

**Questions and Answers Regarding the Administration of the
2013-14 New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)**

1. Can the verifying evidence for the baseline and the final data point be the same?

Yes.

2. Must there be exactly 15 school days between the baseline and the final data point?

No, this is flexible. Best practice would be to administer the final data point at least 15 school days after the baseline. However, a datafolio with less than 15 days between the baseline and final data point will be acceptable at scoring. In addition, the final data point may be administered any time after the baseline and up to the last day of the administration period, which is February 7, 2014.

3. Will providing a prompt to a student to gain a student's attention affect scoring?

No. This is a change from the 2012-13 NYSAA. Beginning with the 2013-14 NYSAA, the Level of Independence is no longer calculated as a percentage. In addition, if a prompt is provided/not provided, it is recorded as a yes/no on the Data Summary Sheet. Although the Department is collecting data of whether prompts were provided, the use of prompts to gain a student's attention will not affect a student's score.

4. Why was the baseline threshold set at 74% and not at 65%, as is done in general education testing?

A threshold for the baseline score for NYAA is intended to ensure that the student has not already mastered the skill being assessed. Students are assessed at the appropriate level of complexity. The threshold for the baseline data point was set at 74% based on the typical number of items, questions, or problems presented to students assessed on the NYSAA. In general, most worksheets presented to students include from 3-6 items. For example, if a student responds correctly to 2 out of 3 questions, the student's level of Accuracy would be 67% and could be considered mastery. If the student responded correctly to 3 out of 4 questions, the level of accuracy would be 75%. This could be considered mastery. Scoring lower than the threshold indicates that the student has not acquired the knowledge, skill and understanding of the skill being assessed.

5. Does there need to be a certain amount of growth between baseline and final for an Extension or Alternate Grade Level Indicator (AGLI)?

No, there is no threshold for the final data point. The threshold only applies to the baseline.

6. One of my students cannot respond to the skills being assessed. How do I assess my student on the NYSAA when he is non-verbal and working on identifying single-digit numbers by name?

A student's method of response remains flexible in the new NYSAA. A teacher can set up an activity in a manner that allows the student to select a response from a set of choices. The teacher can develop the choices in the verifying evidence to address the appropriate level of the student and in a way that allow the student to respond in his/her own way.

7. Can a parent have his/her child "opt-out" of being assessed on the NYSAA?

No. Federal and State law and regulations require that all students be assessed, including students with severe disabilities who are assessed on the NYSAA.

8. Can a teacher administer more than one task on the same day for more than one extension for a student?

Yes. This should be based on the needs of the student. The restriction on this that has been in place in the past for NYSAA is no longer in effect. The only exception is that for a single Extension/AGLI, the baseline and final must be administered on two different dates.

9. Are verifying evidence labels required?

No. The teacher may use a label or may write the three required elements on each piece of verifying evidence. The three required elements are: the student's name, date, and level of accuracy.

10. I have a student with multiple disabilities who is nonverbal and hearing impaired, has no consistent eye gaze, no physical mobility and has a feeding tube. Can this student be "medically excused" from testing on the NYSAA?

If the school determines that the student is too incapacitated to be assessed, and if a medical practitioner provides a note stating the student is too incapacitated to be tested, the student can be medically excused from testing. The Not Tested Form is posted at:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/nysaa/2013-14/not-testedform-14.pdf>
The medical practitioner's note is kept on file in the school district.

11. Can a student use manipulatives or other strategies to complete the task?

Yes. The use of manipulatives is allowed at any grade level and should be used according to the needs of the student.