

Wyoming Alternate Assessment Participation Guidance



Wyoming Department of Education

122 W. 25th St., Ste. E200 | Cheyenne, WY 82002
P: 307-777-7675 | F: 307-777-6234 | edu.wyoming.gov

Identification, Evaluation, and Eligibility Determinations for Special Education

The purpose of special education is to provide equal access to education for children ages birth through 21 by providing specialized services that will lead to school success in the general curriculum. Pursuant to §300.301(b): Request for initial evaluation. Consistent with the consent requirements in § 300.300, either a parent of a child or a public agency may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability. This is the first step in the special education evaluation process.

Once the referral has been made and formal assessments have been completed, the evaluation team will need to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. Pursuant to §300.306(c)(2): If a determination is made that a child has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP must be developed for the child in accordance with §300.320 through §300.324. Additionally, there is considerable case law to support this premise. If a child has a disability, but only needs a related service and NOT special education, the child is not eligible. §3008(a)(2).

[Wyoming Chapter 7 Rules](#) provides the state's Special Education Rules. Section 4 specifically addresses identification, evaluation, and eligibility determinations for special education. [Wyoming's Policy and Procedure Manual](#) is a separate document.

Participation in Assessment

Federal law clearly includes all students in assessment and accountability. Thus, all students with disabilities are included in all state and district-wide assessments. For students who have an IEP, the IEP team must determine **how** students participate in assessments, **not whether** they participate.

Since instruction drives assessment, it is the instructional standard that determines assessment. IEP teams are required to consider whether a student with the most significant cognitive disability should receive instruction in the general education curriculum aligned with the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards ([WYCPS](#)) or in an alternate curriculum aligned with the Wyoming Extended Standards ([WYES](#)).

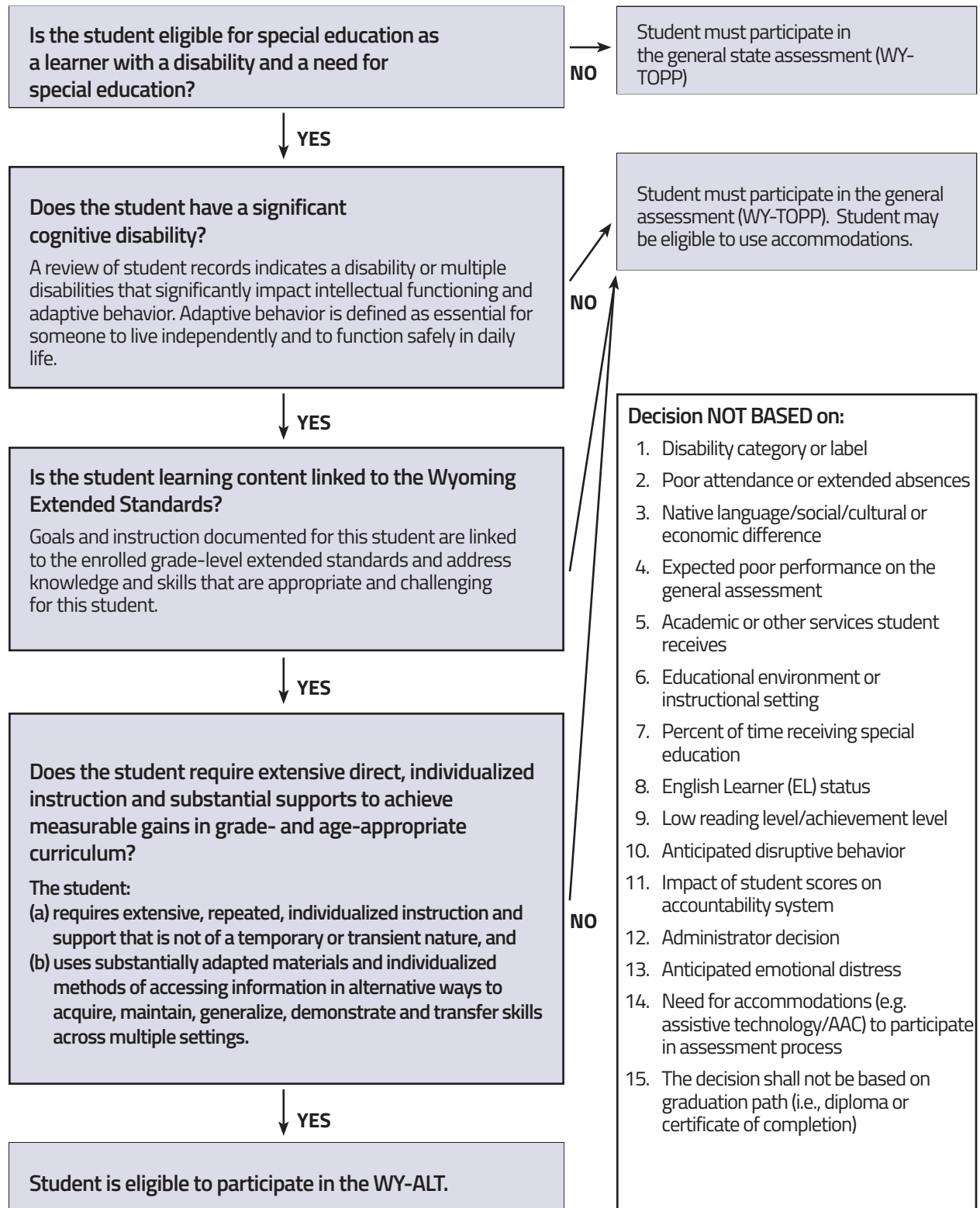
The IEP team needs to determine if a student has documented evidence of a cognitive disability and if the severity of the cognitive disability falls into the most significant range. If it does not, the IEP team may choose grade-level instructional standards with/without appropriate accommodations. In that case, the student will participate in grade-level classroom/district/state assessments with or without accommodations.

