

Florida Department of Education

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

LEA: St. Johns County School District

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>Assessment participation data is reviewed multiple times throughout the year. It is first examined at the beginning of the year when determining curriculum allocations for schools. Additional reviews take place before the assessment retake window and during the completion of state-required FAA assurances. The data is also discussed annually with the FLDOE during a scheduled data chat. Through these reviews and ongoing monitoring, the district ESE leadership team, in collaboration with the Planning, Accountability, and Assessment department, ensures that only students who have been determined eligible are assessed using the FAA.</p> <p>Additionally, the district ESE Department facilitates the District Review Committee – Access Team (DRC-A), which reviews documented student data and provides feedback to help IEP teams make informed decisions about appropriate assessment tools. The DRC-A examines data for students being considered for instruction using modified standards and/or assessment through the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA). While the DRC-A does not determine the least restrictive environment (LRE), school placement, curriculum, or assessment, it supports schools by reviewing relevant data to ensure that assessment recommendations made by the IEP team are appropriate and well-informed.</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: 1.2%</p>

	<p>Math: 1.3%</p> <p>Science: 1.0%</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: 0.99%</p> <p>Math: 1.04%</p> <p>Science: 1.1%</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: 99.2%</p> <p>Math: 98.8%</p> <p>Science: 98.9%</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: 99.01%</p> <p>Math: 98.96%</p> <p>Science: 98.9%</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>St. Johns County School District continues to be a highly desirable option for families in Florida. Our Exceptional Student Education (ESE) department receives a high volume of inquiries via phone and email regarding special education services, particularly for students with cognitive impairments.</p> <p>While growth in our general education population has slowed significantly (from an average of 4% annually in the early 2020s to less than 1% in 2025–2026) enrollment of ESE students has continued to increase rapidly, with a 6% growth rate in 2025–2026 alone.</p> <p>Additionally, an increasing number of families are utilizing FES-EO, PEP, and FES-UA scholarships to enroll in non-public schools. These families often include general education students or students with disabilities who are primarily served in</p>

	<p>general education settings. As a result, the number of students with disabilities taking the FAST assessment has declined more quickly than the number taking the FAA.</p> <p>Other contributing factors to our growing ESE population include the presence of multiple group homes and SIP placements in the county, many of which serve students with disabilities. Our proximity to top-tier pediatric medical facilities such as Wolfson Children's Hospital and Nemours Children's Hospital also attracts families with children who have complex medical needs. Furthermore, the nearby Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport bring military families to the area, many of whom have children requiring special education services.</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> <table border="1" data-bbox="297 793 1455 1003"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>Primary</u></th> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>Secondary</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Intellectual Disability (InD):</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45.13%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7.08%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):</td> <td style="text-align: center;">44.7%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Health Impairment (OHI):</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7.74%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8.85%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	Intellectual Disability (InD):	45.13%	7.08%	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):	44.7%	5.09%	Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):	0%	0.22%	Other Health Impairment (OHI):	7.74%	8.85%
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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 trends have been observed at this time.</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 appears to be a disproportionate representation of students on the Alternate Assessment for the following subgroups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Black = 17.7% of students on FAA vs. accounting for 5.8% of the overall population -Male = 67.3% of students on FAA vs. accounting for 51.2% of the overall population -FRL = 40.2% of students on FAA vs. accounting for 18.8% of the overall population 															

	<p>This disproportionality aligns with patterns observed in other areas, including ESSA subgroup performance, discipline data, and the identification of students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (EBD) and Intellectual Disabilities (InD). The district recognizes this ongoing trend and is actively working to address the underlying causes and implement more equitable practices.</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>St. Johns County School District does meet the required 95%+ participation threshold.</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 district ESE Department facilitates the District Review Committee – Access Team (DRC-A), which reviews documented student data and provides feedback to help IEP teams make informed decisions about appropriate assessment tools. The DRC-A examines data for students being considered for instruction using modified standards and/or assessment through the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA). While the DRC-A does not determine the least restrictive environment (LRE), school placement, curriculum, or assessment, it supports schools by reviewing relevant data to ensure that assessment recommendations made by the IEP team are appropriate and well-informed.</p> <p>In accordance with s. 1008.22(3)(d), F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., the FAA participation criteria are reviewed at every annual IEP meeting using the state-provided checklist for course and assessment participation. All procedures outlined in the State Policies and Procedures Manual are strictly followed.</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>As stated above, the district ESE Department facilitates the District Review Committee – Access Team (DRC-A), which reviews documented student data and provides feedback to help IEP teams make informed decisions about appropriate assessment tools. The DRC-A examines data for students being considered for instruction using modified standards and/or assessment through the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA). While the DRC-A does not determine the least</p>

