

Florida Department of Education

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

LEA: The School Board of Hardee County

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>Monthly staffing specialists pull reports showing all students LRE and FAA status to ensure that we are keeping abreast of our data and percentages in all areas.</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: 1.6% Math: 1.5% Science: 0.2%</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: 1.1% Math: 1.1% Science: 0.2%</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 2025-26 SY in each of the following subjects?</p> <p>ELA: 98.4% Math: 98.5% Science: 99.08%</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: 98.9% Math:98.9% Science: 99.08%</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>No, we do not have any of these circumstances in our district.</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): 72% Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): 22% Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): 2% Other Health Impairment (OHI): 3%</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>No, there does not seem to be any patterns or discrepancies at any schools.</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 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>At this time our district does not have any disproportionate representation in any areas.</p>

<p>10.</p>	<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>In our district we always strive to test over 95% of all students including students participating in FAA. Last year we tested 98% of our FAA students.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<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 “Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation” for IEP team meetings within your LEA.)</p> <p>If it is determined by the IEP team, using the “Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation,” that the student will participate in the statewide assessment through the AA-AAAS, the IEP must contain a statement of why the general assessment is not appropriate and why the AA-AAAS is appropriate. The IEP also must indicate that notification was made to the parent and that the implications of the student’s nonparticipation in the statewide, standardized assessment program were provided.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<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>The decision that a student with a most significant cognitive disability will participate in the statewide alternate assessment program as defined in s. 1008.22(3)(d), F.S. and Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(a), F.A.C., is made by the IEP team and recorded on the IEP. The provisions with regard to parental consent for participation in the FAA program, in accordance with s. 1003.5715, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.0331(10)(b), F.A.C., must be followed. The following criteria must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Even with appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, assistive technology or accessible instructional materials, the student requires modifications as defined in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C.; and b. The student requires direct instruction in academic areas of English language arts (ELA), math, social studies and science based on access points pursuant to Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., in order to acquire, generalize, and transfer skills across settings.
<p>13.</p>	<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>In the past year we have not removed any students from FAA.</p>

<p>14.</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>In accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(10)(b), F.A.C., if the decision of the IEP team is that the student will be instructed in Access Points and participate in the FAA program, the parents and/or guardians of the student must give signed consent to have their child instructed in and assessed on Access Points. This decision must be documented on the Parental Consent Form: Instruction in Access Points—Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) and Administration of the Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment. If the parents fail to respond after reasonable efforts by the school district to obtain consent, the school district may provide instruction in Access Points and the student may participate in the FAA program. The IEP should include a statement of why the student cannot participate in the general assessment and why the alternate assessment is appropriate. Once the IEP team determines that a student will be instructed in Access Points and participate in the FAA program, the next step is to determine the method by which the student will be assessed—via the Performance Task or the Datafolio. The IEP team should begin by considering the student’s present level of performance and communication mode. This information is presented yearly in the students annual IEP meeting. In this meeting the information is provided in the parents native language via a translator or translating device. Along with a copy of the sign consent the parent also receives the ACCESS pamphlet developed by FLDOE.</p>
<p>15.</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>Students eligible to participate in the FAA are progress monitored throughout the year on state and district progress monitoring assessments. These progress monitoring assessments are determined in the IEP team meeting based on the students current data and progress. This allows the district to continuously monitor a student's progress to see if at any time they would be able to participate successfully in the general statewide assessments with supports and accommodations.</p>
<p>16.</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>Each school in the district has a designated staffing specialist who monitors the validity of the number of students taking the alternate assessment. This staffing specialist quarterly pulls reports on the number of students that are currently taking the FAA.</p>
17.	<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>ACCESS Project yearly completes training on ACCESS standards and best practices. We do feel that these activities are effective based on our data.</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 district is showing a decrease in our number of students taking the FAA. Our projections in ELA and Math is 1.1% which is lower than the previous year.</p>
19.	<p>What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY?</p> <p>Professional Development for the 25-26 SY includes the following: Assistive Technology and AIM Training - District Lead Inclusive Practices to Increase Student Achievement - FIN Learning Ally - Learning Ally Ready, Get Set, Read! Practical strategies for ESE teachers to use with students identified with reading disabilities/dyslexia - District Lead From Chaos to Clarity: Executive Functioning Strategies for Every Classroom - District Lead Hands-On Math: Implementing Manipulatives for Deeper Understanding in K-2 - District Lead Every Learner, Every Day: Practical Accommodations in the Gen Ed Classroom - District Lead New Teacher IEP Training - District Lead FAA Training - District Lead ACCESS Training - ACCESS Project</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>The District will continue to closely monitor the number of students taking the FAA quarterly. Also, ensuring fidelity in the eligibility process by having all students data that are being considered for ACCESS points reviewed by the ESE Director.</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.

Sonye M. Bennett
Signature of Superintendent

9/18/2025
Date

L. L. L.
Signature of Exceptional Student Education Director

9/17/25
Date

Julia G. Jan
Signature of Director of Data

9/18/25
Date