If the IEP team finds there are compelling reasons that the student should receive instruction based on WYES, the student may be eligible to take the Wyoming Alternate Assessment ([WY-ALT](#)). This must be documented in the student's IEP, including accommodations for the assessment. IEP teams should consider that participation in the WY-ALT assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma.

It is important to note, some students who have a cognitive disability WILL NOT require instruction based on WYES and WILL NOT take WY-ALT. It is an individualized determination made by the IEP team.

WY-ALT Decision Making Flowchart

The student is eligible to participate in the alternate assessment if all responses below are **YES**.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 1.0% Threshold (Cap)?

The 1.0% Threshold (Cap) relates to the federal accountability requirement that all students be included in state assessment. It is not a limit on the number of children who may take an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. Rather, it is a limit on the number of proficient and advanced scores that may be included in accountability calculations. The number of students taking the alternate assessment cannot be administratively determined.

What are the consequences of taking an alternate assessment?

Through the IEP process, parents must be informed of the potential consequences, if any, for their child if he or she participates in WY-ALT based on WYES. Eligibility for the WY-ALT will be evaluated annually. Continued participation in WYES and WY-ALT may impact student curricula, number of credits earned, and the possibility of earning a diploma. Parents must be aware of any implications for their child's graduation options. ([IDEA Sec. 300.160](#))

How does the IEP team determine WY-ALT participation?

IEP team decisions must be based upon:

- unique abilities and needs of each individual student,
- impact of the disability on educational performance, and
- professional judgment, supported by a collected body of evidence to support the existence of a cognitive disability that falls within the significant cognitive disability range, either as the primary condition or a secondary component.

The special education disability category may not be a deciding factor. In other words, the disability category of Cognitive Disability itself does not automatically qualify the student to receive instruction based on WYES or to take the WY-ALT. Some disability categories have eligibility criteria that may inherently exclude significant cognitive disability. It is the existence of the significant cognitive disability, regardless of a certain disability category, that allows the IEP team to consider the option of WYES and WY-ALT.

A small number of students who have significant cognitive disabilities will meet the participation guidelines to receive instruction based on the WYES and take WY-ALT and district assessments. However, the number of students who meet the participation guidelines is not limited nor can it be administratively determined.

What alternate assessments are available for English Learner (EL) students with a disability?

