

CHAPTER
12

Assessment of Students

Education Code Section 51746(b) states that the services and resources for independent study may include:

The services of qualified personnel to assess the achievement, abilities, interests, aptitudes, and needs of participating pupils to determine each of the following:

(1) Whether full-time independent study is the most appropriate alternative for the pupil being referred.

(2) If the answer to paragraph (1) is affirmative, the determination of the most appropriate individualized plan and resources to be made available to pupils enrolled in full-time independent study.

Before appropriate placement can be made in independent study, the student's academic strengths and weaknesses need to be diagnosed. This assessment should give the independent study coordinator, counselor, or teacher specific information for planning the student's educational program. The assessment also might reduce the amount of time, energy, and frustration spent by students, parents, and school staffs in trying to find the best educational alternative

for students. Assessments do not guarantee a proper fit, but do tend to eliminate much of the guesswork.

A Assessment Process

The initial assessment, especially for elementary students or students with low self-esteem or limited success in traditional classroom-based programs, should not be based on tests. The assessment

process might include an informal interview between the appropriate school staff and the student and parent. In another nonthreatening and quick assessment, the student might verbally answer a student profile questionnaire, such as the samples at the end of this chapter.

In a more formal assessment process, the designated assessment personnel or other staff members who are responsible for the initial assessment should be aware of the conditions for successful testing. The designated personnel should:

1. Be familiar with various assessment instruments.
2. Be able to choose appropriate instruments and correctly interpret the results.
3. Be genuinely empathetic toward all students and flexible in dealing with a wide variety of students.
4. Be sensitive to the fact that testing can be stressful and be willing to help students feel comfortable with the process.
5. Possess good listening and counseling skills.

A positive environment is another important condition to ensure valid assessment results. Consider the following factors in selecting the location for testing sessions:

- Adequate lighting
- Controlled temperature of the room
- Comfortable furniture
- Comfortable noise level in the room

In addition to physical factors, consider time constraints. Testing sessions should be separated by frequent breaks. Depending on the time of day and the length of the session, a refreshment break might also be appropriate.

B Factors to Consider in Assessment

It is important to contact district, county, or private assessment specialists who could assist the school in determining factors to identify a potentially successful candidate for independent study. This chapter indicates possible assessment areas and some resources. However, the following factors are important to remember when selecting assessment instruments:

1. Test only the areas that are essential to placement.

2. Do not test just for the sake of testing, especially if current test information is available.
3. Select instruments based on the assessment personnel available and within time and budgetary constraints.

C Assessment of Students in Kindergarten Through Grade Eight

Initial student assessment in kindergarten through grade eight independent study varies. Students who transfer directly from another school often have records to indicate what books and materials need to be used. Refer to the appropriate curriculum frameworks and state documents for developing procedures to assess students' strengths and deficiencies in various subject areas.

Whatever assessment format the school uses, it is important that completion of the assessment results in a placement that is comfortable and successful for the student.

D Assessment of Students in Grades Nine Through Twelve

1. Initial student assessment in grades nine through twelve is often more extensive than at other grade levels as it is necessary to include vocational assessment activities as well as an analysis of the coursework and skills necessary for high school completion.

The following activities could enhance the enrollment process:

- Intake interview
- Review of records (grades, achievement testing, attendance, previous interest inventory results)
- Transcript analysis/credit check (See Chapter 8, "Attendance Accounting and the Audit Trail," for sample forms.)
- Basic skills screening tests (reading and mathematics)
- Writing sample
- Vocational interviews and counseling
- Vocational interest inventories

