



Updates to Access Points - Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS)

Spring 2022

Bureau of Exceptional Student Education



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
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Start with the End in Mind

The state's alternate assessment, based on alternate academic achievement standards, is meant for a very small number of children with significant cognitive disabilities. Although life after school seems a long time away, taking the alternate assessment instead of the general state test can affect your child's future.



Graduation



Further Education
and Training



Military Service



Employment

Five things to consider when making state test decisions:

1. Disability

Only children with the most significant cognitive disabilities can take the alternate state assessment.

2. Yearly

Every year the IEP team should make the decision about which test your child will take.

3. Guidelines

IEP team members use the state's participation guidelines to decide whether your child should take the state alternate assessment or the state general assessment.

4. Agreement

Everyone on the IEP team should agree that your child meets each of the state's participation criteria for taking the alternate assessment.

5. Instruction

All children are taught academic content for their enrolled grade level. Students who take the alternate assessment may need content presented in reduced depth, breadth, or complexity.

For more information talk to your child's teacher or visit your state's alternate assessment website.



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<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tool7Infographic.pdf>

Supplementary Aids and Services

Aids, services and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, or other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate.

Accommodations

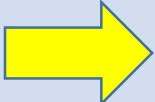
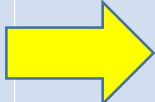
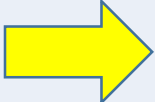
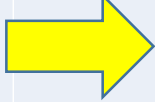
Changes that are made in **how** a student **accesses information** and **demonstrates performance**.

Modifications

Changes in **what** a student **is expected** to learn and may include **changes to content, requirements and expected level of mastery**.

Access Points-Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) aligned to the Florida Standards, Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) and/or Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards

Which Course? Which Assessment?

Florida's Standards		Courses		Assessments
B.E.S.T. Standards, NGSSS		General Education Courses		Florida Standards Assessment Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (F.A.S.T.)
Access Points-Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) aligned to B.E.S.T. Standards and the NGSSS		Access Courses		Florida's Alternate Assessment (FSAA) Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS) aligned to B.E.S.T. Standards and the NGSSS



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Eligibility Criteria for a Student to Participate in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment

Rule 6A-1.0943(5), F.A.C.

(5) Participation in the Statewide, Standardized Alternate Assessment.

(a) The decision (including specific data supporting that decision) that a student with a significant cognitive disability will participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment as defined in section 1008.22(3)(c), F.S., **must be recorded on the student's Individual Educational Plan or IEP.**

(b) The provisions with regard to **parental consent** for participation in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment found in subsection 6A-6.0331(10), F.A.C., must be followed.

Parent Consent

- This decision must be documented annually on the Parental Consent Form—Instruction in the State Standards Access Points Curriculum and FSAA administration, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/parental-consent-form-prior-written-no.shtml>.
- If the parents fail to respond after reasonable efforts by the school district to obtain consent, the school district may provide instruction in the state standards AP-AAAS and administer the applicable alternate assessments.
- If the parent refuses to consent to the instruction of the student in AS-AAAS and participation in the FSAA, the district cannot proceed unless it prevails in a due process hearing on this matter.



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FSAA Participation Requirement 2022 Updates

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)1., F.A.C.

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;

Questions to ask...

- Does the student have an individual education plan (IEP) and receive exceptional student education (ESE) services?
- Will the student have been enrolled in appropriate and aligned Access Points courses for two consecutive full-time equivalent (FTE) reporting periods prior to the assessment?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)2., F.A.C.

2. The student must be receiving 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 is exhibiting very limited to no progress in the general education curriculum standards;

Questions to ask...

Is the student receiving interventions in Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 of the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)?

**Initial Eligibility
only**

Please note: [MTSS](#) does not end after a student is found eligible for services.

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)3., F.A.C.

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;

Questions to ask...

Is the student receiving interventions in Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 of the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)?

**Initial Eligibility
only**

Please note: [MTSS](#) does not end after a student is found eligible for services.

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)4., F.A.C.

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

Questions to ask...

Does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards even after the school exhausted all appropriate and allowable instructional accommodations and documented evidence of the provision of those accommodations?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)5., F.A.C.

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

Questions to ask...

Does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards even after the school exhausted the use of accessing a variety of supplementary instructional materials and documented evidence of the provision of a variety of supplementary instructional materials?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)6., F.A.C.

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

Questions to ask...

