Should My Student Take the Alternate Assessment?

MI-Access is Michigan's alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. The Michigan guidelines to determine if a student should be working toward alternate content expectations and taking the alternate assessment are provided below and detailed in the rubric referenced on page 2.

The IEP team has the front-line role in determining which assessment a student should take, but the decision-making process must follow federal law and state policy.

Does the student have an IEP?

- If No → **Student should take M-STEP or MME.**
- If Yes →

Is the student's primary disability ANY of the following: speech/language impairment, specific learning disability, or emotional impairment?

- If Yes → These disability types are not compatible with the definition of a "Student with the MOST Significant Cognitive Disabilities (MSCD)." These students should have instruction aligned with Michigan K-12 General Content Academic Standards.

  Therefore, student should take M-STEP or MME.
- If No →

Does the student meet ALL COMPONENTS of the definition of a "Student with the MOST Significant Cognitive Disabilities (MSCD)"?

"Students with the MOST Significant Cognitive Disabilities (MSCD)" is not specific to a particular primary disability type but is more commonly present as a secondary condition for some types of disabilities. Students with MSCD will:

- Have substantial impairment in intellectual or cognitive functioning **AND**
- Have substantial deficits in the adaptive functioning across the conceptual, social, and practical domains **AND**
- Require extensive supports to demonstrate learning and to generalize skills across different settings in daily life.

- If No → **Student should take M-STEP or MME.**
- If Yes →

Does the student require an English language proficiency assessment?

- If Yes → Follow the MDE guidelines for participation in WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

  Continue
- If No →

In each subject, to which standards or content expectations is the student's instruction most closely aligned?

- General Content Standards → **Student should take M-STEP or MME.**
- Alternate Content Standards →

Student should take MI-Access.
Student is working toward Michigan's alternate content standards; IEP determines which level or range of complexity of those standards (High, Medium, Low)

→ **Teachers align levels of instruction to the appropriate range of complexity.**

If the student is working toward alternate content standards, which of the following are most closely aligned to the student's goals and objectives and instructional approach?

Functional Independence	Supported Independence	Participation
• Student's instruction aligns most closely to the **High** range of complexity for ELA and mathematics	• Student's instruction aligns most closely to the **Medium** range of complexity for ELA and mathematics	• Student's instruction aligns most closely to the **Low** range of complexity for ELA and mathematics

IEP teams are strongly encouraged to use the Rubric for Assigning Students to Alternate Standards for Instruction and Assessment (https://tinyurl.com/m9ktjdjr). This rubric explores the four criteria in greater depth; additionally, the rubric provides guidance to IEP teams in using evidence to support the four criteria to determine if a student meets the definition of a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A training module (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9qCLKmpeb0) is available for teams on using the rubric.

Reminder: Students with specific learning disabilities, speech/language impairments, and/or emotional impairments do not meet the definition of "Students with the MOST Significant Cognitive Disabilities (MSCD)" and should have specially designed instructional aligned with the Michigan K-12 General Content Academic Standards, measured by M-STEP or MME.

Factors to Consider
(ALL MUST BE TRUE)

- Student has an IEP
- Student has substantial impairment to intellectual or cognitive functioning
- Student has substantial impairment to adaptive functioning and skills across the daily life domains of conceptual, social, and practical adaptive behaviors
- Student requires extensive individualized instruction and supports
- Majority of student's primary instructional goals are based on the alternate content expectations (i.e., Michigan's Essential Elements)
- Student does not demonstrably show learning or growth using general assessments, even with optimizing available universal or designative testing accommodations

Factors Not to Consider
(NONE SHOULD BE USED AS A DETERMINING FACTOR)

- Type of program in which student is placed
- Anticipated poor performance or lack of proficiency on the general assessment
- Need for accommodation (universal, designated, or otherwise) while testing
- Social, cultural, linguistic, or environmental factors
- Administrative decisions purely to reduce the percent of students taking alternate assessments
- Anticipated emotional issues or disruptive behaviors during testing
- Anticipated impact on school accountability determinations

For ALL students working toward alternate content expectations:
Parent Notification Required: If the IEP team determines that MI-Access is the most appropriate state level assessment for any given student, **then the school must provide information to that student's parents regarding any implication this decision may have on the student completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma.**