

**KENTUCKY ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT  
2020-2021 ADMINISTRATION GUIDE**

*for*

**TRANSITION ATTAINMENT RECORD  
(TAR)**



***Kentucky Department of Education***

***Jason E. Glass, Ed.D  
Commissioner of Education***

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## **Kentucky Alternate Assessment**

The **Transition Attainment Record (TAR)** is one of two assessment components that make up the Alternate K-PREP. The TAR provides an alternate assessment aligned to the college entrance exam required by Senate Bill 1 (revised in 2017) in the content areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 1997, PL 108-446) requires states to develop and implement guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments when those children cannot participate in regular assessments with accommodations. The TAR approach:

- ♦ assesses skills that evidence performance of desired skill sets and concepts,
- ♦ allows the instructional team to evaluate student performance, and
- ♦ permits students with significant cognitive disabilities to be assessed on skills and concepts that are linked to grade level academic skills through basic literacy, language, quantitative, and science skills that will lead to successful transitions from high school to adult life.

## **Specifications**

The TAR has the same participation guidelines as the Attainment Tasks. Participation must be an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team decision and must be documented on the IEP. The TAR is designed exclusively for students with significant cognitive disabilities who have met all of the participation guidelines.

## **Grade Level Requirements**

The Transition Attainment Record assesses a student's ability to demonstrate understanding of concepts and skills that are related to academic curriculum at **grade 11**. It is designed to mirror the content assessed on the college entrance exam.

In grade 11 the following concepts and skills may be tested:

English/Language Arts – literary elements and devices, determining how characters advance the plot, theme, objective summary, determining how the author advances plot using rhetoric, organizing writing, selecting a writing style, and producing clear and coherent writing

Mathematics – creating histograms and dot plots, mean and median, solving linear equations and inequalities

Science – Earth's surface processes and water, engineering and design, environmental changes in ecosystems and traits of species, forces, and chemical reactions.

## **TAR at GRADES 12 and 14**

Any student who did not meet benchmark at grade 11 is eligible to take the TAR at grades 12 and 14. The reading benchmark is 19. The mathematics and science benchmarks are 16.

## **Grade 12**

Grade 12 students who did not meet the benchmarks of the TAR may take the assessment in reading, mathematics and science. A grade 12 student will not appear in the Student Registration Database (SRD), it will be up to the district to register the student in the database. Once the district registers the student in the SRD, the district must then contact

[Kevin O’Hair](#) to request the account be opened. Once the account is open, scores may be entered into the SRD.

**Grade 14**

Students who have completed the grade 12 assessment requirements and remain enrolled as a grade 14 student will also have the opportunity to take the TAR if the benchmark was not met at grades 11 or 12. A grade 14 student will not appear in the Student Registration Database (SRD), it will be up to the district to register the student in the database. Once the district registers the student in the SRD, the district must then contact [Kevin O’Hair](#) to request the account be opened. Once the account is open, scores may be entered into the SRD. **Students taking the TAR at grade 14 may not have a graduation code in place.**

**Test Security**

The TAR is considered secure testing material and must follow the Administration Code/703 KAR 5:080 and Inclusion of Special Populations 703 KAR 5:070 established for all state assessments. The following information from the administration code training is adapted to address the TAR.

District assessment coordinators (DACs), administrators and teachers shall ensure the security of the assessment materials before, during and after test administration. **When not being used for testing sessions, all TAR materials shall be stored in a secure location with access granted to authorized personnel only.**

| OK  | Not OK   |
|---|--|
| <p>It is appropriate for teachers to know the concepts measured by the statewide assessment and to teach those concepts. Concepts appropriate for curriculum instruction can be found in Kentucky Program of Studies/ Curriculum Guide.</p> <p>The TAR can be reviewed and administered from the date in which it is posted on the Online Training System (OTS) website through the due date.</p> | <p>Secure test materials shall not be reproduced in whole, in part, or paraphrased in any way. Examples include: photocopying, photographing, handwriting, or typing.</p> <p>Local district staff may not show items in the test booklets to anyone not involved in administration of the test unless directed by the superintendent (See Section IV of this document for details). Once authorization has been granted to local district staff to have access to the tests, staff shall not use knowledge about the content of any specific questions to prepare students for the assessment.</p> <p>Teachers or other staff, who become aware of specific test items through any means, shall not use this knowledge to prepare students for the assessment.</p> |

