

Learner Characteristics Inventory for Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards

Purpose:

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is a project of five national assessment and special education policy centers and 19 states, including yours. Its purpose is to develop a new comprehensive assessment system for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The goal of NCSC is to produce an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) based on the best practice-oriented research available, along with supportive professional development and instructional modules for teachers. As part of this project, you are asked to complete the Learner Characteristics Inventory.

This inventory will be used to create a profile of the population of students who participate in the AA-AAS in each state. edCount, LLC will use these data to provide important information to the assessment design and professional development teams, as well as to assess the validity of the assessment system once it is developed. We will not collect any identifying information about you or your school or district, and we do not want student names or ID numbers. We will report the results of the study only by state, which will be identified by region (aggregate data in a Western, Midwestern, Northeastern, or Southeastern state). The risks associated with providing this information are minimal. If you have any questions about this study, and you would prefer not to correspond with your AA-AAS coordinator, you may call the University of Minnesota Research Subjects' Advocate Line at 612-625-1650.

Based on the decisions from the participation guidelines and performance dimension determination for the DC CAS-Alt, on which performance dimension will the student be scored?

- Attainment (A)
- Progress (B)

Questions:

- 1. Student's grade:** _____
- 2. Student's age in years:** _____
- 3. Is your student's primary language a language other than English?**
 - Yes
 - No
- 4. If yes, what is your student's primary language (the dominant language spoken in the student's home)?** _____

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

- Special school
- Primarily self-contained, some special inclusive (students go to art, music, PE but return to their special education class for most of school day).
- Primarily self-contained, some academic inclusive (students go to some general education academic classes (reading, math, science) but return to special education 80% or more of school day).
- Primarily resource room (students come for services and then go back to their general education classrooms for at least 50% of the school day)
- Primarily 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 in general education classes)

6. 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.

7. Does your student use an augmentative communication system in addition to or in place of oral speech?

- Yes
- No

8. 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).

9. Vision (check the best description)

- Vision within normal limits.
- Corrected vision within normal limits.
- Low vision; uses vision for some activities of daily living.
- No functional use of vision for activities of daily living, or unable to determine functional use of vision.

10. Hearing (check the best description)

- Hearing within normal limits.
- Corrected hearing loss within normal limits.
- Hearing loss aided, but still with a significant loss.
- Profound loss, even with aids.
- Unable to determine functional use of hearing.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. Writing (check the best description)

- Conveys thoughts in complete sentences using correct spelling, grammar, and writing mechanics.
- Writes words or sentences from a model or uses word cards or sentence strips to compose a complete sentence.
- Uses pictorial representations to convey thoughts; writes alphabet letters on demand; writes name.
- Locates print; understands that print has a purpose; recognizes name in print.
- No observable awareness or use of print.