



**One Percent Waiver Extension Request
for
Reading, Mathematics and Science**

ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D) and 34 CFR 200.6(c) and (d)

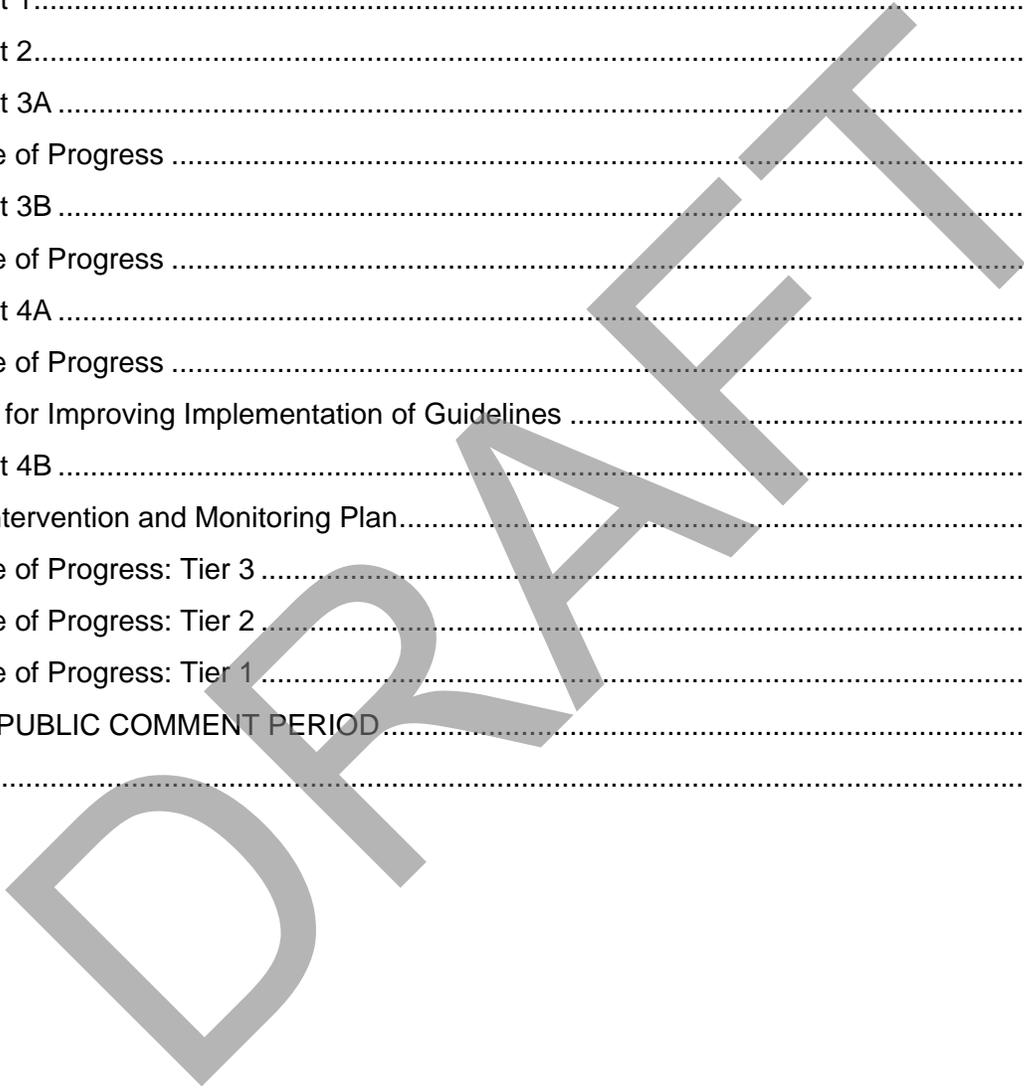
Submission to U.S. Department of Education

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

OCT. 25, 2019

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INTRODUCTION

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), addresses alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. As each state must submit a waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education if it predicts exceeding 1 percent participation in the alternate assessment in a subject, Ohio submitted and was granted a waiver for school year 2017-2018. Ohio's alternate assessment participation rates were 1.72 percent in reading, 1.81 percent in mathematics and 2.00 percent in science for school year 2017-2018. Participation rates in school year 2018-2019, were 1.70 percent in reading, 1.78 percent in mathematics, and 1.93 in science. Due to these past rates, Ohio anticipates exceeding the 1 percent threshold for the 2019-2020 administration of the alternate assessment in reading, mathematics and science and is requesting an extension to the current waiver.

