

Florida Department of Education

**Local Educational Agency (LEA) Justification for Exceeding the 1% Cap Participation Action Plan (AP)**

**LEA: ALACHUA**

**Please select one:**

My LEA **does not expect to exceed** one percent of the number of assessed students participating in the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) in the 2025-26 school year (SY).

My LEA **expects to exceed** one percent of the number of assessed students participating in the FAA in the 2025-26 SY.

**Please check the LEA size.**

Small

Medium

Large

Very Large

1.	How has your LEA reviewed the data for assessment participation to make informed decisions for implementation? The district received and reviewed the data from the state in July 2025. Following the review with the state, the district reviewed the data with the ESE district supervisors. Reviews are scheduled with school psychologists, staffing specialists, and ESE department chairs during the first semester of this school year.
2.	What are your LEA's percentages of students that participated in the FAA in the 2024-25 SY in each of the following subjects?  ELA: 1.1 Math: 1.2 Science: 1.2
3.	What is your LEA's projection for the percentage of students participating in the FAA in the upcoming SY in each of the following subjects?  ELA: 1.0 Math: 1.0 Science: 1.0
4.	What are your LEA's percentages of students participating in the Florida Assessment for Student Thinking (FAST) 3-10 Progress Monitoring and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in the 2024-25 SY in each of the following subjects?  ELA: 97% Math: 97% Science: 97%

5.	<p>What is your LEA’s projection for the percentage of students participating in the FAST 3-10 Progress Monitoring and EOC assessments in the upcoming SY in each of the following subjects?</p> <p>ELA: 97%  Math: 97%  Science: 97%</p>
6.	<p>Are there unique circumstances in the LEA that might draw large numbers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to live in the LEA, which in turn might result in more than one percent of students participating in the FAA? If so, describe those unique circumstances (i.e., migrant families, military bases, hospitals, rehabilitation centers or student enrollment). Shands teaching hospital located in Alachua County provides medical care for students with significant disabilities. Families have moved to Gainesville, FL for much needed medical services which has increased the number of students served through the hospital homebound program and the number of students with significant disabilities needing medical care. Students in UF College of Special Education indirectly contributes to supporting students with significant disabilities in the PK-12 school programs making Alachua County attractive to parents of students with significant disabilities.</p>
7.	<p>List the percentages of the following primary/secondary exceptionality categories in your LEA for students participating in the FAA in the 2025-26 SY for each of the following:</p> <p>Intellectual Disability (InD): 43%  Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): 40%  Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): .01%  Other Health Impairment (OHI):</p>
8.	<p>After reviewing your data on students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, were there any patterns that emerged? For example, were students who attended a specific class or school more likely to participate in the alternate assessment? Does the participation rate vary? Students attending schools with district program classes for students with significant disabilities were more likely to participate in the FAA. District program classes are placed on regular education campuses in order to provide opportunities for inclusion with non-disabled peers and to allow students to attend school with siblings. Sidney Lanier is an alternative school that houses a K-12 program for student with significant cognitive disabilities.</p>
9.	<p>Regarding the participation of students in alternate assessments, is the LEA aware of any disproportionate representation of students in the following subgroups: English Language Learners, African American students, Hispanic/Latino students, male/female students or low-income students? If so,</p>

