

Developing and Disseminating Information about State Assessments to Families of Students with Disabilities

National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO)
Sheryl Lazarus | Kristin Liu | Andrew Hinkle | Kathy Strunk

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
David Egnor | Carmen Sánchez

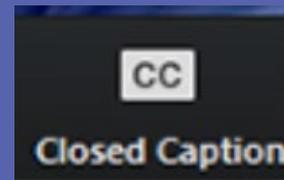
Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)
Carolyn Hayer

February 9, 2022



Using Closed Captioning

To start using CC, click the caption button



Uso de la interpretación de idiomas

- Hagan clic en el icono de interpretación
- Seleccionen "Spanish"
- Después de seleccionar "español", hagan clic "Mute Original Audio"



Introductions

Carolyn Hayer

*Director, Center for Parent
Information and Resources (CPIR)*



And

Sheryl Lazarus

*Director, National Center on
Educational Outcomes (NCEO)*



Purpose of Today's Webinar

To share information and resources that will help Parent Centers support families in making decisions about student participation in state tests.

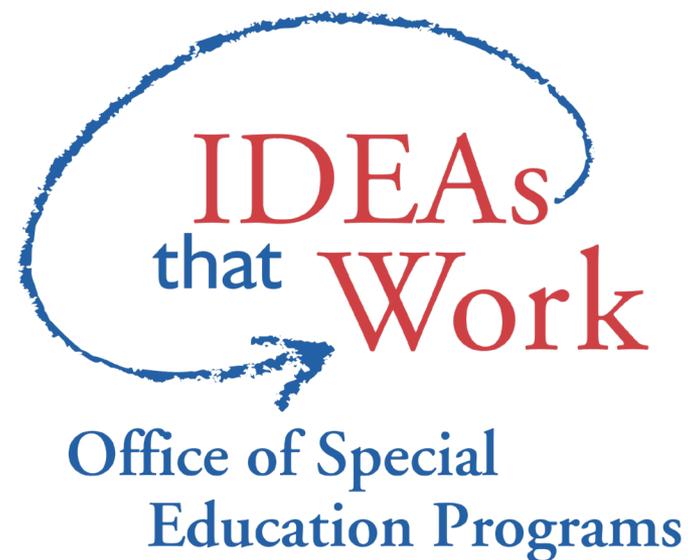


Webinar Overview

- Welcome from OSEP
- NCEO/CPIR Collaboration
- Assessment Information
- Participation Communication Toolkit

Welcome from OSEP

Carmen Sanchez,
CPIR Project Officer
and
David Egnor,
NCEO Project Officer



NCEO was recently refunded for 5 more years. In addition to what NCEO has done in the past, it has a new charge.

Language in OSEP's 2021 RFP for a National Assessment Center:

The Center must achieve, at a minimum, the following expected outcomes:

(c) Increased capacity of parents of students with disabilities to understand how students with disabilities are included in, and benefit from, participation in diagnostic, interim and summative assessments to improve instruction of students with disabilities . . .

To help address this need, NCEO has a new partner



Joint CPIR/NCEO Activities

- Collaboratively develop and share resources
 - Jointly design and develop modules for an online assessment course for the Parent Center e-Learning Hub that provides training for staff at parent centers across the county
 - Create other resources for parents
- CPIR will share NCEO resources that parents might find useful via its platforms (CentersConnect, e-Newsletter, Webinars, Social Media posts) and networks
- Jointly produce webinars on relevant topics
- NCEO staff will serve as content experts in CPIR's "Who Knows What Data Base"

Why are state tests administered?

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that all students with disabilities are included in all state and districtwide assessment administrations.
- State testing is important for understanding student learning.
- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all states to administer annual tests in grades 3–8 and at least once in grades 9–12.
- ESSA ensures **all** students are included in state testing, including students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities who were historically often excluded from testing.



Why are state test data important?

- State testing provides valuable data for understanding how schools are meeting students' learning needs, including the learning needs of students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities.
- State tests also help check students' progress toward states' rigorous content standards.



How does state testing help students?

- State tests allow students to demonstrate what they have learned and practiced in the classroom.
- State tests allow educators, families, and community members to understand how their schools are meeting educational needs.
- State testing supports educators' efforts to hold all students to high learning expectations.



How does state testing help schools?

- State testing provides critical information on student learning, so educators can make programmatic improvements.
- State testing highlights gaps in academic achievement and helps identify where to target instructional supports.
- Data from state tests can help guide school strategies



Participant Feedback #1

What questions do families ask about the participation of students with disabilities in state tests?

(share your answers in the chat box)

Discussion: Kathy Strunk (NCEO)

Overview of the Toolkit

Sheryl Lazarus
(NCEO)



Participation Communications Toolkit

- **Customizable** resources about why it is important for students with disabilities to participate in state assessments
 - Flyers for families, students, educators and policymakers
 - IEP discussion guide that provides information about various test options and the implications of various decisions
 - Sample social media posts
 - Slide deck
 - Letter to parents
- Toolkit is intended to provide a neutral but useful mechanism to guide positive, thoughtful conversations about student testing participation.



