

Guidance for Admissions and Release Committees (ARCs) on Participation Decisions for the Kentucky Alternate Assessment

February 2018



Revision to guidance documents occurs based on feedback the Division of Learning Services (DLS) receives from the Directors of Special Education, state shareholder groups, the KDE's interpretation of law, court cases and guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The DLS also revises guidance documents based on on-site monitoring visits, desk audits and formal written complaints.

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Guidance for ARC on Participation Decisions on the Kentucky Alternate Assessment

Introduction

This document is intended to help guide an Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) to determine whether the Kentucky Alternate Assessment (Alternate K-Prep) based on alternate achievement standards, is the most appropriate assessment for an individual student with the most significant cognitive disability. This assessment was developed to ensure that all students are able to participate in an assessment that is a measure of what they know and can do in relation to the grade level Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS's). This assessment was developed to be part of a system of curriculum, instructional, and assessment tools, so that students with significant cognitive disabilities are able to participate in content instruction and assessments that are aligned to the KAS's.

ARCs must consider a student's individual characteristics when determining whether a student with a disability should participate in the general assessment with or without accommodations, or in the alternate assessment. This document outlines steps that an ARC should take in determining whether participating in the alternate assessment is appropriate for a student. These include: (a) reviewing student records and important information across multiple school years and settings (e.g., school, home, community), and (b) determining whether the student fits all of the criteria for participating in the alternate assessment as outlined in this document.

Description of the Kentucky Alternate Assessment

The Kentucky Alternate Assessment was developed in 1990 as a result of Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 to provide schools and programs with a valid and reliable means of assessing the instruction provided to students with moderate and significant disabilities (i.e., for the less than 1% of the total student population for whom traditional assessments would be an inappropriate measure of progress).

In 2011, all content areas of the Alternate K-PREP were represented by attainment tasks and the transition attainment record for students in grades 8, 10 and 11. These assessments continue to meet federal requirements for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

Alternate K-PREP is based upon two components: Attainment Tasks (AT) and the Transition Attainment Record (TAR). These components play vital roles in the assessment of the individual student.

Attainment Tasks (AT)

Attainment tasks are performance events that require students to complete a task, working step by step as directed by the teacher.

Transition Attainment Record (TAR)

The Transition Attainment Record is a checklist which evaluates the student's readiness in reading, mathematics and science.

Assessment Design

With the 2009 implementation of Senate Bill 1 (SB1) requiring new assessment standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics for the general assessment, new statements aligned to the standards were also required for the Alternate Assessment.

Low Incidence Consultants and the KDE Content Experts narrowed the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) to 10 standards to release into the field for teachers and administrators to select the top 6. KDE in conjunction with the Low Incidence Consultants worked to modify the language of the six standards selected to create less depth and breath.

Reading, mathematics, writing and science are based upon the KAS, while social studies is based upon Core Content 4.1.

The Alternate K-Prep is an assessment of English language arts (reading and writing) and mathematics in grades 3-8 and 10. It is an on demand assessment of approximately 30 test items that assess approximately 10 prioritized content targets per grade level. These content targets were identified for each grade based on learning progressions and alignment to the grade level KAS's. The assessment includes multiple choice items and constructed response items. Each content target is assessed by items that have been carefully and intentionally designed to assess a range of ability and performance.

Assessment Administration

A trained testing administrator familiar to the student (e.g., the student's teacher) facilitates the administration, presenting items via paper or manipulatives as appropriate for the student. Items are administered to the student over the course of one or more testing sessions as needed for a student to complete a content area assessment. Testing sessions are scheduled within a testing window of approximately two months in the spring and fall.

The Alternate K-PREP consists of two assessment types, Attainment Tasks and the Transition Attainment Record. Attainment Tasks are scripted, picture based performance events that allow students to complete tasks administered by a certified, trained test administrator. The Transition Attainment Record is a checklist based evaluation of a student's readiness in reading, mathematics and science at grade 11.

The Attainment Tasks are administered based on Kentucky assessment requirements related to specific content areas at grades 3-12. Two assessment windows are provided, one occurring in the fall and one in the spring. The Transition Attainment Record is an assessment type consistent with transition readiness requirements at high school and is available from September to May of an assessment year.

Participation Decisions

Kentucky's *Participation Guidelines* are provided in Appendix A. An ARC will use the guidelines to determine whether a student participates in the alternate assessment. The Alternate K-Prep is administered each year to students in grades 3-12 who meet the required criteria. As reflected in the *guidelines*, to participate a student **must meet all** of the following criteria:

1. **The student has an individualized education program and receives special education services.** Review of the eligibility determination forms and current individualized education program indicates that the student is eligible.
2. **The student has a significant cognitive disability.** Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

3. **Review of exclusions were considered.** The ARC decision for the student to participate in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment is not primarily the result of: excessive or extended absences; disability related to visual or auditory disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairment; native language, social, cultural, and economic differences; those identified as English Language Learners (ELL); pre-determined poor performance on the grade-level assessment; the student displays disruptive behaviors or experiences emotional duress during testing; administrator decision or educational environment or instructional setting

4. **The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum.** The student:
 - requires extensive, repeated, individualized direct instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature across multiple settings, and
 - requires intensive accommodations, modifications and assistive technology to access and make progress in the KAS and to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.

