.
- If the district were able to round the above number we would be right at the 1%.

Rationale: We have two students that attend at _____ and three middle school students who each have a one-on-one aide during their school days. All of these students need to use the alternate assessment due to their disabilities during testing.

Rationale: Previously, the _____ District has only had one student participating in the Alternate Dakota Step Assessment. However, this past year two of our severely cognitively disabled students have reached testing age and a third student was listed as a junior, which makes our total number of student

taking the Alternate Assessment five. The staff and the IEP for each student looks at all options for every student. We try and have every student take the regular test, but in these 5 cases, it is not an appropriate option for this school year. With being a small school, we just happened to have all 5 students at the testing age at the same time. Due to age and graduation, we don't foresee having so many in future school years.

Rationale: The _____ District had 5 out of 411 assessed students take the alternate assessment for a 1.22% rate. At this time, we feel that all 5 students met the criteria and that school district personnel accurately used the established criteria to designate students that required alternative testing. The _____ District was less than a quarter of a percentage point over the 1% participation baseline and our review of data and IEP needs is consistent with best practice and we feel that our five students were served correctly.

Rationale: Based on the 16-17 window date the _____ district had more than 1.0 percent of its student population tested on the alternative assessment.

Rationale:

IEP teams use classroom work samples and data, teacher observations, multiple district-wide assessments (Dibels, Star Math, Star Reading, Imagine Reading, Imagine Math etc...) most recent evaluations, observations of service providers and parent/guardians and present levels of academic achievement to make a decision on whether or not we should be using the Alternative Assessment for each IEP eligible student. Each of the students that, based on IEP team decisions, qualified for the Alternate Assessment have a disability, or disabilities, that significantly impacts their cognitive function and adaptive behavior. Each of the students require continually daily support from school staff who provide direct individualized instruction and support to provide the opportunity for these students to achieve measurable gains in appropriate curriculum based in South Dakota Common Core Standards. In recent years, we have identified a number of families who have sought out our district, as a place for appropriate general education and special education services for their children.

Rationale: The _____ District exceeded the participation rate during the 2016-2017 school year. The school district carefully examined the state guidelines and used the documentation of the evidence worksheet to determine alternate assessment placement. Through the use of the state guidelines, for the alternate assessment participation rate, the _____ District determined the number of students participating in the alternate assessment, which exceeded the participation rate. The _____ District reviewed student data (significance of disability, programming and extensive support needed, type of instruction needed, evidence through work samples, and assessments, adaptive behavior, and much

more) and determined through the state guidelines that these students met the requirements to take the alternate assessment.

Rationale:

Student 1: This student required extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary nature for learning content linked to the Common Core Standards. He uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing content. He would be more able to demonstrate his knowledge using an alternate assessment. The team agreed this was more appropriate for this student.

Student 2: This student is unable to computer grade level math, read and comprehend grade level material, write essays at grade level, therefore the regular assessment is not appropriate for her. She uses an alternate curriculum in all academic areas; therefore again, the state assessment will not measure what she knows. The IEP teams feels the alternate assessment is a better assessment of her skills.

Student 3: This student's skills are significantly below where they would be expected to be for a 5th grade students. She struggles to work independently and requires extensive repetition and exposure to master new concepts and skills. She struggles to work 2-3 letter words and to computer basic math problems. She has a difficult time writing a basic sentence and is unable to follow a classroom lecture or multiple step directions. Her skills are below those of typical peers. The IEP team feels the alternate assessment measures this student at her skill level and will be a better representation of her abilities.

Student 4: This student uses an alternate curriculum or substantially modified curriculum in all academic areas, therefore, the regular assessment would not measure the skills that he is working on. The IEP team feels the alternate assessment is appropriate for him because this assessment will more accurately measure his current academic skills. This assessment more closely aligns with the alternate curriculum that he uses.