Students may have TAR materials provided to them by using a text reader or by creating the symbol choice answers on the computer. All security guidelines are followed per the Inclusion of Special Populations Regulation 703 KAR: 070. When secure material is located on a disk drive, district staff shall ensure that on completion of assessment administration, files containing secure materials are completely and permanently deleted from all computer equipment. This applies to both the scanning and entry of secure test materials and student responses. Electronic or other versions of secure assessment materials or related student responses shall not be maintained in the district and should be destroyed.

## **Administration Protocol**

This section provides detailed specifications for rating the TAR with individual students. Adherence to these guidelines is required to facilitate the assessment process.

## **Timelines**

The TAR is one of the two assessment pieces (Alternate K-PREP) that make up the academic assessment portion of the Kentucky Alternate Assessment. Ratings can begin once training is complete and the document has been downloaded (test administrators will be prompted to download the TAR after successful completion of the online quiz). The TAR must be completed by the due date. The due date is May 28, 2021.

Teachers or district representatives will print the TAR for each student in grade 11 required to complete the assessment. Experience in the field following the first year of implementation showed that the best time to complete the majority of the record is during the transition meeting or the Annual Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meeting. This may be the best time to conduct the student interview portion of the TAR. The interview information is used for data purposes only and does not impact student assessment scores. The student interview information is designed to provide valuable information for transition planning.

## **Administrators**

The TAR must be completed by a certified staff member of the student's instructional team and done in collaboration with other instructional team members. The person responsible for recording the assessment must pass a qualification quiz before completing the TAR. Upon successful completion of the quiz, the lead member will be granted access to the TAR document (under Teacher Tools/Quiz Site Location).

Instructional team members may include:

- Special Education Teacher (typically lead team member): If a student has more than one special education teacher, the individual who is most familiar with the student's performance across multiple settings should be responsible for completing the record and the student interview. This teacher will also be

- responsible for recording scores as directed. Student scores, or ratings, will be entered in the SRD.
- General Education Teacher(s): To the extent a student participates in the general education program, the student's general education teacher(s) should collaborate with the primary special education teacher in determining appropriate ratings for the items on the record.
  - Other Staff: Other team members who have knowledge of a student's current performance levels in the areas assessed by the TAR should be consulted. Often, a student's Speech/Language Pathologist, Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist, or one of the other team members will have valuable information about the student's performance in different settings.
  - **Paraprofessionals may assist in administering the assessment.** However, the primary administration and all of the scoring must be completed by a certified staff member.

### **Steps to Completing the TAR**

The TAR is based on the rater's knowledge of the student's current performance at the time it is administered. The student's lead instructional team member should solicit input from other teachers and certified staff members when completing the TAR. They should supplement their own observations of the student with additional assessment activities as needed.

The goal of the TAR is to provide an accurate picture of the student's achievement and ratings must reflect the student's current achievement levels. This means that the rater must be confident that the ratings being assigned accurately reflect the student's achievement when the TAR is finalized. The items being rated must have been observed within a year's time. Any item that has not been assessed within a year must be reassessed prior to completion of the TAR to confirm the student's performance level.

1. Complete the online training. Complete the qualification quiz. Only one person (**usually the lead member**) on the instructional team needs to complete the training and quiz.
2. Review all the standards, critical functions, items, and possible documentation locations for each item in each content area.
3. Before rating a student's performance, it is important to review the TAR items with other professionals who participate in the implementation of the student's instruction and jointly decide whether the student's performance on each item should be scored

as a 0, 1, or 2 (as explained in the following section). Note the location of supporting documentation.

