



SPREAD THE WORD: ALTERNATE DIPLOMA

In May 2021, the Indiana State Board of Education approved a proposed rule amendment for 511 IAC 6-7.1 (Graduation Requirements) to establish an Alternate Diploma and make corresponding changes to the existing regulatory language in 511 IAC 7. The Alternate Diploma is standards-based and will be available to students with significant cognitive disabilities that are participating in the alternate assessments and satisfy graduation requirements. The first exiters able to take advantage of the Alternate Diploma will be the 2022-2023 cohort (Class of 2023). *Note: Administrative Rulemaking Action (LSA 2-325) for the Alternate Diploma is not complete.*

Graduation Rate

Students who receive the Alternate Diploma will be counted towards the overall graduation rate of the school or school corporation they are exiting.

Alternate Diploma

Nothing in the proposed rule shall limit a school corporation's authority to award a locally developed certificates, such as a certificate of completion, to those students who do not meet the graduation requirement set forth in IC 20-32-4.

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) determines, based on the criteria provided and the student's individual and unique needs, whether a student with disabilities will participate in general education assessments with or without testing accommodations, or in the alternate assessment with or without accommodations. The alternate assessment is based on alternate academic achievement standards/content connectors. The CCC must be informed that the decision to participate in an alternate assessment means the student will have limited or modified exposure to the grade level standards that may have a significant impact on the student's academic outcomes and postsecondary opportunities.



For the purpose of identifying students eligible to participate in the statewide alternate assessment program in lieu of participation in the general assessment program, the student's CCC must determine that the student is a student with the most significant cognitive disability.

Guidelines

A comprehensive understanding of the whole student, including a review of educational considerations and data obtained through the individualized education program (IEP) process, is required to make this determination. The CCC must agree that the student:

- has a disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life;
- requires extensive, repeated, individualized direct instruction and substantial support that is not of a temporary nature; and
- requires substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to achieve measurable gains on the state academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled.

NB The CCC may not base its decision for determining participation in the alternate assessment solely on any of the following: a disability category or label; poor attendance; native language; social, cultural or economic difference; expected poor performance on the general education assessment; special education placement and services; emotional, behavioral, or physical challenges; English language learner (ELL) status; impact of student scores on accountability system; or need for accommodation to participate in the assessment process.