5. **The student will receive instruction based upon Kentucky alternate achievement standards while participating in the alternate assessment.** All data sources reviewed can be verified with supporting documentation.

Participation Descriptions

1. Kentucky definition of a student with a significant cognitive disability:
 - Meets eligibility criterion in one or more of the existing categories of disabilities under IDEA (e.g., intellectual disabilities, autism, traumatic, multiple disabilities),
 - Have cognitive and adaptive behavior functioning preventing them from attaining grade level achievement standards, even with program modifications, adaptations, and accommodations,
 - Require extensive individualized instruction across multiple settings to access and make progress in the Kentucky Academic Standards, and to maintain, generalize and demonstrate learning,
 - Have a significant cognitive disability that is not primarily the result of:
 - excessive or extended absences
 - disability related to visual or auditory disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairment
 - native language, social, cultural, and economic differences,
 - those identified as English Learners (EL)
 - pre-determined poor performance on the grade-level assessment
 - displays disruptive behaviors or experiences emotional duress during testing
 - administrator decision
 - educational environment or instructional setting

2. The student is learning content linked to Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS). The student's disability or multiple disabilities affect how the student learns curriculum linked to the KAS. The student is learning content that is linked to (derived from) the KAS that appropriately breaks the standards into smaller steps. Kentucky has derived these smaller steps from the KAS to guide instruction and they are called Kentucky alternate achievement standards. For information on the alternate achievement standards use the link here to the [Alternate Standards Page](#).

3. The student's need for extensive direct individualized instruction is not temporary or transient. His or her need for substantial supports to achieve gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum requires substantially adapted materials and customized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, and generalize skills across multiple settings.

The ARC is to consider the following information to determine whether the Kentucky Alternate Assessment is appropriate for an individual student:

- Description of the student's curriculum and instruction, including data on progress
- Data from scientific research-based interventions, progress monitoring data
- Eligibility Determination
- Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test
- Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
- Classroom work samples and data (from multiple settings)
- Examples of performance on assessment tasks to compare with classroom work
- Results of district-wide alternate assessments
- Results of individualized reading and informal assessments
- IEP information including:
 - Present (and past) levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), goals, and short-term objectives.
 - Considerations for students with individualized and substantial communication needs or modes (from multiple data sources)
 - Integrated reports and Accommodations/Modifications Determination Form
 - Considerations for students who may be learning English as a second or other language (i.e., English Learners) that may interfere with an accurate assessment of his or her academic, social, or adaptive abilities.

In addition to the criteria for determining participation, there are other issues that may affect a student's learning experience and his/her ability to learn that are **not appropriate** to consider during the decision-making process for the Kentucky Alternate Assessment. ***Do Not Use the Following as Criteria for Participation Decisions:***

- A disability category or label
- Poor attendance or extended absences
- Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
- Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
- Academic and other services student receives
- Educational environment or instructional setting
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- English Learner (EL) status
- Low reading level/achievement level
- Anticipated disruptive behavior
- Impact of test scores on accountability system
- Administrator decision
- Anticipated emotional distress
- Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment

Participation Tools

There are several tools that may be helpful to the ARC as they collect and organize evidence before making a decision about whether a student meets all of the criteria listed above. Participation forms and other tools designed to assist teams in collecting and reviewing evidence to determine whether it is appropriate for an individual student to participate in the alternate assessment are provided in the appendices.

[Appendix A. Participation Guidelines.](#) This is a form that ARCs use to make decisions about whether a student is eligible to participate in the Alternate Assessment. This form also includes a way to indicate the evidence that was used in making decisions and the considerations that should *not* be the basis of making decisions.

[Appendix B. Decision Flowchart for Participation.](#) This shows the sequence of decisions made by ARC when determining whether a student should participate in the alternate assessment.

[Appendix C. Learner Characteristics Inventory.](#) The LCI has two primary purposes: 1) to describe the range of the characteristics of learners who participate in alternate assessments and to 2) describe the extent to which patterns of those characteristics emerged within and across districts and within the state.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who decides that a student should participate in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment?

The ARC makes the determination of how a student will participate in statewide assessments. The ARC must follow the Kentucky Participation Guidelines if they are to assign a student to participate in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment. No one member of the ARC makes this decision. Parents, teachers, and administrators make the decision based on evidence and adherence to the *Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines* and *Guidance for ARC on Participation in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment*. All participation criterion in the Participation Guidelines Documentation form **must** be answered YES in order for a student to be considered eligible to participate in alternate assessment. If any participation criterion is answered NO, the student is not eligible to participate in the alternate assessment.

2. How do we know that a student has a “significant cognitive disability”?

The KDE does not define a “significant cognitive disability” in terms of a “cut off” IQ score. Most students with significant cognitive disabilities have intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism, but not all do. Also, not all students with these disabilities are considered to have a “significant cognitive disability.” Students demonstrating academic deficits or difficulties due to learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, and emotional-behavioral disabilities do not qualify for participation in the alternate assessment. Performing 3-4 grade levels below peers without disabilities is not, by itself, evidence of a significant cognitive disability. Academic deficits or difficulties alone do not indicate that a student has a significant cognitive disability. Further, a significant cognitive disability will be pervasive, affecting student learning across content areas and in social and community settings.