- Does the student have a way to communicate?
- Has the student ever had an assistive technology (AT) evaluation?
- Does the student use assistive technology? If so, is the assistive technology used daily?
- Does the student require modifications to the general education curriculum standards even after documented evidence of the provision and use of assistive technology?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)7., F.A.C.

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

**Initial Eligibility
only**

Questions to ask...

- Is the student being instructed on general education curriculum standards?
- Is the student exhibiting limited or no progress on the general education curriculum standards?
- In the student receiving direct instruction in all core academic areas (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science)?
- Does the student need to have their general education curriculum standards changed?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)8., F.A.C.

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 seventy (70) percent of the school year prior to the assessment;

Questions to ask...

Was the student available and present for grade-level general education curriculum standards instruction for at least 70 percent of the school year prior to the assessment?

Initial Eligibility only

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)9., F.A.C.

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

Was the student instructed by a certified teacher for at least 80 percent of the school year prior to the assessment?

Initial Eligibility only

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)10., F.A.C.

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); and

Questions to ask...

- Are the student's evaluation results a true reflection of their ability?
- Was the evaluation used to measure the student's intellectual abilities chosen with the consideration of other needs they have?

Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(c)11., F.A.C.

11. The student has a most significant cognitive disability as defined in paragraph (1)(f) of this rule.

Questions to ask...

Does the student have 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

Does the student meet the requirements of the district submitted and approved process incorporated in the district's ESE Policies and Procedures?

Definition: 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:

1. 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
2. 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 under paragraph (5)(e) of this rule.

Exclusionary Criteria: Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)1., F.A.C.

“(d) A student is not eligible to participate in the statewide, standardized alternate assessment if any of the following is true:

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

Questions to ask:

- Is the student identified as having a specific learning disability or as gifted?
- What exceptionalities are listed on the student’s IEP?

Exclusionary Criteria: Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)2., F.A.C.

“2. The student is identified solely as a student eligible for services as a student who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) or has a visual impairment (VI), a dual sensory impairment (DSI), an emotional or behavioral disability (EBD), a language impairment (LI), a speech impairment (SI), or an orthopedic impairment (OI).”

Questions to Ask:

- Is the student solely eligible for services as a student in the areas outlined above?
- Does the student have a cognitive impairment?

Exclusionary Criteria: Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(d)3., F.A.C.

“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)(a)-(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.”

Questions to ask...

- Has the student scored a level 2 or above on a previous statewide, general education curriculum standardized assessment?
- If so, has 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?

District Specific Procedure: Rule 6A-1.0943(5)(e), F.A.C.

“(e) Each school district must submit to the Department of Education a procedure to identify students with the most significant cognitive disability when a global, full-scale intelligence quotient score is unattainable. In order to be approved for use by a district, the procedure must:

1. Include data from multiple sources;
2. Meet the criteria found in paragraphs (5)(c) and (d); and
3. Be documented in the district’s annual ESE Policies and Procedures, as required by section 1003.57, F.S.”

FAQs

Standard Error of Measurement (*SEm*)

What is the Standard Error of Measurement?

- Key Terms:
 - **True Score** - the perfect reflection of a person's level of functioning
 - **Obtained Score** - the actual score earned on a given test
 - **Reliability** - how stable and consistent a measure is over time
 - ***SEm*** -
 - a range of scores, applied to increase Reliability around the Obtained Score, within which the True Score lies
 - also known as - 'Estimated Range of Scores' or 'Confidence Interval'
 - estimates how repeated measures of a person on the same instrument tend to be distributed around his or her "true" score

Standard Error of Measurement (SEm) - continued

Who determines the use of the SEm?

- The evaluator -
As with any professional decision made regarding data obtained under standardized testing conditions, the evaluator's professional interpretation of the results should be accepted as a reflection of the student's abilities at a given point in time.
- Best Practice –
If the data interpretation cannot be accepted with a high level of confidence, the evaluator should secure additional data rather than to leave the data open to alternative interpretations by others who did not conduct the evaluation.

Standard Error of Measurement (SEm) - continued

How could the use of the SEm be communicated in a psycho-educational report (two examples)?

- “Given the student’s obtained score of _____, there are _____ % chance that the individual’s true score would fall between _____ (low score in range) and _____ (high score in range).”
- “Given the student’s obtained score of _____ and the added variables listed in the psycho-educational report impacting test administration and performance, the best estimate of the student’s currently level of functioning would be expected to fall between _____ (low score in range) and _____ (high score in range).”