Rationale:

During the 2016-2017 school year, the _____ District experienced a large number or percentage of students who met each of the three eligibility requirements for the alternate assessment.

Each of the students who took the alternate assessment have a significant cognitive disability that impacts their cognitive function and adaptive behavior. Their instruction is aligned to the South Dakota content standards in ELA, Math, and Science, but it is adapted to reflect their knowledge and skill levels relative to those standards as documented in the students' present levels of performance. Each of the students required extensive direct and individualized instruction, and substantial support in order to make gains that are measureable.

Rationale: We have three students born with a significant cognitive disorder and one student with a significant cognitive disorder who moved into our school district . One student with the cognitive disability was a freshmen last year so they did not have to take the state assessment. The student's disability does not allow them to learn at the same pace as all the other students. As a school district, we have to come up with alternative teaching strategies to help these students be successful. To help the school district determine if these students are learning, the school district has to give the students the alternative assessment. From the data received from the alternative assessments, we determine what changes need to be made in our teaching strategies.

Rationale: The _____ District has exceeded the one percent participation threshold for the number of students taking the Alternate Assessment. The District's IEP team does utilize the South Dakota's Significant Cognitive Disability Criteria when determining if a student is eligible for an alternative assessment along with any appropriate accommodations and modifications via a student's IEP. This is done through a data review process that assess students' capacity to participate to the maximum extent possible in the general education program and on statewide assessments when criteria is met. This is done prior to any Alternative Assessment consideration and participation. If a student's needs cannot be fully met through the use of accommodations, modifications, functional skills assessments, Core Content Connectors, parental input, and the IEP teams review of evaluation data, the IEP team determines an alternate assessment is an appropriate measure to determine academic progress based on alternate academic achievement standards. The number of students who were determined, via the above process, to have met the criteria for Alternative Assessment in 2016-2017 exceeded the allowable measure by 2 students due to a number of students having significant cognitive disabilities.

Rationale: We allowed 3 students to take the alternate assessment. Each of these students' IEP teams made the decision for each of these individuals to participate in the alternate assessment (MSAA). The following criteria were used:

1. The student has a significant cognitive disability. (Adaptive Behavior is impaired as well.)

Student #1 - YES

Student #2 - YES

Student #3 - YES

2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Student #1 - YES

Student #2 - YES

Student #3 - YES

3. The student required extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.

Student #1 - YES

Student #2 - YES

Student #3 - YES

Rationale: During the 2016-2017 school year there were five students eligible for the alternate assessment in the _____ District. Four of the five students' cognitive abilities were far below the two standard deviations below the average. The fifth student was also below the two standard deviations below the average and had transferred to _____ with an IEP written for the alternate assessment. The students that participated in the alternate assessment are unable to apply cognitive and adaptive skills across the settings of home and school without adult assistance to make modifications, accommodations, adaptations and offer multiple alternate opportunities. The instruction for these students are aligned to the South Dakota Content Standards but is adapted to each student's level. The knowledge and skills addressed during instruction are found in the Core Content Connectors and focus on basic academic skills and also address life and job skills.

Rationale:

The _____ District has identified thirteen students in our population that should be eligible for the alternative assessment based on their ability, functional adaptive behavior, and need for individualized specialized instruction that is intense and frequent. In 2017, our district identified seven students that qualified based on the documentation of evidence worksheet that justified that need. The demographics of our district dictate that need, not the percentage set by the state. We have a high number of special education students in our student population. Of those special education students, the special education staff has determined the need of how our students should be assessed on state assessments.

Rationale: Each of the 9 students tested in 2017 using the alternative assessment were eligible using the guidance of the 'documentation of evidence worksheet' by the IEP teams. During the IEP meeting the team considered if the disability significantly impacted cognitive function and behavior. In each of the students it was determined that the answer was yes. Documentation of the evidence included: WIAT/WISC testing results, adaptive behavior testing results, FSIQ and nonverbal IQ, informal reading/math testing, DIBELS benchmarking and STAR reading/math.