Students with autism or intellectual disabilities should be carefully considered for the alternate assessment, but they should not automatically be assigned to the alternate assessment based on their identified disability category. Not all students with autism or intellectual disabilities have a significant

cognitive disability. Many students eligible to receive special education and related services under these categorical labels are able to participate in general assessments, with accommodations.

Students receiving special education services who are identified as having orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, or traumatic brain injuries, do not necessarily have a significant cognitive disability. Determinations for student participation in statewide assessments must be evidence centered and made individually for each student by the ARC.

Students demonstrating mild to moderate cognitive disabilities may be more appropriately placed in the general assessment system with accommodations (See the [Accommodations Determination page](#)). Anticipated or past low achievement on the general assessment or in the classroom does **not** mean the student should be taking the Alternate K-Prep.

Note: See the Kentucky definition of a student with a significant cognitive disability above.

3. How do I know if the alternate assessment is appropriate for an English Learner (EL) with an IEP whose language proficiency makes it difficult to assess content knowledge and skills?

An EL student should be considered for the alternate assessment if (a) his/her intellectual functioning indicates a significant cognitive disability using assessments in his/her home language as appropriate, and (b) he/she meets the other participation guidelines for the alternate assessment. Assessments of adaptive behavior and communication should take into account linguistic and sociocultural factors for valid interpretation of these assessments, alongside the information on goals and instruction in the student's IEP used to determine what may or may not be a significant cognitive disability. If an EL student with an IEP does not meet the criteria for the alternate assessment, he/she should take the general assessment with accommodations as appropriate.

4. Why is it important to indicate that a student, participating in the alternate assessment, is receiving instruction on the Kentucky Academic Standards and his/her performance measured against alternate achievement standards?

Participation in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment limits a student's direct contact with the breadth of the Kentucky Academic Standards for the grade level in which he/she is enrolled. This limited or modified exposure to the grade level standards may have significant impact on academic outcomes and post-secondary opportunities.

5. What if it is impossible to assess a student because the student does not appear to communicate?

All attempts should be made to find a mode of communication with the student as soon as he or she is enrolled and the student's receptive and expressive communication must be documented in the IEP. If various approaches and technologies do not appear to demonstrate a route of communication, then consider that all behavior that the student exhibits is a form of communication, and use this as the starting point. A critical element in assessing all students is a focus on communicative competency as the base for student access to the Kentucky Academic Standards. Best practice would indicate that students should enter Kindergarten with a communication plan documented in the IEP that allows them to demonstrate an understanding of academic concepts prior to entering the third grade. However, with or without a communication plan, students may still participate in the Alternate Assessment.

6. If a student has been tested in the past on an alternate assessment, but the current ARC determines that the student does not meet the Kentucky Participation Guidelines, can the student be assigned to the general assessment?

Yes. The ARC must ensure that the student receives appropriate instruction on the Kentucky Academic Standards and participates in the required general assessments for his/her current grade level with or without accommodations.

7. Is it possible that a decision to participate in the Kentucky alternate assessment could change as a student gets older?

Yes. Participating in the Kentucky alternate assessment requires that the student has a significant cognitive impairment and interacts with content that has been significantly modified from that which is provided to the student's typically developing peers. Even though students with significant cognitive disabilities often are identified early, prior to starting school, they may be able to participate in the general assessment during their elementary grades. An ARC should be especially cautious about assigning students with significant cognitive disabilities to an alternate assessment in their early school years. When the level of support needed for the student to participate in the breadth of the Kentucky Academic Standards and the general assessment increases, the ARC may determine that participation in the Alternate Assessment is appropriate.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to continue to need supports to live as independently as possible throughout their adult lives after high school. Students who did not need early intervention services, or who are unlikely to need substantial daily supports in their adult lives, probably do not have a significant cognitive disability and would not be appropriately placed in the Kentucky alternate assessment.

8. What is the difference between longitudinal and current data and what are some examples?

Student performance data is information that demonstrates how the student is performing academically, behaviorally, socially, and functionally on the student's IEP goals. Student performance data assists the ARC in decision-making, IEP development and implementation.

Current data: Data that are collected within the most recent 365-day time period

Examples: IEP progress monitoring data, IEP progress reports, classroom-based assessments, classroom observations, work samples, functional behavior assessment data, transition assessment, assistive technology evaluation, attendance records, etc.

Longitudinal data: Data that have been collected and analyzed overtime and are more than one-year-old. A dataset is longitudinal if it tracks the same type of information on the same subjects at multiple points in time.

Examples: Social Developmental History, integrated assessment report, diagnostic assessments, state and district-wide assessment results, adaptive behavior rating scales, progress monitoring data, functional behavior assessment data, transition assessment, assistive technology evaluation, etc.

9. How are significant deficits in adaptive behavior defined for participation in Alternate Assessment?

Deficits in adaptive behavior that result in failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards for personal independence and social responsibility (i.e., actions that are necessary for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life). Without ongoing support, the adaptive deficits limit

functioning in one or more activities of daily life, such as communication, social participation, and independent living across multiple environments, such as home, school, and work.

10. What does “exceed accommodations” mean?

Students with disabilities may qualify for accommodations such as assistive technology, manipulatives, reader, scribe, calculator, paraphrasing, extended time, reinforcement and behavior modification strategies, and interpreters in accordance with their IEPs. Students with significant disabilities would require those accommodations PLUS additional accommodations and modifications to the curriculum and to instruction in order to access similar content.

