



**Guidance for IEP Teams**  
**on**  
**Participation Decisions**  
**for the**  
**Arkansas Alternate**  
**Assessment Program**  
**2019-2020**

**Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the  
Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program**

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# **Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions on the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Programs of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science**

## **Introduction**

This document is intended to help guide Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams to determine whether the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program, an alternate assessment program based on alternate achievement standards, is the most appropriate assessment for an individual student. The Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program 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 state content standards. This assessment program was developed to be part of a system of curriculum, instructional, and assessment tools, so that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are able to participate in content instruction and assessments that are aligned to the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements which are linked to the Arkansas Academic Standards.

IEP teams 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 Program. This document outlines steps that an IEP team should take in determining whether the Alternate Assessment Program 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), (b) the likelihood that the student will not be able to live independently and (c) determining whether the student fits all of the criteria for participating in the Alternate Assessment Program as outlined in this document.

## **Definition of Significant Cognitive Disability**

(1) The term "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" means a child with a disability or disabilities that are not temporary in nature and that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are students who require repeated, extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains across all content areas and settings.

(2) The term "adaptive behavior" is defined as those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently and safely in daily life.

Additionally,

(i) The specific category of eligibility, as defined in IDEA, shall not be the sole determining factor of whether or not a student is a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

(ii) Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities must not be identified based solely on the student's previous low academic achievement or the student's previous need for accommodations to participate in general state or district wide assessments. Having a significant cognitive disability is not determined by an IQ test score, but rather a holistic understanding of a student.

## **Adoption of Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment**

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) offers an online assessment with appropriate accessibility features for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Assessment content includes the core academic areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science in a single platform. The adoption of this alternate assessment was approved by the Arkansas State Legislature in 2018.

## **Assessment Administration for English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics (Math), and Science**

The assessment is a computer-based test with allowances for flexibility in administration. For example, a student may respond to administrator-presented item stimuli rather than to the item stimuli on the computer. 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 testlets in each content area assessed. Testing sessions for ELA and Math are part of an instructionally-embedded model scheduled within two windows, the fall window and the spring window. Testing sessions for the Science portion will be required during the spring window and will be available during the fall window.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will test in **grades three through ten** in ELA, Math **and** Science.

The assessment uses an adaptive approach, meaning that each student receives items that have been determined to be an appropriate level of challenge. The administration script provides flexibility in the ways in which a student may interact with items, so that what is being measured is not changed.

## **Participation Decisions for the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program**

Arkansas's participation guidelines are provided in Appendix A. IEP teams will want to use the guidelines to determine whether a student participates in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. The Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is administered each year to students who meet the criteria in grades 3-10 for literacy, math, and science. As reflected in the Guidelines, to participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment a student must meet all three of the following criteria:

- 1. The student has the most significant cognitive disability.** Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviors that are essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
- 2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Arkansas Academic Standards.** Goals listed in the IEP for this student are aligned with the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.
- 3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum.**

The student:

- a. Requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature, and
- b. Uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.

### Participation Descriptions

1. **A student with the most significant cognitive disability** is one who has records that indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as actions essential for an individual to live independently and to function safely in daily life. *Having a significant cognitive disability is not determined by an IQ test score, but rather a holistic understanding of a student.*
2. **The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Arkansas Academic Standards.** The student's disability or multiple disabilities affect how the student learns curriculum linked to the Arkansas Academic Standards. The student is learning content that appropriately breaks the standards into smaller steps. DLM has derived these smaller steps from the Arkansas Academic Standards to guide instruction and has called them the Essential Elements (EE). An EE is a representation of essential curricular content. Each EE was identified by examining learning progressions to determine the critical content for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. For information on the EEs, click [here](#).
3. **The student's need for extensive direct individualized instruction is not temporary.** 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 alternate ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

The IEP team is to consider the following information to determine whether the Alternate Assessments are appropriate for individual students:

- Description of the student's curriculum and instruction, including data on progress
- Classroom work samples and data
- Examples of performance on assessment tasks to compare with classroom work
- Results of district-wide alternate assessments
- Results of individualized reading assessments
- IEP information including:
  - The Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (includes—Strengths, Needs, and Data Sources)
  - Considerations for students with individualized and substantial communication needs or modes (from multiple data sources)

- 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.

### ***Do Not Use the Following as Criteria for Participation Decisions***

In addition to the three 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 Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. These are:

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

### **Participation Tools**

There are several tools that may be helpful to IEP teams 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 Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program are provided in the appendices.

**Appendix A. *Participation Guidelines*.** This is a short form that IEP teams can use to make decisions about whether a student should take the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program assessments.

**Appendix B. *Participation Checklist*.** This is a form that 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 C. *Decision Flowchart for Participation*.** This shows the sequence of decisions made by IEP teams when determining whether a student should participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program.

**Appendix D. *Alternate Assessment Field codes for eSchool*.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Who decides that a student should participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program?**

The IEP team makes the determination of how a student will participate in statewide assessments. The IEP team must follow the Arkansas Participation Guidelines if they are to assign a student to participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. No one member of the IEP team makes this decision. Parents, teachers, and administrators make the decision based on evidence and adherence to the *Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program*.

