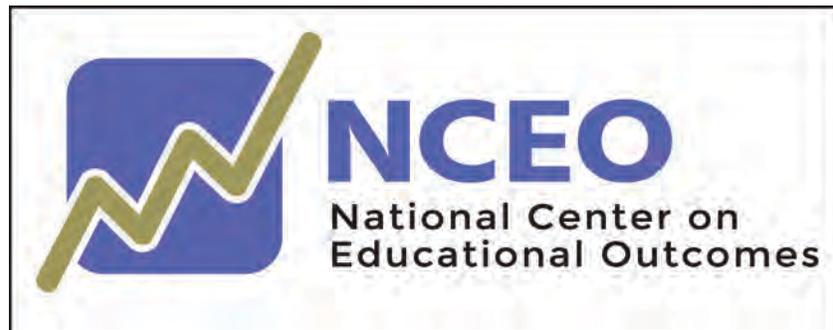


WHAT NEW SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS TOOLKIT

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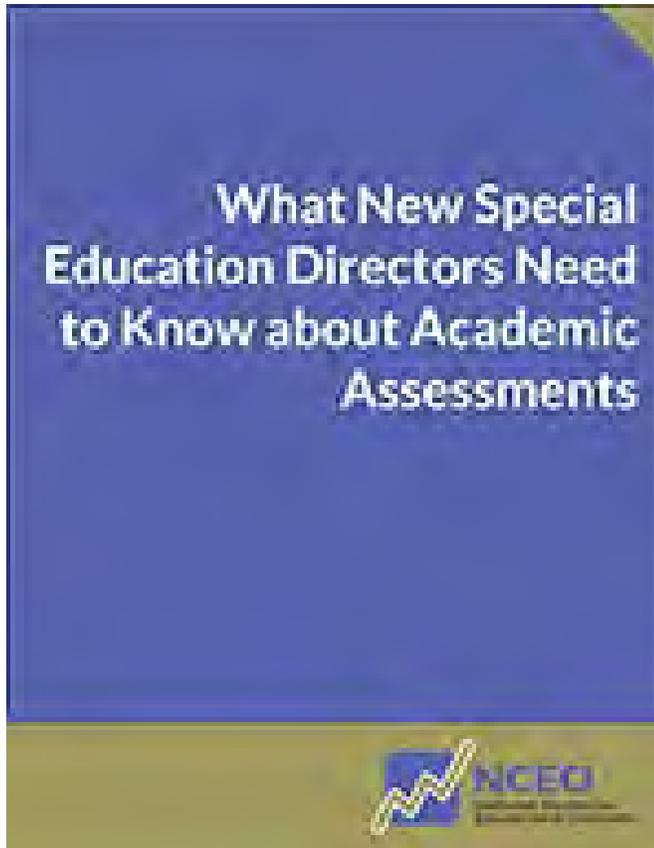


Agenda

- Overview of Toolkit
 - Toolkit Contents
 - Dissemination Via Social Media
 - Questions and Comments
-



New Special Education Directors Toolkit

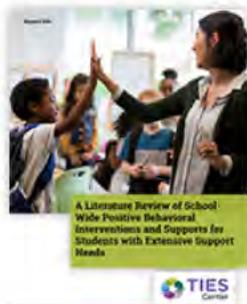


National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO)

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) focuses on the inclusion of students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities in instruction and assessments. The scope of NCEO's work includes issues related to accessibility of assessments across the comprehensive assessment system including formative assessment practices, classroom-based assessments, diagnostic assessments, interim assessments, and summative assessments.

See our [About page](#) for more on NCEO.

Latest News and Publications



[A Literature Review of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for](#)



[Separate School Placement Trends by Category and Age for Students with Extensive Support](#)



[What New Special Education Directors Need to Know about Academic Assessments](#)

[1% Toolkit](#)

[Accommodations Toolkit](#)

[Annual Performance Reports \(APR\)](#)

[Assessment Snapshot Data](#)

[Data Analytics](#)

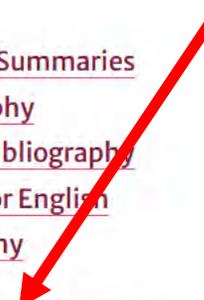
[Participation Communication Toolkit](#)

[School Leader Series](#)

[Searchable Research Summaries](#)

- [AA-AAAS Bibliography](#)
- [Accommodations Bibliography](#)
- [Accommodations for English Learners Bibliography](#)

[Special Education Directors Toolkit](#)



Purpose

To provide easy access to information that will help new state directors fulfill role in ensuring participation of students with disabilities in assessments. It will assist in locating information and resources on the NCEO website.

- Highlighted information and resources can help support state directors and their staff ensure that all students with disabilities are appropriately included in assessment and accountability systems based on their specific instructional and assessment needs.

Role As New State Director

- Primary role of state directors of special education is to ensure that schools and districts follow all state and federal laws and regulations on the identification, placement, and program development for students with disabilities.
- State directors are in a unique position to be an expert on how to include students with disabilities in assessments.

8 CRITICAL QUESTIONS

2. Why are state assessments important?

State assessments provide valuable data to many stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, families, and students. All students, regardless of ability, race, ethnicity, or other characteristics, CAN and should be included in state-required assessments. These assessments provide important information on the academic progress of students and promote improved educational services for them. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners (including those with disabilities) were routinely excluded from state testing. As a result, they were less likely to receive the attention they deserved to ensure that they had access to the general education grade-level curriculum.

