

**WAAS-Portfolio Access Guide:  
A Decision-Making Process for Aligning IEPs to the WAAS-Portfolio  
For Students with Significant Cognitive Challenges**

After developing an IEP that includes a statement of the student’s Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and measurable goals and objectives/benchmarks, use Step 1 below to determine how the student will participate in state assessments [WAC 392-172A-03090]. Students participating in the WAAS-Portfolio must be assessed in all areas being assessed at the student’s grade level with the WAAS-Portfolio. If it is determined that the WAAS-Portfolio is the most appropriate assessment option for the student, use the remaining steps to identify GLE/PE Extensions in reading and mathematics, collect baseline data, set goals, and monitor student progress. (For content areas that do not have associated IEP goals, use relevant PLAAFP and evaluation information and/or data that are collected within the context of other classroom instruction.)

**STEP 1: Confirm whether the student’s current level of cognitive and symbolic functioning falls within the range required for participation in the WAAS-Portfolio.** The tables below provide general information about available assessment options and different levels of cognitive functioning. Students functioning at the Abstract Symbolic through Awareness levels (see descriptions on p. 2) may participate in state assessments using the WAAS-Portfolio (OSPI, 2010). IEP teams may also want to consult with the evaluation group when determining an appropriate assessment option. For additional information, see *Guidelines for Participation in State Assessments* (<http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/AlternativeAssessment/pubdocs/StudentParticipation.pdf>).

**Assessment Options for Students with Disabilities**

	<b>Used for NCLB</b>	<b>Grade Level(s)</b>	<b>High School Graduation</b>
Assessment with or without accommodations	√	3-8, 10-12	√
Basic Level (Level 2 cut score to pass) with or without accommodations		3-8, 10-12	√
<b>WAAS-Portfolio</b>	√	3-8, 10-12	√
Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam (DAPE)		11-12	√
Locally Determined Assessment (LDA)		12	√
“Awareness Level” Waiver		11-12	√

**Continuum of Cognitive Development and Assessment Options**

In an effort to support IEP teams in their assessment decisions for their students, the Continuum of Cognitive Development was developed. This Continuum lists student learning behaviors and suggests possible assessment options by category. Because there are additional options for students in high school, a separate graphic is provided for this age group.

## Grades 3-8

Level of Cognitive Development	Assessment Option
<p><b>Abstract Conceptual:</b> Comprehends, interprets, and analyzes grade level text; understands and applies on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates in writing using elaboration and complex structures</p>	<p><b>General assessments with or without accommodations (e.g., MSP*)</b></p>
<p><b>Concrete Conceptual - on Grade Level:</b> Reads and comprehends on-grade level text; masters a limited number of on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates ideas in writing with limited elaboration and simple structures</p>	
<p><b>Concrete Conceptual - on or below grade level:</b> Reads and comprehends below-grade level or modified on-grade level print text; masters below grade level or a very limited number of on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates basic ideas in writing using simple structures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All option noted above OR</li> <li>• General assessments with or without accommodations scored at Basic Level (L2)**</li> </ul>
<p><b>Abstract Symbolic:</b> Reads sight words and picture symbols; writes using sight words or picture symbols to communicate; counts objects and recognizes symbolic numbers; comprehends modified texts composed of sight words and picture symbols</p>	
<p><b>Early-symbolic:</b> Recognizes pictures; may also use a range of pictures/objects to communicate ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All options noted above OR</li> <li>• WAAS-Portfolio</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-symbolic:</b> Uses objects or gestures to communicate, relies on immediate context and uses objects to communicate</p>	
<p><b>Awareness:</b> Limited consciousness.</p>	

\*MSP is the Measurement of Student Progress.

\*\*Basic Level (2): A determination by a student's IEP team to establish a proficient score at Level 2, or Basic, on the state's annual assessment. This score determination process is accessible for all students on an IEP in grades 3 through 8 and high school. The MSP/HSPE Basic cannot be used for state and federal accountability; at the high school level the HSPE Basic can be used to meet state graduation requirements.