True or False: There are no virtual options for the instruction of students with significant cognitive disabilities.

This is an IEP team decision and must be based on data provided in the present level statement and on the individual strengths and needs of the student. Each school district in Florida offers at least one full-time and part-time virtual instructional program (VIP) option for students in grades Kindergarten-12. Districts may contract with an approved virtual provider or run their own district-operated virtual instruction program. More information is available at <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/parent-resources/district-virtual-options.shtml>.

What should I do if a student is struggling, and I believe access points instruction may be appropriate?

Request an IEP meeting to review the student's response to Standards-based Instruction and the ESE services being provided, were provided and have yet to be attempted

- Review MTSS Tier 1, 2 and 3 instruction/intervention for fidelity and integrity
- Review implementation and progress monitoring data
- Review standards-based, classwork performance
- Review the Supplementary Aids and Services
- Review the Accommodations (including Assistive Technology)
- Consider the eligibility criteria of Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C.

True or False: You cannot instruct students in a self-contained class using general standards (non-Access).

False. Students in a self-contained class can be instructed using general standards.

All academic achievement standards are placement neutral and can be provided to students in any educational placement or setting.

True or False: Instruction in Access Points - Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AP-AAAS) has no impact on a student's postsecondary options or life after graduation.

False. Changes that modify the requirements of the standard and lower expectations can limit academic progress of the student, and postsecondary opportunities may be limited.

True or False: A transfer student must be enrolled in general education classes a full year before the student can be placed in an access points course.

False – If a student transfers in and there is evidence that the student has been previously instructed using alternate academic achievement standards, the student may be enrolled in Access Point Courses. Per section 300.323 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), for transfer students, the new school district must provide FAPE with comparable services to the existing IEP until the district has data to develop a new IEP for the student.

Does a student have to attempt the FSA prior to being enrolled in Access Points courses?

No. If a student meets all the eligibility criteria, inclusionary and exclusionary, in Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C., then the student may be enrolled in Access Point-Alternate Academic Achievement Standards courses. However, the potential impact on the student's post secondary options should be clearly communicated to parents prior to placement and enrollment in Access Point Courses and signed parental consent must be sought.

True or False: A student placed on Access Points Standards in the fall will not be eligible to take the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment and must take the Florida Standards Assessment.

False. The student may be eligible to take the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment if he or she is enrolled in Access Point courses prior to the October Survey 2 reporting period. Students must be enrolled and instructed the majority of the year in the courses aligned with the type of administered assessment. Students with disabilities also have the option to have assessment [results waived](#) or to apply for an [extraordinary exemption](#) or a medical complexity exemption from statewide standardized assessment(s).

Can a student working on Access Points participate in general education classroom?

Yes. A student with a disability is not removed from education in a general education classroom solely because of modifications to the curriculum. These students can participate in a general education classroom with the support of an ESE teacher. In addition, a general education teacher who is dually certified in both the content area and ESE may support the student directly. For additional information on scheduling methods, please refer to the narrative section of the current Course Code Directory (CCD) under the chart entitled Certification/Highly Qualified Requirements for Different Scheduling Methods Used for Students with Disabilities (<http://fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd/>).

[34 CFR § 300.116(e)]

What information must be included in an IEP with regard to LRE?

If the IEP team recommends the student be removed from the general education environment for a particular class or subject, it should be evident in the IEP why the removal is necessary. If the removal results from an educational need in a particular area, such as specific academic skills or behaviors, this should be addressed in the present-level statement and annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks, if applicable.

[34 CFR § 300.320(a)(5)]

What should happen when a student is moved from instruction in Access Points – Alternate Academic Achievement Standards to instruction in general standards?

If the decision is made to move a student to general standards, the IEP team should use data to decide if the student's revised IEP needs to include any additional services, supports and accommodations, including assistive technology, to support the transition back to instruction in general education standards.

What happens if a global, full-scale IQ score is unattainable, or if there are concerns about the validity of the IQ score?

In this case, the school district should refer to the procedure it was required to submit to the Bureau. This procedure is required to

1. Include data from multiple sources;
2. Meet the criteria found in paragraphs (5)(c) and (5)(d) of this rule; and
3. Be documented in the district's ESE Policies and Procedures, as required by Section 1003.57, F.S.



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Contact Information

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