- Multiaptitude test batteries (if appropriate)
 - Vision, hearing, motor skills (Contact appropriate district, county, or private specialists, or local public health clinics.)
2. Assessment instruments:
- a. *Basic skills screening tests* (academic achievement). These tests are used to identify an individual's proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics. Some tests of basic skills can be used to diagnose specific deficiencies so that instruction can be linked appropriately to the assessment. Some of these tests can also be used as pretests and posttests for the purpose of monitoring the progress of students.
 - b. *Vocational interest inventories*. Interest assessments are used in guidance programs to explore students' preferences for certain kinds of work. These assessments create a better understanding of the personal and environmental influences involved in career selection.
 - c. *Multiaptitude test batteries*. Aptitude is a combination of abilities and other characteristics, either inherent or acquired. A student's aptitudes indicate the individual's ability to learn or develop proficiency in some particular area. The tests measure special abilities or assess readiness for learning in specific vocational clusters. Manual dexterity and tests for color blindness also fall within this category.
 - d. *Work samples*. A simulated work or job sample is a collection of job tasks that allow persons to use the actual tools and procedures of a particular occupation. Students interacting with simulated work samples actively explore, evaluate, and learn more about themselves in relation to the work activities of a specific occupation.

- e. *Preemployment and work maturity*. These assessments focus on the attitude and basic work knowledge necessary for getting and keeping a job. Behavioral checklists and learning-style indicators are in this category. The following are resources for these kinds of assessments. Specific instruments are suggested resources only and *not* recommendations.

f. *Learning styles*

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
- Kiersey-Bates Temperament Sorter (must be duplicated from book)

Please Understand Me by David Kiersey and Marilyn Bates

INI Books
2153 DeMayo Road
Del Mar, CA 92014
(619) 481-0576

- Swassing-Barbe Modality Index

Zaner-Bloser
P.O. Box 16764
Columbus, OH 43216-6764
(614) 486-0221

3. Resources for test selection

- CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) Vocational Assessment Guide for Youth and Adults, 1988

CASAS
2725 Congress Street
San Diego, CA 92110

This guide has been written as a reference to aid in the selection of published assessment instruments which are appropriate for varied youth and adult populations. The instruments reviewed include interest inventories, aptitude/ability and preemployment/work maturity assessments, and work samples.

E Role of the Counselor or Placement Person

The counselor or placement person should conduct a personal interview with the student and parent, guardian, or caregiver, when appropriate, based on formal and informal assessments. During this interview, the counselor could discuss the following:

1. Assessment results, relayed in a positive manner, and the implications for educational planning
2. Educational status review; for example, placement levels for students in kindergarten through grade eight, or transcript evaluation for high school students
3. Various alternative approaches available to the student
4. The most appropriate educational plan for the student
5. Referral to programs other than independent study; for example, special educational services, alternative regular education elementary offerings, Regional Occupational Centers/Programs (ROC/P), Adult Education, JTPA, GAIN, GED testing centers, and community colleges
6. Referrals to social service agencies; for example, substance abuse centers, social welfare agencies, and mental health centers

7. Expectations of the student's responsibilities for independent study

If the counselor or placement person determines through this assessment and counseling process that independent study is the appropriate educational placement, the next step would be to schedule the student with a teacher or teachers. If possible, the student should be placed with a teacher whose style best fits the student's needs. For example, a young male student with no adult male role model might benefit from having a male teacher. An introverted student with low self-esteem might benefit from having a warm, caring teacher who has the ability to enhance the student's self-esteem.

F Ongoing Assessment

Once the initial placement has been made, it is advisable to maintain an ongoing assessment process. See the curriculum chapter, Chapter 11, for additional strategies to make the student assessment process more meaningful. The following chart illustrates activities that can help to ensure a student's continued success in independent study.

Student Assessment Process

Participation in a student assessment process could be a requirement for enrollment and is essential to ensure that student needs are met. The following participation could be required in a small or large (15 maximum) group setting:

Day 1, Three Hours

- Registration process with parent attendance required
- Orientation explaining educational program, Regional Occupational Program, and work experience
- Administration of reading test as needed
- Explanation of orientation assignments (See Chapter 6 for suggestions.)