The ALT-ACCESS for English Learner students ([ELLs](#)) is an assessment of English language proficiency (ELP) for students in grades 1-12 who are classified as English learners (ELs) and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the [ACCESS for ELLs®](#) assessment. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA 2015) requires that all students identified as ELs be assessed annually for English language proficiency, including students who receive special education services. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) also mandates that students with disabilities participate in statewide and district-wide assessment programs, including alternate assessments with appropriate accommodations, when it is documented in their Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

Wyoming Alternate Assessment Participation Guidance Criteria

Exclusionary Factors:

- The IEP Team affirms that annual assessment data was reviewed for each content area.
- The decision for participation in the Alternate Assessment is NOT based on the following:
 1. A specific disability category or label
 2. Poor attendance or extended absences
 3. Native language/social, cultural, or economic difference
 4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment (WY-TOPP)
 5. Academic and other services student receives
 6. Educational environment or instructional setting
 7. Percent of time receiving special education services
 8. English Learner (EL) status
 9. Low reading level/achievement level
 10. Anticipated disruptive behavior
 11. Impact of student scores on the accountability system
 12. Administration and/or parental decision
 13. Anticipated emotional distress
 14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in the assessment
 15. The decision shall not be based on graduation path (i.e., diploma or certificate of completion).

Criterion	Considerations	Yes	No
<p>Criterion #1 The student has a significant cognitive disability*.</p> <p>*Significant cognitive disability is not related to the disability category.</p>	Does the student’s record indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior?		
	Does the student demonstrate cognitive ability and adaptive skill levels that impede progress of the general core curriculum, with or without accommodations?		
	Does the student have a disability that presents unique and significant challenges to participate productively in everyday life activities in school, home, community, and work environments?		
<p>Criterion #2 The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.</p>	Does the student require extensive modifications to the general curriculum (classroom objectives, materials, and/or activities)?		
	Does the student require frequent and extensive, repeated instruction presented in individualized, incremental steps that is not temporary in nature?		
	Does the student use substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information?		
	Does the student require substantial assistance to acquire, maintain, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings (e.g., school, workplace, community, and home)?		
<p>Criterion #3 The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Wyoming Extended Standards, which appropriately challenge the student.</p>	Is the student unable to master grade-level standards even after being provided the appropriate and allowable accommodations?		
	Are the goals and instructions listed in the IEP for this student linked to the enrolled grade-level extended standards for all assessed content areas?		
	Is the student unable to participate in any other component of the statewide assessment system, even with test accommodations?		

If Yes to ALL	If No to ANY
<p>At this time, the evidence supports potential student participation in alternate assessments.</p> <p>Instruction and alternate assessments will be based on the Wyoming Extended Standards.</p> <p>Student may participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate classroom/district assessments based on extended standards (Gr. K-12+) <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate State Summative Assessments (Gr. 3-10) <p>Continue to Parent Note.</p> <p><small>Note: With the passage of IDEA in 1997 and its reauthorization in 2004, it is required that both state and districts provide an alternate assessment for students who cannot participate in general state and district assessments.</small></p>	<p>At this time, the evidence supports student participation in general assessments.</p> <p>Assessments will be based on grade-level Wyoming standards.</p> <p>Student will participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> General classroom/district assessments based on general standards with or without accommodations (Gr. K-12+) <input type="checkbox"/> State Summative Assessments with or without accommodations (Gr. 3-10) <input type="checkbox"/> ACT (Gr. 11) <input type="checkbox"/> WorkKeys Assessments (optional in Gr. 11-12)

IEP Team Note Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand this student will take the WY-ALT summative assessment in place of the WY-TOPP summative assessment. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that continued participation in the WY-ALT assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand this decision will be reviewed annually.