The second indicator for eligibility which was discussed during IEP team meetings was what instruction looked like compared to State Level Grade Standards. All students were being instructed using the Core Content Connectors. Evidence for this included lesson plans and materials. Progress monitoring was

referred to also. The students present levels of performance was attached as examples of what levels the students were working at on the Core Content Connectors.

The third criteria for eligibility on the alternative test included whether the student is unable to apply skills in home, school and community without intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in multiple settings. With the team making this determination, parents could contribute home information and agreed that these factors were true in all 9 students. The school could identify curriculum examples and that the students were working below grade level on the Core Content Connectors. Teachers collected data to make the determination that this questions was true of the students.

Rationale:

We have a wonderful Life Skills program in _____. We are proud of the supports and opportunities provided for all students. Over the past several years, the number of open enrollment applications have increased in our district as well as families moving into the community to provide programming for their children.

IEP teams consider standardized assessment results, skill based assessments, the need for specialized instruction, and specialized factors when determining special education eligibility. When determining eligibility for the alternative assessment, teams always consider whether or not the student able to participate in the Smarter Balance Assessment first. When teams consider the alternative assessment, students must have a significant cognitive disability that impacts both adaptive behavior and cognitive function. Students are typically participating in our daily life skills program as a part of their daily direct instruction. This environment provides extensive, repeated, and individualized instruction. Curriculum and materials are significantly modified and adapted to meet individual student needs. IEP team discuss how participating in an alternative assessment may impact post-school outcomes for students. After teams review data they determine which assessment is most appropriate based on individual student need. We are well aware of the 1% participation regulation, but always make team determinations on an individual basis. Due to the high number of students in our district with multiple disabilities, Autism, and severe cognitive impairment there are years when we have exceeded our 1% participation rate. Sometimes it is due to new students moving to 3rd grade and now participating in state assessments or new students in district. I feel confident that our district reviews each situation on an individual basis, always consider participation in the Smarter Balance as a first choice.

Rationale: After review of data, it has been determined that the percentage of alternatively assess students exceeds the 1%. These students, through the Alt. Assessment Participation documentation and guideline, are unable to participate in the general assessment due to cognitive delays that require extensive, direct, individualized instruction and significantly modified materials to facilitate learning and

understanding. Based on evidence from previous assessments, student work samples, and the need for substantial supports, the IEP team, including student, parents/guardians, teachers and paraprofessionals, chose to assess these students using the Alternate Assessment.

Rationale: In using the Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines, the students in the _____ District that were tested using the alternate assessment met ALL THREE criteria on the guideline. Our district has a higher than 1% participation rate due to the number of students with low cognitive ability and students who have limited communication skills.

Rationale: Our teams determined that the three students who took the Alternative Assessment were all cognitively impaired, participating in alternative curriculums, had a history of taking the Alternative Assessment and not excelling, and receiving much of their day to day instruction in the resource rooms.

Rationale: 4 students taking the Alternate Assessments justification

We have 2 students that were 8th graders last school year. Both students have a Cognitive Disability that is significantly below average general intellectual functioning that exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior skills.

Student A has been in our school district since 2004.

The other student (student B) came to our school district in March of 2017 from another district.

Our 7th grade student (student C) has a Traumatic Brain Injury in which the injury to the brain was caused by an external physical force, resulting in a total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment or both. The head injury resulting in impairments in one or more areas such as: cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgement, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing and speech.

Student C has been in our district since 2005

Our 4th grade student that is presently in the elementary school (student D) has an Autism Spectrum Disorder. His disorder also has an adverse effect on his communication and cognitive ability. Other than computers, physical education and music; he is in the resource room. He took the regular assessment in 2015 and his SPED teacher determined it was too much for him to sit in front of a computer and cognitively take; it was rewritten in his new IEP that he start taking the alternative assessment in 2016.

Student D has been in our district since 2009.