The Collaborative’s Guide to New York State Alternative Assessment (NYSAA)

WHAT

The NYSAA is an assessment in which students with severe cognitive disabilities demonstrate their performance toward achieving the NYS P-12 CCLS in ELA, math, science and social studies (depending on the grade level being tested). Student performance is recorded in a datafolio, and includes direct observation and documentation of information such as student work products, photographs, audio and videotapes.

The CSE uses the following criteria to determine whether a student is eligible to take the NYSAA:

- Student has a severe cognitive disability and significant deficits in communication/language and significant deficits in adaptive behavior; and
- Student requires a highly specialized educational program that facilitates the acquisition, application, and transfer of skills across natural environments (home, school, community, and/or workplace); and
- Student requires educational support systems (assistive technology, personal care services, health/medical services, or behavioral intervention).

“Students with severe disabilities” refers to students who have:

- limited cognitive abilities combined with behavioral and/or physical limitations
- require highly specialized education and/or social, psychological, and medical services
- may experience severe speech, language, and/or perceptual-cognitive impairments and challenging behaviors that interfere with learning and socialization opportunities
- may also have extremely fragile physiological conditions and may require personal care, physical/verbal supports, and assistive technology devices.

WHEN

Basic Steps to Administering the NYSAA

1. Determine Eligibility
   - CSE determines eligibility according to specified criteria
   - Use Age Range table to determine appropriate grade level assessments

2. Administer the NYSAA (September 29th, 2014 – February 27th, 2015)
   - Determine appropriate assessment tasks and plan evidence
   - Conduct baseline assessments for all tasks (must score 74% or lower)
   - Provide instruction for more than 15 school days
   - Schedule your Collegial Review
   - Complete final assessments

3. Assemble Datafolio and Finalize NYSAA
   - Complete Verifying Evidence Documentation
   - Complete Data Summary Sheet Documentation
   - Assemble and Submit Datafolio to DOE

Additional Resources

- 2014–15 Elementary and Intermediate level Testing Schedule
- A Parent’s Quick Guide to NYSAA
- Eligibility and Participation Criteria - NYSAA
- Office of State Assessment NYSAA Administration Information
- Questions and Answers Regarding the Administration of the 2013-14 NYSAA

NYSAA eligible students are assessed yearly, according to chronological ages aligned with grade levels. Assessment begin in the school year they become 9 years old and continue until the school year they become 14 (grade equivalents 3-8). The secondary level NYSAA is administered during the school year they become 17-18 years of age (high school). *Note: NYSAA-eligible students who do not meet the age criteria above and will be leaving school before they reach their 18th birthday must take the secondary-level NYSAA before they leave school (i.e., when they are 17 years old. NYSAA-eligible students with a birth date prior to September 1, 1996 who have not been assessed at the secondary-level must be assessed in 2014-15 before they leave school.

Collegial Review is required for each student datafolio. Multiple reviews are recommended.

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