

Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

# Participation in Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS)

## COMPLIANCE PROTOCOL

2023-2024

## INTRODUCTION

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**Monitoring Priority:** Effective General Supervision Part B/Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment

The purposes of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) include, among other things, to ensure that all students with disabilities have available to them a FAPE that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. In addition, if a State has adopted AAAS for students with disabilities who are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, as permitted in section 1111(b)(1)(E) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the State (or, in the case of a districtwide assessment, a school district) must develop and implement alternate assessments and guidelines for the participation in alternate assessments of those students with disabilities who cannot participate in regular assessments, even with accommodations, as indicated in their respective individual education plans (IEPs).

In November 2020, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) requested an extension of a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the Every Student Succeeds Act requirement that a State may not assess using an AA-AAAS more than 1.0 percent of the total number of students in the state who are assessed in the subjects of reading/language arts, mathematics and science. On March 26, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education [granted](#) the FDOE's waiver request.

As part of this waiver, the FDOE assured that it would, among other things, implement, consistent with the plan submitted in the FDOE's waiver request, system improvements and monitor future administrations of the AA-AAAS to avoid exceeding the 1.0 percent cap. Finally, the FDOE was to provide a plan and timeline with clear, actionable steps and milestones that included, in relevant part:

- A clear description of how the State will improve the implementation of its guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS, including by reviewing and, if necessary, revising its definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities [section 200.6(d)(1) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.)], so the State meets the 1.0 percent cap in each subject for which assessments are administered in future school years; and
- A clear description of how the State will monitor and regularly evaluate each local educational agency (LEA) to ensure that the LEA provides sufficient training such that school staff who participate as members of an IEP team or other placement team understand and implement the guidelines established by the State for participation in an AA-AAAS so all students are appropriately assessed.

## **Getting Started**

As part of the self-assessment process, the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) has selected a group of students who has been determined to meet, or continue to meet, eligibility criteria per Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code, (F.A.C.), for instruction in Florida's Access Points – Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) and participation in Florida's Alternate Assessment within the last calendar year. To complete the self-assessment process for each student, the school district will need to compile and review the following education records:

- Cumulative file, including but not limited to, attendance records, discipline records, grades, measurable annual goal reports, and statewide and districtwide assessment results
- Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
- Evaluation reports
- Parental consent forms
- Meeting notices and prior written notices
- Student class schedules

Upon completing the self-assessment process, please enter the results for each student in the [General Supervision Website](#) (GSW).

## **Additional Resources**

The [National Center on Educational Outcomes \(NCEO\): Alternate Assessments: AA-AAAS](#)

The NCEO focuses on the inclusion of students with disabilities, English learners and English learners with disabilities in instruction and assessments. The scope of NCEO's work includes issues related to accessibility of assessments across the comprehensive assessment system including formative assessment practices, classroom-based assessments, diagnostic assessments, interim assessments and summative assessments.

### [The Access Project](#)

The Access Project is funded by the State of Florida, FDOE, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services through federal assistance under the IDEA, Part B.

### [TIES Center](#)

TIES Center is the national technical assistance center on inclusive practices and policies. It works with states, districts, and schools to support the movement of students with disabilities from less inclusive to more inclusive environments. Inclusion is an ongoing commitment to working for the valued membership, active participation, and learning of each student with their age-grade peers, utilizing a wide array of school community structures, practices, and supports.

## COMPLIANCE PROTOCOL: AA-AAAS

|                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>GSW Student Number:</b> | <b>District:</b>       |
| <b>Student Name:</b>       | <b>IEP Date:</b>       |
| <b>School/Grade:</b>       | <b>Exceptionality:</b> |
| <b>Reviewer's Name:</b>    | <b>Review Date:</b>    |

### Pre-Self-Assessment Probe

**Instructions:**

During the self-assessment process, school districts have the opportunity to correct school district-identified noncompliance prior to submitting the self-assessment results. In the event that a student's IEP has been reviewed and revised as part of a preemptive correction and is no longer eligible to participate in the AA-AAAS, please select "Option 2" and skip further probes.