### **2. How do we know that a student has a *significant cognitive disability*?**

Arkansas does not define a *significant cognitive disability* in terms of an IQ score. Most students with significant cognitive disabilities have intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism, but not all do. And, more importantly, not all students with these disabilities are considered to have the “most significant cognitive disability.” Students demonstrating academic deficits or difficulties due to learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, and emotional-behavioral disabilities do not qualify solely on these disabilities for participation in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. 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 Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program, but they should not automatically be assigned to the alternate assessments 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. Not all students receiving services in a self-contained setting will take the alternate assessment. Determinations for student participation in statewide assessments must be evidence-centered and made individually for each student by the IEP team. Students demonstrating mild to moderate cognitive disabilities may be more appropriately placed in the general assessment system with accommodations. Anticipated or past low achievement on the general assessment does not mean the student should be taking the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program.

It is important to note that the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) states that only students with the **most** significant cognitive disabilities participate in the alternate assessment. Therefore, many students with significant cognitive disabilities would be expected to participate in the general assessment.

### **3. How do I know if the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is appropriate for an EL student 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 most significant cognitive disability, and (b) he/she meets the other participation guidelines for the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. 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 specify that a student participating in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is receiving instruction on content linked to the Arkansas Academic Standards while his/her performance is measured against alternate achievement standards?**

The decision to align a student's academic program to the ELA, Math and Science Essential Elements limits a student's direct contact with the breadth of the Arkansas 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 route of communication with the student as soon as he or she is enrolled. This can include speaking, eye gaze, gestures, pointing, signing, or other augmentative methods. 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 Arkansas Academic Standards. Best practice would indicate that students should enter kindergarten with a communication system that allows them to demonstrate an understanding of academic concepts prior to entering the third grade. However, with or without a communication system, students must still participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program. **Test administrators must attempt every testlet** and indicate the response or lack of response to each item.

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

Yes. The IEP team must ensure that the student receives appropriate instruction on the Arkansas Academic Standards and participates in the required general assessments for their current grade level with or without accommodations. Please see Appendix D for the appropriate codes when changing assessments.

**7. Is it possible that a decision to participate in the General Assessment Program could change to the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program as a student gets older?**

Yes. Participating in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program requires that the student has a most 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 the most 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. IEP teams should be especially cautious about assigning students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to an alternate assessment in their early school years. As the level of support

needed for the student to participate in the breadth of the Arkansas Academic Standards and the general assessment increases, the team may determine that participation in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is appropriate.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are likely to continue to need supports to live as independently as possible after high school and throughout their adult lives. 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 Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program.

#### **8. Who can we ask if we have questions about this important decision?**

Contact the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education if you have any questions about participation decision making for the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program, or for assistance with instruction for students who participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program:

*Debbie Young*

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## Glossary

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

**Accessibility Features:** DLM assessments are designed to maximize accessibility for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Assessments are built to allow multiple ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understandings. During assessment administration, students have access to unique accessibility tools and supports to fit each student's needs and preferences. Some of these tools and supports are delivered through the online assessment system while others are provided outside the system, by the teacher.

**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.

**Adaptive behavior:** Those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently and safely in daily life.

**Arkansas Academic Standards:** Arkansas statute Ark. Code Ann. §6-15-404 (2017) describes the responsibilities of the Arkansas State Board of Education regarding development and implementation of challenging academic standards to prepare students for college, career, and community engagement. Arkansas' Learning Standards are defined in the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, which are discipline-based and clearly describe what students must know and be able to do in each academic content area. The rigorous academic content standards and the student learning expectations within each document provides the focus for instruction for each local school district, without rigidly prescribing every element of the local curriculum. Student demonstration of the standards and learning expectations within the Arkansas Academic Standards is the anchor for the entire education system, with instructional programs, state-level assessments, professional development, school improvement planning, teacher/administrator licensure, and accountability sharing the common goal of improved student learning and performance around these standards.

**Assessment:** The process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about student achievement.

**Assistive Technology:** Devices, items, pieces of equipment, or product systems that are used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a significant cognitive disability. Students with significant cognitive disabilities should have access to technology which will assist them in developing and participating in meaningful academics, social relationships, and employment activities. Both low and high technology approaches can be combined to allow students to communicate with others and to exert varied levels of control over their environments.

**Challenging:** A realistic degree of difficulty for the student in relation to the student's abilities and present level of functioning.

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

**Context:** The degree to which the tasks reflect meaningful, real-world activities with age-appropriate materials and provide a challenge for the student.

**Criteria:** Guidelines used to determine the eligibility of a student to participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment.

**English Learner (EL):** An EL is a student whose first 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.

**Essential Elements:** Students who take DLM assessments are instructed and assessed on **Essential Elements (EEs)**. EEs are grade-level-specific expectations about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. EEs are related to college- and career-readiness standards for students in the general population.

**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.

**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 content. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this extensively to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A written plan for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a meeting in accordance with 34 CFR 300.320 and 300.324.

**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 determine where a student is in the process of learning a specific skill or understanding a concept.

**Peer:** A student without identified significant cognitive disabilities who is within a two- year age span of the targeted student; a peer at the senior high level could be 16 years old or older (e.g., an adult co-worker of any age).