These additional accommodations should be documented on the IEP. Typically, the content is modified to such an extent that the instructional objective has changed. The main thing to note in this section is that this impacts both assessment and instruction.

11. What does extensive, individualized direct instruction in adaptive behavior across multiple settings mean?

Extensive direct individualized instruction means – Repeated instruction and substantial supports that are not temporary in nature to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum and uses substantially adapted materials (e.g., significantly shortening the length of reading passages or using raised dots and hand-over-hand counting when identifying a matching number in math).

Intensive, accommodations, modifications and assistive technology means- Accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology that EXCEEDS what is allowed on the general assessments for students as described in the “Inclusion Document” and set forth in 703 KAR 5:070. (Refer to question 5 above.)

Acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings means - when the student has acquired skills and can apply the skills across settings -such as different classes, at home, at a job, and in the community- with different people and with a variety of materials.

12. What is the difference between a High School Diploma and an Alternative Diploma?

Students shall have a total of at least twenty-two (22) credits to earn a high school diploma. Credits shall include the content standards as provided in the Kentucky Academic Standards at 704 KAR 3:303.

Students in the Alternate Assessment program are eligible to receive an Alternative Diploma. The ARC must determine if a student’s demonstrated cognitive ability and adaptive behavior prevents completion of the general education course of study, even with program modifications, accommodations, or both.

The ARC uses a variety of data and information, such as the Participation Guidelines for the Alternate Assessment, psycho-educational integrated report, student work, student observations and any other relevant information, to make this determination. The ARC must determine the student would not be able to complete the general course of study to earn a high school diploma and would therefore complete an alternative course of study to receive an Alternative Diploma as stated in the Kentucky Administrative Regulations at 704 KAR 3:305.

13. When should the parent guide be provided to the parent?

The Alternate Assessment Parent Guide should be provided at the initial ARC in which consideration for participation in the Alternate Assessment is being considered (A copy may be sent home with meeting notice for parent to review). After initial participation in the Alternate Assessment has been considered, the Alternate Assessment Parent Guide can be provided prior to each annual review. Parents must be given an opportunity to review the parent guide and allowed the opportunity to ask questions.

14. Who can we ask if we have questions about this important decision?

Contact Information

Contact the KY Department of Education if you have any questions about participation decision making for the Alternate Assessment.

For information about who can participate in the Alternate Assessment contact:

Yayo Radder at 502-564-4970 or yayo.radder@education.ky.gov

Tania Sharp at 502-564-7970 or tania.sharp@education.ky.gov

For information about the Kentucky Alternate Assessment testing contact:

Kevin O'Hair at (502) 564-4394 or kevin.ohair@education.ky.gov

Dispute Resolution Process

If a member of the ARC disagrees with the students' eligibility to participate in the alternate assessment, the ARC must document in the conference summary. There are several options for the resolution of a disagreement:

- The ARC may schedule an additional meeting to further discuss and address the issue at hand once it has been further researched.
- The Director of Special Education (DoSE) may contact the ARC member in order to clarify the issue
- The DoSE may provide the parent with a copy and further explanation of the Parent Q&A
- The ARC may review the training on guidelines for participation in the Alternate Assessment

If the ARC has exhausted all available options for consensus and still is not able to come to an agreement, the district makes the final determination and **MUST** provide the parent with prior written notice of the decision. Prior written notice should be documented on the conference summary and must include ALL of the following:

- Description of the action proposed or refused by the district
- An explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action
- A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the district used as a basis for the proposed or refused action

- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards and, if the notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of the procedural safeguards can be obtained.
- Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding Part B of the IDEA
- A description of other options the ARC considered and the reasons why those options were rejected
- A description of other factors relevant to the district's proposal or refusal.

Should the dispute continue after the district has provided the parent with prior written notice, the parent may dispute the decision via any of the dispute resolution options. These options include mediation, formal written complaints, and due process hearings. Information on each of these options can be found on KDE's website located at: [Dispute Resolutions Process Page](#)

Glossary

AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication (e.g., speech generating devices such as text-to-speech communication aids, picture or symbol boards, etc.)

Accommodation: A change in materials or procedures that facilitates access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change the construct or intent of what is being taught or measured. Assessment accommodations are intended to allow the student to participate in the assessment and to produce valid results that indicate what a student knows and can do.

Adaptations – Changes made specific to the students individual needs. Changes made to existing materials or instructional delivery to meet the needs of a student. Examples include head pointers, Boardmaker (Mayer Johnson) symbols, and photographs, symbols paired with real objects, real objects, enlarged pictures, textured or raised pictures, high contrast color or coactive signs.

Adaptive behavior: Behaviors defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

(ARC) Admissions and Release Committee: A group of individuals responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an Individual Education Program (IEP) for a student with a disability.

Alternate achievement standards: An alternate achievement standard sets an expectation of performance that differs in complexity from a grade-level achievement standard. The December 9, 2003 regulations clarify that a State is permitted to use alternate achievement standards to evaluate the performance of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

In general, alternate achievement standards must be aligned with a State's academic content standards, promote access to the general curriculum, and reflect professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible. (See 34 C.F.R. §200.1(d).)