IEP Team District Representative's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Note Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I understand my student will take the WY-ALT summative assessment in place of the WY-TOPP summative assessment. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that continued participation in the WY-ALT assessment may lead to a certificate of completion instead of a general diploma. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand this decision will be reviewed annually.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Wiser ID #

Glossary

Academic Modifications

"A modification as used in this document is an adjustment to an assignment or a test that changes the standard or what the test or assignment is supposed to measure. Examples of possible modifications include a student completing work on part of a standard or a student completing an alternate assignment that is more easily achievable than the standard assignment." (Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) FAPE Coordinating Office: PACER Center, Inc. 8161 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55437, 952-838-9000 voice ~ 952-838-0190 TTY ~ 952-838-0199 fax ~ 1-888-248-0822 toll-free, Web site: www.fape.org ~ E-mail: fape@pacer.org, Readers are encouraged to copy and share this information, but please credit PACER Center)

Accommodations

"Accommodations are a change in how an assessment is presented, administered, or in how a student is allowed to respond. The proper use of accommodations does not change academic level or performance criteria and are made to provide equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge." (NAAC Glossary. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://naac.cast.org/glossary#>)

Activities of Daily Living

"Essential self-care skills needed to function independently in society, the most basic of which are feeding, toileting, and dressing. Also called independent living skills. Generally considered skills for self-care, social skills, domestic maintenance (housekeeping), employment or vocational skills, and recreation." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Adaptive Behavior

"Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that are learned and performed by people in their everyday lives. Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction. Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized. Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone. Standardized tests can also determine limitations in adaptive behavior." (American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://www.aiddwi.org>)

Alternate Assessment (AA)

"Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in general state assessments even with accommodations. Alternate assessments provide a mechanism for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and for other students with disabilities who may need alternate ways to access assessments, to be included in an educational accountability system. There are three types of alternate assessments: Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS); Alternate Assessment Based on Modified Academic Achievement Standards (AA-MAS); Alternate Assessments Based on Grade-level Achievement Standards (AA-GLAS)." (NAAC Glossary. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://naac.cast.org/glossary#>)

Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS)

"The alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) is an assessment of academic content used for accountability purposes. It is intended to be used with students with significant cognitive disabilities as determined by each state's eligibility criteria.

National data on who participates in AA-AAS show that most students are those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, primarily those with intellectual disabilities, autism, and multiple disabilities...

The achievement of grade-level content by students with significant cognitive disabilities is very different from their general education classroom peers, but the evidence of their work is compelling. Given the right kinds of supports, these students, including ELs with significant cognitive disabilities, are able to learn academic content with reduced complexity, breadth, and depth clearly linked to the same grade-level content as their peers. Researchers and practitioners are working side-by-side to capture the nature of the linkages to the grade-level content in both instruction and assessment. ("Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS) Overview." NCEO. Accessed May 07, 2019.

https://nceo.info/Assessments/alternate_assessments/aa-aas) See Wyoming Extended Standards.

Assessment

"Broader than testing and typically includes gathering and integrating information to determine a student's current level of emotional, behavioral, academic, and intellectual functioning, resulting educational needs and strategies for remediation to promote effective treatment; common assessment - methods include standardized tests, interviews, behavioral assessments, rating scales, apperception tests, and neurophysical tests." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Assistive Technology

"Assistive Technology (AT) device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of that device." (29 U.S.C. § 3002 - Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://us.vlex.com/vid/definitions-671076929>)

Cognitive Disability

Cognitive Disability means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(A) Cognitive Disability eligibility criteria: Eligibility is established through a comprehensive evaluation in accordance with the requirements of these rules by the school district or public agency. The initial evaluation process shall be comprehensive and address all areas of need resulting from the suspected disability. In accordance with these rules, a child is identified as a child with a Cognitive Disability if all of the following criteria are met:

(l) Documentation on an individual test of intelligence that the child's intellectual functioning is two (2) standard deviations below the mean, taking into consideration the standard error of measurement. In the event that an individual test of intelligence is not able to be administered to the child, the evaluation team shall document how they determined that the child's performance in a majority of areas;

(II) Documentation on an individually administered test or assessment that the child's academic or pre-academic skills are coexistent with the child's deficits in intellectual functioning. Behavior observations, criterion-referenced tests, or documentation of classroom performance may be used when a child's level of functioning cannot appropriately be measured by standardized tests; and

(III) Documentation on standardized adaptive behavior measurements, that includes information gathered from parents and school staff, that the child's deficits in adaptive behavior are coexistent with the child's deficits in intellectual functioning." (Chapter 7 Rules. (n.d.). Retrieved April 22, 2019, from https://1ddlxtt2jowkvs672myo6z14-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/chapter_7_rules_march232010.pdf)

Diagnostic Test

"An instrument to measure an individual student's strengths and weaknesses in a specific area and how his/her resulting educational needs can be met through regular instruction or remediation." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

English Learners (EL)

"The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 replaced the term "limited English proficient" with the term English learner. The 2017 amendments to the IDEA Part B regulations at 34 CFR 300.27 provides that the term has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the ESEA.

