

Eligibility Requirements for the MCA-Modified

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team is responsible for determining how a student served by special education will participate in statewide testing. IEP teams must consider student participation in the MCA before considering the MCA-Modified or the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS). Eligibility is determined separately for reading and mathematics assessments.

General Considerations for Participation in the MCA-Modified

The IEP team is responsible for the following:

- Determining annually how a student who receives special education services will participate in statewide assessments.
- Considering student participation in the MCA, with or without accommodations, before considering participation in an alternate assessment.
- Establishing that, even when the student is provided allowable and appropriate accommodations,* the MCA is not an appropriate measure of the student's knowledge and skills on grade-level content standards.
- Considering the MCA-Modified for a student who has previously met or exceeded the standards on the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS).

Specific Eligibility Requirements

All requirements must be met in order for the student to qualify for the MCA-Modified in reading or mathematics. Eligibility is determined separately for the reading and mathematics assessments.

1. The student demonstrates persistent low performance as defined by performance at the lowest achievement level on the MCA (Does Not Meet the Standards) for the past 2 years.

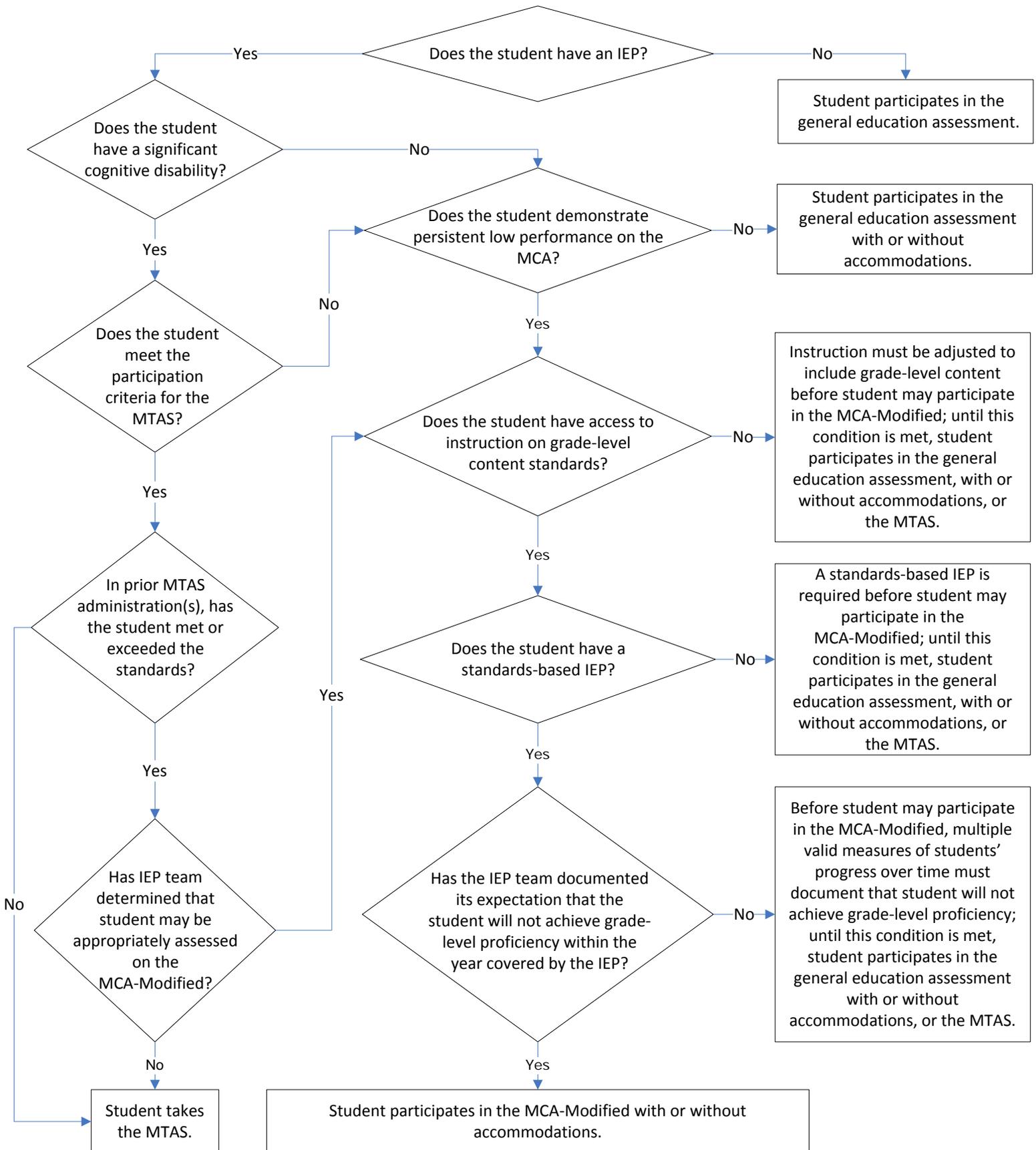
OR

The student meets or exceeds the standards on the MTAS and the IEP team determines that the student is most appropriately assessed with the MCA-Modified.

2. The student has access to instruction on grade-level content standards.
3. The student has an IEP based on grade-level content standards in the content area(s) being assessed by MCA-Modified.
4. The IEP team determines that the student is highly unlikely to achieve proficiency on the grade-level content standards within the year the test is administered, even with specially designed instruction.
 - Objective and valid data from multiple measures should be collected over time to confirm that the student is not likely to achieve proficiency on grade-level content standards within the year. Examples of objective and valid measures include state assessments, district-wide assessments, curriculum-based measures and other repeated measures of progress over time.
 - Appropriate accommodations, such as assistive technology, are provided as needed on evaluations of classroom performance, and the student's accommodation needs are carefully considered before the IEP team makes a determination that the student is not likely to achieve proficiency on grade-level content standards.

