

QUESTIONS ABOUT ASSESSMENT

What is assessment?

Assessment is the collecting of information to make decisions. In the classroom, a teacher collects information about students to make decisions about how and what to teach. Watching a child solve a problem or play with objects is assessment. Giving a child a test or project to do are also types of assessment.

What types of assessment are often used?

There are several types of assessment that students take while in school. Achievement tests are used most often. These tests measure what a child has learned and often are given by the teacher. A major goal of educational policy makers is to ensure educational opportunities for all students. It is equally important to measure the progress of all students. Therefore, the participation of students with disabilities in *ISTEP+* and district-wide assessments is important.

What is an alternate assessment?

There is a small percentage of students for whom *ISTEP+* is not appropriate. These students participate in educational programs primarily focusing on developing functional life skills. In order to assess student progress in life skill and academic areas, an alternate assessment has been developed in Indiana. The Indiana Assessment System of Educational Proficiencies, *IASEP*, assesses progress in all areas and environments in which instruction is received.

QUESTIONS ABOUT IASEP

What are the purposes of IASEP?

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997* required that all students be included in statewide assessment and accountability systems by the year 2000. All states were required to develop an alternate assessment system. *IASEP* is the alternate assessment currently being used in Indiana. *IASEP* honors the belief that all students have value, can learn with appropriate supports, and can be expected to make

measurable gains. It is being used to improve the content and quality of education by documenting student progress from year to year. Information will be gathered to document individual student growth. It will not be used to compare students or classes.

Who participates in IASEP?

IASEP will be used to assess students who have moderate to severe disabilities. Participation in *IASEP* is for students who are not working toward a high school diploma and whose curricula may include domains of personal adjustment, social adjustment, recreation and leisure, and vocational experience in addition to academics. This system can, however, be used along with other assessment instruments to document achievement for any student.

How is participation in IASEP documented?

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) decides which assessment is appropriate for the student. If the decision is for the student to participate in *IASEP*, the IEP must include a reason why *ISTEP+* is not appropriate.

How will student performance be assessed?

Student information may be collected from several sources. Samples of student work, information about the support systems that are in place for a student, interviews, rating surveys completed by a student's teacher or family members, photos, audio clips, video tape, observations, or other documents that show student performance in a variety of areas may be used. These samples of student progress will be used to support ratings of student abilities made by the classroom teacher.

What are assessment ratings?

IASEP is an alternate assessment system that provides an assessment of student achievement through ratings of essential skills and academic standards. Skills are identified in subdomains within the broad domains of information acquisition and use, personal adjustment, social adjustment, recreation and leisure, and vocational experience.

Documentation in the form of audio clips, scanned images, video clips, or text entries support the ratings.

How often will students be assessed with IASEP?

IASEP is an ongoing assessment system designed to be updated throughout each school year. The data will be passed on to teachers from year to year as a continuous record of student achievement. *IASEP* is designed to document progress during each school year.

Does IASEP replace the reevaluation?

Participation in *IASEP* provides ongoing evaluation information. A Case Conference Committee determines the type of assessment to be used with each student. There must be some type of reevaluation every three years (per state and federal law) OR if there is a suspected change in the student's eligibility. *IASEP* may provide sufficient assessment information and there may be no need for a formal assessment to take place. This is a decision made by the Case Conference Committee.

Can IASEP be used as a progress report to parents?

Yes. *IASEP* is linked to goals and objectives in the student's IEP. Teachers using *IASEP* also have the capability of selecting archived data on the student and showing progress from selected time intervals. This provides parents not only with actual ratings over time, but also with visual representations of those ratings.

Will the IASEP IEP replace currently used IEP's?

No. The IEP component was never intended to replace the IEPs that are currently being used in districts around the state. It has been developed in response to requests from special education teachers during the pilot year. It will contain the basic components required by the state. Districts may use this component of the system if they choose.

When will scores be reported?

States were required by IDEA '97 to begin reporting student progress on *IASEP* by July of 2000. Scores are reported only if doing so will not result in the disclosure of results identifiable to individual children. Information collected through *IASEP* will remain confidential as part of the student's education records.

Can IASEP be used with children 3-5 years old?

IASEP was originally designed for use with the school-aged population; however, some preschoolers were included during the pilot year. A group of stakeholders has worked to develop essential skills that are more appropriate for assessing the development of preschoolers. A pilot for the early childhood component of the system is currently taking place. Included in the pilot are: New Albany, Richmond, Joint Educational Services in Special Education, Elkhart Community Schools, West Central Services, and Hamilton-Boone-Madison.

What are the future plans for using IASEP with other levels of special education students?

Documenting Indiana Academic Standards (DIAS) began pilot testing in January of 2000. This pilot involves teachers of students with learning disabilities and mild mental handicaps. For this population of students, the alternate assessment will provide documentation to support diploma decisions. Related work is being done in the areas of best teaching strategies and accommodations. There is also a pilot being conducted in an alternative school setting.

***To obtain more information on
IASEP, please contact:***

Karen Dodson, Parent Liaison
Purdue University
1446 LAEB, Room 6157
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1446
Phone: 765-496-7323
Email: karendodson@purdue.edu

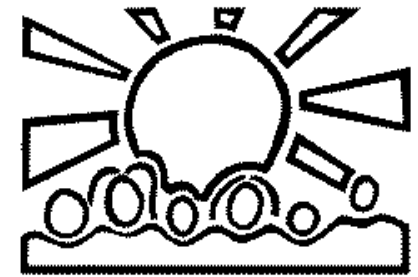
Deborah Bennett, IASEP Project Director
Purdue University
1446 LAEB, Room 5122
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1446
Phone: 765-494-7237
Email: bennett@purdue.edu

Helen Arvidson, IASEP Technical Editor/
IASEP: EC Project Coordinator
Purdue University
1446 LAEB, Room 5152
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1446
Phone: 765-494-9636
Email: arvidson@purdue.edu

John Cunningham, Software Developer
62657 CR 17
Goshen, IN 46526
Phone: 219-534-0257
Email: john@johnsdesk.com

Brian Simkins, Educational Consultant
Indiana Department of Education
Division of Special Education
Room 229, State House
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798
Phone: 317-232-0573
877-851-4106
Email: briansimkin@speced.doe.state.in.us

Information can also be found on the IASEP website: <http://iasep.soe.purdue.edu/>



***Indiana Assessment
System of
Educational Proficiencies***

IASEP

***Building Brighter Futures
for Indiana Students***

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