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

**Progress:** The forward movement of student performance on a targeted IEP goal/objective from a beginning to a more advanced level; this is most easily documented with instructional data and graphs.

**Significant Cognitive Disability:** (1) The term "students with the most significant cognitive disabilities" means a child with a disability or disabilities that are not temporary in nature and that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are students who require repeated, extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains across all content areas and settings.

(2) The term “adaptive behavior” is defined as those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently and safely in daily life.

Additionally,

(i) The specific category of eligibility, as defined in IDEA, shall not be the sole determining factor of whether or not a student is a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities

(ii) Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities must not be identified based solely on the student’s previous low academic achievement or the student’s previous need for accommodations to participate in general State or district-wide assessments. Having a significant cognitive disability is not determined by an IQ test score, but rather a holistic understanding of a student.

**Substantial supports:** Substantial supports include support from the teachers and others (e.g., resource teacher, co-teacher, and 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, or graphics to replace words.

**Supports:** That which is required by the student (either technological or human assistance) to function independently.

**Types of Supports:** Support provided by peers in the context of students learning together (e.g., cooperative learning groups, working on a class project together, assisting the student with significant cognitive disabilities in a regular class activity, assistance on the job provided by a co-worker, interpreting the student’s communication response to peers on the playground). Support is provided to all students in the context of regular education (e.g., instruction provided by the regular education teacher, help given by a regular classroom volunteer, community worker using a student’s adaptation within the context of a normally occurring interaction, support from a collaborative special education teacher/paraprofessional/therapist in an integrated setting that is consistent with support provided to all students).

# **Appendix A**

## ***Determination of Participation in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program***

## Arkansas Participation Guidelines

The criteria for participation in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program reflect the pervasive nature of a most significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate in this assessment. Thus, a student who participates in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program participates in this assessment for English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science.

In addition, evidence for the decision for participating in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is **not based** on:

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education services
8. English Learner (EL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated disruptive behavior
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system
12. Administrator decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress
14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in the assessment process

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No) Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a <b>most</b> significant cognitive disability	Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.  <i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i>	Yes / No
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Arkansas Academic Standards	Goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level content standards and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	Yes / No

The student may participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program if **all responses** are marked YES.

# **Appendix B**

## **Participation Checklist**

# Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program

## Participation Decision Documentation

To meet the criteria for the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program, the student must meet **ALL** participation criteria descriptors and will likely not be able to live independently.

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p>1. The student has a most significant cognitive disability</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> YES  <input type="radio"/> NO                 </p>	<p>Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.</p> <p><i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual reading assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English learner (EL) language assessments if applicable</li> </ul>
<p>2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Arkansas Academic Standards.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> YES  <input type="radio"/> NO                 </p>	<p>Goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade-level Arkansas Academic Standards and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives from the IEP</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data</li> </ul>
<p>3. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="radio"/> YES  <input type="radio"/> NO                 </p>	<p>The student</p> <p>(a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature, and</p> <p>(b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across academic content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community based instruction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher collected data and checklists</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 16 and older (recommended prior to age 16).</li> </ul>

**If all responses above are marked YES, the student may participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program.**

**Additional Considerations Not to Use in Reviewing Evidence**

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services received
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education services
8. English Learner (EL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated disruptive behavior
11. Impact of test scores on accountability system
12. Administrator decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress
14. Need for accommodations, e.g., assistive technology/AAC to participate in assessment process
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Evidence shows that the decision for participating in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program was <u>not based</u> on the above list- (check ✓ )</b>

IEP Team Statement of Assurance: Our decision was based on multiple pieces of evidence that, when taken together, demonstrated that the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program is the most appropriate assessment for this student; that his/her academic instruction will be based on the Essential Elements linked to the Arkansas Academic Standards; that the Additional Considerations listed above were not used to make this decision; and that any additional implications of this decision were discussed thoroughly.

Each of us agrees with the participation decision in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Appendix C**

## **Arkansas Alternate Assessment Program Participation Decision Flowchart**

**For student with current IEP, enrolled in grade level that requires state or district assessment:**

**Consider These:**

Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test, Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment, Individual/group/ administered achievement tests, and district-wide alternate assessments, and English learner (EL) language assessments, if applicable.

Data from evidence-based interventions, progress monitoring data, results of informal assessments, teacher collected data and checklists.

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

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

1. Do the student's records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that most significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior?\*

\*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

**Yes**

2. Would the student be appropriately challenged by goals and instruction linked to the enrolled grade-level state standards

**Yes**

3a. Does the student require extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature?

**Yes**

3b. Does the student use substantially adapted materials with individualized methods of accessing information in alternate ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills

**Yes**

**Student may participate in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment**

**No**

**No**

**No**

**No**

**Student must participate in the Standard State Assessment. Student may be eligible to use accommodations.**

## Alternate Assessment Field in eSchool

**NA** = Not Applicable or Null (default)

**ALMS** = Alternate Literacy, Math & Science (**Grades 3-10**)

Please note: Special education course codes are no longer tied to the type of assessment the student takes.