

Parent Notification of Participation in the New York State Alternate Assessment (Sample Letter)

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter serves to inform you that your child, _____, was recommended by the committee on special education (CSE) to participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA), rather than in the general statewide assessment program, in the following subjects:_____.

In making this recommendation, the CSE has determined that your child meets New York State's (NYS) eligibility and participation criteria for NYSAA and that the general statewide assessment program is not an appropriate assessment program for your child to demonstrate his/her knowledge and skills, even with testing accommodations. NYSAA is part of the NYS testing program that measures student performance on alternate achievement standards in the areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities in grades 3-8 and high school.

Students recommended for participation in NYSAA must receive instruction in the same State learning standards as students participating in NYS's general assessments; however, they are instructed and assessed against alternate standards that are at a reduced level of complexity. Your child will be assessed using the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) alternate assessment system. DLM alternate assessment is a computer-delivered, adaptive assessment system that measures student achievement of ELA, mathematics, and science State learning standards at a reduced level of complexity. This computerized assessment provides the opportunity to customize the assessment to the individual abilities and needs of your child.

Your child's CSE, of which you are a member, will make an annual recommendation on whether NYSAA remains an appropriate assessment program for your child. Please be aware that NYSAA assesses learning standards that do not meet the expectations needed to earn a regular high school diploma (local or Regents diploma) in NYS. In order to earn a NYS high school diploma, students must earn required course credits and participate in required Regents examinations. Your child will not be able to meet the requirements for a NYS high school diploma if he/she continues to participate in NYSAA for one or more subjects in high school. Additional information on graduation requirements is available on the New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) [Office of Curriculum and Instruction webpage](http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/) (<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/>).

If you have any questions about your child's participation in NYSAA, you are encouraged to speak with your child's teacher or special education administrator. For questions on NYSAA, you may also wish to contact NYSED's Office of Special Education Policy Unit at 518-473-2878 or the Office of State Assessment at 518-474-5900. Additional information on NYSAA, including *A Parent's Quick Guide to the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)* is available on NYSED's Office of State Assessment [NYSAA webpage](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/nysaa/home.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/nysaa/home.html>).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,