## Grades 9-12

Level of Cognitive Development	Assessment Option
<p><b>Abstract Conceptual:</b> Comprehends, interprets, and analyzes grade level text; understands and applies on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates in writing using elaboration and complex structures</p>	<p><b>General assessments with or without accommodations (e.g., HSPE, EOC*)</b></p>
<p><b>Concrete Conceptual - on Grade Level:</b> Reads and comprehends on-grade level text; masters a limited number of on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates ideas in writing with limited elaboration and simple structures</p>	
<p><b>Concrete Conceptual - on or below grade level:</b> Reads and comprehends below-grade level or modified on-grade level print text; masters below grade level or a very limited number of on-grade level mathematics concepts and skills; communicates basic ideas in writing using simple structures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option noted above</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• General assessments with or without accommodations scored at Basic Level (L2)**</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All options noted above</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• DAPE with or without accommodations (Grades 11-12 Only)</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• LDA (Grade 12 Only)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Abstract Symbolic:</b> Reads sight words and picture symbols; writes using sight words or picture symbols to communicate; counts objects and recognizes symbolic numbers; comprehends modified texts composed of sight words and picture symbols</p>	
<p><b>Early-symbolic:</b> Recognizes pictures; may also use a range of pictures/objects to communicate ideas</p>	
<p><b>Pre-symbolic:</b> Uses objects or gestures to communicate, relies on immediate context and uses objects to communicate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All options noted above</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• WAAS-Portfolio</li> </ul>
<p><b>Awareness:</b> Limited consciousness. A waiver is available for 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students who have cognitive functioning that falls at this level.</p>	

\*HSPE is the High School Proficiency Exam; EOC is the End of Course Assessments.

\*\*Basic Level (2): A determination by a student's IEP team to establish a proficient score at Level 2, or Basic, on the state's annual assessment. This score determination process is accessible for all students on an IEP in grades 3 through 8 and high school. The MSP/HSPE Basic cannot be used for state and federal accountability; at the high school level the HSPE Basic can be used to meet state graduation requirements.

**STEP 2: Familiarize yourself with Grade Level Expectations and Performance Expectations (GLEs/PEs).** Identify GLEs/PEs representing fundamental concepts and skills at the chronological age or grade level of the student. This establishes an important reference point for aligning appropriate access to the general education curriculum for all students.

**STEP 3: If the IEP team determines that the WAAS-Portfolio is the most appropriate assessment for the student, use WAAS-Portfolio Extensions documents**

**(<http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/AlternativeAssessment/Portfolio.aspx>) in reading and mathematics to identify extensions of GLEs/PEs with relevance to the student's current PLAAFP and IEP goal(s).** Extensions are learning progressions that underlie GLEs/PEs and are intended to reflect the varying skill levels at which a student may perform. They also provide teachers with additional options for measuring students' progress on academic skills that have relevance to GLEs/PEs. Given that the course of study for a student eligible for the WAAS-Portfolio is primarily functional and life skills oriented, teachers should identify appropriate math and/or reading skills from the extensions that relate to the student's instructional program. Data on student progress toward academic skills may be collected during daily instruction. For example, a student may demonstrate progress toward reading and/or math extensions during a cooking activity.

**STEP 4: Collect and report baseline data.** Once you have identified appropriate GLE/PE Extensions, collect baseline data. For efficiency, relevant PLAAFP or progress data from a recent IEP (i.e., written/collected after the start of the school year) may be used for the initial data point.

**STEP 5: Set goals for student progress.** Use goals and objectives/benchmarks established in the IEP as the metric for monitoring student progress on GLE/PE Extensions assessed for the WAAS. As noted above, GLE/PE Extensions and prior Portfolio performance data should be used as sources of information when developing future IEPs so that the goals and objectives/benchmarks are relevant to the extensions to be monitored for the WAAS-Portfolio. Keep in mind that objectives/benchmarks that reflect incremental progress toward an annual IEP goal (i.e., increasing accuracy or fluency over time) are likely to lend themselves most efficiently to this process. (Note: Some modification to this step may be required during the transitional year of this process.)

**STEP 6: Monitor student progress.** Choose a data collection strategy (graphs, audio, or video evidence, etc.) that allows for documentation and determination of student progress toward assessment targets. The data collected should also be sensitive to growth over time, and consistent with submission requirements for the WAAS-Portfolio (See Step 8).

**STEP 7: Report on student progress throughout the year.** A complete WAAS-Portfolio must include at least 3 data points. Timelines for WAAS-Portfolio data collection may parallel school district grading periods so that data collected for the WAAS-Portfolio are also used to meet IEP progress reporting requirements. There should be at least one month between collection of baseline and time point 2 data.

**STEP 8: Submit the WAAS-Portfolio to the state for evaluation.** Refer to *Washington Alternate Assessment System: Teachers' Guide to the WAAS-Portfolio, 2011-12* [<http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/AlternativeAssessment/Portfolio.aspx>] to find specific requirements and procedures for compiling data for submission.

**STEP 9: Use WAAS-Portfolio performance data to inform future IEP planning.** Student progress data reported for the WAAS-Portfolio are important sources of information to include in comprehensive evaluation/re-evaluation reports, and to facilitate individualized educational planning. These data supplement other relevant assessments of students' cognitive, academic, adaptive, behavior, and motor functioning.