

Chapter Four

Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards: Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR)

The Purpose of ISTAR Assessments in Grades 3-8 and 10

Federal law (IDEA 2008) and state law require that all students participate in Indiana’s assessment system. For most students with special needs, this law requires participation in ISTEP+ assessments, with or without accommodations. For students with significant cognitive disabilities, however, the Case Conference Committee may determine that the *Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting (ISTAR)* is the most appropriate assessment. ISTAR is the only alternate assessment that is recognized in Indiana for the purpose of statewide accountability. The criteria for determining eligibility to participate are available at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/criteria-determining-participation-istar.pdf>

Structure and Content of ISTAR for 2015-16

The ISTAR test design will provide teachers and students the flexibility of incorporating assessment into ongoing instruction by utilizing three administration windows throughout the year. The first ISTAR testing window in the fall will consist of the administration of a “placement” test. The results of this first test will determine in which one of three tiers the student will be placed during the second window. All three tiers are aligned to Indiana’s Academic Standards and will consist of questions that have varying degrees of cognitive complexity (i.e., Tier 3 will consist of questions with a higher degree of complexity than Tiers 1 and 2; Tier 2 will consist of questions with a higher degree of complexity than Tier 1). The second ISTAR testing window, in the winter, will assess standards on which students should have received instruction during the first half of the school year. The third and final ISTAR testing window, in the spring, will assess standards on which students should have received instruction during the second half of the school year (i.e., the Spring assessment will not be cumulative).

Testing personnel should note the following regarding the administration of the 2015-16 ISTAR assessment:

- I. ISTAR will be administered during three testing windows;
 - a. Part 1 – Placement test
 - i. Based on standards that should have been taught in the fall
 - ii. Determines student placement into Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3
 - iii. Trained test administrators provide a one-on-one test administration of multiple-choice items using an online test platform.
 - iv. Does not impact accountability.
 - b. Part 2 – Second test administration
 - i. Based on standards that should have been taught in the fall and winter
 - ii. Trained test administrators provide a one-on-one test administration of multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items using an online test platform.
 - iii. Student results used for accountability.

- c. Part 3 – Spring test administration
 - i. Based on standards that should have been taught in the spring.
 - ii. Trained test administrators provide a one-on-one test administration of multiple-choice and technology-enhanced items using an online test platform.
 - iii. Student results used for accountability.
2. English/language arts and mathematics are assessed in Grades 3-8 and 10.
3. Science is assessed in Grades 4, 6 and 10.
4. Social studies is assessed in Grades 5 and 7.

Testing Accommodations

The approved accommodations for ISTAR are outlined in *Appendix C*. These testing accommodations may be administered by classroom teachers in addition to program area staff (i.e., an EL or Special Education teacher). Test examiners must be made aware of each student's allowable accommodations.

Paper form requests will be handled through the Non-Standard Assessment Accommodation Request form found in Appendix B of the 2015-16 Indiana Assessment Program Manual.

Data Collection

Purpose

The purpose of the DOE-TL data collection is to gather details used to populate student-level information for online testing and barcode labels for the ISTAR Assessment during the 2015-2016 testing administrations. The barcode labels and online information will help reduce set-up time requirements of the assessments and will also ensure more accurate student information. The required data for online and barcode labels should be collected, combined into a file, and submitted to the Indiana Department of Education through the Application Center by the DOE-TL collection date. Schools that do not submit data by the collection deadline will either have to hand enter student demographic information into the test platform or hand bubble each individual test booklet.

Audience

This is a required collection for schools administering ISTAR:

- Public schools (Traditional and Charter)
- Nonpublic schools (Accredited and Freeway)
- Choice Scholarship Schools

Prior to testing

The CTC is required to access the vendors' site to set up test administration. Instructions and dates for completing this process will be disseminated in September to CTCs.

ISTAR (Grades 3-8 and 10) Assessment Windows for 2015-2016

Please review the "Assessment Testing Windows" section of the Office of Student Assessment's website at <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment> for more details on testing windows.

The results from the ISTAR assessment must be communicated to parents in a timely manner.

NOTE:

For additional information, please access <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/alternate-assessments>.