

Florida Department of Education

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

LEA: Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

**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.	<p>How has your LEA reviewed the data for assessment participation to make informed decisions for implementation?</p> <p>The FSDB reviews, yearly, Federal Percent of Points Index (FPPI) data and School Improvement Rating (SIR) data to determine assessment participation. The District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) works closely with the ESE director to discuss data trends or concerns.</p>
2.	<p>What are your LEA's percentages of students that participated in the FAA in the 2024-25 SY in each of the following subjects?</p> <p>ELA: 2.1% (&gt;10 students) Math: 1.7% (&gt;10 students) Science: 1.6% (&gt;10 students)</p>
3.	<p>What is your LEA's projection for the percentage of students participating in the FAA in the 2025-26 SY in each of the following subjects?</p> <p>ELA: 1% (&gt;10 students) Math: 1.6% (&gt;10 students) Science: 4.1% (&gt;10 students)</p>
4.	<p>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?</p> <p>ELA: 97.9% (292) Math: 98.3% (289) Science: 98.4% (124)</p>

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 2025-26 SY in each of the following subjects?</p> <p>ELA: 99% (300)  Math: 98.4% (306)  Science: 95.8% (146)</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).</p> <p>The Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind is a special school that serves only students with sensory impairments (deaf/hard-of-hearing, visually impaired/low vision, and dual-sensory impaired students) from across the state of Florida. The students who attend are from a low-incidence population, less than 1% of all students. Given the complex medical and cognitive profiles often associated with sensory impairments, it is statistically significant and expected that our population would exceed the 1.0 threshold for students with the most severe cognitive 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:  (&gt;10 students)</p> <p>Intellectual Disability (InD): 89%  Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): 0%  Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): 0%  Other Health Impairment (OHI): 11%</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?</p> <p>Due to the complex nature and reasoning of students being born with sensory impairments, we find that blind/visually impaired students are more likely to have a most significant cognitive disability. Serving students from across the state of Florida, our population is determined by parent choice to attend the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind or their LEA.</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, please describe the steps the LEA will take in the coming year (or the steps</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>Based on data reviews, there is not a disproportionate representation of students in the specified subgroups.</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.</p> <p>The FSDB has consistently achieved above 95% participation in all assessments with many years being above 98% participation. Each school schedules multiple make-up sessions to ensure that as many students as possible can be tested within the established windows.</p> <p>Due to the statistically small sensory impaired population and the small number of students tested using the FAA in the LEA, FSDB will likely remain above the 1% threshold.</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.)</p> <p>The FSDB uses PEER for its IEP system. The checklist for assessment participation is built in. Teams must complete the checklist in order to move forward with the IEP decision. A trained school psychologist is always present at annual IEP meetings to discuss the student's intellectual data and confirm that a student has the most significant cognitive disability.</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.</p> <p><i>1. The student must receive exceptional student education (ESE) services as identified through a current IEP and be enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternate achievement standards for two (2) consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment;</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Students are enrolled at an ESE center school and are therefore receiving ESE services. Student course schedules are reviewed to ensure that they will be enrolled in appropriately aligned course for 2 FTE periods.</p> <p><i>2. The student must be receiving specially designed instruction, which provides unique instruction and intervention supports that is determined, designed and delivered through a team approach, ensuring access to core instruction through</i></p>

*the adaptation of content, methodology or delivery of instruction and is exhibiting very limited to no progress in the general education curriculum standards;*

The team documents the types and intensity of specially designed instruction provided to the student.

*3. The student must be receiving support through systematic, explicit and interactive small-group instruction focused on foundational skills in addition to instruction in the general education curriculum standards;*

The MTSS team provides evidence of small group instruction on foundational skills provided to the student.

*4. Even after documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, the student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards;*

The IEP team provides evidence of instructional accommodations provided to the student.

*5. Even after documented evidence of accessing a variety of supplementary instructional materials, the student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards;*

The IEP team provides evidence of the types and use of supplementary instructional materials the student uses to access the general education curriculum.

*6. Even with documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology, the student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards;*

The IEP team provides evidence of the types and use of assistive technologies the student uses to access the general education curriculum.

*7. Even with direct instruction in all core academic areas (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science), the student is exhibiting limited or no progress on the general education curriculum standards, and requires modifications;*

All students receive direct instruction from a TVI or TOD in all core academic areas. Teachers at FSDB are required to be certified in their content area along with their ESE area (VI, D/HH). A description of instructional methodologies is provided as evidence.

*8. Unless the student is a transfer student, the student must have been available and present for grade-level general education curriculum standards instruction for at least seventy (70) percent of the school year prior to the assessment;*

Student attendance is verified for the prior and current school year.

*9. Unless the student is a transfer student, the student must have been instructed by a certified teacher for at least eighty (80) percent of the school year prior to the assessment;*

Teacher attendance is verified for the prior school year.

