

Florida Department of Education

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

LEA: Hendry County School District

Please select one:

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? Testing data is reviewed 3 times per year following PM assessments by district.
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: 1.1% Science: 1.1%
3.	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? ELA: 1.1% Math: 1.1% Science: 1.1%
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 2025-26 SY in each of the following subjects? ELA: 98% Math: 98% Science: 98%

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% Math: 98% Science: 98%</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>There are no unique circumstances expected to draw large numbers of students with the most significant 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:</p> <p>Intellectual Disability (InD): 62% Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): 33% Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): 0% Other Health Impairment (OHI): 5%</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>The participation rate varies across schools however students who are in high incidence classrooms were more likely to be tested on alternate assessments.</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>There is no disproportionate representation of students.</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>The district continues to monitor data and provides training to ESE teachers, ESE Specialist and school teams regarding the alternate assessment criteria. The district continues to focus on instruction in the LRE to ensure adequate access to general education curriculum and standards and sets high expectations for all students. The district continues to work with Florida Inclusion Network for technical assistance, training and coaching to support ESE students across the continuum of services.</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>The team reviews the criteria and uses the data to determine if the student qualifies. The team will use the Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation as a resource when reviewing data.</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 process for finding a student eligible to participate in the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) is a function of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The determination is not based on a single criterion but on review of the student's needs, and it must be supported by a specific body of evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initial Eligibility: The student must first be an eligible student with a disability, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This means they have a current IEP in place. ● The "Significant Cognitive Disability" Determination: The core of the decision-making process is a determination that the student has a "significant cognitive disability" (SCD). This is not a diagnosis on its own but is a determination made by the IEP team based on specific criteria. The evidence for this must be documented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Criterion 1: Academic and Functional Skills: The student's academic and functional skills and adaptive behavior are well below average. This is not just a deficit in a single area, but a global impairment that affects multiple areas of functioning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comprehensive Evaluation: Documentation of the student's most recent psychological, educational, and/or intellectual evaluation. ○ Adaptive Behavior Assessment: An assessment that measures a student's ability to perform daily living skills and other functional skills.

- **Teacher and Parent Reports:** Detailed and recent observations from teachers and parents about the student's skills in various settings.
- **Current Academic Data:** Data from a variety of sources (e.g., curriculum-based measurements, classroom assessments, work samples) showing that the student is performing significantly below grade-level peers
- **Criterion 2: The Impact on Curriculum and Learning:** The student requires extensive and pervasive support to acquire, maintain, and generalize skills. The instruction must be highly individualized and different in content and delivery from what is used for typical peers.
 - **Required Evidence:**
 - **Documentation of Modifications:** Evidence that the student has been provided with a variety of instructional accommodations and modifications in the general education curriculum, and that, even with these supports, the student has shown limited or no progress on grade-level standards. This evidence could include:
 - IEP goals that are based on alternate academic achievement standards (Access Points).
 - A log of specific modifications and accommodations provided, and a summary of the student's progress.
 - Examples of modified work samples.
 - **Intensive, Individualized Instruction:** Documentation of direct instruction focused on foundational academic and functional skills, showing that the student requires a fundamentally different curriculum.
- **Criterion 3: The Impact on Assessment and Measurement:** Even with appropriate and allowable accommodations, the student is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on the general statewide assessment.
 - **Required Evidence:**
 - **Previous Assessment Data:** If the student has ever taken the general statewide assessment (e.g., FAST, EOCs), the results of those tests must be reviewed by the IEP team.
 - **Documentation of Accommodations:** A clear record on the IEP showing that the student was provided with all appropriate accommodations and still did not make progress on the general assessment.
 - **IEP Team Justification:** The IEP team must document in the meeting notes or on a specific form that they have reviewed the student's history, their need for a different curriculum, and the futility of testing them on the general assessment.

	<p>The team will determine if the student meets the exclusionary criteria: A student is not eligible for the FAA if the IEP team determines that the student's primary disability is one of the following, without a co-occurring significant cognitive disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A specific learning disability ○ An emotional or behavioral disability ○ A language impairment ○ A speech impairment ○ An orthopedic impairment ○ A visual impairment ○ Deaf or hard of hearing <p>● Required Evidence: The IEP team must review the student's evaluation and eligibility reports to ensure that the student is not identified solely in one of these categories. The documentation must support the presence of a significant cognitive disability that is the primary reason for the student's need for the alternate assessment.</p> <p>Once the IEP team has reviewed all the evidence and determined that the student meets all the eligibility criteria in Rule 6A-1.0943, and does not meet any of the exclusionary criteria, the final steps of the process are initiated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal Documentation: The decision and all supporting evidence are documented in the student's IEP. The IEP will specify that the student will receive instruction in Access Points and will participate in the FAA. ● Informed Parental Consent: The LEA must obtain written, informed consent from the parent or legal guardian for the student to participate in the FAA. The IEP team must thoroughly explain the implications of this decision, including the different curriculum and assessment, and the potential impact on future educational and post-secondary opportunities. ● Annual Review: This is not a one-time decision. The IEP team must review the student's eligibility for the FAA annually at the IEP meeting, ensuring that the student continues to meet all of the criteria.
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>We have not had to remove any students from participating in the FAA.</p>
14	<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>The process of Hendry County Schools to inform parents, families, and students about instruction in Access Points and participation in the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) is governed by state and federal regulations, primarily through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. A translator is provided during meetings, documents are presented</p>

