

## 2023-2024 Policies and Procedures: Florida School for Deaf & Blind (Approved)

### Section E: Participation in State and District Assessments

The school district administers districtwide assessments of academic student achievement.

- Yes
- No

History

If **yes**, include the name of each districtwide assessment and whether the assessment is administered to students on alternate academic achievement standards. If the districtwide assessment is not administered to students on alternate academic achievement standards, identify the corresponding alternate assessment. (If your school district uses a portfolio as a corresponding district alternate assessment, the data collected should be based on grade-level alternate academic achievement standards. For portfolios, indicate what information is being collected, how the information is being recorded, what type of scoring rubric is being used, and how the school district ensures that all teachers are collecting the same information and scoring the data the same way.)

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) - This assessment is administered to most students regardless of the standards they are using. However, due to the difficulties for some students using Access Points this test is not accessible. In these instances, the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) or Unique Learning Skills (ULS) curriculum is used to measure progress.

Achieve 3000 - This assessment is not administered to students on alternate achievement standards due to reading level.

Students not participating in Achieve 3000 monitored via the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) and Sitton 1200 High Frequency Word List.

History

#### **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>.

The school district certifies that it either obtains prior parental consent or due process approval for every student participating in the FAA program. If prior parental consent is not obtained, the school district certifies that it has documentation of reasonable efforts to obtain that approval and consent, or a final order from DOAH.

- Yes
- No

History

## **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.

What is your school district's 2022-23 participation percentage in the FAA in the following areas?

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.)**

FSDB provides yearly training to faculty (teachers, administrators, reading and math specialists, and IEP Coordinators) on criteria for a student to be identified to participate in the Alternate Assessment. All students at FSDB are exceptional education students. Therefore, students who have additional concerns in addition to those on their current IEP per FSDB protocol are placed on the MTSS team. If there is a concern that a student may have a significant cognitive disability the teacher shares concerns about rate of progress and level of performance compared to peers of similar needs (DHH/VI). This allows a multidisciplinary MTSS team (case manager/teacher, psychologist, social worker, boarding program, educational diagnostician, parent, etc.) time to review data points (recent testing, intellectual scores, academic performance, etc) to determine if there are additional supports needed for the student or to determine if there is sufficient evidence for the IEP team to make a decision concerning alternate assessment. In order to determine sufficient evidence, the MTSS team will use the FDOE guidance document, "Significant Cognitive Disabilities" as a guide to discuss relevant information/assessments to determine how all aspects of the student's performance (academic, independent functioning, community living, leisure, and vocational) are impacted and which modifications are required for the student to access the state standards. If it is unclear how student performance is impacted in any area the MTSS team will continue to gather additional information.

### History

**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).**

FSDB serves only students with sensory disabilities from all over the state of Florida. As such, FSDB functions like a center school with all students receiving ESE services. FSDB has enrollment criteria that require the primary disability of a student to be deaf/hard-of-hearing, blind/visually impaired, or dual sensory impaired. Deafness, blindness, or dual sensory impairments are not reasons, in and of themselves, for a student to be identified as having a significant cognitive disability. There are several factors that contribute to FSDB's percentage of students with a significant cognitive disability being higher than 1%. Students with sensory disabilities (deafness/blindness) make up less than 1% of the school-aged population. As a low incidence population, the percentage of students with a significant cognitive disability is likely to be higher than in the general population. FSDB is the largest school of its kind in Florida focusing solely on the needs of students with sensory impairments (deafness/blindness). Due to the percentage of students who have congenital vision/hearing loss being small resulting in the reasons for the loss being more likely to have secondary disabilities. Of the subset of sensory impaired students being considered as having a significant cognitive disability there are many additional barriers that students face being members of a low incidence population. As a whole, 80% of the students at FSDB are identified as being economically disadvantaged. Many deaf students arrive at school with limited language skills. Ninety percent of students with hearing loss are born to hearing families and as a result some students do not have exposure to a full language until they are enrolled in school for a variety of reasons from access to resources to outdated medical advice. As such, students may miss critical language development milestones because they have not been able to access (hear) the stimuli being presented. Students also may lose out on critical incidental learning opportunities because they are not able to naturally pick up the stimuli. Some students arrive to school at the age of 5 being language deprived due to limited or no early intervention services. While language deprivation can impact the development of cognitive, memory, and brain development in some instances the severity of the language deprivation may result in a significant cognitive disability. Many of the conditions for a student to be blind have their own unique characteristics and clinical features affecting the student. Students may lack the experiential learning necessary at a young age to help develop the necessary schemas for learning. Students may also miss out on incidental learning opportunities and must be provided direct experiential opportunities for instruction. Students with low vision may lack the motivation to explore their environment thus affecting motor development. As a result of visual impairment the normal sequence of learning in social, motor, language, and cognitive developmental areas may be impacted. All of these factors may result in the impact of the blindness and a lack of services at an early age leading to a significant cognitive disability. Since FSDB focuses solely on students with sensory impairments we are able to have a larger group for student norm comparisons. Therefore, 'typical' developmental patterns and growth rates can be used to help identify a student who may have a significant cognitive disability.

History

What is your school district's risk ratio for disproportionality in each content area for each subgroup?