* Minnesota Department of Education and the National Center on Educational Outcomes (2008). *Minnesota Accommodations Manual: A Guide to Selecting, Administering, and Evaluating the Use of Accommodations*. Available at <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/Teleconferences/tele16/MNmanualOfAccommodationsPDF.pdf>, July 2009.

Decision-Making Process for the MCA-Modified



Glossary

ACCOMMODATIONS

Changes in assessment administration such as setting, scheduling, timing, presentation format, response mode, etc., that do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of resulting scores. Used for equity, not advantage.

ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION ON GRADE-LEVEL CONTENT STANDARDS

Active engagement in “learning the content and skills that define the general education curriculum.”¹ While students are more likely to gain access to content standards in the general education classroom, no particular setting guarantees or precludes access.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

A device or service that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability.

CURRICULUM-BASED MEASURES

Assessments that mirror instructional materials and procedures related to the curriculum resulting in an ongoing process of monitoring progress in the curriculum and guiding adjustments in instruction, remediation, accommodations or modifications provided to the student.

GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The body of knowledge and range of skills that all students in the state are expected to master. Minnesota school districts determine their curriculum, which must align to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

GRADE-LEVEL CONTENT STANDARDS

Statements of the subject-specific knowledge and skills schools are expected to teach students at each grade level.

PERSISTENT LOW PERFORMANCE

For the purposes of eligibility for the MCA-Modified, persistent low performance is defined as performance in the lowest achievement level on the MCA in one or more content areas for the past two years.

PROFICIENCY

Level of knowledge or skills that demonstrates a mastery level of achievement.

STANDARDS-BASED IEP

A process and a document that is framed by the state standards and that contains goals aligned with, and chosen to facilitate, the student’s achievement of grade-level academic achievement standards.

VALIDITY

The appropriateness or correctness of inferences, decisions or descriptions made about individuals, groups or institutions from test results. There is no such thing as a generally valid test. Validity must be considered in terms of the correctness of a particular inference.

¹ National Center on Educational Outcomes (2006). *What Parents of Students with Disabilities Need to Know and Do*. Available at <http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo>, July 2008.