

2023-2024 Policies and Procedures: Polk (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 districtwide assessments include STAR Early Literacy, STAR Reading and STAR Math. Students on alternate academic achievement standards do not participate in Unique Learning Systems Benchmark Assessments.

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

1.7

History

Mathematics

1.8

History

Science

1.8

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.)

A committee will be formed in each region to monitor the students on alternate assessment. This group will consist of the following members, noting that additional members may be added: regional program compliance specialists, regional senior managers, assistant director of ESE instruction, assistant director of ESE compliance, and instructional TRST's. The responsibilities of the work group will be as follows: -Monitoring compliance issues related to Individual Education Plans as it pertains to placement on FSAA and students' exceptionalities. -Ensuring that the correct psychological test(s) are being administered taking into account barriers such as, but not limited to, culture bias and language needs (native language assessments and assessments for non-verbal students) -Examining FSAA test results for perfect or near perfect scores and further examining those students' IEPs, psychological assessments, etc. -Providing professional development to IEP members to address the following issues: *Students with Specific Learning Disabled (SLD) as an exceptionality by definition of SLD do not have a "significant cognitive disability" and cannot be placed on FSAA/Access Point Modified curriculum. *Students who only have Language Impaired (LI) as their exceptionality cannot be placed on FSAA/Access Points Modified Curriculum. If the IEP team suspects, based on data, that the student has a significant cognitive disability, the team should follow the steps necessary to determine if the student is eligible for a new exceptionality and if the student has a significant cognitive disability. *LI cannot be the primary exceptionality for students who have more than one exceptionality. The other exceptionality, such as IND or ASD, must be listed as the primary exceptionality. *Students with the exceptionality of Speech Impaired (SI) must not be placed on FSAA/Access Point Modified curriculum. Again, if the IEP team suspects, based on data, that the student has a significant cognitive disability, the team should follow the next steps necessary to determine if the student is eligible for a new exceptionality and if the student has a significant cognitive disability. *IEP teams ensure that students with primary exceptionality of Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD) have had the proper testing completed to determine they have a significant cognitive disability. Students must not be put on FSAA/Access Point Modified Curriculum due to behavioral issues. *IEP teams must ensure that students with the primary exceptionality of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have a significant cognitive disability and are not being put on FSAA/Access Point curriculum just because they are students with ASD and/or because the characteristics of ASD (i.e. stemming such as flapping hands, rocking in seat, etc.). The district must ensure the the IEP team is not putting these students on FSAA/Access Point curriculum because it is easier for the adults involved. -The district is implementing accountability measures for compliance issues with IEPs to reduce the number of errors within the district when completing the FSAA Assurances report.

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).

Polk County School District has three (3) center schools. Some surrounding districts do not have center schools so this can create a higher enrollment of students in access courses due to families moving to Polk for center school placement. As a district, we have high numbers of students with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder exceptionalities. There are group homes for persons with disabilities that have students who attend Polk County Schools. Polk County is also the fastest growing county in the United States.

History

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

ELA American Indian or Alaskan Native

0.84

History

ELA Black, non-Hispanic

1.19

History

ELA Hispanic

1.02

History

ELA Asian or Pacific Islander

0.51

History

ELA White, non-Hispanic

0.85

History

ELA Economically Disadvantaged

1.07

History

ELA English Language Learner

0.36

History

Math American Indian or Alaskan Native

1.3

History

Math Black, non-Hispanic

1.18

History

Math Hispanic

1

History

Math Asian or Pacific Islander

0.9

History

Math White, non-Hispanic

0.85

History

Math Economically Disadvantaged

1.05

History

Math English Language Learner

0.36

History

Science American Indian or Alaskan Native

0

History

Science Black, non-Hispanic

1.16

History

Science Hispanic

0.97

History

Science Asian or Pacific Islander

0.73

History

Science White, non-Hispanic

0.95

History

Science Economically Disadvantaged

0.97

History

Science English Language Learner

0.42

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.