In March 2018, Ohio was granted a waiver for exceeding 1 percent participation in the alternate assessment for school year 2017-2018. Subsequently, Ohio was approved for an extension to the waiver for school year 2018-2019. As stipulated in ESSA, Ohio's improvement plan includes annually requiring justifications from districts and community schools exceeding the 1 percent threshold, supporting and monitoring districts and community schools in appropriately using the state's eligibility guidelines for the alternate assessment, and utilizing a statewide tiered system of support to provide appropriate oversight and support to districts that exceed the 1 percent threshold.

Ohio's participation rate continues to be above the 1 percent threshold. The Department is collaborating with local and national partners to develop and implement innovative approaches to ensure only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are participating in Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD). An Alternate Assessment Participation Workgroup (Workgroup), created at the Department in early 2017, continues with regularly scheduled meetings and includes representatives from the Offices for Exceptional Children, Learning and Instructional Strategies, Assessment, Innovation and Improvement, Accountability, Data Quality and Governance and Community Schools. This cross-agency team participates in National Center for Educational Outcomes Community of Practice and Professional Learning Groups, includes Council for Chief State School Officers State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students members, and representatives from the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence and Ohio's [state support teams](#). The Workgroup has consulted with the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children and the special education testing advisory committee to gather input and feedback throughout the school year.

Ohio continues to build on the Department's system of regional state support teams to provide technical assistance and monitoring to local districts and community schools. The Department is collaborating with state support team directors and key staff members to implement a tiered system of support to assist districts and community schools in reviewing and improving their alternate assessment policies and practices. The goal is to ensure that only eligible students with the most significant cognitive disabilities participate in the state's alternate assessment. Ohio's tiered intervention monitoring plan is described in more detail beginning on page 12 of this document.

As stipulated in the Every Student Succeeds Act, districts and community schools exceeding 1 percent participation were again required to complete an electronic justification and submit in December 2018 describing their IEP policies and processes for determining assessment participation for students with disabilities. The updated justification form (*not yet available for review*) required districts and community schools to outline how they are utilizing the Department's eligibility guidelines and companion resources when making decisions about alternate assessment participation. Districts and community schools also were asked

to describe any special programs or circumstances that might impact their participation rate and, as a result, would exceed the 1 percent participation threshold. The justification form was updated for 2019-2020 to include more detailed participation data, including state comparison data, and assurances that staff are appropriately using Department guidelines and resources.

Alignment to Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education

Each Child, Our Future is Ohio's strategic plan for education. The purpose of the plan is, "To lift aspirations, create hope and excitement, guide development of state-level education policies and promote high-quality educational practices across the state" (ODE, 2017, p. 4). Introduced in 2017, the plan focuses on three core principles: Equity, Partnerships and Quality Schools – with the goal of creating a system in which each student is challenged, prepared and empowered for his or her future. The Department's work on alternate assessment participation aligns with the purpose and goals of Ohio's strategic plan. The Department is working to reduce participation in alternate assessment not solely to meet federal requirements, but to ensure each student has access to rigorous curriculum and assessment that prepares them for future success. *Ohio's goal is to ensure the right students are taking the right tests.*

Ohio's strategic plan recognizes that equity of education achievement is a persisting challenge. The plan makes it clear that, "Appropriate supports must be made available so personal and social circumstances do not prohibit a child from reaching his or her greatest aspiration" (ODE, 2017, p. 10). Access to academically challenging standards is fundamental to achieving equity in education and over-reliance on Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities limits students' access to rigorous curriculum and assessment that meets the personalized learning needs of each child. The Department is working with regional state support teams, Educational Service Centers, districts, community schools and other partners to improve the process of identifying students for participation in the alternate assessment to ensure that all students have equitable access to high quality education and related services leading to post-secondary success.

Through *Each Child, Our Future*, Ohio is challenging the leadership of districts and community schools to consider the following questions as they work to ensure equitable access to education achievement for each child.

