

## 2023-2024 Policies and Procedures: Palm Beach (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 majority of students with disabilities participate in district wide assessments of student achievement administered throughout the District. Students determined for alternate assessment may take the district wide assessment (general FSQs & USAs, semester exams, writing assessments), may take a district developed corresponding district wide assessment (Access FSQs & USAs, semester exams, writing assessments), and may be progress monitored with the Brigance -Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills II for reading and math, depending on their individual levels and needs.

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.)**

The ESE Department is working with Regional ESE offices and schools to continue to address this issue. Guidance was provided at the September 21, 2023 and January 17, 2024 District ESE Contact meetings including the eligibility criteria for Access Points, Assurances processes, and follow up actions. Additionally, in October 2023, District/Regional Resource Teachers, were provided the guiding documents "Meeting State Compliance for Participation in Alternate Standards/Assessment" (two versions provided--Google Slides and Google Doc) followed by a training session on 11/29/23 for District/Regional Resource Teachers and InD Resource Teachers. On 12/1/23 guidance was disseminated to district ESE Contacts, with links to the two guiding documents "Meeting State Compliance for Participation in Alternate Standards/Assessment" and a description of the process and how to use the guiding docs. Ongoing since FY22, the district ESE Department has guided IEP teams in review of students determined for access points based on state criteria. Each year all students determined for Florida Alternate Assessment are verified for student assignments to Access Points courses and parental consent during the FAA Assurances and Pre-ID process. District training will continue- reiterating state guidance and policies to school IEP teams and administration. Individual case guidance is provided.

[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).**

There are nine Charter Schools located in the boundaries of the School District of Palm Beach County which provide services in an instructional model that has historically required, as a criteria for entry, that the student be identified as working on Access Point standards and participating in Alternate Assessment. While most now offer both general and access standards instruction models, these campuses serve over 380 students determined for access points. One of these programs currently only serves deferred diploma students. (Palm Beach School For Autism, Connections, the Early Learning Center, the Learning Academy, Believers, EdVenture, Seagull Academy, Career Academy of the Palm Beaches, Potentials)

In addition, the level of service available within district based programs for students identified and participating in programs that support needs of students on the Autism Spectrum, varies from surrounding districts and provides for language therapy infused throughout the school day. This model of service attracts families to Palm Beach County specifically to access these program models resulting in a disproportionately high rate of students identified on the spectrum within the district. The most recent available Data & Statistics on Autism Spectrum Disorder from the CDC indicate 1 in 36 children are identified on the spectrum; this prevalence is 1 in 51.5 in Palm Beach Schools.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data/index.html>). In addition, there has been a steady increase in overall number of students identified on the spectrum over the past 10 years going from 1,767 or 5% of SWD identified as ASD in the 2015 school year to 5,730 students (12% of SWD) in the 2024 school year. The district has been reviewing student data and offering training and individual support to schools in the determination of instruction on access points and modified curriculum for students. The district is focused on providing updated guidance to address identified cases and to initiate re-evaluations for students as needed in order to make appropriate decisions based on current data.

History

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

**ELA American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0.580884736

History

**ELA Black, non-Hispanic**

1.589173198

History

**ELA Hispanic**

0.806905494

History

**ELA Asian or Pacific Islander**

1.046849698

History

**ELA White, non-Hispanic**

0.81606863

History

**ELA Economically Disadvantaged**

1.253502509

History

**ELA English Language Learner**

0.453228345

History

**Math American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0.67417427

History

**Math Black, non-Hispanic**

1.484992942

History

**Math Hispanic**

0.821682055

History

**Math Asian or Pacific Islander**

1.027990786

History

**Math White, non-Hispanic**

0.852080998

History

**Math Economically Disadvantaged**

1.134910204

History

**Math English Language Learner**

0.428103444

History

**Science American Indian or Alaskan Native**

0.687520601

History

**Science Black, non-Hispanic**

1.405188716

History

**Science Hispanic**

0.873472703

History

**Science Asian or Pacific Islander**

0.932249633

History

**Science White, non-Hispanic**

0.858512483

History

**Science Economically Disadvantaged**

1.153682881

History

**Science English Language Learner**

0.430951766

History

**Social Studies American Indian or Alaskan Native**

N/A

History

**Social Studies Black, non-Hispanic**

N/A

History

**Social Studies Hispanic**

N/A

History

**Social Studies Asian or Pacific Islander**

N/A

History

**Social Studies White, non-Hispanic**

N/A

History

**Social Studies Economically Disadvantaged**

N/A

History

**Social Studies English Language Learner**

N/A

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

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 (RtI) 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 RtI 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.**

A direct assessment of cognitive functioning, using a standardized, norm-referenced measure, must first be attempted.

The factors used to determine that a direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable will include observed and documented limitations and/or impairments demonstrated by the student (e.g., significant communication, motor, sensory impairments, etc.) that:

- a) adversely impact and limit the student’s ability to complete standardized cognitive assessment tasks in a valid manner as indicated by the test instrument .....guidelines; or,
- b) that require modifications to standardized administration of the test of cognitive functioning that exceed the allowable provisions delineated by the test publisher; and,
- c) behavioral concerns (e.g., noncompliance, distractibility, etc.) in the absence of other factors (e.g., significant communication, motor, sensory impairments, etc.) shall not be considered a sufficient determining factor.

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.**

In the absence of a reliable direct assessment of cognitive functioning to determine if a student has a most significant cognitive disability, the following alternate assessment process will be followed:

1. When it has been established by the evaluating and supervising school psychologists that a reliable direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable, information about the student's cognitive functioning will be obtained from other indirect sources as follows:

- a) The evaluating school psychologist will select and administer an appropriate measure of developmental functioning that includes a cognitive scale (e.g., Developmental Profile - 4, Developmental Assessment of Young Children - Second Edition, etc.); and,
- b) The evaluating school psychologist will conduct a comprehensive ecological evaluation with information collected from multiple raters, across multiple settings, in order to obtain a full profile of the student's current level of functioning, including the student's strengths, weaknesses, and educational needs.

2. The documentation of the attempted cognitive assessment administration will include the following:

a) The cognitive assessment attempt must be documented in the psychological evaluation report. The evaluation report must include the following information:

i) the evaluating school psychologist shall detail in the evaluation report why the valid cognitive assessment result could not be obtained (e.g., due to significant communication, motor, sensory or other limitations demonstrated by the student); and,

ii) any accommodations, including assistive technology, offered and/or utilized during the test administration; and,

iii) a qualitative description of the student's response to the attempted test administration, including observed strengths and weaknesses.

b) The cognitive assessment protocol(s) used in the assessment attempt will be secured in an LEA-designated location.

History

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

The district will train and monitor staff with compliance related to Section A procedure steps

(1) through (2) as follows:

**1) Training**

- a) A recorded and/or live training will be completed by district staff annually, based upon staff role and function, addressing 1) the factors used to determine that a direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable, and 2) the assessment process used to determine if a student has a most significant cognitive disability in the absence of a reliable direct assessment of cognitive functioning; and,
- b) A brief assessment of staff knowledge in the form of a multiple choice quiz, based upon staff role and function, will accompany each of the provided training sessions.

**2) Monitoring**

During the alternate assessment process, the evaluating school psychologist must consult with the school psychologist supervisor as follows:

- a) review and confirm the factors used to determine that a direct assessment of cognitive functioning is not achievable, as outlined in Section 1a-c; and,
- b) review and confirm that the alternate assessment and documentation process as outlined in Section 2 has been followed; and,
- c) document all alternate assessment process cases on supervisor monitoring log.

History