Polk County Public Schools does not have any areas above 3%.

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.

- The student is unable to successfully complete the minimum number of items to obtain a basal score on multiple subtests of an age appropriate, standardized cognitive measure.
- The student exhibits global functioning estimated to be below a 24-month developmental level based on observation and teacher/parent report and medical or school history.
- The student lacks the expressive communication skills necessary to participate in testing of global cognitive functioning. Examples may include being nonverbal, primarily echolalic or non-meaningful use of language, or using gestural communication only, students identified with a severe language impairment, and students who lack proficiency in either English or Spanish.
- The student is unable to participate in direct assessment of global cognitive functioning to obtain a full-scale intelligence quotient due to already identified limitations and impairment of a significant sensory loss, such as vision or hearing.
- The student exhibits extreme difficulty with motor functioning such that they are unable to complete performance items following standardized testing procedures. Examples may include an inability to point, utilize a pointing device or indicate a choice from a visual field of 4-6 pictures, or an inability to manipulate small objects.
- The student exhibits extreme restrictive or repetitive behaviors or other extreme behaviors that limit their ability to respond to standardized testing instructions and questions without significantly breaking test standardization.

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.

For students who exhibit global ability below an estimated 24-month developmental level and are unable to successfully complete a minimum number of items to obtain a basal score on multiple subtests within a standardized, age-appropriate test of global cognitive ability to obtain a reliable full scale intelligence quotient, the evaluator will make the determination to drop down to administer a developmental assessment that addresses the cognitive domain to generate a global cognitive score equivalent. In addition, the evaluators will gather and review observational data, parent and teacher interview data, and assessments of adaptive functioning. For students who are unable to be directly assessed on tests of global cognitive ability due to deficits in communication, restrictive or repetitive behaviors, or the significant impact of sensory loss including hearing, an a-priori decision may be made to administer a direct assessment of nonverbal cognitive ability to generate a global cognitive score equivalent. Should reliable results still not be attained, procedures for conducting a developmental assessment that addresses the cognitive domain to generate a cognitive score equivalent. In addition, the evaluators will gather and review observational data, parent and teacher interview data, and assessments of adaptive functioning. For students who are unable to be directly assessed on tests of global cognitive ability due to limitations in motor skills or the significant impact of sensory loss including vision, an a-priori decision may be made to administer a verbal only assessment of cognitive ability to provide a global cognitive score equivalent. Should reliable results still not be attained, procedures for conducting a developmental assessment that addresses the cognitive domain to generate a cognitive score equivalent. In addition, the evaluators will gather and review observational data, parent and teacher interview data, and assessments of adaptive functioning. For students who are not able be directly assessed on tests of global cognitive ability due to exhibiting extreme behaviors that significantly interfere with task performance, a review of any test data collected in combination with observational data, teacher and parent interview, and measures of adaptive functioning will be considered. In addition, the evaluator will attempt to conduct a developmental assessment that addresses the cognitive domain to generate a cognitive score equivalent. The evaluator will include a written summary of assessment techniques attempted during the global IQ assessment and recommendations regarding global IQ score validity based on their clinical professional judgment and training regarding cognitive assessment techniques.

History

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

Training on evaluation procedures in extraordinary circumstances will be provided to school psychologists, staffing specialists, and LEAs by the Sr. Manager for Psychological Services and District Staffing Specialists and reviewed annually. A select group of school psychologists will provide additional support to evaluators with support and consultation regarding assessment strategies and procedures through the Low Incidence & Spectrum Team (formerly MDT). Compliance with special factors and assessment procedures will be monitored by a team made up of the Sr. Manager for Psychological Services and District Staffing Specialists. Each instance requiring any of the procedures listed above, will be reviewed by a team made up of the Sr. Manager for Psychological services and District Staffing Specialists to ensure ethical evaluation practices and compliance with the procedures have been followed.

[History](#)