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National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO)

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) focuses on the inclusion of students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities in instruction and assessments. The scope of NCEO's work includes issues related to accessibility of assessments across the comprehensive assessment system including formative assessment practices, classroom-based assessments, diagnostic assessments, interim assessments, and summative assessments.

See our [About page](#) for more on NCEO.

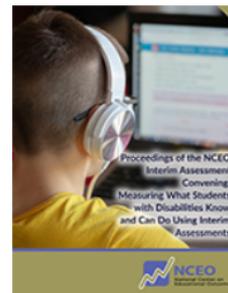
Latest News and Publications



[NCEO February 2022 Newsletter](#)



[Forum on Education for Each and Every Student: Perspectives on](#)



[Proceedings of the NCEO Interim Assessment Convening:](#)

[Searchable Research Summaries](#)

- [AA-AAAS Bibliography](#)
- [Accommodations Bibliography](#)
- [Accommodations for English Learners Bibliography](#)

[Accommodations Toolkit](#)

[Data Analytics](#)

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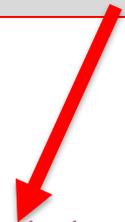
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Participation Communication Toolkit



Digging Deeper into Select Components

Andrew Hinkle
(NCEO)

Kristin Liu
(NCEO)



Customizable Flyer to share with Families



Logo

WHY STATEWIDE TESTING PARTICIPATION MATTERS TO FAMILIES

How Does Taking State Tests Help My Child?

- It allows your child to show what they have been learning and practicing in their classroom, and how well they are connecting with classroom instruction.
- It lets you know how well your school is teaching all students.
- It provides you and other families in your community with information about how local schools are meeting the needs of all students.
- It lets you check your child's progress toward completing high school ready for a career or college.

How Does Taking State Tests Help My Child's School?

- It provides critical information to the district and state on how well all students in your child's school are doing, so the school can be supported.

Did you know?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)—the federal law that governs general education in public schools across the country—was passed in 2015 and requires statewide testing in certain grades and subjects.

By requiring that all students take state tests, the law requires schools to start thinking about all students when designing learning opportunities and setting goals.

Not too long ago, some students were **not included** in testing. Back then students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded.

Parent Flyer Addresses These Questions

- How does taking state tests help my child?
- How does taking states tests help my child's school?
- How can I support my child?

How Does Taking State Tests Help My Child?

- It allows your child to show what they have been learning and practicing in their classroom, and how well they are connecting with classroom instruction.
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**Includes sidebar
with interesting and
helpful facts.**

<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/ParticipationCommunicationToolkit/FamilyFlyer.docx>

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Fully Customizable



Insert logo & provide organization information

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Word document so text can be edited

Customizable Flyer for Students



Logo

WHY STATEWIDE TESTING PARTICIPATION MATTERS TO STUDENTS

How Does Taking State Tests Help Me?

- It allows you to show what you've learned and practiced in your school.
- It lets you and your family know if your school is doing a good job supporting your learning.
- It gives you and your family information about how local schools in your community are meeting the needs of all students.
- It tells you and your family about your progress toward completing high school and success after high school, such as attending college and being ready for a career.

How Does Taking State Tests Help My School?

- It provides information to your principal and teachers about how well all students are doing at your school.

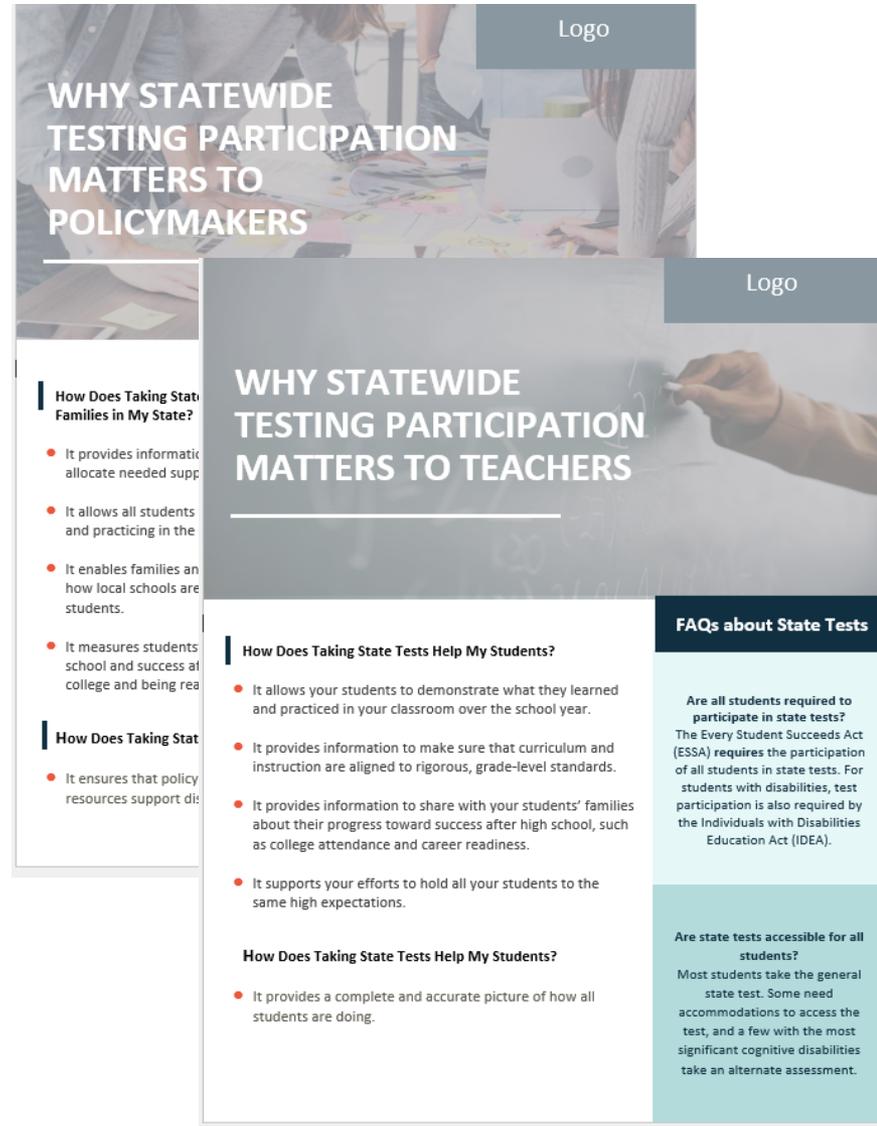
Did you know?