	in both English and Spanish when possible. If the parent needs further translation or a different language, an interpreter would be provided.
15	<p>Describe how IEP teams will review the assessment data of students with advanced proficiency or perfect scores in one or more content areas, and consider whether these students could participate in the general statewide progress monitoring (FAST) or EOCs with necessary support and accommodations.</p> <p>The IEP team reviews assessment data for a student with advanced proficiency, or perfect scores, in one or more subjects and will focus on ensuring the student is appropriately challenged and their unique learning needs are met. This process involves a comprehensive review beyond just the test scores, with the goal of determining if the student can still participate in general statewide assessments (like FAST or EOCs) with the necessary support and accommodations.</p>

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 LEA plans to assist schools in verifying the validity of the number of students taking the alternate assessment, by using a multi-tiered system of support and oversight, focusing on training, data analysis, and direct file reviews. The goal is to ensure that alternate assessment participation is based on individual student needs and not on other factors.

- **Step 1: The LEA will provide training to all administrators, school counselors, special education teachers and general education teachers. This training will focus on the definition of a "student with the most significant cognitive disabilities", as outlined by state and federal regulations, and will clarify the criteria that should (and should not) be used to determine eligibility for the alternate assessment. The LEA will provide a comprehensive checklist that IEP teams must complete for each student being considered for the alternate assessment. This tool will require specific evidence from a variety of sources (e.g., adaptive behavior assessments, psychological evaluations, and data on response to intensive, individualized instruction).**
- **Step 2: The LEA will implement a system to monitor alternate assessment participation rates at the school level. The plan is to collect and analyze data at three key points during the school year:**
 - **October: A preliminary data check to identify schools that have a high percentage of students on the alternate assessment plan.**
 - **January: A second review to identify schools whose numbers are on track to exceed the 1% cap.**
 - **March: A final review before the assessment window closes to identify schools that have exceeded the 1% cap.**
- **Step 3: The LEA will provide tiered support to schools based on their data.**
 - **Universal (Tier 1): For all schools, the LEA will provide ongoing professional development, coaching by ESE Specialist and resource materials, to reinforce the alternate assessment guidelines.**
 - **Targeted (Tier 2): For schools with an alternate assessment participation rate approaching 1%, the LEA's special education department will schedule a virtual meeting with the school's IEP teams to review the data, discuss individual cases, and provide technical assistance. The focus will be on ensuring the IEP documentation fully supports the decision to administer the alternate assessment.**
 - **Intensive (Tier 3): For schools that exceed the 1% cap, the LEA will conduct an on-site audit. This will involve a file review of a random sample of IEPs for students on the alternate assessment. The LEA will verify that the decision-making tool was completed correctly, that all required data was reviewed, and that the IEP team's decision aligns with the established criteria.**

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>The LEA primarily focused on Professional Learning and coaching with administrators, counselors, ESE Specialists, ESE teachers and General Education teachers. That has been successful however the action plan will help address ongoing monitoring for improvement.</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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress Monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will track the percentage of IEP teams that have correctly and completely filled out the decision-making tool for all students on the alternate assessment. ● Data Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spreadsheet which will display the alternate assessment participation rate for each school in real time, allowing for the October, January, and March data checks. ○ Shared drive, with a folder for each school will house the completed decision-making tools for each student, allowing for easy access during file reviews and audits. ○ We will use the final state data on alternate assessment participation rates to confirm whether the LEA met the 1% cap at the district level and to identify schools that still require support in the next school year.
19	<p>What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY?</p> <p>Professional learning is offered throughout the year to help staff become more familiar with data collection and FAA standards. Additionally, LEAs are trained on expectations for the criteria for FAA determination.</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>We will continue to educate staff on data collection. Additionally, we will be sure to follow all guidance and expectations that the DOE recommends to help reduce the number of students participating 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.



Signature of Superintendent

12/02/25

Date



12/2/25

Date

Signature of Exceptional Student Education
Director



12/2/25

Date

Signature of Director of Data