4. Make sure to respond to every item and record where the documentation for that item is located (e.g., student working folder, ILP, etc.)
5. If unsure of the student’s current performance level for an item, develop an assessment activity (as explained in the following section) during which the student’s behavior can be observed.
6. Review the completed TAR to ensure that all areas have been marked.
7. Complete the Student Interview. If a student is unable to complete the student interview even with support, the team may complete it based on knowledge of the student.
8. Transfer scores to the SRD as indicated when directions are received through the Alternate Assessment E-mail distribution list and DAC e-mail.

### Item Rating Scale

Every item must be rated on the following 3-point scale. **There must be a response for every item.** When rating an item, any mode of communication or responding that is typically utilized by the student is acceptable. It is important, whenever possible, to identify a modality that will permit the student to demonstrate the basic skill addressed by the item. This means that for some students, skills will be demonstrated verbally; other skills might be demonstrated by gestures, eye gaze, assistive technology, etc.

| <u>Rating Scale</u> |                            | <u>Explanation</u>  |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 0                   | Does not demonstrate skill | Use this response for skills and concepts that the student does not demonstrate in any setting.   |
| 1                   | Developing/Prompted        | Use this response for skills the student displays only with some level of <b>prompt</b> (i.e., a verbal cue, partial physical guidance, modeling, etc.). Use also for skills that are displayed inconsistently. If a student can demonstrate a skill occasionally but not consistently (79% of the time), then the skill should be rated a “1 Developing/Supported.”  |
| 2                   | Independent/Mastered       | Use this response for skills that the student clearly has mastered and performs independently. To be rated as “2 Independent/Mastered,” the student must demonstrate the skill consistently over time. The student does not have to demonstrate the skill every time but over the course of instruction would have shown that he/she has mastered the skill 80% or more of the time without prompt support. |

If an item requires two parts (e.g., the student is able to identify the origin **and** choose the appropriate scale to graph given data. If the student completes only one part, then the student would receive a 1).

## **Supporting Documentation**

Rating of student performance must be based on direct observation and must be documented. The documentation may take various forms, including quizzes, anecdotal notes, placement tests, class work, etc. The location of supporting documentation must be noted for each item. The lead team member should check off the location of the documentation. If the location is not listed, then “other” can be checked and the location listed. Following are the provided locations with a brief explanation:

- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) (current ILP or the most current transition planning documents)
- Student’s working folder (due process folder, classroom working folder, etc.)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- No previous documentation

## **Instructional Team Consensus**

For many items, there will be immediate consensus regarding the student’s current performance level. For this reason, the team members may wish to focus on discussing and resolving any differences in their perceptions for items about which there is no general agreement. If, after exploring the reasons for their differing opinions, the team members cannot reach agreement or if they determine that the student demonstrates different performance levels at different times or under different conditions, then the **lowest** of the ratings being considered must be assigned to the item.

## **Designing and Utilizing Assessment Activities**

When unsure of the student’s current performance on an item, the team should create an assessment activity to allow demonstration of performance. As needed, consult with the content teacher to clearly understand the TAR concepts and skills. Select an activity that reflects the critical function of the concept or skill set to which the item is related. When observing the student during an assessment activity, remember the following guidelines:

- a. provide assessment directions,
- b. provide the student with tools necessary to demonstrate the knowledge, skill, or concept as indicated on the assessment item,
- c. observe the student at a different time if the session is interrupted with medical or behavioral problems,
- d. use supports (assistive technology, adaptations and modifications) as needed,
- e. provide a minimum of three choices when choices are provided, and include distractors or incorrect answers along with the correct choice,

- f. score any prompts (models, prompts, cues, etc.) provided that would guide to the correct answer as a 1 – Developing/Supported,
- g. Full physical prompting leading the student to an answer would resort in a score of 0. (e.g., hand over hand)

### **Example Assessment Activity:**

The student is able to identify the author’s purpose in a text. In order to assess whether the student is able to identify the author’s purpose, the teacher develops an activity around a newspaper article about storm damage in his town. The student is read the article from the paper and allowed to look at the photos. He/she is given the article, which has been modified, reduced and adapted with picture symbols to read. Given three picture options, the student selects the picture that best represents the author’s purpose for writing the article.

