

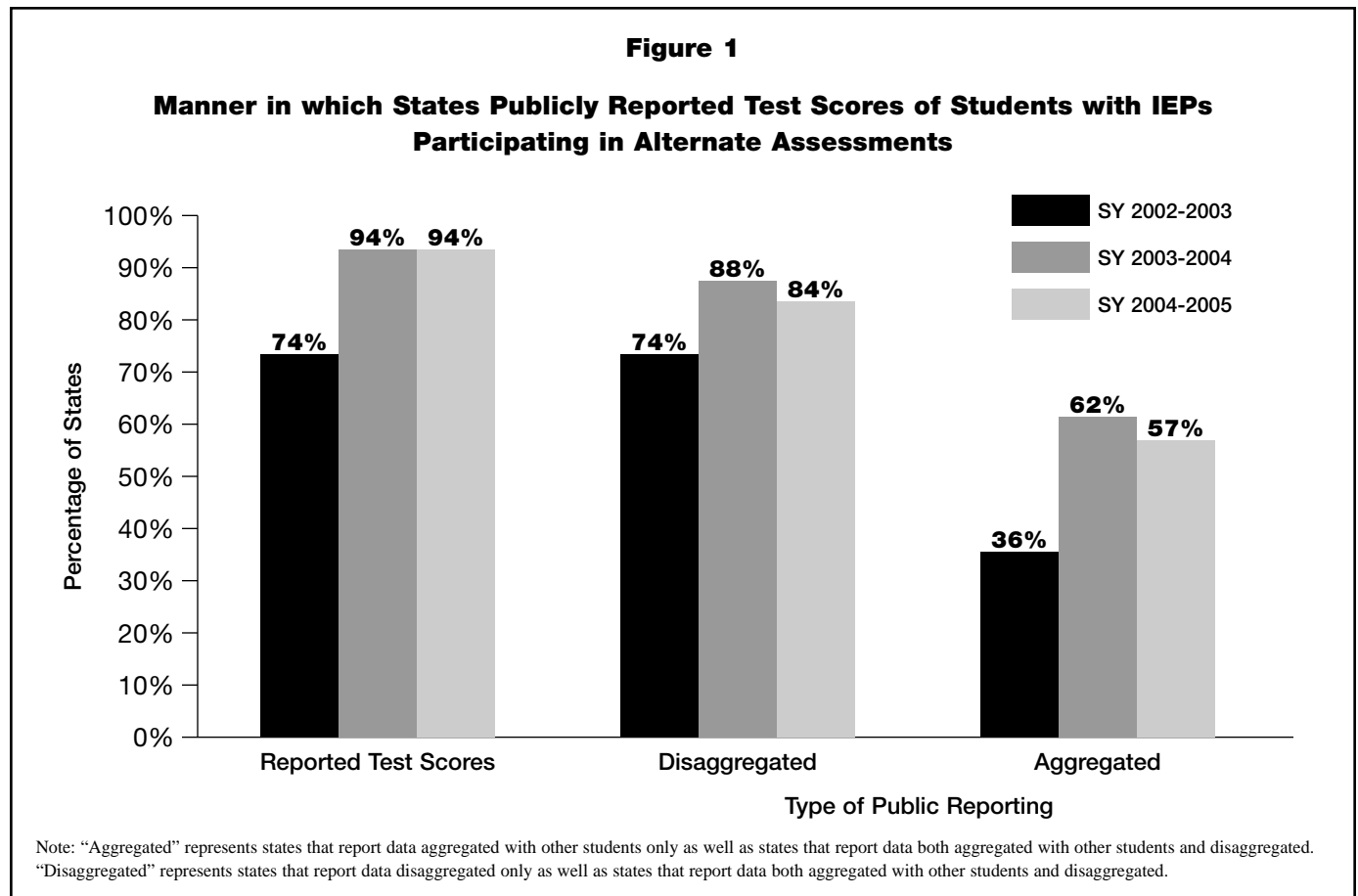
Integrating Alternate Assessments into State Accountability Systems

Alternate assessments are typically used when the IEP team determines that the student would not benefit from participating in the standard assessment offered to all students. The data below from the 2004-2005 school year suggest that alternate assessments are a feasible component of a state's accountability system.

In nearly all states students with disabilities who could not benefit from accommodations to standard assessments were allowed to demonstrate their performance by taking an alternate assessment.

For instance, our study found that:

- In the 2004-2005 school year, over 98 percent of states reported having alternate assessments available for measuring the performance of those students with IEPs who could not participate in the regular state- or district-wide assessment. States were more likely to use a state-wide alternate assessment than to use a district-wide alternate assessment (94 percent and 25 percent, respectively, in the 2004-2005 school year).



