Extended Evidence Outcomes

In 2005, the federal government allowed states to develop alternate academic achievement standards (AAAS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. In Colorado, the process involved the development of Expanded Benchmarks as the first iteration of the AAAS. In 2010-11 these became the Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEO). As required by statute, in 2018 the Colorado Academic Standards underwent significant updates. Once the Academic Standards were updated, the EEO in Reading, Writing, and Communicating, Math, Science, and Social Studies were revised.

Eligibility

The EEO have been developed for a very small and specific group of students, 1% of the tested population. They are to be used solely for students who have been identified with a ***significant cognitive disability***. There is a process in place to determine which students would qualify to receive their instruction on the EEO and be assessed on the alternate assessment. The process can be accessed on the CDE website.

Development Process

A dedicated team of teachers, both general and special educators across grade levels (P-12), were gathered through an application process to begin the important work of revising the EEO. The four content areas (listed above) were addressed and EEOs were retained, revised, or new ones were developed across each of the grade levels for all Evidence Outcomes. Upon completion of the revisions, the EEO went before the State Board of Education for review and received final approval. A list of members of each committee is available on the CDE website.

Revisions

Significant revisions to the EEO occurred through this process:

- The most substantial revision is the addition of a one-to-one correspondence to each of the Evidence Outcomes, thereby increasing the rigor for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Prior iterations of the EEO had 1-4 outcomes for each standard.
- The last revision adds an introductory statement to each of the standards: "With Guidance and Support the student will…"

Guidance and Support

Guidance and support "should be interpreted as teacher encouragement, general assistance, and informative feedback to support student learning. Some examples include:
- Getting the student started (e.g. tell me what to do first).
- Providing a hint in the right direction without revealing the answer (e.g. student wants to write dog but is unsure how, the teacher might say, "See if you can write the first letter in the word, /d/og")
- Narrowing the field of choices as a student provides an inaccurate response.
- Using structured technologies such as task-specific word banks.

- Providing the structured cues such as those found in prompting procedures (e.g., least-to-most prompts, simultaneous prompting, and graduated guidance)." (Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, 2015)

Efficient, Effective, and Functional Communication

Students must have a way to demonstrate what they know and can do. Many students with a significant cognitive disability require an alternative method of communication. Communication modes include, but are not limited to Assistive, Augmentative, and/or Alternative Communication devices, picture communication symbols, objects, sign language, gestures, etc.

The student must be able to access their communication system throughout the day. The system must be functional and provide access to academic vocabulary used during instruction as well as core vocabulary (e.g. a list of high-frequency words that are commonly used in expressive language). For more information on Core Vocabulary and communication strategies, see the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Professional Development Modules (https://www.dlmpd.com/).

Instructional Support

The focus of each EEO is to address conceptual access to grade-level material. Each EEO statement includes action verbs that describe what the student is expected to do to demonstrate learning. Educators should analyze how students are to interact with academic content and may need to use objects, visual representations, text, and/or other media to provide access. Structured prompting may also be used to assist the student in accessing the academic content.

Conclusion

The EEO provides a foundation for aligning instruction with Evidence Outcomes, providing increased rigor and high expectations for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Additionally, IEPs are aligned with the EEO allowing teachers to support student achievement and inclusion leading to students who are better prepared for post-school outcomes.

Center for Literacy and Disability Studies (2015). *Dynamic Learning Maps Aligned K-3 Literacy Assessment – Colorado.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel. Hill.