- Are we working in our community to explore ways to increase access to quality early childhood experiences? Do we have strong relationships with early childhood providers whose students will be in our classrooms?
 - Have we addressed issues of teacher excellence including recruitment, induction, feedback, professional development and retention?
 - Have we addressed issues of academic rigor, quality instructional practices, excellent curriculum and the four equal learning domains?
 - Have we addressed challenges we may face with school climate and culture?
 - Have we developed effective partnerships with the broad range of partners who could support student success?
 - Do we have a clear understanding of what we are striving for—and, if not, where can we go to see it?
 - Have we thought about and developed our own continuous improvement action plan for addressing areas described in this plan? Are we committed to the plan and working to implement it? Are we analyzing data to guide us in identifying underperformance and its causes?
- (ODE, 2017, p. 26)

While none of these guiding questions explicitly addresses alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, they all promote a focus on meeting the needs of each child. As we improve our ability to meet students' individual learning, behavioral and social emotional needs, fewer students will be at risk of being inappropriately identified as having a disability and therefore being inappropriately assigned to an alternate assessment.

Ohio's Significant Steps Toward Ensuring the Right Students are Taking the Right Assessments

Ohio's focus on equity has made access to appropriately rigorous curriculum and assessment for all students a priority. While the Department is working to reduce the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessment, the priority is to ensure that the right students are taking the right assessments. The Department working with regional support teams, districts and community schools to ensure that IEP teams are using the guidance documents appropriately, consistently applying the criteria for alternate assessment participation and utilizing the available accommodations to provide students with disabilities access to Ohio's State Tests.

Ohio has taken significant steps toward improving the use of the alternate assessment statewide. These steps include:

1. Added alternate assessment participation rates to both the annual [Special Education Profiles and Special Education Ratings](#) which are published annually. Both the Profiles and the Ratings are available to stakeholders and include easy to understand explanations of the published data. Districts and community schools identified as significantly exceeding the 1 percent threshold are assigned to Tier 3 and required to complete a root cause data analysis tool and an improvement plan.
2. The Office for Exceptional Children collaborated with the Office for Innovation and Improvement to add alternate assessment participation guidance to the Compliance Support Tool used with districts and community schools in school improvement status. The Tool is designed to promote communication among department, regional and local staff to address meaningful progress on corrective action plans like those developed to improve alternate assessment participation as a result of the Special Education Profiles.
3. Working in partnership with stakeholder groups like the [Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence](#), the state [Assistive Technology network](#) and others to provide regional state support teams with training and tools to support appropriate use of the alternate assessment and Ohio's Learning Standards – Extended with students with disabilities.
4. Updated guidance documents available for use by Individualized Education Program teams when considering alternate assessment for students. Updates were made with multiple levels of stakeholder input.
5. Alternate Assessment Workgroup members from across the agency, along with selected stakeholders, continue to participate in national learning and networking opportunities. These opportunities included the National Center on Educational Outcomes' Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Groups, membership in the Council for Chief State School Officers State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students, the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence [OCALICON](#) international conference, participation and presentations in the National Center on Educational Outcomes' [1 percent Cap National Convening](#): Supporting States in Implementing ESSA's 1 percent State-level Cap on Participation of Students in the AA-AAAS.

REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF ONE PERCENT WAIVER EXTENSION REQUEST

Component 1

Be submitted at least 90 days prior to the start of the state's testing window for the relevant subject;

Ohio's assessment window for the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) opens Feb. 18, 2020. Ninety days prior to the start of Ohio's testing window (Nov. 18, 2019), the Department will submit a waiver extension request to the United States Department of Education.

Component 2

Provide state-level data, from the current or previous school year, to show:

a. The number and percentage of students in each subgroup of students who took an alternate assessment;

Ohio's state-level data from school year 2018-2019 show the number and percentage of students in each subgroup who took an alternate assessment by content area in grades 3-8 and high school. (See *Table 1*) The participation rates in Ohio's alternate assessment show slight improvement from 1.75 percent in 2016-2017 to 1.70 percent in 2018-2019, **an improvement of 0.05 percent fewer students participating.** (See *Table 2*)

(Note that Ohio's State Tests in English Language Arts are reported here and referred to throughout this document as Reading.)

