

2023-2024 Policies and Procedures: Hamilton (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.)

The Hamilton County School District uses the following assessments to determine achievement levels and to monitor student growth and progress.

i-Ready Diagnostic Assessments are utilized as a district-wide and corresponding alternate assessment. i-Ready provides insights into a student's strengths and weaknesses in reading and math, identifying areas of additional support. It is administered online in an adaptive format, covering reading and math skills, and provides detailed reports for educators.

Corresponding Alternate Assessments

Brigance Early Childhood Developmental Inventory (ECDI): This instrument assesses the developmental skills of children ages birth to 7-8, identifying developmental delays or areas needing support. It is administered through observation, interviews, and direct interaction and covers various domains of development, providing insights into a child's progress.

The Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills II assesses students' academic skills in grades K-9. It identifies strengths and weaknesses in various academic areas, including reading, math, and written and oral language skills. Administered through paper-and-pencil tasks, it provides valuable information about students' academic abilities.

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?

Reading

1.1

History

Mathematics

1.1

History

Science

1.3

History

Is the school district over one percent in any area?

- Yes
 No

History

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.)

The Hamilton County School District uses the *Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment: Access Committee Determination* guide when determining whether a student with disabilities meets eligibility criteria to be assessed through the Florida Alternate Assessment (F.A.A.) administration. The I.E.P. team considers various information, including student performance across different areas, evaluation data, test scores, observations, medical records, and more, to ensure that all eligibility requirements have been met. The team considers whether the student has a significantly below-average cognitive score (≤ 67), has received exceptional student education services in appropriate and aligned courses, and requires specially designed instruction, systematic, explicit, and interactive small-group instruction focused on foundational skills. There must be documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, that the student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards, and evidence of accessing a variety of supplementary instructional materials, the student requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards.

A student is not eligible to participate in the F.A.A. if they are identified as having a specific learning disability or as gifted, or if they are 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 if they scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide assessment unless there is medical documentation of a traumatic brain injury or health-related complication subsequent to the administration of that assessment that led to the student having the most significantly below-average global cognitive impairment.

The student must meet the requirements listed on the *Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment; Access Committee Determination* form in compliance with 6A-1.0943 F.A.C. The team must determine how the student will be assessed through the F.A.A. Performance Task or Datafolio.

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).

The Hamilton County School District is a small rural district with 1,524 pre-kindergarten to 12th-grade students, including 216 (14%) students with disabilities. There are several reasons why more students may be enrolled in access courses:

Department of Juvenile Justice Residential Facility—This 40-bed facility sends/receives students continuously throughout the school year. A student’s length of stay depends on their sentencing and behavior. Two of the Hamilton students who participated in FAA were enrolled in Oak Grove Academy (OGA), which is 16.6% of the total number of students participating in FAA.

Inclusive Educational Practices – The Hamilton County School District (HCSD) prioritizes inclusive education by integrating students with significant cognitive impairments into mainstream classrooms with appropriate supports and accommodations, which may experience higher enrollments in this population. Inclusive settings offer opportunities for social interaction, peer modeling, and academic growth, which can appeal to families seeking an inclusive educational environment for their children. The Annual Performance Report (2023) indicates that 98.21% of students with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80% or more of the day.

Demographic Trends: The HCSD has experienced an increase in the number of children eligible for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The United States Census (2022) lists that 9.2% (34.3% state average) of residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher, 44.1% of residents earned their high school diploma, 15.1% are without health care coverage, an employment rate of 33.2%, and 26.4% (12.7% state average) live in poverty. That 13.2% of the residents moved from a different county in Florida to Hamilton in 2022.

Early Childhood Centers: Hamilton County currently has four active childcare centers. Access to early childhood education and childcare facilities is crucial for the growth and development of our students. Many of our families rely on various childcare arrangements, including formal childcare centers, informal arrangements with relatives or neighbors, or home-based care. This has led to an increase in students entering VPK or kindergarten with delays in language and social-emotional skills.

History

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

ELA American Indian or Alaskan Native

NA

History

ELA Black, non-Hispanic

.765

History

ELA Hispanic

| .366

[History](#)

ELA Asian or Pacific Islander

| NA

[History](#)

ELA White, non-Hispanic

| 1.76

[History](#)

ELA Economically Disadvantaged

| .254

[History](#)

ELA English Language Learner

| NA

[History](#)

Math American Indian or Alaskan Native

| NA

[History](#)

Math Black, non-Hispanic

.438

History

Math Hispanic

.815

History

Math Asian or Pacific Islander

NA

History

Math White, non-Hispanic

1.81

History

Math Economically Disadvantaged

.343

History

Math English Language Learner

NA

History

Science American Indian or Alaskan Native

| NA

History

Science Black, non-Hispanic

| .420

History

Science Hispanic

| .907

History

Science Asian or Pacific Islander

| NA

History

Science White, non-Hispanic

| 1.14

History

Science Economically Disadvantaged

| .394

History

Science English Language Learner

| NA

History

Social Studies American Indian or Alaskan Native

| NA

History

Social Studies Black, non-Hispanic

| NA

History

Social Studies Hispanic

| NA

History

Social Studies Asian or Pacific Islander

| NA

History

Social Studies White, non-Hispanic

| NA

History

Social Studies Economically Disadvantaged

NA

History

Social Studies English Language Learner

NA

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.

NA

History

Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities

District-Specific Procedures

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.

If direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable, the Hamilton County School District (HCSD) will attempt two separate individually administered measures of global cognitive functioning with students suspected of having a significant cognitive disability. An assessment is considered INVALID 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 cognitive 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 unattainable, the evaluator(s) will be asked to obtain additional assessments to include a developmental assessment, a measure of adaptive behavior collected from the teacher and/or parent/guardian. The Speech and Language Pathologist will conduct a direct assessment of language/communication skills OR a review of communication methods in place for those students without intentional language. Those scores, along with a review of previous attempts at direct assessment and any evidence of medical conditions that impact global functioning will be documented on the Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment form. The IEP team will consider all available data and evidence regarding the student's cognitive ability. A decision will be made by the IEP team based on a thorough review of the student's diagnostic information, adaptive functioning, academic performance data, and the guidelines outlined in Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

History

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

The school district will provide training to all evaluators on the completion and appropriate use of the Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide Standardized Alternate Assessment form. The ESE department provides training to school psychologists, staffing specialists, Speech and Language Pathologists, ESE teachers, and other applicable IEP team members through annual or as-needed workshops that address district-specific policies and procedures. The ESE department ensures compliance through the completion of the Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide Standardized Alternate Assessment form, the student's IEP, and the annual FAA Assurances Self-Assessment.

Hamilton County School District will provide training to all evaluators on the completion and appropriate use of the Consideration for Access Points Instruction and Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment form. Training will be provided to the school psychologists, staffing specialists, Speech and Language Pathologists and other applicable IEP team members through annual meetings that address district specific policies and procedures. The ESE department will ensure compliance while completing the annual FAA Assurances Self-Assessment.

[History](#)