Please note: the FDOE may request the complete education records of the student during the validation process.

|   | Response   |
|---|--|
| <b>Choose one of the following responses.</b> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 1.</b> The student's current IEP indicates that the student must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular statewide or districtwide assessment of student achievement.</p>   |
|   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Option 2.</b> In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.324 and Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C., the school district reviewed the student's IEP and revised the IEP, as appropriate, to address whether the student was to participate in the AA-AAAS. Based on that review, the IEP team determined that the student no longer met FDOE's AA-AAAS participation guidelines and the FDOE's definition of a "student with the most significant cognitive disabilities."</p> |

## Adherence to Florida’s AA-AAAS Participation Guidelines

**Compliance Indicator:** IEP teams in the state are adhering to the State’s AA-AAAS participation guidelines.

| Standard         | Probe   | Response   |
|------------------|---|--|
| <b>AA-AAAS-1</b> | <p>The decision for the student to participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment as defined in Section 1008.22(3)(c), Florida Statutes (F.S.), was made by the IEP team and recorded on the IEP.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(a), F.A.C.</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                     |
| <b>AA-AAAS-2</b> | <p>The student receives exceptional student education services as identified through the current IEP <b>and</b> the student has been enrolled in the appropriate and aligned courses using alternate academic achievement standards for two consecutive full-time equivalent reporting periods prior to the assessment.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)1., F.A.C.</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                     |
| <b>AA-AAAS-3</b> | <p>AA-AAAS-3 is for initial eligibility only. If this is not the student’s first alternate assessment, choose “N/A,” and move to the next probe.</p> <p>The student received specially designed instruction, which provides unique instruction and intervention supports 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 exhibited very limited to no progress in the general education curriculum standards.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)2., F.A.C.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> |
| <b>AA-AAAS-4</b> | <p>AA-AAAS-4 is for initial eligibility only. If this is not the student’s first alternate assessment, choose “N/A” and move to the next probe.</p> <p>The student received support through systematic, explicit and interactive small-</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> |

| Standard         | Probe  | Response   |
|------------------|--|--|
|                  | <p>group instruction focused on foundational skills in addition to instruction in the general education curriculum standards.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)3., F.A.C.</p>  |  |
| <b>AA-AAAS-5</b> | <p>Even after documented evidence of exhausting all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations, the student still requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)4., F.A.C.</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                     |
| <b>AA-AAAS-6</b> | <p>Even after documented evidence of accessing a variety of supplementary instructional materials, the student still requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)5., F.A.C.</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                     |
| <b>AA-AAAS-7</b> | <p>Even with documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology, the student still requires modifications to the general education curriculum standards.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)6., F.A.C.</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                     |
| <b>AA-AAAS-8</b> | <p>AA-AAAS-8 is for initial eligibility only. If this is not the student’s first alternate assessment, choose “N/A,” and move to the next probe.</p> <p>Even with direct instruction in all core academic areas (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science), the student exhibited limited or no progress on the general education curriculum standards and requires modifications.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)7., F.A.C.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> |
| <b>AA-AAAS-9</b> | <p>AA-AAAS-9 is for initial eligibility and does not apply to transfer students. If this is not the student’s first alternate assessment, and/or the student is a transfer student, choose “N/A,” and move to the next probe.</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> |

| Standard                 | Probe   | Response   |
|--------------------------|---|--|
|                          | <p>The student was available and present for grade-level general education curriculum standards instruction for at least seventy (70) percent of the school year prior to the assessment.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)8., F.A.C.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-10</b></p> | <p>AA-AAAS-10 is for initial eligibility and does not apply to transfer students. If this is not the student’s first alternate assessment, and/or the student is a transfer student, choose “N/A,” and move to the next probe.</p> <p>The student was instructed by a certified teacher for at least eighty (80) percent of the school year prior to the assessment.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)9., F.A.C.</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>   |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-11</b></p> | <p>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).</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)10., F.A.C.</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>   |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-12</b></p> | <p>The student has a most significant cognitive disability. “Most significant cognitive disability” means a global cognitive impairment that adversely impacts multiple areas of functioning across many settings and is a result of a congenital, acquired or traumatic brain injury or syndrome and is verified by either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A statistically significant below average global cognitive score that falls within the first percentile rank (i.e., a standard, full-scale score of 67 or under); or</li> </ul> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the student has a most significant cognitive disability, verified by a statistically significant below average global cognitive score that falls within the first percentile rank, <b>or</b>, verified by the school district and FDOE-approved procedure (extraordinary circumstance).</p> |