The United States passed a law in 2015 that **requires** statewide testing in certain grades and subjects. All students in these grades take state tests.

Not too long ago, some students were **not included** in testing. Back then students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded.

By requiring that **all** students take the same test, schools and teachers can think about all students when they are planning.

Also, Customizable Flyers for Teachers and Policymakers



Teacher Flyer:

<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/ParticipationCommunicationToolkit/EducatorFlyer.docx>

Policymaker Flyer:

<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/ParticipationCommunicationToolkit/PolicymakerFlyer.docx>

Customizable IEP Team Discussion Guide



Logo

Making Statewide Testing Participation Decisions: IEP Team Discussion Guide

Did you know?

Why should students with disabilities participate in State testing?

- It allows children to show what they know and have been doing.
- It provides information to make sure that the instruction of students with disabilities is rigorous and aligned to standards.
- It reveals performance gaps across different groups of students in your school, and guides school strategies to address the educational needs of students with disabilities.

What are the test options?

- **General Assessment:** Most students with disabilities take the general assessment with or without accommodations.
- **Alternate Assessment:** A few students with the most significant cognitive disabilities take an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). There are short- and long-term implications for students who participate in the AA-AAAS so participation decisions should be made very carefully.

What are the implications of participating in the alternate assessment?

- A short-term implication is that the instruction of students who take the alternate assessment will be at less depth, breadth, and complexity than the instruction of other students.
- Long term implication are that students who take the alternate assessment may not be on track to meet the requirements for a regular graduation diploma, or may not be eligible for some postsecondary training institutions, military service, or jobs.

Test participation decisions may have unintended consequences.

There is a risk that expectations for learning may be lowered, which leads to:

- less rigorous instructional programming
- diminished academic progress
- more limited post-school opportunities

There are ways to support and empower students with disabilities when they participate in tests.

Accessibility features and accommodations can help students show what they know and can do on tests.

Discussion Guide Addresses These Questions

- Why should students with disabilities participate in assessments?
- What are the test options?
- What are the implications of participating in the alternate assessment?
- How can the IEP team confidently make State assessment participation decisions?
- How can accessibility features and accommodations support the inclusion of students with disabilities in instruction and assessments?
- What is needed for the student to meaningfully access the assessment?

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Social Media Post Example: Series for Parents and Families

DAY 1:

Parents and families have an important role to play in helping their student mentally prepare for state tests. For the next five days we'll share a post each day with a practical suggestion for supporting your child during testing. Stay tuned!

DAY 2:

State testing will soon be here. To help your child get ready, talk with your child and make sure they understand why they are taking state tests.

DAY 3:

Families, when you talk with your child about taking state tests, use positive language about testing and help your child use positive self-talk (e.g., I can do my best; mistakes are okay).

DAY 4:

Does your child get anxious when taking state tests? Practice stress-reducing strategies (breathing exercises, stretching, and other activities) with your child.

Customizable Slide Deck



Why Statewide Testing Participation Matters for All Students

Date

SEA/LEA Name

Presenter Name(s)

Participant Feedback #2

Do you have any questions about the toolkit?

How might you use the tools in the toolkit?

Discussion (Respond in Chat or Unmute)

Facilitated by Kathy Strunk (NCEO)

Closing

- Final thoughts
- Complete evaluation survey

*Thank
you*

For Additional Information

NCEO

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CPIR

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/>