Rating:

0 = the student was not able to respond even with verbal and/or partial physical prompts

1 = the student selected the author’s purpose with verbal prompts

2 = the student selected the author’s purpose independently

It is critical that the scoring criteria be applied correctly and objectively for every item assessed. To the extent that a rater works to become a better observer of student behavior and to more fully understand the subtleties of various student responses and the role that cues and prompts play in eliciting these responses, he/she will become a more reliable rater and will produce more accurate and reliable results.

### **Score and Reporting**

The team rates or scores the student performance as the TAR is completed. The lead team member reports the student’s scores to KDE through the SRD. The SRD will close for all score entry on June 4, 2021.

## **Glossary**

### **accommodation**

Changes in how a test or assessment is presented or in the response a test-taker gives (e.g., test format, response format, setting, timing, schedule); changes do not affect level, content, or performance criteria but provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities. Accommodations are intended to *mediate* the effects of a student's disability – they are *not* intended to reduce learning expectations.

### **adaptation**

Changes made to existing materials or instructional delivery in order to meet the needs of a student (e.g., head pointers, Opti-Indicator, *Boardmaker* [Mayer Johnson] symbols, photographs, symbols paired with real objects, real objects, enlarged pictures, textured or raised pictures, high contrast color or coactive signs).

### **alignment**

The effort to ensure that what teachers teach is in accordance with what the curriculum says will be taught and what is assessed on official assessments. The alignment of expectations for student learning with assessments for measuring students' attainment of these expectations is an essential attribute for an effective standards-based education system. Without adequate alignment between standards and assessments, teachers and students become confused about educational expectations. Among other things, this can result in learning expectations being lowered for some students while being raised for others, creating potential inequities.

### **Alternative High School Diploma**

A diploma provided to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to meet requirements for a regular high school diploma. Recipients of an Alternative High School Diploma will participate in alternate assessments. The Alternative High School Diploma is not equivalent to a regular high school diploma.

**assistive technology**

Tools and strategies used to assist students in developing and participating in meaningful academics, social relationships, and employment activities; can range from *low technology* (e.g., unaided communication systems, sign language, etc.) to *high technology* (e.g., computers with switch interfaces, etc.).

**augmentative communication**

Low, medium, or high technology system that assists the student in expressive language (e.g., making a request, initiate, and respond to questions, describe things or events, and express refusal).

**cut scores**

Set by the standards setting committee, cut scores are demarcations on a scale of all possible raw scores that show the beginning and ending points for each performance level.

**prompt**

For the purpose of this assessment, a prompt is defined as any word(s), gesture, or physical assistance provided by the teacher that is designed **to lead or guide the student to the correct answer** during any instructional activity (e.g., work samples, projects, or assessment probes).

**supports**

Adaptations, modifications, assistive technology, and other accommodations that provide the student access to information and allow the student to demonstrate understanding. These do not guide the student to the answer.

## References

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997, PL 105-17, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 *et seq.*

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, PL 108-446, 20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq*

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, PL 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425, 20 U.S.C §§ 6301 *et seq.*

U.S. Department of Education (December 9, 2003). Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged. *Federal Register*, 66 (236), 68698-68708

U.S. Department of Education (April 2004). Standards and assessment, peer review guidance: information and examples for meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind Act 2001

U.S. Department of Education (August 2005). Alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant disabilities, non-regulatory guidance