Alternative high school diploma: Provided to students with 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 and complete the alternative course of study. 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; it can range from low technology (e.g., unaided communication systems, sign language, etc.) to high technology, such as computers with switch interfaces.

(AAC) Augmentative and Alternative Communication - Low, medium or high technology system that assists the student in expressive language (e.g., making a request, initiating and responding to questions, describing things or events, and expressing refusal).

Communicative competence: The use of a communication system that allows students to gain and demonstrate knowledge.

Content target: Content targets identify those content standards that are the focus of the assessment. For the Alternate K-Prep the content targets are defined by the Core Content Connectors in English language arts and mathematics.

Current data - Data that are collected within the most recent 365-day time period. Examples include IEP progress monitoring data, IEP progress reports, classroom-based assessments, classroom observations, work samples, functional behavior assessment data, transition assessment, assistive technology evaluation, and attendance records.

English Learner (EL): An EL is a student whose native language is a language other than English or a student 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. An EL's difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be a barrier to learning in classrooms instructed in English and to performance on assessments presented in English.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal law governing P-12 public education. Known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the measure replaced No Child Left Behind and created a long-term policy that gives states additional flexibility and provides more state and local control over the accountability process.

Evidence: This refers to the specific sources of information being used to identify student characteristics that either meet or do not meet the participation criteria.

Exceeds accommodations – Accommodations, modifications and assistive technology that EXCEED what is allowed on the general assessments for students, as described in the "Inclusion Document" and set forth in 703 KAR 5:070.

Extensive direct individualized instruction: Concentrated instruction designed for and directed toward an individual student. This type of instruction is needed by students with significant cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in context. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this extensively to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.

(IDEA) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: The IDEA is a federal law enacted in 1990 and reauthorized in 1997 and again in 2004. It is designed to protect the rights of students with disabilities by ensuring that everyone receives a *free appropriate public education (FAPE)*, regardless of ability. Furthermore, IDEA strives not only to grant equal access to students with disabilities, but also to provide additional special education services and procedural safeguards.

(IEP) Individualized Education Program: A written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised annually with the ARC. It consists of learner goals and objectives utilized for student success.

Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS): Contain the minimum required standards that all Kentucky students should have the opportunity to learn before graduating from Kentucky high

schools. The standards address what is to be learned, but do not address how learning experiences are to be designed or what resources should be used. Helps ensure that all students throughout Kentucky are provided with common content and have opportunities to learn at high levels.

Learning progression: A learning progression is a description of the way in which typically developing students may develop and build academic competencies over time. Learning progressions can be useful tools for teachers to use to determine where a student is in the process of learning a specific skill or understanding a concept.

Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI): A questionnaire that assists the teacher in understanding the individuality of each student in various areas: expressive communication, receptive communication, hearing, vision, motor, engagement, attendance, reading skills, and mathematics skills. The LCI has two primary purposes: 1) to describe the range of the characteristics of learners who participate in alternate assessments and to 2) describe the extent to which patterns of those characteristics emerged within and across the state.

Longitudinal data - Data that have been collected and analyzed overtime and are older than one year. A dataset is longitudinal if it tracks the same type of information on the same subjects at multiple points in time. Examples of longitudinal data include Social Developmental History, integrated assessment reports, diagnostic assessments, state and district-wide assessment results, adaptive behavior rating scales, progress monitoring data, functional behavior assessment data, transition assessment, and technology evaluation.

Mode of communication: The predominant way a student expresses his or her thoughts, such as through words, pictures, objects, tactile cues, and augmented communication/assistive technology.

Modification: A change in materials or procedures during instruction and assessment that changes the learning expectations of the grade level content. Modifications during instruction may be appropriate on a temporary basis for scaffolding the student's understanding and skills. Assessment modifications result in invalid measures of a student's knowledge and skills and thus should be avoided.

(NCLB) No Child Left Behind – A federal law passed under the George W. Bush administration meant to hold primary and secondary schools measurably accountable to higher standards. NCLB is written so that it requires 100% of students (including special education students and those from disadvantaged background) within a school to reach the same set of state standards in math and reading by the year 2014. NCLB has been replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Participation guidelines for alternate assessment – The Participation Guidelines for the Alternate K-PREP identify the requirements set by the state department of education for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These requirements must be agreed upon by the ARC committee and revisited at the annual meeting.

Participation criteria: These descriptors provide further information about the characteristics students would have in order to meet the four participation criteria for the Alternate Assessment.

Pervasive: Present across academic content areas and across multiple settings (including school, home, and community).

(SDI) Specifically Designed Instruction – Adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the individual needs of the child and to ensure access to the curriculum so that the child can meet the educational standards set in place.

Selected response items: Assessment items that are structured for students to respond by choosing an answer (e.g., multiple choice, true or false, etc.)

Substantial supports: Substantial supports include support from the teachers and others (e.g., resource teacher, co-teacher, aide) and various material supports within the student's environment. Examples include adapting text for assessments and learning, and extensive scaffolding of content to support learning.

Substantially adapted materials: Substantially adapted materials include various classroom and other materials that have been altered in appearance and content from the materials that peers without disabilities use for instruction or assessment. Examples include significantly shortening the length of passages, or using raised dots and hand-over-hand counting when identifying a matching number in math.