Under ESSA, the term "English learner," when used with respect to an individual, means an individual: (A) who is ages 3 through 21; (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school; (C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; (ii) I. who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and II. who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual: (i) the ability to meet the state's proficient level of achievement on state assessments described in section 1111(b)(3); (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society. Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114- 95, Sec. 8101(25)." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Fifty years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. The law represented a major new commitment by the federal government to "quality and equality" in educating our young people.

When President Johnson sent the bill to Congress, he urged that the country, "declare a national goal of full educational opportunity."

The purpose of ESEA was to provide additional resources for vulnerable students. ESEA offered new grants to districts serving low-income students, federal grants for textbooks and library books, created special education centers, and created scholarships for low-income college students. The law also provided federal grants to state educational agencies to improve the quality of elementary and

secondary education. ("What Is ESEA?" ED.gov Blog, April 08, 2015. Accessed May 07, 2019. <https://blog.ed.gov/2015/04/what-is-esea/>)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

"On Dec. 10, 2015, the president signed ESSA, Pub. L. No. 114-95, into law, reauthorizing the ESEA. Most provisions of ESSA take effect beginning with SY 2017-18. ESSA repeals AYP and replaces it with statewide accountability systems." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Grade Level Standards

"Generally the level of classroom performance of a student who is learning material at about the same rate and quality as others in the same class. When used in connection with a standardized test scoring at the 50th percentile rank, meaning that about half the student's peers score higher and about half score lower." (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.).

Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

"The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 ([IDEA](#)) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. The IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities." (NAAC Glossary. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://naac.cast.org/glossary#>)

Interim

Interim assessments are similar to the summative assessment in that they are built with similar questions, but interims are shorter, optional, and taken at different times throughout the year to show student progress. The interim assessments offer instant, detailed results, and educators are able to see each student's response to questions. WY-TOPP interim assessments are available in grades K-10.

[Wyoming State Assessment System](#)

Learner Characteristics Inventory

"The Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) (Kearns, Kleinert, Kleinert, and Towles-Reeves, 2006) was developed by the National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) in order to investigate the true learning characteristics of students participating in alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS). The instrument was intended to verify validity questions that extend our knowledge of the assessment population to insure that 1) the test is designed for the intended population; and 2) the intended population is participating in the test (Kearns, 2006). The AERA, APA, and NCME Joint Standards on Psychological Testing (1999) recommend that "population(s) for which the test is appropriate should be clearly delimited" (p. 17). The students who participate in AA-AAS represent a highly diverse population with varying levels of communication and other complex characteristics that impinge on the assessment design and the interpretations that we want to make about the assessment

results. The LCI is designed to enhance the demographic data collection for the test and when used appropriately, provide additional data to consider in the validity evaluation for AA-AAS. The LCI should not be used as an assessment device or in any other capacity where decisions would be made about students based on the results.” (Publications: Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI). (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://www.naacpartners.org/publications/LCI.aspx>)

Measurable Goals and Objectives

A goal is an overall principle that guides decision making. Objectives are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goal. Measurable means you can count or observe it. Measurable goals allow parents and teachers to know how much progress the child has made since the performance was last measured.

Multidisciplinary Team

“Generally, a functioning unit of individuals with varied professional training that coordinates services for a child with a disability, also called an interdisciplinary team. The group of people who conduct the evaluation and determine the placement of a child with a disability under the IDEA and Section 504. According to 34 CFR 300.116 (a)(1), the team is “a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options” who make placement decisions. Membership on the team can change. It can be the IEP team. The term “MDT” is not specifically used in the 2006 implementing regulations of the IDEA. However, state law often specifies the members of a child’s placement team and what the team is called. If parents dispute the appointment of certain members to the placement team, they may pursue relief through the established due process or state complaint procedures under the IDEA.