| Standard          | Probe   | Response  |
|-------------------|---|---|
|                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the extraordinary circumstance when a global, full-scale intelligent quotient score is unattainable, a school district-determined procedure that has been approved by the Florida Department of Education per Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(e), F.A.C.</li> </ul> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(f) and (5)(c)11., F.A.C.</p>   | <p>[ ] No, the student does not have a most significant cognitive disability or there is no appropriate verification of such.</p>   |
| <b>AA-AAAS-13</b> | <p>The student is <b>not</b> identified as a student with a specific learning disability and/or as gifted.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)1., F.A.C.</p>  | <p>[ ] Yes, the student is <b>not</b> identified as a student with a specific learning disability and/or as gifted.</p> <p>[ ] No, the student is identified as a student with a specific learning disability and/or as gifted.</p>   |
| <b>AA-AAAS-14</b> | <p>The student is <b>not</b> solely eligible for services as a student who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is deaf or hard of hearing</li> <li>has a visual impairment</li> <li>has a dual sensory impairment</li> <li>has an emotional or behavioral disability</li> <li>has a language impairment</li> <li>has a speech impairment</li> <li>has an orthopedic impairment.</li> </ul> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)2., F.A.C.</p> | <p>[ ] Yes, the student is <b>not</b> solely eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, has a visual impairment, has a dual sensory impairment, has an emotional or behavioral disability, has a language impairment, has a speech impairment, or has an orthopedic impairment.</p> <p>[ ] No, the student is solely eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, has a visual impairment, has a dual sensory impairment, has an emotional or behavioral disability, has a language impairment, has a speech impairment, or has an orthopedic impairment.</p> |

| Standard                 | Probe  | Response  |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-15</b></p> | <p>The student <b>has not</b> scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Sections 1008.22(3)(a) and (b), F.S., unless there is medical documentation that the student experienced a traumatic brain injury or other health-related complication subsequent to the administration of that assessment that led to the student having the most significantly below-average global cognitive impairment.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)3., F.A.C.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the student <b>has not</b> scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Sections 1008.22(3)(a) and (b), F.S.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>The student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Sections 1008.22(3)(a) and (b), F.S., however, there was medical documentation that the student experienced a traumatic brain injury or other health-related complication subsequent to the administration of that assessment that led to the student having the most significantly below-average global cognitive impairment.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, the student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment administered pursuant to Sections 1008.22(3)(a) and (b), F.S.</p> |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-16</b></p> | <p>The school district informed the parents of the student, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.2(e), that their student’s achievement will be</p>   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>  |



| Standard                 | Probe   | Response  |
|--------------------------|---|---|
|                          | <p>measured based on alternate academic achievement standards, and of how participation in such assessments may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a standard high school diploma.</p> <p>34 C.F.R. §§ 300.160(e) and 200.2(e); Rule 6A-6.0331(10)(b), F.A.C.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-17</b></p> | <p>The school district obtained parental consent prior to the administration of an alternate assessment in accordance with Section 1008.22, F.S., and provision of instruction in the alternate academic achievement standards.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>The school district documented reasonable efforts to obtain the parent’s consent and the student’s parent has failed to respond, or the school district obtained approval through a due process hearing in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331(9), F.A.C. To meet the reasonable efforts requirements to obtain parental consent, the school district must document its attempts to obtain parental consent using procedures such as those used to obtain parental participation in meetings as described in Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(b)7., F.A.C.</p> <p>34 C.F.R. § 300.300(d)(2); Rules 6A-1.0943, 6A-6.0331(10)(b), 6A-6.0331(9) and 6A-6.03028(3)(b)7. F.A.C.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>  |
| <p><b>AA-AAAS-18</b></p> | <p>If <b>all</b> items above are answered “yes” or “N/A” mark “The review indicates compliance.”<br/> If <b>any</b> of the items above are answered “no,” the review indicates non-compliance. Mark “The review indicates non-compliance.”<br/> <b>Note:</b> the response to this item will be automatically generated in the General Supervision Website (GSW).</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> The review indicates compliance.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The review indicates non-compliance.</p> |