Appendix A

Determination of Participation in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment

The criteria for participation in the Alternate K-Prep reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate in this assessment. Thus, a student who participates in the Alternate K-Prep participates in this assessment for all content areas.

Kentucky Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Documentation Form

Enter District Name Here

(Attachment to the Student's IEP and the ARC Conference Action Form)

Student's Full Name:	SSID:
Disability:	Grade:
Date of Birth:	Date of ARC:
School:	
<p>Kentucky Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Documentation Form</p> <p><i>** For further clarification of terms used in this worksheet, please refer to the Guidance for Admissions & Release Committee (ARCs) on Participation Decisions for the KY Alternate Assessment</i></p> <p><i>**All answers to Participation Criterion must be answered Yes in order to be eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment.</i></p>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>The parent was provided a copy of the Alternate Assessment Parent Guide with an opportunity to ask questions. <i>If yes</i>, indicate below when the Guide was provided to the parents. <i>If no</i>, provide a copy of the Alternate Assessment Parent Guide and an opportunity to ask questions.</p>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Prior to Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> During Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Other Date Guide Provided to Parents:
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>The Admissions and Release Committee has explained the <i>difference</i> between an <u>Alternative High School Diploma (704 KAR 3:305)</u> and a <u>Regular High School Diploma</u> to all members of the ARC.</p> <p><i>Participation in the KY Alternate Assessment is stated in the IEP and based on the annual review.</i></p>

Participation Criterion #1 (questions to determine eligibility):	Response (Answer to Criterion):	Sources of Evidence and Justification (Check and complete after sources have been reviewed and documented in the conference summary)
<p>1. Has the student been determined to be a student with a disability eligible to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Is a current Individual Education Program (IEP) in place or being developed for the student?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If NO to either question. Stop here. The student must meet Special Education Determination for Eligibility criteria in one or more disability categories defined in Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KAR). The student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The ARC must determine state approved accommodations (as set forth in 703 KAR 5:070) in the general assessment, if any, refer to the accommodations and modifications form. Document on IEP and conference summary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If YES to both. If the student meets the Special Education Determination for Eligibility criteria in one or more disability categories, continue to Criterion #2.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Data Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disability Eligibility Determination Form (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Program (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

Participation Criterion #2:	Response (Answer to Criterion):	Sources of Evidence and Justification
<p>1. The student’s demonstrated cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior in the home, school and community environments are significantly below age expectations, <i>even with</i> program modifications and accommodations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. ARC reviewed current and longitudinal data across settings (age appropriate home, school, and community environments) in all academic areas AND adaptive behavior(s), to inform the ARC decision.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If NO to either question. Stop Here. The student does not have a significant cognitive disability. The student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The ARC must determine state approved accommodations (as set forth in 703 KAR 5:070) in the general assessment, if any, refer to the accommodations and modifications form. Document on IEP and conference summary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If YES to both. Continue to Criterion #3.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Data (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Program (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Previous IEP if available (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Progress Monitoring Data (required):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Observations (optional):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Comments (optional):</p>

Participation Criterion #3:	Response (Answer to Criterion):	Sources of Evidence and Justification
<p>1. Does the student require extensive individual direct instruction across multiple settings, utilizing intensive accommodations, modifications and assistive technology to access and make progress on the Kentucky Academic Standards and to maintain and generalize learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. ARC reviewed current and longitudinal data across settings (age appropriate home, school, and community environments) to inform the ARC decision.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO to either question. Stop Here. The ARC determines that the student does not require direct instruction across multiple settings and/or accommodations, modifications, and supports that exceed what is allowed on the general assessments for students as described in the "Inclusion Document" and set forth in 703 KAR 5:070. The student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The ARC must determine state approved accommodations (as set forth in 703 KAR 5:070) in the general assessment, if any, refer to the accommodations and modifications form. Document on IEP and conference summary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES to both. The student requires extensive direct individual instruction in multiple settings and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age appropriate curriculum that do exceed what is allowed on the general assessments for students as described in the "Inclusion Document" and set forth in 703 KAR 5:070, Continue to Criterion #4</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Data Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disability Eligibility Determination Form Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Program (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Progress Monitoring (required):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistive Technology Consideration Guide (optional) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of Accommodations Determination (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent Input (required):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Observations:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

Participation Criterion #4:	Response (Answer to Criterion):	Sources of Evidence and Justification
<p>1. Did the ARC carefully consider (check as considered) each of these items:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> excessive or extended absences</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> disability related to visual or auditory disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> native language, social, cultural, and economic differences,</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> those identified as English Language Learners (ELL)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pre-determined poor performance on the grade-level assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> the student displays disruptive behaviors or experiences emotional duress during testing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> administrator decision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> educational environment or instructional setting</p> <p>2. The ARCs decision for the student to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment <i>is not primarily</i> the result of any of the exclusions listed above.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (Agree) <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If NO to either question. Stop Here. Any criterion that is not checked means that the student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The ARC must determine state approved accommodations (as set forth in 703 KAR 5:070) in the general assessment, if any, refer to the accommodations and modifications form. Document on IEP and conference summary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If YES to both. All necessary exclusions were considered. Continue to ARC Eligibility Determination.</p>	<p>Supporting Comments (optional):</p>