Section 504 regulations at 34 CFR 104.35 (c) are broad, stating that “placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options.” (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Multiple Disabilities

“Multiple Disabilities means concomitant impairments (such as Cognitive Disability-Blindness; Traumatic Brain Injury-Orthopedic Impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one (1) of the impairments. The term does not include Deaf-Blindness unless eligibility criteria in an additional disability category are satisfied.

A. Multiple Disabilities eligibility criteria: Eligibility is established through a comprehensive evaluation in accordance with the requirements of these rules. The initial evaluation shall be conducted by qualified professionals as determined appropriate by the school district or public agency. The initial evaluation process shall be comprehensive and address all areas of need resulting from the suspected disability.” ([WY Ch. 7 Rules](#))

Procedural Safeguards

“The collective term used to refer to the formality requirements of Part B of the IDEA that are designed to allow parents to participate meaningfully in decisions concerning the appropriate educational program for their children; includes: (a) providing parents with “prior written notice” whenever it proposes or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation or educational placement of the child, or the provision of FAPE.” (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

Specially Designed Instruction

“Adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.” (**IDEA 300.39**)

Summative

The state summative assessment is an end-of-year test that measures how much students have learned during the school year. Students in grades 3-10 take the WYTOPP summative assessment in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Writing is assessed in grades 3, 5, 7, and 9; Science is assessed in grades 4, 8, and 10. (**WDE Assessment**)

Universal Design (Tools)

“A concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities, which include products and services that are directly accessible (without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are interoperable with assistive technologies. 34 CFR 300.44. The term has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 USC 3002. (Authority 20 USC 1401 (35).) Universal design is based on three principles: 1) Multiple means of representation, to give diverse learners options for acquiring information and knowledge; 2) Multiple means of action and expression, to provide learners options for demonstrating what they know; and 3) Multiple means of engagement, to tap into learners’ interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation.” (Special Ed Connection Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.specialedconnection.com/LrpSecStoryTool/splash.jsp>)

WY-ALT (Wyoming Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities)

Wyoming’s alternate assessment, WY-ALT, is designed for a small number of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. It is part of a statewide instructionally supportive assessment system which complies with the requirements of federal accountability law and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

Wyoming has rigorous academic standards for all students. The Wyoming Department of Education believes that the results of the WY-ALT, along with other measures of student performance, will enable teachers to provide individualized academic instruction to enable students to achieve high standards of academic performance and improve instructional programs. A student’s participation in the WY-ALT is appropriate when the IEP team has determined that the student’s academic achievement is best measured by the Wyoming Extended Standards, consistent with Wyoming’s participation requirements. (**WY-ALT**)

Wyoming Extended Standards (Alternate Achievement Standards(AAS)) (WYES)

“The Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES) define the essential knowledge and skills that allow students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to achieve high academic expectations and to access the general academic curriculum. The WYES are linked to the grade-level Wyoming state standards. The WYES provide a common set of goals and expectations for all students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in Wyoming. They also provide a consistent framework for challenging instruction to promote access to the general education curriculum.

The foundation of the WYES provide a framework for instruction of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and to assist school districts, schools, and communities in developing and strengthening curriculum, rather than prescribing courses, materials, or instructional methodology. The WYES specify the essential learning all students with significant cognitive disabilities must master. Teachers ensure that students achieve mastery by using a wide range of instructional strategies, assistive technology, and other accommodations based on a student’s individual learning characteristics and present levels of performance.” ([Wyoming Extended Standards](#))

Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCP)

The Wyoming Content and Performance Standards serve several purposes. They articulate a set of expectations for what students should know and be able to do, enabling them to be prepared for college and career success; to live a life that contributes to the global community. These expectations are communicated to students, parents, educators, and all other Wyoming stakeholders, and provide a common understanding among educators as to what students should learn at particular grades. State law requires the standards in each content area be reviewed every nine years. Content areas are reviewed based on a Standards Review Timeline approved by the State Board of Education, who also set the Standards Implementation Timeline. ([WY Content and Performance Standards](#))

WY-TOPP

The Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress, or WY-TOPP, assesses students’ proficiency on Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. It is administered online and is a computer-adaptive assessment. In addition to the end-of-year summative assessment, schools also have the option to use WY-TOPP for their interim and modular assessments. ([WY-TOPP](#))