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|           | <p>*Note: There is a projected increase in Science participation for Lee County due to the courses selected for enrollment by students not assessed in modified curriculum.</p> <p>Per DOE, only students in the following course codes are required to participate in the Biology EOC. In all other Biology course codes, the assessment is optional. (typically our higher achieving students, like AP and IB courses)</p> <p>Course Codes used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 8 Physical Science - Not an EOC but is "science" - 20030100</li> <li>• Grade 8 Physical Science Advanced - 20030200</li> <li>• Biology 1 - 2000310</li> <li>• Biology 1 Honors - 2000320</li> <li>• Pre-AICE Biology - 2000322</li> </ul>          |
| <p>4.</p> | <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: 98.8<br/> Math: 98.7<br/> Science: 97.8</p>   |
| <p>5.</p> | <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: 98.7<br/> Math: 98.7<br/> Science: 98.1</p>  |
| <p>6.</p> | <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>In Lee County, we have Golisano Children’s Hospital. Golisano is the only children’s hospital between Tampa and Miami, that delivers vital, lifesaving care for children.</p> <p>We have one center school, Buckingham Exceptional Center that serves 74 students with significant cognitive disabilities and complex medical conditions.</p> |

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|    | <p>No surrounding counties have a center school of this type. This draws some families to Lee County.</p> <p>We have PPEC facilities both privately owned and those affiliated with Lee Health Systems. Many families choose to reside in Lee County to have close proximity to these important services.</p> <p>There are also many group homes in Lee County that provide services for students with significant disabilities. Some of these group homes specialize in round the clock supervision and care of students with significant behavioral and cognitive concerns and take placements from the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.</p> <p>Per the directory located at <a href="https://fldresources.qlarant.com/html/service_descriptions.htm">https://fldresources.qlarant.com/html/service_descriptions.htm</a> there are 57 group homes operating in Lee County.</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): 50%<br/> Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): 41%<br/> Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): 3%<br/> Other Health Impairment (OHI): 6%</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>Yes, however, this is directly correlated with the programming at those sites for students' instruction on Florida Standards Access Points, or it is our center school for students with significant cognitive and medical 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, 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>Lee County does not have any identified risk ratios that are 3 or above in any subgroup.</p>  |

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| <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>Lee County Assessment and Accountability team and ESE Staff will continue to monitor completion rates through the assessment windows and to ensure schools meet the 95% participation rate requirement.</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 “<a href="#">Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation</a>” for IEP team meetings within your LEA.)</p> <p>IEP team decisions are being made consistent with the requirements in S.1008.22(3)(d)m F.S. and Rule 6A-1.0943 F.A.C and utilizing the checklist for course and assessment participation. FAA criteria is reviewed at every annual IEP meeting. Procedures are being compliantly followed as outlined in the Lee Policies and Procedures manual.</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><b><u>Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS)</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students with a most significant cognitive disability, for whom the statewide, standardized assessment—even with allowable accommodations—is not appropriate, may be eligible to participate in the statewide assessment program through the AA-AAAS.</li> <li>2. Eligibility requirements       <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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Even with appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, assistive technology or accessible instructional</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

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.

3. Eligibility areas excluded

Per Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C., and 34 C.F.R. § 300.8(c)(10)(ii), students with a primary exceptionality of a specific learning disability (SLD) does not include students with learning problems that are primarily the result of an intellectual disability. Per s. 1008.22, F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., only students with a most significant cognitive disability are eligible to participate in the FAA program. Therefore, students with a primary disability category of SLD cannot participate in the FAA program and subsequently should not be enrolled in access courses that align to the FAA program.

4. School district and IEP team requirements

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. The “Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation” may be accessed at <https://faa.fsassessments.org/-/media/project/client-portals/florida-alt/2023-2024-faa/manuals-and-guides/checklist-for-course-and-assessment-participation.pdf>.

5. Administration of the AA-AAAS

The assessment will be administered individually by the student’s exceptional student education teacher. If this is not possible, the test administrator will be a certified teacher or other licensed professional who has worked extensively with the student. All individuals who administer the AA-AAAS must be trained in administration procedures and receive annual update training.

6. Additional Information Required

An alternate assessment is required for any districtwide assessment of academic student achievement that is not administered to students on alternate academic achievement standards.

### Parental Consent Documentation

In accordance with s. 1003.5715, F.S., and Rule 6A-6.0331(10), F.A.C., the school district may not proceed with a student's instruction in access points and the administration of an alternate assessment without written and informed parental consent unless the school district documents reasonable efforts to obtain parental consent and the student's parent has failed to respond or the school district obtains approval through a due process hearing. The school district shall obtain written parental consent for the actions described above on the Parental Consent Form – Instruction in Access Points – Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) and Administration of the Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment, Form 313181 <https://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-14585>.

### **Percentage of Students on Alternate Assessment**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (which can be found at <https://www.ed.gov/essa>), limits the percentage of students that a state may assess with an AA-AAAS to no more than 1 percent of all assessed students in the grades assessed in a state for each subject.

While there is a limit on the percentage of students statewide who may participate in the AA-AAAS, there is no such limit among school districts; however, 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(c)(3)(ii) and (iv) require that a school district submit information justifying the need to assess more than one percent of its students in any subject with an AA-AAAS. The state must make that information publicly available, provided that such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

It is understood that school districts have unique circumstances that may contribute to a higher number of students who are in access courses and participating in the FAA program. The purpose of this justification is to ensure that school districts are cognizant of their current processes and procedures to ensure that an IEP team decision to place a student in access courses is in alignment with state requirements and is the most appropriate academic decision for the student.

