



## Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD)

### Frequently Asked Questions for Families

#### **1. What is the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD)?**

Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) is the federally required statewide assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to participate in the state's general assessment even with allowable accommodations.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) limits the total number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are assessed statewide with an alternate assessment to 1% of the total number of students in the state who are assessed (or approximately 9% of all students with disabilities). The alternate assessment is aligned to [Ohio's Learning Standards-Extended \(OLS-E\)](#) and designed to allow students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in an appropriately rigorous assessment.

#### **2. Why must students with the most significant cognitive disabilities take state tests?**

The reauthorized federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004) extends educational accountability and reform to ALL students, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This legislation, along with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and Ohio law, mandates that all students with disabilities be included in state and district test programs and that they take either the general tests (with or without accommodations) or alternate tests. These laws provide clear expectations that states will align assessments of student achievement with the state's academic content standards.

#### **3. When and how will the alternate assessment be administered?**

The alternate assessment testing window opens in February and ends in late March. This window was chosen to provide as much instructional time as possible prior to testing and still provide ample time to test all eligible students at each student's pace. A test administrator, usually the student's teacher, will administer the tests to your child in a one-on-one environment.

#### **4. How is the alternate assessment designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?**

The alternate assessment is designed to be accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities. The test contains questions that range from simple to complex. The test is computer adaptive, meaning the difficulty of the next question a student receives on their test is based on whether they answer the previous question correctly. Students may answer using their preferred method of communication (oral, point/gesture, sign language).

language, picture system, or augmentative communication device) and test materials can be adapted to the specific needs and accommodations that have been documented in the individualized education program (IEP). There is no time restriction on the test and students may stop and resume the test at any point during the multiple week test window.

**5. In which grades and content areas will my child be tested?**

Students will take the alternate assessment in the same grades and content areas that are administered for Ohio's State Tests in grades 3-8. High school students take the alternate assessment for the first time in grades 9-11. Which high school test the student takes and which grade depends on when the school has determined the student has been taught the content and is ready to take the test.

Student Grade Level	Content Areas to Be Administered to Each Student
3	English language arts and mathematics
4	English language arts and mathematics
5	English language arts, mathematics and science
6	English language arts and mathematics
7	English language arts and mathematics
8	English language arts, mathematics and science
High School	English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies

**6. When will I receive my child's test results?**

The family score report for the alternate assessment will be sent to your child's district in the summer. Check with your child's school to determine when you will receive your child's report.

The score reports for the alternate assessment will show your child's performance on each content area of the test. It will also explain what students at your child's proficiency level know and can do in each content area.

**7. What does my child's performance level tell me?**

The performance levels indicate how often and accurately your child demonstrates the knowledge and skills being tested.

For more information on the alternate assessment family score reports, visit the [Ohio Alternate Assessment Portal](#) and download the Score Reports Interpretive Guide, which walks users through the features of the reports.

**8. Can I receive my Family Score Report in a second language?**

Yes, for more information, please contact the Office of Assessment at [Statetests@education.ohio.gov](mailto:Statetests@education.ohio.gov) or 1-877-644-6338.

**9. Where can I learn more about Ohio's Alternate Assessment?**

Families can visit the Ohio Alternate Assessment Portal Students and Families page ([oh.portal.airast.org](http://oh.portal.airast.org)) to find more information, including frequently asked questions documents and practice tests. Families are also encouraged to speak with their child's teacher(s) to learn more.