	<p>restrictive environment (LRE), school placement, curriculum, or assessment, it supports schools by reviewing relevant data to ensure that assessment recommendations made by the IEP team are appropriate and well-informed.</p> <p>This process is also outlined in our State Policies and Procedures manual.</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, all student folders were reviewed, and some students were reevaluated to determine if they still met the criteria for participation in the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA). If a student no longer qualified, the IEP team convened to review all documentation and develop a new IEP to support the transition to general education standards. These students received additional review by their IEP team to determine appropriate support and services needed to access and succeed with grade-level content and general education standards.</p> <p>Changes in assessment participation may also occur when a student transfers into the district from another state and does not meet Florida’s criteria for the FAA, or less commonly when a re-evaluation shows the student no longer qualifies. In such cases, the school, the ESE Department, and the Student Services Department collaborate to determine appropriate coursework and graduation requirements. The IEP team again reviews the student’s needs to identify necessary supports and services for success with general education standards.</p> <p>This transition can be disruptive to student learning and success, so intentional and ongoing monitoring by the school team is essential to ensure that each student’s needs are met.</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 first step occurs during the IEP meeting, when parents are offered the opportunity to provide consent. St. Johns County School District uses the PEER IEP application, which includes structured questions that guide a thorough explanation and discussion regarding FAA eligibility. To ensure parents receive information in their native language, interpreters or interpreting services are used during IEP meetings and other communications. PEER provides translated documents in multiple languages; when a language is not available, an interpreting service is used to provide translation. This process is conducted at least once annually.</p>

	<p>Additionally, as students approach transition age and begin participating in their IEP meetings, the team engages in detailed discussions about Access Points, FAA participation, and the impact these decisions may have on post-secondary opportunities. To support this process, St. Johns County School District hosts an annual Transition Fair, providing students and families with the opportunity to explore available post-secondary services, supports, and options.</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 becomes available, it is reviewed by the Planning, Accountability, and Assessment department, along with district leadership and school administrators. If a student demonstrates advanced proficiency, the district team, working in collaboration with the school, reviews all supporting documentation and provides recommendations for the IEP team to consider.</p> <p>Additionally, as part of the annual IEP process, the team reviews the students' most recent evaluation data, including district and state assessments. If the data indicates the student is demonstrating proficiency, the IEP team will then consider appropriate adjustments to the IEP, including changes to services and assessment participation.</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>In addition to school-based monitoring, a designated staff member in the Planning, Accountability, and Assessment department is responsible for tracking student participation counts to ensure the accuracy and validity of FAA data. Throughout the year, a random sampling of IEPs is conducted by the ESE compliance staff to verify the appropriateness of assessment determinations. LEAs at schools that serve students receiving instruction on Access Points are also expected to conduct self-assessments to confirm continued eligibility and monitor student performance.</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>No improvement activities were implemented during the 2024–25 school year, as the district's performance percentages were closely aligned with state</p>

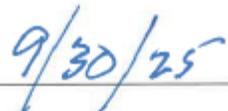
	<p>expectations. Therefore, additional activities were not deemed necessary at this time.</p>
<p>18.</p>	<p>Describe your LEA’s AP. List your progress monitoring activity and data source that will assist in determining the effectiveness of the AP. Identify the persons responsible for monitoring the progress of the AP.</p> <p>The LEA’s AP is outlined in the State Policies and Procedures Manual. Progress monitoring activities include regular review of student assessment data, IEP documentation, and participation rates in the Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA). Data sources include district and state assessments, student performance records, and IEP reviews.</p> <p>The individuals responsible for monitoring the progress of the AP include the Senior Director of ESE, the Director of ESE, and the Director of Planning, Accountability, and Assessment.</p>
<p>19.</p>	<p>What professional learning will your staff complete for the 2025-26 SY?</p> <p>The following professional learning activities are planned to support staff in the 2025–26 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Writing Access IEPs – Deep Dive Training</u>: Delivered to all Access teachers during the district in-service day. This training included a dedicated section on FAA participation and Access Points requirements. • <u>Access to General Education Training</u>: Provided district-wide during the in-service day, this training addressed inclusive practices and touched on FAA and Access Points considerations. • <u>DRC-A Process Annual Training</u>: Local Education Agency (LEA) representatives receive annual training on the District Review Committee (DRC-A) process. ESE teachers also receive brief reminders during virtual meetings. • <u>Compliance Support</u>: Compliance staff assist with training related to Access Points and provide ongoing support to teams making assessment and instructional decisions. • <u>Monthly Virtual ESE Meetings</u>: Targeted to teachers, these sessions provide ongoing professional development and updates related to Access Points, FAA, and compliance. • <u>Monthly AP/LEA Meetings</u>: Designed for LEA representatives, these meetings offer continued guidance and collaboration opportunities around topics such as Access standards and assessment practices.
<p>20.</p>	<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>Compliance staff will provide targeted support to school teams considering FAA eligibility. This includes reviewing individual cases and offering coaching to ensure decisions are aligned with state criteria.</p> <p>The district will conduct yearly audits of IEPs to assist schools in maintaining compliance and identifying opportunities to transition students to general education standards when appropriate.</p>
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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.



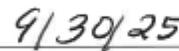
Signature of Superintendent



Date



Signature of Exceptional Student Education
Director



Date



Signature of Director of Data



Date