The criteria for the following statement is outlined in s. 1008.22(3)(d), F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., and on the Checklist for Course and Assessment Participation, which can be found at <https://faa.fsassessments.org/-/media/project/client-portals/florida-alt/2023-2024-faa/manuals-and->

[guides/checklist-for-course-and-assessment-participation.pdf](#) for use in determining student eligibility for participation in the FAA program. If the school district is over one percent in any area, please provide a description of how the school district is ensuring that IEP teams are adhering to the criteria (see above.)

Lee County is ensuring that IEP teams are adhering to the criteria by training staff to follow the state protocol. To make informed and equitable decisions, the district IEP teams are answering each of the following questions when determining the appropriate course of instruction and assessment:

1. Meets the definition as having a most significant cognitive disability as defined in paragraph (1)(f) of this rule, or in the extraordinary circumstance when a global, full-scale intelligent quotient score is unattainable, satisfies the school district- determined procedure that had been approved by the Florida Department of Education under paragraph (5)(e) of this rule.
2. The student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards – even after direct instruction, a variety of accommodations and assistive technology have been attempted as documented in the student’s individual educational plan.
3. Provisions for parental consent per Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., have been followed.
4. Enrollment in appropriate and aligned courses for two consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment.
5. The student is receiving support through systematic, explicit and interactive small-group instruction focused on foundational skills.
6. The student is receiving specially designed instruction per the requirements of this rule.
7. 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 70 percent of the school year prior to the assessment.

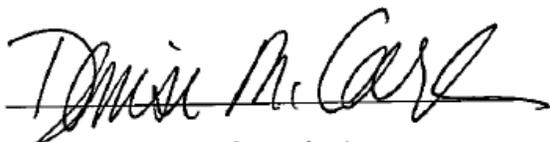
Instructed by a certified teacher for at least 80 percent of the school year prior to the assessment.

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|     | <p>The assessment instrument used to measure the student’s global level of cognitive functioning was selected to limit the adverse impact of already-identified limitations and impairments (e.g., language acquisition, mode of communication, culture, hearing, vision, orthopedic functioning, hypersensitivities and distractibility).</p> <p>If “YES” is not checked in all three areas, then the student is instructed on general education standard and standard assessment with any appropriate accommodations. If the IEP team determines that all three of the questions accurately characterize a student’s current educational situation, then the student is enrolled in access courses and the FSAA is used to evaluate the student's academic achievement.</p> <p>Provide a justification, with supporting evidence, that identifies specific programs or circumstances within the school district that may contribute to higher enrollment of students in access courses that exceeds one percent (e.g., center schools serving surrounding school districts).</p> <p>Lee County has a center school, Buckingham Exceptional Center. This school serves students with significant cognitive disabilities, most of which are also medically fragile. It is a small school, with total enrollment between 80 and 120 students, with 100% of students enrolled participating in alternate assessment. While the school does not serve students from surrounding districts, families with students of this profile do relocate here for access to this school.</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>When the statute changed, student files were reviewed. If necessitated by the review, students were reevaluated to ensure they still met criteria to participate in FAA. If they were not, teams met, reviewed all data and developed an IEP with the appropriate supports to transition to general education standards.</p> <p>Additionally, the criteria for participation in FAA is reviewed at every IEP meeting.</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>Parents are informed at the IEP meeting when consent is offered. Lee County utilizes PEER as our IEP platform. The guiding questions in PEER lead the team through a full discussion of alternate standards and the implications.</p>  |

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|            | <p>Information is presented in the parent’s native language though options available in PEER, human translators and a virtual interpreting service when particular languages are needed.</p> <p>Implications are discussed at least annually.</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>When assessment data is made available, the Assessment and Accountability team reviews data with the ESE Department. If a student shows advanced proficiency the district regional ESE Coordinators work with school teams to review all supporting documentation and provide recommendations.</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>With school-based monitoring and data obtained from our Assessment and Accountability Department and information housed in our FOCUS our student information system, we can ensure the validity of the number of students taking FAA. School based staffing specialists audit files monthly for compliance. If discrepancies are found the staffing specialist will work with the school-based team and the regional ESE Coordinator to create a plan for ensuring compliance.</p> |
| <p>17.</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>All initial eligibility meetings for participation in FAA require the inclusion of a district ESE Staffing Specialist. These specialists have participated in ongoing PD and assist in compliance monitoring. The inclusion of these specialist has ensured decisions about FAA participation are made in accordance with state guidelines.</p>   |
| <p>18.</p> | <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>This is detailed in our district’s Policies and Procedures manual and is also above in question 12.</p>  |

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|     | The Senior Director of Student Services, Director of ESE and the team in Assessment and Accountability.  |
| 19. | <p>What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY?</p> <p>In addition to the annual required FAA Administration Trainings, professional development will continue be provided focusing on the critical indicators when considering FAA eligibility to reinforce knowledge of existing staff and ensure newly hired staff are properly trained.</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>Staffing specialist data review and coaching for school-based teams considering FAA eligibility. Continued random file audits for compliance.</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

9/30/2025

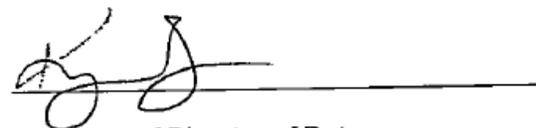
Date



Signature of Exceptional Student Education Director

9/30/25

Date



Signature of Director of Data

9/30/25

Date