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TABLE 1: 2018-2019 Participation in Alternate Assessment by Content Area (Grades 3-8 and High School)

Subject	Subgroup	Number of students who took the standard assessment	Number of students who took the alternate assessment	All Students Tested	Percentage Alternately Assessed
Reading	All Students	1,017,486	17,591	1,035,077	1.70%
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,268	22	1,290	1.71%
	Asian or Pacific Islander	26,104	332	26,436	1.26%
	Black, Non-Hispanic	164,557	4,347	168,904	2.57%
	Hispanic	62,967	996	63,963	1.56%
	Multiracial	53,299	812	54,111	1.50%
	White, Non-Hispanic	709,291	11,082	720,373	1.54%
	Students with Disabilities	144,108	17,566	161,674	10.87%
	Economically Disadvantaged	504,774	11,807	516,581	2.29%
	English Learners	37,489	702	38,191	1.84%
Mathematics	All Students	973,139	17,608	990,747	1.78%
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,199	21	1,220	1.72%
	Asian or Pacific Islander	24,163	333	24,496	1.36%
	Black, Non-Hispanic	160,037	4,359	164,396	2.65%
	Hispanic	61,029	997	62,026	1.61%
	Multiracial	51,358	819	52,177	1.57%
	White, Non-Hispanic	675,353	11,079	686,432	1.61%
	Students with Disabilities	140,354	17,584	157,938	11.13%
	Economically Disadvantaged	489,667	11,807	501,474	2.35%
	English Learners	36,838	704	37,542	1.88%
Science	All Students	386,142	7,614	393,756	1.93%
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	496	6	502	1.20%
	Asian or Pacific Islander	10,409	147	10,556	1.39%
	Black, Non-Hispanic	59,585	1,839	61,424	2.99%
	Hispanic	23,022	401	23,423	1.71%
	Multiracial	19,122	349	19,471	1.79%
	White, Non-Hispanic	273,508	4,872	278,380	1.75%
	Students with Disabilities	52,486	7,606	60,092	12.66%
	Economically Disadvantaged	182,421	4,935	187,356	2.63%
	English Learners	12,354	277	12,631	2.19%

TABLE 2: Participation in Alternate Assessment by Content Area Across Years

Content Area	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Change
Reading	1.75%	1.72%	1.70%	- 0.05%
Mathematics	1.84%	1.81%	1.78%	- 0.03%
Science	1.96%	2.00%	1.93%	- 0.03%

b. The state measured the achievement of at least 95 percent of all students and 95 percent of students in the children with disabilities subgroup enrolled in grades for which the assessment is required.

Ohio follows federal requirements for participation in statewide assessments as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act. Students in grades 3 through 8 are required to take both reading and mathematics assessments annually. Students in grades 5 and 8 must take a science assessment. High school students are required to take end-of-course exams to meet state graduation requirements. Ohio met federal requirements for statewide test participation in 2018-2019 through the administration of Ohio’s State Tests. Data in Table 3 indicate that the Department measured achievement for more than 95 percent of all students enrolled in grades and courses for which an assessment is required. The Department measured achievement for more than 95 percent of students in the children with disabilities subgroup enrolled in grades and courses for which an assessment is required. (See Table 3)

TABLE 3: 2017-2018 Participation Rate of All Students and Students with Disabilities (Grades 3-8 and High School)

Subject	Students Tested	Students Required to Test	% Achievement Measured for All Students	Students with Disabilities Tested	Students with Disabilities Required to Test	% Achievement Measured for Students with Disabilities
Reading	1,035,077	1,041,176	99.41%	161,674	163,462	98.91%
Mathematics	990,747	998,444	99.23%	157,938	160,208	98.58%
Science	393,756	397,983	98.94%	60,092	61,286	98.05%

Component 3A

Include assurances from the state that it has verified that each district or community school that the state anticipates will assess more than 1 percent of its assessed students in any subject using an alternate assessment followed the state’s guidelines for participation in the alternate assessment.

The Ohio Department of Education exceeded the 1 percent threshold of students participating in Ohio’s Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities in all subject areas for the 2018-2019 school year. Data showed that a considerable number of districts and community schools, 558, exceeded the 1 percent threshold and were required to submit a justification by Dec. 21, 2018, detailing how they implemented the Department guidelines for participation in the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities.