More states are reporting publicly on the performance of students with IEPs who took alternate assessments and are reporting results both for students with and without disabilities. (See Figure 1)

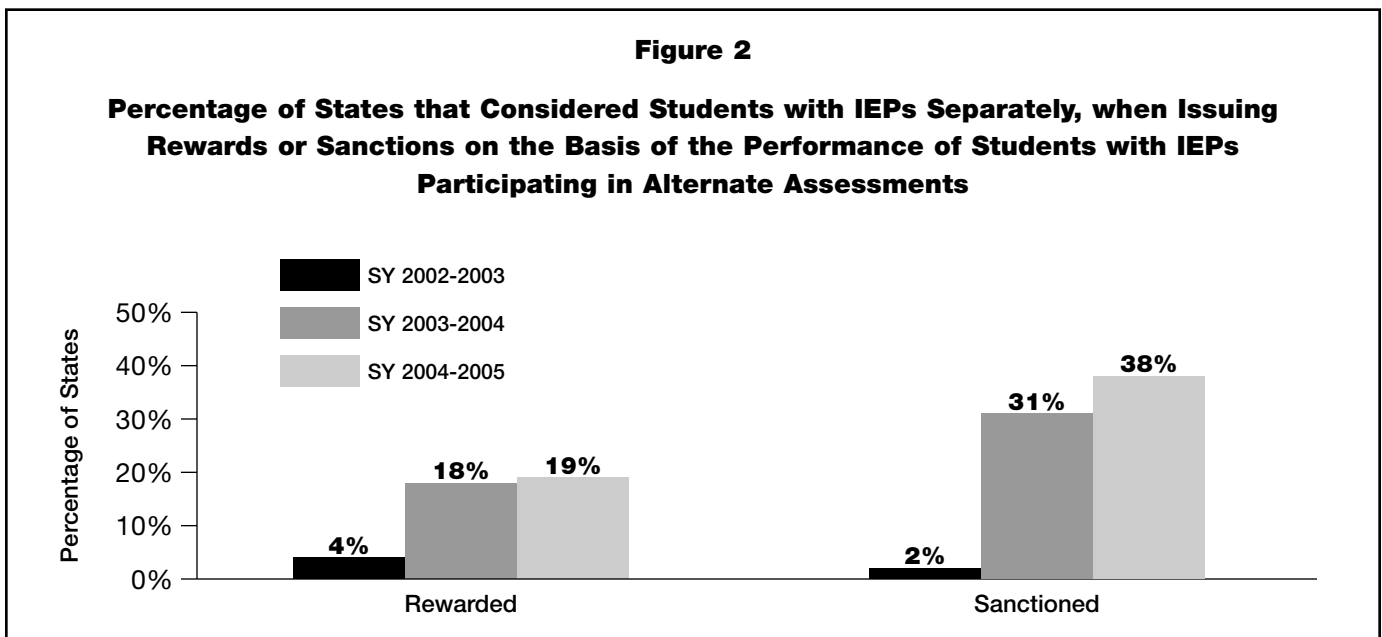
For instance, our study found that:

- A large majority of states (84 percent) reported data separately for students with and without disabilities, a 10-percentage point increase since the 2002-2003 school year.
- Over half of states (57 percent) reported results on alternate assessments aggregated with those of other students in the 2004-2005 school year, a substantial increase from the 2002-2003 school year when just over one-third of states (36 percent) reported scores in this way.
- Virtually all states (94 percent) reported publicly on the performance of students with IEPs who participated in alternate assessments at the state level, up 20 percentage points from the 2002-2003 school year.

Although the practice remains rare, states showed a substantial increase in the use of rewards and sanctions on the basis of the scores of students with disabilities taking an alternate assessment. These increases likely reflect the influence of the No Child Left Behind Act. (See Figure 2)

For instance, our study found that:

- Almost one in five states (19 percent) rewarded or recognized districts or schools based on the test scores of students with IEPs participating in alternate assessments. This relatively small percentage represented a substantial increase over the 2002-2003 school year, when only 4 percent of states provided such rewards.
- Sanctioning by states was more prevalent, and also increased over time. In the 2004-2005 school year, over one-third of states (38 percent) sanctioned districts or schools for the performance of students with disabilities taking alternate assessments, compared with only 2 percent in the 2002-2003 school year.



The results summarized in this fact sheet are based on the six year *Study of State and Local Implementation and Impact of IDEA (SLIIDEA)* supported by the Office of Special Education Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, as part of Contract ED-00-C0-0026, conducted by Abt Associates Inc. Any points of view expressed in this fact sheet are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education.

Surveys were mailed to key personnel responsible for or familiar with special education issues in all 50 states and the District of Columbia - a total of 959 districts and 4,434 schools. For state, district, and school surveys, response rates were 100 percent, 89 percent, and 80 percent, respectively in the 2004-2005 school year. Similar response rates were obtained for the 2002-2003 school year.

From Abt Associates Inc (2006 April). *Marking the Progress of IDEA Implementation and Volume I: The SLIIDEA Sourcebook Report (1999-2000, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and 2004-2005 School Years)*. Study reports, data tables and technical documentation are available at <http://abt.sliidea.org>.