**ELA American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0

History

**ELA Black, non-Hispanic**

0

History

**ELA Hispanic**

0

History

**ELA Asian or Pacific Islander**

1.6

History

**ELA White, non-Hispanic**

1.62

History

**ELA Economically Disadvantaged**

1.11

History

**ELA English Language Learner**

0

History

**Math American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0

History

**Math Black, non-Hispanic**

0.37

History

**Math Hispanic**

0.33

History

**Math Asian or Pacific Islander**

1.27

History

**Math White, non-Hispanic**

1.48

History

**Math Economically Disadvantaged**

1.11

History

**Math English Language Learner**

0

History

**Science American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0

History

**Science Black, non-Hispanic**

0.62

History

**Science Hispanic**

0.39

History

**Science Asian or Pacific Islander**

0

History

**Science White, non-Hispanic**

1.28

History

**Science Economically Disadvantaged**

1.0

History

**Science English Language Learner**

0

History

**Social Studies American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0

History

**Social Studies Black, non-Hispanic**

0.70

History

**Social Studies Hispanic**

0.47

History

**Social Studies Asian or Pacific Islander**

0

History

**Social Studies White, non-Hispanic**

1.14

History

**Social Studies Economically Disadvantaged**

1.00

History

**Social Studies English Language Learner**

0

History

**If an identified risk ratio is 3 or above in any area, describe the school district's plan to address this disproportionality. This could include examining practices, such as the training and technical assistance provided to personnel on culturally responsive practices; working within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to promote best practices in screening; progress monitoring; and initial eligibility determination. School districts may also refer to their efforts to decrease disproportionality in evaluation, identification and discipline if similar efforts are made in that area.**

N/A. There are no risk ratios 3 or above in the district.

History

These are the criteria required for participation in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment as per Rule 6A-1.0943(5), F.A.C.:

**Section A:** The decision that a student with a significant cognitive disability will participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment as defined in Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(a), F.A.C., must be made by the IEP team and recorded on the IEP.

If the definition of “most significant cognitive disability” is not met according to the criteria set in Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(f)1., F.A.C., then complete Section E of this document, which satisfies Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(f)2., F.A.C.

**Section B:** The provisions regarding parental consent for participation in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment found in Rule 6A-6.0331(10), F.A.C., must be followed.

**Section C:** In order for a student to participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment, all of the following criteria must be met:

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 consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment;

Evidence of criteria will be provided through the student’s current IEP and student schedule.

2. The student must be receiving specially designed instruction, which provides unique instruction and intervention support that is determined, designed and delivered through a team approach, ensuring access to core instruction through the adaptation of content, methodology or delivery of instruction and exhibits very limited to no progress in the general education curriculum standards;

Evidence of criteria will be provided through MTSS or response-to-intervention (Rtl) documentation.

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;

Evidence of criteria will be provided through MTSS or Rtl documentation.

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided with \_\_\_\_\_ (the required IEP and school district documentation of services provided—accommodation logs, accommodation logs compared to classroom performance).

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided with \_\_\_\_\_ (the required IEP and school district documentation of the provision of supplementary instructional materials—may be a summary from teacher, speech-language pathologist (SLP) or other service providers).

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided with \_\_\_\_\_ (the required IEP and school district documentation of the provision assistive technology services provided).

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided with \_\_\_\_\_ (the required IEP and school district documentation of the provision of supplementary instructional materials—may be a summary from teacher, SLP or other service providers).

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 70 percent of the school year prior to the assessment;

Evidence of criteria will be provided through the student’s attendance report.

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided through the teacher's certificate and teacher's attendance record.

10. 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).

Evidence of criteria will be provided through available evaluations, medical reports or screeners provided in the past.

11. The student has a most significant cognitive disability.

**Section D:** A student is not eligible to participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment if any of the following apply:

1. The student is identified as a student with a specific learning disability or as gifted;

Evidence of criteria will be provided through IEP and applicable evaluation results.

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

Evidence of criteria will be provided through IEP and applicable data.

3. The student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Section 1008.22(3)(e), F.S., unless there is medical documentation that the student experienced a traumatic brain injury or other health-related complications subsequent to the administration of that assessment that led to the student having the most significantly below-average global cognitive impairment.

Evidence of criteria will be provided through statewide standard assessment results, if applicable.

**Section E:** In the extraordinary circumstance when a global, full-scale intelligent quotient score is unattainable, a school district will comply as follows:

More specifically, in the event when a student cannot be directly assessed, the student who has a suspected most significant cognitive disability for whom assessment via the FAA may be appropriate as defined in Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(f)1., F.A.C., will be identified through the following detailed procedure:

**List the factors the school district will use to determine that a direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable.**

The school psychologist will observe the student and/or interview the teacher in order to select the most appropriate test for the student's measured ability. An individually administered measure of global cognitive functioning will be attempted with all students suspected of having a significant cognitive disability. An assessment will not be considered valid if the student is unable to respond with purposeful and intentional responses, if the student is unable to understand the presented tasks, or if a valid basal is not obtained on the measure of global ability.

History

**Describe the assessment process the school district will use to determine if a student has a most significant cognitive disability in the absence of reliable direct assessment of cognitive functioning.**

When an individually administered measure of global cognitive functioning is not able to be obtained, the evaluator(s) will be asked to review previous MTSS documentation and obtain additional assessments to include a developmental assessment and a measure of adaptive behavior. Observations of the student during attempted direct assessment and any previous assessment information will be considered. Observations and input from other professionals (i.e. Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Special Education Teachers) who have attempted to directly assess the skills of the student will be considered as well.

History

**Describe how the school district will train and monitor staff with compliance of the determination and assessment process.**

FSDB will provide training to all school psychologists and staffing specialists (IEP Coordinators) on the procedures for determining a student has a most significant cognitive disability when cognitive function can not be directly assessed. The District ESE staff will monitor compliance through review of applicable information when there is consideration of alternate assessments and the student was not directly assessed. The ESE department will ensure compliance through the completion of the Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide, Alternate Assessment form, the student's IEP, and the annual FSAA Assurances Self-Assessment.

History