Evidence of Progress

The Department collected justification forms from 100 percent of required districts and community schools. The Alternate Assessment Workgroup utilized both quantitative and qualitative data from district and community school justifications to plan for technical assistance. Trends identified include:

- An overabundance of students with specific learning disabilities and other health impairments, disability categories that do not include intellectual disabilities
- An overabundance of students with other disability categories not typically seen taking the alternate assessment.,
- Confusing low academic performance with intellectual disability
- Repeated references to high poverty combined with both urban and rural settings
- Belief that drug addiction, unemployment and low socio-economic status are directly linked to the most significant cognitive disabilities
- Assignment to alternate assessment based on placement and least-restrictive environment decisions

The justification forms revealed multiple opportunities for improvement across districts. The Alternate Assessment Workgroup created a set of resources for state support teams to use in providing professional development to districts and community schools. This set of resources included content clarifying disability category definitions and a detailed review of the Department's decision-making flow chart and companion document for determining eligibility. The goal of the State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit was to address misunderstandings of disability categories and to clarify the list of criteria NOT to be used for decision-making including academic performance and least restrictive environment. The Workgroup plans to build on this first set of resources to create a more comprehensive toolkit for use by the state support teams in the coming school year.

While the [2019-2020 district-level justification form](#) has been revised, the justification form continues to require districts and community schools to report the anticipated participation rates and to describe how Individualized Education Program teams are using guidance tools to determine eligibility. The revised form also requires districts and community schools to agree to five assurances regarding local use of state eligibility guidelines, training for teachers and administrators, and Individualized Education Program team practices. Data from the 2019-2020 submitted justifications will be integrated into the process for identifying Tier 3 districts and community schools.

An overview of the updated justification form and other alternate assessment updates are available to all districts and community schools in the form of two fall webinars, with slides and a transcript posted online following the webinars. The webinars address the calculation of projected participation rates and the timeline for submitting justifications. Additionally, stakeholders will be updated on the state waiver process and receive a preview of new tools and guidance. The Department will share previews of the new decision-making tool for determining alternate assessment participation, and new family resources regarding criteria for and implications of participation in Ohio's alternate assessment and use of Ohio's Learning Standards-Extended for instruction. The Department website includes a static version of the [2019-2020 justification form](#) for review prior to the submission process.

Component 3B

Include assurances from the state that it has verified that each district or community school that the state anticipates will assess more than 1 percent of its assessed students in any subject using an alternate assessment will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any subgroup taking an alternate assessment.

The Department continues to address disproportionality in the percentage of students in any subgroup participating in the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. (See Table 1) Ohio's 2018-2019 accountability data shows a continuing disproportionately high number of participants in the economically disadvantaged subgroup. This is a persisting area of concern that is also evident in the qualitative data analysis of the district-level justification forms. Data also show a disproportionate number of black students participating in the alternate assessment, which echoes state-level significant disproportionality data regarding the identification of students with disabilities. At this point in the improvement process, the Department has not yet had the resources available to assist districts and community schools with the analysis of alternate assessment disproportionality data. In alignment with *Each Child, Our Future's* focus on equity, the Office for Exceptional Children plans to make disproportionality a high-priority focus for 2019-2020. The Alternate Assessment Workgroup plans a targeted analysis of student participation by 1) socio-economic status, 2) race and ethnicity, and 3) disability category. This analysis will include data at the state level and within identified Tier 3 districts and community schools.

Evidence of Progress

In 2018, the Department included alternate assessment participation in Special Education Profiles and Special Education Ratings for the first time. By incorporating alternate assessment participation in the profiles and ratings, the Office for Exceptional Children was able to identify Tier 3 districts and community schools for the supports and monitoring process, providing an opportunity and the means to work with districts and community schools in analyzing participation data. The electronic Special Education Profile system was designed to alert Tier 3 districts of mandatory action steps including completion of a Self-Review Summary Report and an improvement plan within the electronic compliance dashboard. The self-review for alternate assessment required analysis of participation rates by disability category. Districts and community schools were supported by state support teams to complete the self-review and develop improvement plans.

The Alternate Assessment Workgroup concluded that the Self-Review Summary Report could be improved to engage districts and community schools in more rigorous data analysis, especially concerning disproportionality data. In addition to analyzing participation by disability category, the revised self-review will require analysis of participation data by race and ethnicity. Resources provided by the national [Community of Practice](#), led by the National Center on Educational Outcomes, provided guidance for improving the template. The Alternate Assessment Workgroup is collaborating with the Department's Significant Disproportionality Workgroup to explore methods that could be used at the local level to calculate and analyze disproportionality. The Workgroup will include the newly developed guidance in the State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit and will plan for training state support team consultants to assist districts and community schools in analysis of disproportionality data.