Resources to Check:

- [Guidebook to Including Students with Disabilities and English Learners in Assessments \(Report #420\)](#)  
- [Reasons Why Students with Disabilities Should Take State Tests: A Customizable Template for a Flyer for Parents and Families \(Tool #9\)](#)  
- [Supporting the Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Assessment \(School Leader Series Brief #1\)](#)  

Includes links to relevant resources

1. Which state assessments are required for students with disabilities?

- Academic content tests required by Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (general and alternate)
- Additional tests required by state
- And, for English learners with disabilities, English language proficiency (ELP) Assessments and Alternate ELP Assessments (Alt-ELP)

2. Why are state assessments important?

- Data provides important information on the academic progress of students and promotes improved educational services for students with disabilities.
- In the past, students with disabilities were routinely excluded from state testing. As a result, they were less likely to receive the attention they deserved to ensure that they had access to the general education grade-level curriculum.

3. Why should students with disabilities participate in state academic content assessments, and what laws require their participation?

- Important to have a measure which shows whether instructional programs are helping students with disabilities succeed
- Specific curriculum and instructional areas may need improvement for particular groups of students

3. Why should students with disabilities participate in state academic content assessments, and what laws require their participation? (Cont.)

According to regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):

A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and district-wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs. (Sec. 300.160(a)).

4. What are alternate assessments, and for which students are they appropriate?

- For students with significant cognitive disabilities
 - Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS) (e.g., Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science) (Up to 1% of students may participate)
- Also, for English language learners with disabilities with significant cognitive disabilities
 - Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt-ELP)

5. What role do accommodations have in state testing, and how should the IEP team make decisions about assessment accommodations?

- Accommodations are to be used to help students access instruction and assessments
- IEP team decisions about accommodations are guided by state accessibility policies. Many states have accessibility policies for state assessments that have three levels.
 - **Universal Features** are available to all test takers (e.g., highlighter)
 - **Designated Features** are available to all students for whom an adult or team of adults has indicated a need for them (e.g., color contrast)
 - **Accommodations** are provided only to students with disabilities and in some cases to English learners (e.g., braille)

6. What special considerations are there for testing English learners with disabilities using English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments?

- ELP Assessments measure students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills defined in English language proficiency standards
- ELP Assessments help identify English Learners who are eligible for services as well as those who are ready to exit from services
- ELP Assessments track English proficiency of identified students
- States track percentage of English Learners reaching proficiency each year for ESEA Accountability purposes using data from ELP assessments

7. What are the requirements and best practices for including students with disabilities in public reporting of assessment results and accountability systems?

- Both ESEA and IDEA require that assessment results be publicly reported.
 - Disaggregating assessment data for students with disabilities and English learners (and if the numbers are sufficient English learners with disabilities) provides one level of accountability for their results.
- Students with disabilities are included in accountability systems (ESEA, OSEP's results driven accountability, and in some places educator and individual student accountability).

8. What help is available for including students with disabilities in other types of assessments?

- Many districts administer interim assessments. Increasingly, states are requiring districts to use interim, benchmark, through-course, or other more frequently administered assessments.
- IDEA requires that all students with disabilities participate in districtwide assessment administrations.
- Depending on the specific assessment or process used, the inclusion of all students might not have been assumed during their development. Special education directors can help when districts select these types of assessments by providing information on the extent to which each assessment under consideration was developed using processes that included students with disabilities.

Dissemination via Social Media

- Ramped up dissemination from two times a week to a campaign
- LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook & Instagram, Tik Tok
- Need to create a new process for review

Old Way vs New Way

What New Special Education Directors Need to Know about Academic Assessments

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State special education directors have an important role to play in ensuring that students with disabilities are provided accessible assessments, and that appropriate decisions are made about the participation of students with disabilities in these assessments.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide you easy access to information that will help you fulfill your role in ensuring the participation of students with disabilities in assessments. The toolkit will assist you in locating information and resources on the website of the [National Center on Educational Outcomes \(NCEO\)](https://www.nceo.info). NCEO is a technical assistance center funded by the Office of Special Education Programs. It focuses on the inclusion of students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities in instruction and assessments. NCEO has a wealth of assessment-related resources that will help you quickly become an informed assessment leader.

The information and resources highlighted in this resource can help support you in ensuring that all students with disabilities are included in state, district, and school assessments and accountability systems in a manner that is appropriate for each student based on their specific instructional and assessment needs.



NEW RESOURCE

What New Special Education Directors Need to Know about Academic Assessments

1. Which state assessments are required for students with disabilities?

State-required academic assessments include:

- Academic content tests of reading/language arts, mathematics, and science that are required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and are used for accountability.
- Additional tests required by the state, such as those for other content areas (e.g., social studies), college entrance, interim, or benchmark assessments.

English learners with disabilities also are required to take English language proficiency (ELP) assessments, or in the case of English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities, alternate ELP assessments (Alt-ELP).

This tool addresses eight critical questions and identifies helpful resources on the NCEO website

<https://nceo.info>





Review and Style Guide

- Acronyms/Initialisms not in parentheses that will be read spelled out.
 - Examples - IDEA (I,D,E,A)
- Acronyms/Initialisms not in parentheses that will not be read spelled out.
 - Examples - AA-AAAS read as “Alternate Assessment”
- i.e. and e.g. - e.g. read as “For example”
- References in parenthesis will not be read.
 - Examples - (Sec. 300.160(a))

Discussion

1. What information do you need related to assessments?
2. How do you collaborate with other agencies to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in assessments?

For More Information



www.nceo.info

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