



MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence

SECTION 4 — MI-ACCESS PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORTED INDEPENDENCE: ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND SCORING

To understand how students taking part in MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence are scored, it is important to first understand how the assessments are designed. The following explanation uses a Grade 4 Participation assessment as an example, but the overall design elements are included on all MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments.

1. Each assessment includes five or six **Performance Expectations (PEs)** or what students in a particular grade should know and be able to do. For example, PE 2 in a sample MI-Access Participation Grade 4 assessment booklet might be “engage in typical patterns of interaction.”
2. For each PE, students are observed while taking part in four standardized assessment **Activities**—activities on which all students in the state in that grade are assessed. For example, for Activity 1 in PE 2, a teacher might observe a student as he or she greets a familiar authority figure or his or her peers when entering the classroom. This activity is closely tied to the PE of engaging in typical patterns of interaction.
3. Each assessment activity takes place in a different **Context** or situation. For example, the activity just described takes place in the classroom, whereas another activity might take place when the student enters or exits the building. The PE is the same—engage in typical patterns of interaction—but the activities (interacting with an authority figure versus interacting with peers) and the contexts (the classroom versus the school entrance or exit hall) are different.
4. As the student takes part in an activity, the observer looks for two or three specific behaviors or **Performance Requirements (PRs)**. For example, in the sample activity and PE, the teacher might look for (1) how the student *initiates* the activity, and (2) whether the student’s *conduct* is safe and appropriate during the activity.

The number of activities—or assessment “items”—varies by the type of assessment. The MI-Access Participation assessments have 5 PEs each with 4 activities, which equals 20 total assessment items. The MI-Access Supported Independence assessments have 6 PEs each with 4 activities, which equals 24 total assessment items.

Scoring Guides

After an observation is complete, the student's teacher scores the student using a standardized scoring guide.

MI-Access Participation

Following is the standardized scoring guide used for the MI-Access Participation assessments.

Participation Scoring Guide

Score Points

- 4 **more than** expected for this student
- 3 as expected for this student
Specify: *vocalizes/hand movements*
- 2 **less than** expected for this student
- 1 **NOT** evident for this student

Before an observation, the student's teacher determines the activity—as prescribed in the MI-Access assessment booklet—on which he or she will observe the student during that particular school day. Then, using guidance provided by the student's IEP Team, the teacher fills in the blank line in num-

ber three. (See example.) This is how the standardized Participation scoring guide is individualized for each student.

To determine what to write next to score point number three, or the "as expected for this student," the teacher and the student's IEP Team must take into account the student's individual participation and response mode or, in other words, how he or she generally responds or behaves in specific settings and during specific activities. That response must (1) reflect the student's instruction and curriculum and (2) even if typical, must not interfere with the completion of the assessment activity or cause harm to the student or others in the classroom.

For each PR within an activity, the teacher will give the student a score of

- 4 if the student does more than expected,
- 3 if the student does as expected,
- 2 if the student does less than expected, or
- 1 if the student does not engage in the activity.

MI-Access Supported Independence

Following is the standardized scoring guide used for MI-Access Supported Independence assessments.

Supported Independence Scoring Guide	
Score Points	
4	with less than allowable assistance
3	with allowable assistance
2	with more than allowable assistance
1	did NOT initiate the activity

Before the observation, the student’s teacher consults Table 2 (below) to see what types of assistance are allowed during the assessment for students of a certain age. Using the information in the table, the teacher will give the student a score of

- 4 if the student carries out the activity with less than allowable assistance,
- 3 if the student carries out the activity with allowable assistance,
- 2 if the student carries out the activity with more than allowable assistance, or
- 1 if the student does not engage in the activity.

TABLE 2	Supported Independence: Levels of Allowable Assistance*	Ages 9-17	Ages 18 and up
Assistive/Adaptive aids – Materials to help the student perform the target behavior without the intervention of another individual at the time the student is participating in the activity.		allowable	allowable
Prompting – Verbal or physical cues from another person in order to encourage the student to continue effort or get back on track (e.g., saying “good” or “keep going”).		allowable	no
Specific step-by-step directions.		no	no
Physical assistance – Physical help from another individual.**		no	no
* Students are assessed according to the grade in which they are enrolled. However, “Levels of Allowable Assistance,” are determined by the student’s age.			
** Physical help from another individual is allowable only when the student is physically limited and/or sensory impaired and is capable of directing and then receiving assistance from another person.			

MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence: Performance Expectation and Assessment Scores

Performance Requirement (PR) scores, which are determined using the four-point scoring guides just described, are used collectively to determine whether or not a student “meets the criterion” for a particular activity. The total number of times a student “meets the criterion” determines how the student is scored for the Performance Expectation (PE). (See Table 3 and the accompanying explanation.)