Component 4A

Include a plan and timeline for improving the implementation of its guidelines for participation in the alternate assessment.

The Department has made significant progress in improving the use of state guidelines for participation in the alternate assessment. A significant improvement was completed in 2018 when the Office for Exceptional Children embedded the State's participation guidelines into its online, dynamic Individualized Education Program form. The dynamic form links directly to the participation criteria document. This document includes four required signatures: parent or guardian, intervention specialist, district representative, and general education teacher. This form is intended to be updated and signed annually during IEP review. However, stakeholder feedback indicates that the form is not being used consistently or effectively partially because it lacks specificity and clarity. Based on this feedback, the Department has begun efforts to clarify and update existing resources to better expand upon the criteria.

Evidence of Progress

The Department currently offers multiple resources to inform Individualized Education Program teams in their decision-making process: 1) participation criteria form, 2) decision making flowchart, and 3) companion document. The Alternate Assessment Workgroup gathered feedback on the resources from stakeholder advisory committee meetings and through discussions with state support team consultants and others. In July 2019, the Workgroup began the process of updating the existing guidance, with a focus on turning the companion document into a decision-making tool that expands on the participation criteria. The updated tool, Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool, is organized in sections correlated to the participation criteria to provide additional guidance and specificity to the participation criteria. The Department's Supports and Monitoring Team in the Office for Exceptional Children will pilot the new tool with Individualized Education Program teams in districts they are supporting. This will provide the Department with feedback to refine the tool before releasing it statewide.

The Department worked with its testing contractor, American Institutes for Research, to address the concern that many students with disabilities that do not include an intellectual component are assigned to the alternate assessment. A step was added to Ohio's alternate assessment process that requires educators submit the disability category for each student when alternate assessment is selected as their test type. Test records will not be considered complete for students participating until a disability type is identified. The goal of adding this step is to provide another opportunity for educators to reflect on and affirm the team's decision.

Timeline for Improving Implementation of Guidelines

Summer 2019: Work was completed on drafting language for an updated version of the current "companion document". The Workgroup engaged external experts in refining the language and formatting the content into a step by step framework for discussing student eligibility.

September through November 2019: External feedback on the updated tool is being gathered from stakeholder groups including the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children, Ohio Association of Pupil Services Administrators, Students with Disabilities Testing Advisory Committee, and the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence.

November 2019 through June 2020: The Department's Supports and Monitoring Team will pilot use of the new tool with districts and community schools undergoing annual reviews.

December 2019: The Workgroup will use stakeholder feedback to revise and finalize the new tool.

January 2020: The Workgroup plans to release the updated tool with webinars and regional trainings to support implementation.

June 2020: The Workgroup will revisit the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool and make any revisions or updates suggested through feedback from the piloting districts.

Component 4B

Include additional steps to support and provide oversight to each district or community school projected to exceed the 1 percent threshold.

Tiered Intervention and Monitoring Plan

The Department continues to work with districts and community schools directly and through assistance of the state's 16 regional [state support teams](#) to ensure appropriate participation in the AASCD. The cornerstone of the Department's multi-faceted approach is a system of tiered intervention and monitoring designed to improve application of state guidelines for participation in the AASCD. Implementation of the tiered system of support includes collaboration with the state's 16 regional state support teams. The Department provides professional learning opportunities, tools and resources to all districts and community schools (Tier 1). For identified districts and community schools with higher levels of need, the Department collaborates with state support teams to provide additional intervention and monitoring (Tiers 2 and 3).

Using submitted justifications and Ohio School Report Card data from 2018-2019, the Department identified the districts and community schools with the highest needs of intervention and support. Of the 557 districts and community schools above 1 percent participation, the Department anticipates identifying approximately 64 for Tier 3 intervention.

Evidence of Progress: Tier 3

Tier 3 support is provided to districts and community schools that are identified as needing significant support. This tier includes continued Tier 1 and Tier 2 support.