	<p>please describe the steps the LEA will take in the coming year (or the steps already taken) to find the root cause and reduce the impact of any disproportionate representation of students in the above-referenced subgroups among those taking the FAA. The district’s data shows disproportionate representation of students in American Indian/Native Alaskan and Pacific Islander category. This disproportionate representation represents the small number of students in the subgroup.</p>
10.	<p>How will the LEA seek to assess 95% participation in all assessments, including students with disabilities in all grades and subjects? Review your individual educational plan (IEP) data and identification practices to identify the root cause of why the LEA is under the 95% participation rate and over the 1% threshold for students participating in the FAA. The district is not under the 95% participation in all assessments. The district is over by .1% in ELA and .2% in Math and Science for the FAA. The district reviews the IEPs of each student participating in the FAA and continues to monitor the eligibility for both placement in Access Points curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities and also eligibility for FAA yearly.</p>
11.	<p>How are IEP decisions in all schools within your LEA consistently implementing the state’s guidelines and criteria regarding which students should take the FAA? (Please consider using the “<a href="#">Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation</a>” for IEP team meetings within your LEA.) The district uses the PEER Portal to write all IEPs. PEER includes the Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation that IEP teams must consider each year to determine if a student is eligible to be instructed in Access Points and to participate in the FAA program. IEP teams also consider the exclusionary criteria and obtains parental consent yearly.</p>
12.	<p>Describe the process and required evidence of finding a student eligible to participate in the FAA using all the criteria in Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code. IEP teams review diagnostic information, adaptive functioning, academic performance, and any medical conditions before determining eligibility. The students cognitive score must fall at or below 67 unless there are circumstances that a global full scale IQ is unattainable. IEP teams also document that the student is enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternative standards for at least two consecutive full-time FTE periods prior to the FAA assessment. IEP teams also consider that the student exhibited limited or no progress in the general education curriculum standards and the student is receiving direct instruction in all core academic areas. IEP teams also review the FSA scores to ensure the student has not scored at or above a level 2. The school district monitors the procedures used by IEP teams and provides professional development yearly to ensure compliance with determination of both placement and eligibility for Access Points curriculum and also participation in FAA.</p>

13.	Has your LEA removed students from participating in the FAA using state guidelines? If so, please provide more information, such as how many, what process was followed and any other feedback. Students have not been removed from participation in the FAA.
14.	Describe how the LEA informs parents, families and students of the instruction in Access Points – Alternate Academic Achievement Standards and participation in the FAA, as well as the possible implications of this instruction and participation. How is it provided in the parent or student’s native language? How often is this information provided? Parents are provided information at least yearly during the annual IEP meeting. Parents must give informed consent. While the IEP team makes recommendations, the final decision is the parents. Parents are informed that students will receive a standard diploma. However, placement on Access Points curriculum can limit the student’s preparation for post-secondary education and future employment opportunities. The district uses Language Line to translate and also employs a language translator/interpreter specialist.
15.	Describe how IEP teams will review the assessment data of students with advanced proficiency or perfect scores in one or more content area, and consider whether these students could participate in the general statewide progress monitoring (FAST) or EOCs with necessary supports and accommodations. The FAA does not have a perfect score. For students obtaining a level 5 mastery score, IEP teams consider the need for a reevaluation to obtain a current intellectual measure.
16.	Describe your LEA’s AP to assist schools in verifying the validity of the number of students taking the alternate assessment. The plan should include actionable steps and how the LEA will monitor progress or address challenges (it should not be the state’s guidelines reiterated). The district’s percentage is 1.1% in ELA and 1.2% in math and science. The district continues to monitor at the school level with the assistant of the district’s staffing specialist and also school psychologists attending IEP meetings where eligibility for Access curriculum and FAA are reviewed and determination is made.
17.	Describe any improvement activities implemented by your LEA in the 2024-25 SY. Were they effective? If not, please describe why your LEA feels that they were not effective and what your next steps are. The district did not implement any improvement activities. The district continues to monitor the match between missing access courses and participation in the FAA.

18.	Describe your LEA's AP. List your progress monitoring activity and data source that will assist in determining the effectiveness of the AP. Identify the persons responsible for monitoring the progress of the AP. At the monthly principals' and assistant principals' meetings, data will be shared with each school and discussions held regarding school specific data. The districts Data Analytics, Accountability and Evaluation Department will assist the ESE Department in the collection of data to be shared. The person responsible is Kathy Black, Executive Director.
19.	What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY? The district provides professional learning in the area of quality IEPs yearly. Information from the FIN network and Florida Statewide Assessments Portal will be shared at administrator monthly meetings and ESE Department Chair meetings.
20.	What other additional actions does your LEA plan to implement to ensure the reduction of the percentage of students participating in the FAA? The district will continue to identify unique circumstance that may impact the percentage of students participating in the FAA.

By submitting this LEA justification AP, the LEA verifies that all the information provided is valid and accurate and can provide any requested documentation of evidence.

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Signature of Superintendent

9/30/25\_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Signature of Exceptional Student Education  
Director

10/1/2025\_\_\_\_\_

Date

 *in the absence  
of David Skelton*\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Director of Data

9/30/2025\_\_\_\_\_

Date