School Personnel: Administrator, ROP/OWE Coordinator, Counselor, Classified

Day 2, Three Hours

- Administration of ability and career inventory
- Goal setting

School Personnel: Counselor

Day 3, Three Hours

- Administration of math placement test
- Presentation of units on dealing with life changes
- Administration of reading test as needed
- Exploration of personality as it relates to relationships, study habits, and career placement

School Personnel: Counselor

Day 4, Three Hours

- Completion and review of orientation assignment
- Completion of an individual profile, including ability and career inventory analysis, personality type, reading and math scores, writing sample, goals, analysis of credits earned, and resources for stress or crisis (The academic assignment is given. Parents are welcome to attend the first hour for the explanation of the profiles. See sample High School Student Profile at end of chapter.)

School Personnel: Counselor, Teacher

Schools with limited resources could modify the above process to meet student needs.

Ongoing Student Assessments

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Responsible person</i>
Assignment evaluation/portfolios (sample in Chapter 11, “Curriculum and Instruction”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Parents whose children are in home study • Supervising personnel
Referral to counselor or administrator for non-achieving students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Supervising personnel
Credit/grade review (forms in Chapter 6, “Ongoing Operations”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher/counselor
Alternative/additional placement counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Counselor • Administrator • Student • Parent(s), Guardian(s), or Caregiver(s)
End-of-semester/year evaluations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posttests • Portfolio • Student self-assessment • Final credit/grade review • Transcript analysis • Fall placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • Counselor • Assessment personnel

Elementary School Assessment Evaluation Summary

Name	Birth date	Grade	Date
School	Evaluator		

Testing Results

<i>Name of test</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Growth</i>

Known problem of: Vision Hearing Health Speech
 Does the student show significant English language problems? Yes No

Language of home _____

Student language _____

Is this student experiencing learning difficulties? Yes No

Is this student experiencing behavior difficulties? Yes No

Attendance: Regular Poor Inconsistent

Relationship with adults: Positive Accepted Negative

Motor coordination: Above average Average Poor Very poor

Pupil *regularly* displays the following behavior: (Please check.)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperactivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Insecurity | <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Frustration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy | <input type="checkbox"/> Showing off | <input type="checkbox"/> Defiance | <input type="checkbox"/> Trying hard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependability | <input type="checkbox"/> Nail biting | <input type="checkbox"/> Destructiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indifference | <input type="checkbox"/> Crying | <input type="checkbox"/> Tantrums | <input type="checkbox"/> Moodiness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facial tics | <input type="checkbox"/> Tattling | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad language | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerfulness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperativeness | <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal | <input type="checkbox"/> Fearfulness |

Learning and behavioral objects:

Evaluation methods and findings:

Junior and Senior High School Student Profile

I. School History

A. If you are unable to obtain a transcript, please complete the following:

Name used at last school _____

Last school where you earned credit _____

Date last attended _____

School: Street address _____ Telephone _____

City, state _____ ZIP code _____

B. Are you currently working? _____ If so, where? _____

Address _____ Work telephone _____

What hours? _____ Do you have/need a work permit? _____

From what school was this work permit issued? _____

Do you participate in ROP or OWE? _____ If so, who is your teacher? _____

C. Areas of relative academic success: (on a scale of 1–3: 1= better than average, 2 = average, and 3 = below average)

_____ English

_____ Science

_____ Social Studies

_____ Math

_____ Other (list) _____

D. Have you been enrolled in an alternative program previously?

_____ Continuation schools

_____ Gifted program (GATE)

_____ Special education

_____ Learning Disability Class (LDC)

_____ Resource

_____ Other (list)

II. Personal History

A. Current family history:

1. Who in the home is legally responsible for you? _____

2. How many people are living in your home? _____

What are their relationships to you? _____

B. Do you have any involvement with the juvenile court system? If so, how?

Probation officer's name _____ Telephone _____

C. Will the school need to sign any forms concerning public assistance?

Social worker's name _____ Telephone _____

D. What jobs have you held in the past?

E. Please list any group(s) to which you belong (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church, other clubs, athletic team)