Intervention and monitoring processes were greatly improved in 2018-2019 due to the use of the Special Education Profiles and Compliance Dashboard. These two tools allowed the Department and state support teams to work together in providing direct technical assistance and monitoring improvement efforts in Tier 3 districts and community schools. As described above, the Special Education Profiles were used to inform districts and community schools of their Tier 3 status and the required action steps. The Compliance Dashboard is an interactive system that allows districts to read and respond to comments from the Department, submit self-reviews and improvement plans, and upload documentation of completed action steps for review and monitoring by Office for Exceptional Children specialists. State support teams assisted district teams with analyzing data using the provided Self-Review Summary Report, developing and submitting improvement plans, and implementing planned action steps.

The Alternate Assessment Workgroup created a SharePoint site to share alternate assessment professional learning resources with state support team staff. The State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit currently includes content (i.e., presentations, group learning activities, sample forms, parent communication examples) from the Office for Exceptional Children and the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence. The content focuses on interpreting the participation criteria, decision-making to ensure students are assigned to the correct assessments, and how to align student learning goals to grade level content through the use of extended standards. This toolkit will continue to be expanded and updated as

new resources become available. For example, the Workgroup is currently engaged in updating the parent and family frequently asked questions document.

The Department provided technical assistance and resources to Tier 3 districts and community schools as outlined in the 2018-2019 waiver extension request. Evidence of implementation for each action step is listed in Table 4 below. Some of the sample documents referenced are available via web-based links or are available in the Appendix (marked with an asterisk *). (See Table 4)

TABLE 4: Evidence of Tier 3 Progress 2018-2019

Tier 3 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
1. Districts and community schools will, with the assistance of the Department and state support team consultants, construct goals to be included in improvement plans for appropriately identifying students for participation in the alternate assessment. Improvement plans should include measurable outcomes, timelines, frameworks for technical assistance, updated procedures and training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for Exceptional Children Comprehensive Monitoring Process* • District Self-Review Summary Report* • District Improvement Plan template*
2. The Department will review records (e.g., Evaluation Team Reports, Individualized Education Programs) and evaluate current determination processes, policies and procedures used to qualify students for participation in the alternate assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for Exceptional Children Comprehensive Monitoring Process*
3. The Department and state support team consultants will assist districts and community schools with analysis of subgroup participation data to identify and address any disproportionalities in assignment of subgroups to the alternate assessment. Districts and community schools with significant disproportionalities will address the root causes as part of their improvement plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Self-Review Summary Report* • District Improvement Plan Template* • State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit*
4. The Department and state support team consultants will engage in discussions with teachers, administrators and Individualized Education Program team members as part of monitoring processes and root cause analysis as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for Exceptional Children Comprehensive Monitoring Process* • Parent meetings led by Office for Exceptional Children staff* • Parent public meeting notice and notification letter*

Tier 3 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
<p>5. Parents and families will be notified of monitoring procedures and records reviews and provided opportunities to ask questions and participate in discussions as members of the Individualized Education Program teams.</p> <p>6. The Department's Office of Innovation and Improvement will include alternate assessment participation in its school improvement processes for high-priority schools and districts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent meetings led by Office for Exceptional Children staff* • Parent public meeting notice and notification letter* • Compliance Support Tool*

Evidence of Progress: Tier 2

Tier 2 support is provided to districts and community schools that are identified as needing moderate support. This tier includes continued Tier 1 support.

The Department provided technical assistance and resources as outlined in the 2018-2019 waiver. Evidence of implementation for each action step is listed in Table 5 below. Some of the sample documents referenced are available via web-based links or are available in the Appendix (marked with an asterisk *). (See Table 5)

TABLE 5: Evidence of Tier 2 Progress 2018-2019

Tier 2 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
<p>1. Department staff, in collaboration with state support team consultants, will lead regional and local professional learning opportunities focusing on analyzing data and reviewing special education records</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit* • Regional meetings with special education administrators* • Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee meetings* • Presentations at Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators meetings and other professional organizations*

Tier 2 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
2. Department staff, in collaboration with state support team consultants, will provide training opportunities for special education leaders, as well as district and school administrators to ensure Individualized Education Program teams have the necessary resources and are using them properly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit* • Regional meetings with special education administrators* • Presentations at Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators meetings and other professional organizations*
3. The Department will develop training resources to address disproportionality in the assignment of subgroups of students to the alternate assessment at the district and community school level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit* • Office for Exceptional Children Comprehensive Monitoring Process* • Universal Support Training Materials • Alternate Assessment Workgroup is updating the Companion Document to Participation Guidelines into the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool* • Alternate Assessment Workgroup is collaborating with Significant Disproportionality Workgroup to develop additional resources*

Evidence of Progress: Tier 1

Tier 1 support is provided statewide to districts and community schools identified as being above the 1 percent participation threshold, as well as any districts or community schools seeking assistance.