ARC Eligibility Determination:	Response (Answer to Eligibility Determination)	Statement of Eligibility:
<p>1. The student meets the participation guidelines for KY Alternate Assessment as a student with a significant cognitive disability and is eligible to receive instruction based upon alternate academic achievement standards and participate in the KY Alternate Assessment as indicated above.</p> <p>All data sources referenced can be verified with supporting documentation.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO. Stop Here. The student is not eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. The ARC must determine state approved accommodations (as set forth in 703 KAR 5:070) in the general assessment, if any, refer to the accommodations and modifications form. Document on IEP and conference summary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES. All Participation Criterion #1 - #4 are answered Yes, the student is eligible to participate in the KY Alternate Assessment. Continue with documentation form below.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Comments (required):</p>
Documentation Questions:	Response (Answer to Documentation Questions):	Sources of Evidence and Justification
<p>1. The ARC reviewed and completed the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) for the individual student? (See LCI attachment below)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Is receptive and expressive communication addressed in the IEP?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If No to either. Stop Here if the ARC has not reviewed or completed the LCI. The ARC must complete the LCI (below) before completing this documentation form. If student is found eligible, an ARC must convene to develop a (or review current) communication plan as part of the student's IEP.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If Yes to both. Continue with documentation form below.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Learner Characteristics Inventory (required) Date:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Education Program (required) Date:</p>

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS HERE

Kentucky Department of Education definition of a student with a significant cognitive disability:

As outlined in the Kentucky Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Documentation form, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities:

- Meet eligibility criterion in one or more of the existing categories of disabilities under IDEA (e.g., intellectual disabilities, autism, multiple disabilities),
- Have cognitive and adaptive behavior functioning preventing them from attaining grade level achievement standards, even with program modifications and accommodations,
- Require extensive individual instruction across multiple settings to access and make progress in the Kentucky Academic Standards, and to maintain, generalize and demonstrate learning,
- Have a significant cognitive disability that is not primarily the result of:
 - o excessive or extended absences
 - o disability related to visual or auditory disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairment
 - o native language, social, cultural, and economic differences,
 - o those identified as English Learners (EL)
 - o pre-determined poor performance on the grade-level assessment
 - o the student displays disruptive behaviors or experiences emotional duress during testing
 - o administrator decision
 - o educational environment or instructional setting

Appendix B

Alternate K-Prep Participation Decision Flowchart

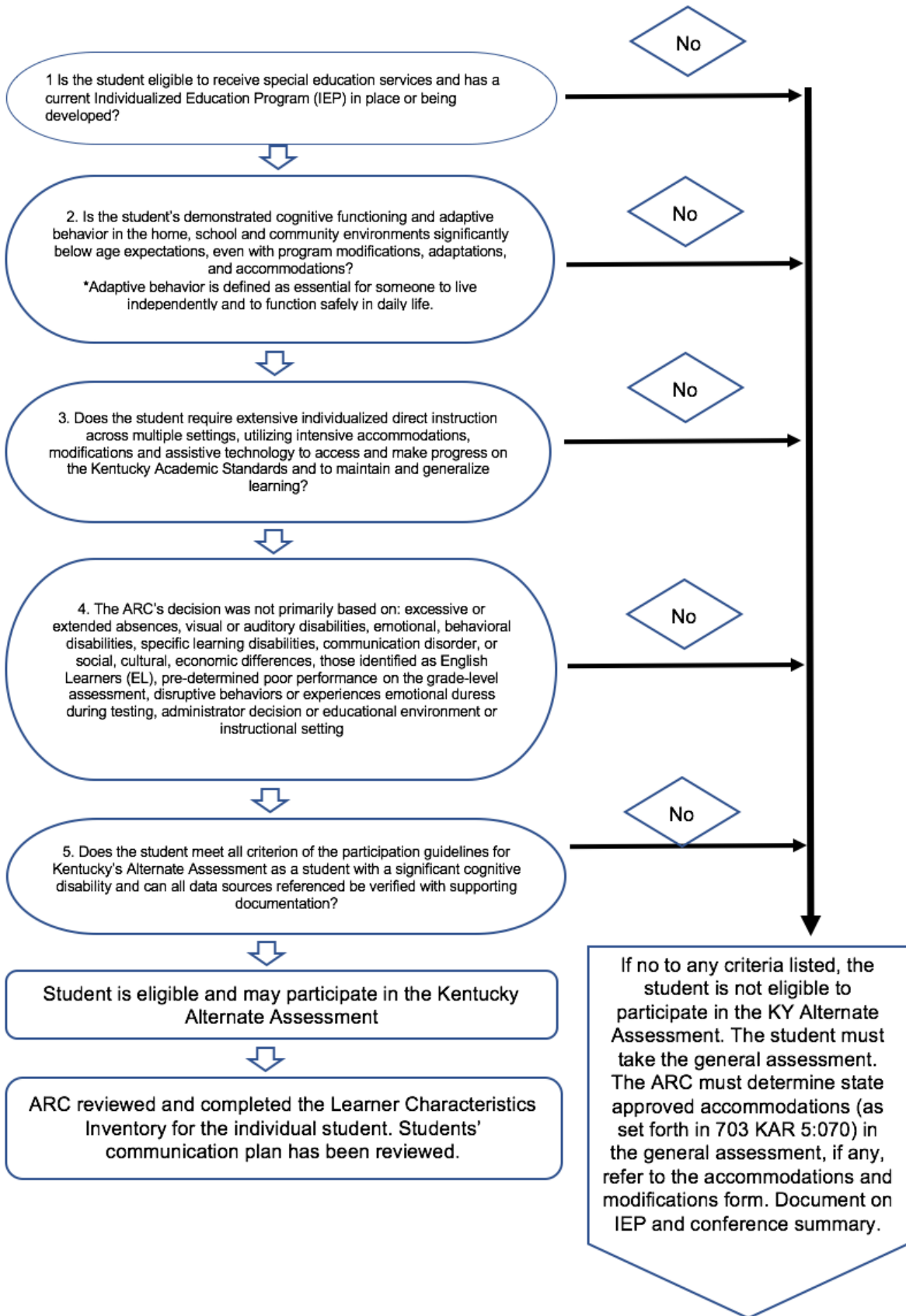
Eligibility Determination, results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test, Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment, individual/group administered achievement tests, and English Learner (EL) language assessments, if applicable.