F. What club(s) or group(s) would you like to join?

Written Case History: Junior and Senior High School Student Profile

Name	Date
Address	Telephone ()

1. What are some things that you like about school and/or learning?

2. What are some things that you dislike about school?

3. What are some things and/or areas you would like to learn more about while in independent study?

4. What would you like to accomplish in IS? Please check an educational goal and briefly explain why.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate with a diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Social participation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catch up on credits at IS and then return to another school | <input type="checkbox"/> GED | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-fulfillment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Or . . . my goal is different from the ones stated above. I would like to accomplish the following educational goal in IS: | <input type="checkbox"/> CHSPE | |

5. How often can you come to an independent study meeting each week? Please check one and briefly explain why.

- one day a week _____

- twice a week _____

- three times a week (or more) _____

6. On what day, or days, would you like to meet about independent study? Why? _____

Junior and Senior High School Student Profile (Continued)

7. How will you get to school and your appointments? _____

8. Do you prefer to work one-on-one or in a small group when you come to independent study for your meetings?
Please check one, and briefly explain why.

one-on-one _____

small group _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Welcome to _____.

High School Student Profile: Outcome of Initial Student Assessment Orientation Lab

Student name _____

Reading score _____

Personality type _____

Mathematics Ability

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
number sense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
computational skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
problem-solving ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: _____

Science Ability

Comments: _____

Mathematics placement:

<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics A	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics B	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra
<input type="checkbox"/> Geometry	<input type="checkbox"/> Algebra II	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Life Stresses

<input type="checkbox"/> family divorce	<input type="checkbox"/> death in family	<input type="checkbox"/> moved a lot
<input type="checkbox"/> many schools	<input type="checkbox"/> drugs/alcohol problems	<input type="checkbox"/> pregnancy
<input type="checkbox"/> not living at home	<input type="checkbox"/> other	

Goals

<input type="checkbox"/> trade/vocational school	<input type="checkbox"/> four-year college
<input type="checkbox"/> return to regular/continuation high school	<input type="checkbox"/> GED
<input type="checkbox"/> graduate from high school	<input type="checkbox"/> CHSPE
<input type="checkbox"/> get a job	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> community college	<input type="checkbox"/> marriage

Strengths and Weaknesses—Ability and Career Inventory Results

	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>		<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
memory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	figural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
evaluation skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	semantics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
problem solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	symbolic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Writing sample attached: autobiography goals

Comments: _____

Learning Styles Questionnaire

These questions will help the teacher to assign instructional activities appropriate for you.

1. Would you rather read words or listen to words? Which would give you more meaning?
 read words listen to words
2. When learning math, do you get more meaning from hearing or seeing numbers?
 hearing numbers seeing numbers
3. Would you prefer to work with other students in the class (group assignments/discussions) or would you prefer to work independently?
 work with others work independently
4. What do you feel the teacher's role is in your learning? Would you prefer a lot of direction or very little direction?
 a lot of direction little direction
5. When learning a subject would you prefer a lot of information: examples, facts, comparisons?
 yes no
6. Do you prefer factual information in tables, brief paragraphs, or outlined materials?
 tables brief paragraphs outlined materials
7. Do you prefer examples be explained or shown to you?
 explained shown
8. Do you generally see the relationship between the facts or the situations given to you?
 yes no
9. Do you prefer to compare or contrast ideas/materials?
 compare contrast
10. Do noises bother you when studying a subject or do you like to work with background noises; e.g., stereo, radio, people talking?
 noises bother noises do not bother like noise
11. When people are moving about the room, does this distract you from learning or can you "tune out" any action or movement?
 distract "tune out"
12. Do you prefer practicing a process the same way until you know it or do you prefer a variety of ways to learn the process?
 prefer practicing same way prefer variety
13. Do you complete all assignments given to you or do you start assignments and then drop them before finishing them to start something else?
 complete assignments drop before completion