TABLE 3 Sample Partial MI-Access Participation Individual Student Report (PE 2, Activities 5-8, Grade 4)				
Performance Expectation 2: Engage in typical patterns of interaction.				
PE Score: 3 (out of 4) Observations Meet Criterion. D				
Activity	Context	Meets Criterion?	Observation Scores for Each PR	
			Initiate	Conduct
5	Interacting with <i>peers</i>	Yes	3	3
6	Interacting with <i>familiar</i> authority figures	Yes	4 A	3
7	Interacting with caregivers	Yes C	3	3
8	Interacting with <i>familiar</i> authority figures	No	2	4
Performance Requirement (PR) Scores			B	3

In Table 3:

- **Section A** shows where the score points from the scoring guides are recorded by activity (across each row).
- **Section B** shows the total PR scores down the columns (or the total number of 3s and 4s the student received). While PR scores are not used to determine the student’s performance level, they may provide insights for instructional use.
- **Section C** shows that if a student gets 3s and 4s on each PR within an activity (across the

row), a “yes” is recorded in the column titled “Meets Criterion” for that activity. If not, a “no” is recorded.

- **Section D** shows the total number of “yesses” the student received (or his/her score for that particular PE).

The scores a student receives for each PE are added together to determine his/her total earned points for the assessment as well as his/her performance level, which adds meaning to the points.

MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence: Performance Levels

There are three performance levels a student can achieve on the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments: (1) Surpassed the Performance Standard, (2) Attained the Performance Standard, or (3) Emerging Toward the Performance Standard. The following charts describe what these levels mean.

Performance Level Descriptors – MI-Access Participation	
Performance Category	Description
Surpassed the Performance Standard	Not available at press time. Please go to the MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access for descriptions. Click on "State Assessment Reports for Students with Disabilities."
Attained the Performance Standard	
Emerging Toward the Performance Standard	

Performance Level Descriptors – MI-Access Supported Independence	
Performance Category	Description
Surpassed the Performance Standard	Not available at press time. Please go to the MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access for descriptions. Click on "State Assessment Reports for Students with Disabilities."
Attained the Performance Standard	
Emerging Toward the Performance Standard	

The cut scores—or the minimum number of “yeses” a student must receive in order to attain a particular performance level—often vary by (1) assessment (Participation or Supported Independence) and (2) grade. Tables 4 and 5 show these scores according to each of the three levels.

TABLE 4	Participation: Performance Levels and Earned Points	Grade						
		3	4	5	6	7	8	11
Surpassed the Performance Standard		Not available at press time. Please go to the MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access for descriptions. Click on "State Assessment Reports for Students with Disabilities."						
Attained the Performance Standard								
Emerging Toward the Performance Standard								

TABLE 5	Supported Independence: Performance Levels and Earned Points	Grade						
		3	4	5	6	7	8	11
Surpassed the Performance Standard		Not available at press time. Please go to the MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access for descriptions. Click on "State Assessment Reports for Students with Disabilities."						
Attained the Performance Standard								
Emerging Toward the Performance Standard								

MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence: Performance Standard Setting

To determine what it means to Surpass, Attain, or Emerge Toward the Performance Standard, the OEAA involved stakeholders—such as classroom teachers (special and general education), administrators, parents, special education directors, school psychologists, and related services providers—in an intensive standard-setting process. The process was conducted by BETA/TASA—the MI-Access operational contractor—and involved more than 35 volunteers who were nominated by their school

districts to participate. The nominees were divided first into two panels—one for each assessment (MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence). Those two panels were further broken down by grade spans—one panel for grades 3 through 5 and another for grades 6 through 8. (Standard setting for grade 11 will take place after the Spring 2006 MI-Access assessment window closes. The same standard-setting process will be used.) The four panels met for two days.

The standard-setting process worked as follows.

- The full group heard a presentation on the various components of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments.
 - The group also discussed (1) how the score points from the MI-Access assessments would translate into score reports, (2) the terminology that was selected to describe the three levels of student performance, (3) and how the standard-setting process would work.
 - The four panels then were asked to add more concrete meaning to the performance levels by developing detailed descriptors. They also were asked to make an initial, independent judgment about cut scores (or, in other words, where the lines should be drawn between the minimum number of points needed to Surpass or Attain the Performance Standard).
 - During the second day, panelists discussed their initial judgments with their peers, internalized the feedback, and were informed about the difficulty of each assessment activity. Panelists were able to use that information, if desired, in making a second round of judgments.
 - After the second round, the panelists discussed their judgments again. They also reviewed performance data from the Fall 2005 administration of MI-Access to see roughly how many students would fall into each performance category if their second-round judgments were adopted.
- Once the data were presented and discussed, the panelists made a final round of judgments to (1) increase the reliability of the judgments, (2) increase panelists' level of comfort with and confidence in their determinations, and (3) encourage a convergence of ideas regarding appropriate cut scores. The judgments made during the final round were considered to be the panelists' recommendations to the OEAA.

At the end of the session, BETA/TASA took the judgments of each panelist and calculated descriptive statistics—such as the mean, the median, and standard errors—for the cut scores recommended for each grade span and assessment (Participation and Supported Independence).

After the statistics were calculated, the TAC reviewed the standard-setting process to ensure that the proper procedures were followed; the OEAA reviewed and synthesized the data; and cut score recommendations were made to the state Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SBE. In January 2006, the cut scores for MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence were approved unanimously by the SBE.