Data from scientific research-based interventions, progress monitoring data, results of informal assessments, parent and teacher observations, teacher-collected data and checklists.

Previous IEP, Integrated reports and Accommodations/Modifications Determination Form.

Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials, work samples from school or community based instruction.

Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post-school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan, if applicable.



Appendix C

Learner Characteristics Inventory

Kearns, J., Kleinert, H., Kleinert, J., and Towles-Reeves, E. (2006). *Learner Characteristics Inventory*. Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky, National Alternate Assessment Center.

1. Student's primary IDEA disability label:

- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Autism
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment, including blindness
- Traumatic brain injury
- Emotional disability
- Deaf-blindness
- Other health impairment
- Orthopedic impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Other

2. Is your student's primary language a language other than English?

- Yes
- No

3. What is the student's primary classroom setting?

- Special school
- Regular school, self-contained special education classroom, some special inclusion (students go to art, music, PE) but return to their special education class for most of school day.
- Regular school, *primarily self-contained special education classroom*, some academic inclusion (students go to some general education academic classes (such as reading, math, science, in addition to specials) but are in general education classes less than 40% of the school day).
- Regular school, *resource room/general education class*, students receive resource room services, but are in general education classes 40% or more of the school day.
- Regular school, *general education class inclusive/collaborative* (students based in general education classes, special education services are primarily delivered in the general education classes) – at least 80% of the school day is spent in general education classes.

- 4. Expressive Communication** (check the best description)
- Uses symbolic language to communicate: Student uses verbal or written words, signs, Braille, or language-based augmentative systems to request, initiate, and respond to questions, describe things or events, and express refusal.
 - Uses intentional communication, but not at a symbolic language level: Student uses understandable communication through such modes as gestures, pictures, objects/textures, points, etc., to clearly express a variety of intentions.
 - Student communicates primarily through cries, facial expressions, change in muscle tone, etc., but no clear use of objects/textures, regularized gestures, pictures, signs, etc., to communicate.
- 5. Does your student use oral speech to communicate?** (student uses his/her vocal cords to produce words)
- Yes
 - No
- 6. Does your student use an augmentative communication system in addition to or in place of oral speech?**
- Yes
 - No
- 7. Receptive Language** (check the best description)
- Independently follows 1-2 step directions presented through words (e.g. words may be spoken, signed, printed, or any combination) and does NOT need additional cues.
 - Requires additional cues (e.g., gestures, pictures, objects, or demonstrations/models) to follow 1-2 step directions.
 - Alerts to sensory input from another person (auditory, visual, touch, movement) BUT requires actual physical assistance to follow simple directions.
 - Uncertain response to sensory stimuli (e.g., sound/voice; sight/gesture; touch; movement; smell).
- 8. Motor** (check the best description)
- No significant motor dysfunction that requires adaptations.
 - Requires adaptations to support motor functioning (e.g., walker, adapted utensils, and/or keyboard).
 - Uses wheelchair, positioning equipment, and/or assistive devices for most activities.
 - Needs personal assistance for most/all motor activities.

9. Engagement (check the best description)

- Initiates and sustains social interactions.
- Responds with social interaction, but does not initiate or sustain social interactions.
- Alerts to others.
- Does not alert to others.

10. Health Issues/Attendance (check the best description)

- Attends at least 90% of school days.
- Attends approximately 75% of school days; absences primarily due to health issues.
- Attends approximately 50% or less of school days; absences primarily due to health issues.
- Receives Homebound Instruction due to health issues.
- Highly irregular attendance or homebound instruction due to issues *other* than health.

11. Reading (check the best description)

- Reads fluently with critical understanding in print or Braille (e.g., to differentiate fact/opinion, point of view, emotional response, etc.).
- Reads fluently with basic (literal) understanding from paragraphs/short passages with narrative/informational texts in print or Braille.
- Reads basic sight words, simple sentences, directions, bullets, and/or lists in print or Braille.
- Aware of text/Braille, follows directionality, makes letter distinctions, or tells a story from the pictures that is not linked to the text.
- No observable awareness of print or Braille.

12. Mathematics (check the best description)

- Applies computational procedures to solve real-life or routine word problems from a variety of contexts.
- Does computational procedures with or without a calculator.
- Counts with 1:1 correspondence to at least 10, and/or makes numbered sets of items.
- Counts by rote to 5.
- No observable awareness or use of numbers.