*10. The assessment instrument used to measure the student's global level of cognitive functioning was selected to limit the adverse impact of already-*

	<p><i>identified limitations and impairments (e.g., language acquisition, mode of communication, culture, hearing, vision, orthopedic functioning, hypersensitivities and distractibility); and,</i></p> <p>All evaluators, psychologists, work directly with VI or DHH students. Based on their experience and the student identified limitations and impairments, the psychologist selects the most appropriate tool.</p> <p><i>11. The student has a most significant cognitive disability as defined in paragraph (1)(f) of this rule.</i></p> <p>The psychologist makes a determination based on the established IQ requirement by the state and standard error of measure whether a student meets requirements as having the most significant cognitive disability, in light of all available data.</p> <p><i>(d) A student is not eligible to participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment if any of the following is true:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. The student is identified as a student with a specific learning disability or as gifted;</i></li> <li><i>2. The student is identified only as a student eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or has a visual impairment, a dual sensory impairment, an emotional or behavioral disability, a language impairment, a speech impairment, or an orthopedic impairment; or</i></li> <li><i>3. The student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Sections 1008.22(3)(a) and (b), F.S., unless there is medical documentation that the student experienced a traumatic brain injury or other health-related complication subsequent to the administration of that assessment that led to the student having the most significantly below-average global cognitive impairment.</i></li> </ol> <p>Each of the areas above is reviewed and a determination is made if the student is ineligible for instruction via the statewide standardized alternate assessment.</p>
13.	<p>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.</p> <p>Yes, students have been removed from participating in the FAA using state guidelines, especially when they were released during the 2021-2022 school year. During that time, the FSDB reviewed each student who was being assessed using the FAA.</p> <p>During the 2021-2022 school year, 6 students were removed from participating in the FAA. The initial review consisted of ensuring students had a secondary identification that aligned with a student having the most significant cognitive disability and secondly, reviewing intellectual scores to ensure students were within the established threshold. If it was discovered that a student did not meet the newly established qualifications, an IEP meeting was held to amend the IEP and determine what additional supports were needed for students.</p>

<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p>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?</p> <p>Parents, families, and students are informed of Access Points instruction and participation during the IEP meeting. As appropriate at the meetings, spoken language interpreters and sign language interpreters are present to ensure appropriate access. The IEP and additional forms and documents are translated and sent home, as appropriate. This information is reviewed yearly at IEP meetings and discussed as parents have additional questions.</p>
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Assessment data is reviewed at every IEP meeting. When data is received at the end of the school year, the school principals review the data. If any students scores with advanced proficiency or perfect scores, the student would be added to MTSS to review student performance and discuss additional needs.</p>
<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p>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).</p> <p>The ESE director reviews course schedules at the beginning of each academic year and semester to ensure students not eligible for AA-AAAS are not enrolled in courses aligned to alternate standards. Staffing specialists send an email to the ESE director after a student is found eligible or continues to meet eligibility for instruction on AA-AAAS, who then updates the student information system.</p> <p>If an IEP team is considering a student to be identified to take the FAA, the team completes an internal checklist (similar to the assessment participation checklist) with all the data that is being used to make that determination. The school Principal provides the data to a dedicated review team that has been established to evaluate all proposed AA-AAAS placements. This team ensures that sufficient evidence to support eligibility in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code.</p>
<p><b>17.</b></p>	<p>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.</p>

	<p>The FSDB closely monitors compliance with the ESSA 1% participation requirement. Each student assessed via alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) is individually tracked. Course schedules are reviewed at the beginning of each academic year and semester to ensure students not eligible for AA-AAAS are not enrolled in courses aligned to alternate standards. Also, FSDB ensures that at least 95 percent of students who are enrolled in grades for which an assessment is required are assessed. FSDB participation in AA-AAAS remains steady with appropriate changes taking place based on student enrollment in specific grades and classes.</p>
18.	<p>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.</p> <p>The FSDB has developed and implemented targeted technical assistance for IEP teams to support the accurate identification of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Furthermore, a dedicated review team has been established to evaluate all proposed AA-AAAS placements. This team ensures that sufficient evidence to support eligibility in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code.</p> <p>In addition, the ESE director monitors course schedules at the beginning of each academic year and semester to ensure students not eligible for AA-AAAS are not enrolled in courses aligned to alternate standards.</p>
19.	<p>What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY?</p> <p>The 2025-2026 school year focus for professional learning is around systematic and scaffolded instruction. This instruction is intended to ensure that students get the highest quality instruction and to more properly utilize scaffolding as a temporary support.</p>
20.	<p>What other additional actions does your LEA plan to implement to ensure the reduction of the percentage of students participating in the FAA?</p> <p>When a new student becomes eligible for the FSDB, who comes from another district identified as needing an AA-AAAS placement, the FSDB reviews all available data and conducts additional evaluations, as needed to determine if the student continues to meet eligibility for participation in the FAA.</p>

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.

Tracee Brown

Signature of Superintendent

9/25/25

Date

Must Nepal

Signature of Exceptional Student Education  
Director

9/25/2025

Date

Shelley S

Signature of Director of Data

9/25/2025

Date