

# Nevada Alternate Assessment (NAA)

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## Overview

Designed specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities, the NAA is the state assessment of alternate achievement standards. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities be included in each state's assessment and accountability system by requiring states to report student achievement for all students as well as for specific groups of students on a disaggregated basis. The NAA consists of assessment items in English Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11, and in Science in grades 5, 8, and 11.

## Questions and Answers

### Who takes this assessment?

The NAA is designed specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This assessment is administered to less than 1% of all students in Nevada who meet the strict criteria required to be assessed with the NAA.

Parents and/or guardians should be aware that students taking the NAA are assessed against alternate achievement standards that will lead to alternate graduation achievements (i.e. a modified diploma). For individual clarity it is imperative that parents and/or guardians work with their student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.

### What content area(s) are assessed?

The NAA assesses student academic performance on [Nevada Content Standards Connectors](#). These assessments parallel the general education content assessments given in each grade level (e.g. English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science).

### What are the connectors and how were they created?

The Nevada Academic Content Standard (NVACS) Connectors were developed by the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) Office of Standards and Instructional Support in collaboration with district staff, Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs), parent and advocate groups. This collaboration was created as a system of instruction and assessment aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science. The NVACS Connectors provide teachers with grade level connectors that align to the general education standards in ELA, Mathematics, and Science and provide students with

significant cognitive disabilities deeper and more enduring exposure to the academic content in preparation for transitional opportunities beyond their K-12 experience.

## **Who administers this assessment?**

The student's special education teacher should administer this assessment. If this is not possible, the assessment administrator must be a certified teacher or other licensed professional who works extensively with the student and is trained in the assessment procedures. The test administrator cannot be a parent or guardian of the student.

What time of year is this assessment given?

The NAA assessment testing window is generally open between the end of May and the end of February. Please speak with your student's school for more detailed information regarding testing dates.

## **What is the approximate testing time?**

The NAA is designed to be administered in a one-on-one setting. There is **no time limit** to ensure that every student has an appropriate opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge. Students who are working productively must be given time to complete the test.

The students participating in the NAA may require multiple testing sessions to complete each content area assessed. Test administrators are aware of student fatigue and physical/emotional issues and plan testing sessions accordingly.

## **What is the test design?**

In 2017-18 the NAA contains 28 items in each ELA, Math and Science. Math and Science are entirely multiple-choice. ELA consists of 27 multiple choice items with one open-response item. The assessment requires direct observation of specific tasks. Each task is an indication of a specific academic skill that has been linked to grade level content. The test administrator reads questions from the Test Booklet and the student responds using the Student Response Booklets. These observations are recorded as digital video-clips that are scored by the classroom teacher. Later, during a validation score session, a second scorer will view the digital video-clips and validate that the score provided by the classroom teacher is accurate.

## **Where can I find more information?**

- [Nevada Department of Education website provides access to assessment resources for the NAA](#)
- [Nevada Academic Content Standard Connectors](#)

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