

11th Grade Alternate Assessment for the Colorado ACT

Which students meet participation requirements for alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards?

Only those students, who have a significant cognitive disability, as determined by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, meet participation requirements for alternate state assessment, including the 11th Grade Alternate Assessment. These learners, approximately 1% of the student population, access instruction through the Colorado Academic Standards/Extended Evidence Outcomes (alternate academic achievement standards).

What is required by Colorado law?

Colorado ACT

4. Requires all students enrolled in the eleventh grade in a Colorado public school to take the Colorado ACT. The ACT is the standardized, curriculum-based, achievement, college entrance examination selected by the department of education pursuant to this statute meeting the following criteria outlined in the statute C.R.S. 22-7-409 (1.5) (a) :

- selected by the Colorado Department of Education
- administered throughout the United States
- relied upon by institutions of higher education that at a minimum test in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science

With the passage of IDEA in 1997 and its reauthorization in 2004, both the state and districts are required to provide an alternate assessment for students who cannot participate in general state and district assessments, even with accommodations. Federal statute 20USC1411 provides the regulations for including children with disabilities in both state and district level assessments (including alternate assessments) with appropriate accommodations as indicated on their Individualized Education Program (IEPs). Since ACT does not offer an alternate version of its test, the Colorado Department of Education provides the 11th Grade Alternate to satisfy the participation requirement.

What is the purpose of the 11th Grade Alternate?

The 11th Grade Alternate Assessment is provided through the Exceptional Student Services Unit as the alternate assessment for the required Colorado ACT. The performance-based tasks are designed to measure post-secondary academic workforce readiness skills in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics for students with a significant cognitive disability.

What are Performance Level Descriptors?

On the assessment, there are 36 tasks related to using reading, writing and mathematics in general work and home environments. The test examiner uses a rubric to score the student's level of independence on each task. The score is calculated and applied to Performance Level Descriptors to yield a rating of Inconclusive, Exploring, Emerging, Developing or Novice.

How can the results be used?

Educators may consider the performance results when identifying meaningful transition goals and developing transition activities and services for students. The following chart is offered as an example:



Task – Follow directions for a job related task

11th Grade Reading/Writing/Communicating Colorado Academic Standards/Extended Evidence Outcomes:

Standard 1 – related to appropriate communication delivery

Standard 2 – meaning of words encountered in the work and community environment

Standard 3 – sequenced events

If the 11 th Grade Alternate Performance Level Descriptor is	that indicates the student needs this level of support...	to accomplish a given task (related to EEO)...	which addresses the transition goal (ERC).	Examples of some Transition activities/services (adult providers work with the student to move toward the goal)
Read down and then across shaded squares				
Inconclusive	Responses are unclear or varied	Indicate response	Communication develop choice-making strategies to communicate a want or need	Provide a variety of high/low assistive technology strategies, such as symbol/picture card, communication board or augmentative communication devices
Exploring	Full verbal/physical prompt; modeling; explicit information	Student observes as task is modeled; imitates sequence of task; repeats task	Performs multi-step task after modeling and with assistance; recognizes transition symbols/words such as first, next, later	Model sequencing of given tasks Teach transition vocabulary during sequencing activities
Emerging	Moderate verbal/physical prompt	Takes information provided and identifies the steps needed to accomplish the task	Follows sequenced steps with decreasing levels of assistance	Develop a task analysis to determine skill sequence Teach student to use tool – e.g. picture /word/signage/checklist
Developing	Minimal verbal prompt to refocus	Completes task; decreasing adult support	Increases completion accuracy	Teach student to follow defined picture schedule or task cards
Novice	Performs independently; little/no verbal prompting	Uses resources from environment (task card; checklist) independently	Completes task accurately Transfers skill to different task/setting	Teach job/task related vocabulary Coach student to self-evaluate performance Provide opportunities to generalize and practice skill in related settings; apply learned procedure to new tasks



For more information related to Secondary Transition Services, please visit:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/Transition.asp>

For additional information on the 11th Grade Alternate assessment, please contact:

Linda Lamirande
Colorado Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services Unit
Assessment & Accommodations Specialist
Lamirande_L@cde.state.co.us
303-866-6863

This CDE guidance document is meant for clarification, is not legally binding, and is not to be confused with legal advice. This guidance reflects CDE's recommendations, but Administrative Units (AUs) may have developed their own policies or procedures that differ from those described herein. Be sure to refer to your local AU's policies and procedures through the Director of Special Education. If you are seeking legal advice, please contact your legal counsel.

The contents of this handout were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

Colorado Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services Unit
(303) 866-6694 / www.cde.state.co.us/offices/exceptionalstudentservicesunit