The Department provided technical assistance and resources as outlined in the 2018-2019 waiver. Evidence of implementation for each action step is listed in Table 6 below. Some of the sample documents referenced are available via web-based links or listed in the Appendix (marked with an asterisk *). (See Table 6)

TABLE 4: Evidence of Tier 1 Progress 2018-2019

Tier 1 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
1. The Department will lead professional development webinars on appropriate alternate assessment participation and completion of required justification forms for exceeding 1 percent participation. Webinars will be recorded and posted public use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train-the-trainer event for test administration training, November 2019* • Participation Guidelines for Ohio's Alternate Assessment • Decision Framework for Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines • Companion Document to Participation Guidelines • 2018-2019 AASCD Refresher Training PowerPoint • Spring 2019 Alternate Assessment Directions for Administration Manual
2. The Department will present at multiple statewide conferences and other events for teachers and administrators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train-the-trainer event for test administration training, November 2019* • 2018-2019 Alternate Assessment Refresher Training PowerPoint • OCALICON Presentation November 2019 • Alternate Assessment Fact Sheet
3. State support teams will continue to provide training on decision-making processes for AASCD participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate assessment participation rates added to Special Education Profiles and Ratings* • Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee Meetings* • State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children Participation Guidelines for Ohio's Alternate Assessment • Alternate Assessment Frequently Asked Questions for Families
4. The Department will provide resources, including data analysis tools, to address disproportionality in assignment of student subgroups to the AASCD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate assessment participation rates added to Special Education Profiles and Ratings* • Monthly state support team Directors' Meetings* • Skype/webinars as needed
5. Parent and family engagement staff will work with districts and community schools to ensure families understand how IEP decisions about alternate assessment participation are appropriately made and the implications of participation in the alternate assessment for students. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AASCD FAQ; • Participation Guidelines for Ohio Alternate Assessment; • Decision Framework (Flowchart) for Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines; • Companion Document to Participation Guidelines • Ohio Learning Standards-Extended; and • AASCD Administration Manuals and Guidance Documents.

Tier 1 Progress	
Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2018-2019
6. Technical support from the Department is available to all stakeholders through phone support and a dedicated email address (AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email support provided by Department staff via AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov • Phone support provided by Department staff at 614-466-13217 or 1-877-644-6338 • ODE AASCD Web Page • Ohio Alternate Assessment Portal

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Evidence that the state provided notice and a reasonable opportunity for the public and districts and community schools to comment and provide input on the request. This evidence must include:

- ***Evidence or a description of the manner in which the state provided such notice to the public and interested districts and community schools;***
- ***Copies of all comments that the state received from districts and community schools in response to this notice, with a description of how the state addressed the comments; and***
- ***Evidence that the state also provided notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment to the public and districts and community schools in the manner in which the state customarily provides similar notice and opportunity to comment.***

The Department accepted public comments from Oct. 25 – Nov. 11, 2019. Stakeholders received notification of the draft state waiver extension request through email and newsletter announcements. The Department sent an email invitation to comment on the waiver extension request to all district and community school superintendents, special education contacts and testing coordinators. Notification for public comment was included in multiple editions of the Department’s EdConnection newsletter.

Responses to public comments will be available on the Department’s website with the final version of the waiver application.

APPENDIX

This portion of the waiver application will be posted with the final document.

- A. Office for Exceptional Children Comprehensive Monitoring Process
- B. District Self-Review Summary Report
- C. District Improvement Plan template
- D. State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit
- E. Parent meetings led by Office for Exceptional Children staff
- F. Parent public meeting notice and notification letter
- G. Compliance Support Tool
- H. Regional meetings with special education administrators
- I. Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee meetings
- J. Presentations at Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators meetings and other professional organizations
- K. Alternate Assessment Workgroup is collaborating with Significant Disproportionality Workgroup to develop additional resources
- L. Train-the-trainer event for test administration training, November 2019
- M. Alternate assessment participation rates added to Special Education Profiles and Ratings*
- N. Monthly state support team Directors' Meetings

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