

Colorado Alternate (CoAlt) Assessments

Parent Brochure: 2021-2022

What are the CoAlt Assessments?

Colorado administers a common set of statewide assessments at the end of each school year. These assessments measure student mastery over the state's academic standards in Math, English Language Arts (ELA), and Science. Classroom instruction for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities is based on the Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs) of Colorado's academic standards. Students in the assessed grade levels participate in the state's alternate assessment program, CoAlt, which is aligned to the EEOs.

The CoAlt assessments are designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom, even with accommodations, participation in Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) and PSAT/SAT is inappropriate. These students represent less than 1% of the student population.

The CoAlt: ELA and Mathematics assessments are administered in grades 3 through 8 as an alternate to CMAS, and in grades 9 through 11 as an alternate to PSAT/SAT. The CoAlt: Science assessment is administered in grades 5, 8, and 11. CoAlt: Social Studies will not be administered this year.

Why should students with the most significant cognitive disabilities take the CoAlt assessment?

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), *all* students are entitled to high quality instruction and assessment. In each assessed grade level, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are entitled to assessments that measure their progress toward mastery over Colorado's grade level EEOs. CoAlt tests are required by both state and federal laws and are the only common measurement of progress on Colorado's academic standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Standards-based assessments are part of the data-driven accountability process. All students should be considered when program improvement decisions are made and prioritized. Students with significant cognitive disabilities may miss out on the educational opportunities that are rightfully available to them if they are not represented.

What are Performance Level Descriptors?

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for the assessed grade level and content area provide details about the content-specific concepts and skills students in each performance level typically demonstrate.

What are the benefits of the CoAlt assessment for students and families?

CoAlt assessments:

- Provide information to families on their child's areas of strength and/or areas for improvement at the end of the school year
- Assist in designing individualized programming for the student
- Inform families about student readiness for the next grade level

How are the results used?

CoAlt results are used in many ways, including to:

- Inform instruction in the classroom
- Inform district and school leaders about potential programming and instruction priorities
- Provide the community with information on how well the state's education system is meeting the goals of helping every child attain academic proficiency in accordance with Colorado's alternate standards
- Provide aggregated data for the state's accountability system
- Allow students to demonstrate their mastery of skills and concepts in the EEOs

When will the CoAlt be administered?

The tentative testing window for Spring 2022 is:

- CoAlt ELA/Math (DLM) and Science for grades 3 through 8: April 11-29, 2022
- CoAlt ELA/Math (DLM) for grades 9-11 and Science for high school should be aligned to your high school's PSAT/SAT schedule in Spring 2022.

When will I receive my child's results? How do I access the results?

Results from the Spring 2021 CoAlt assessments were available to school districts in Summer 2021.

Results from the Spring 2022 CoAlt assessments will be available to school districts in Summer 2022. Districts typically distribute results to parents in the fall. You are encouraged to review CoAlt results with your child's teacher.

How can I support my child?

You can help support your child by:

- Maintaining regular communication with your child's teacher and IEP team
- Helping the school learn more about your child.
- Ensuring your child comes to school ready to learn
- Reviewing CoAlt results with your child's teacher to help determine if any changes need to be made to programming
- Asking your child's teacher if there are activities you can do at home to supplement school instruction

Contact Information:

For more information on the CoAlt Assessment, visit:
CDE
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment>