

# One Percent Waiver Extension Request

ESEA Section 111(b)(2)(D) and 34 CFR 200.6(c) and (d)



SUBMISSION TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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# One Percent Waiver Extension Request

## ESEA section 11(b)(2)(D) and 34 CFR 200.6(c) and (d)

### Introduction

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, addresses alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Each state must submit a waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education if it predicts exceeding 1.0% participation in the alternate assessment in a subject. Ohio was granted an initial waiver for school year 2016-2017 and extensions for school years 2017-2022.

Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) participation rates in school year 2022-2023 were 0.9% in reading, mathematics and science. Ohio understands that a waiver extension request is not required. This waiver extension request is submitted to represent the major improvements Ohio's education system has made to meet the needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and ensure all students take the right tests.

Table 1 shows the percentage of students who took an alternate assessment by content area in grades 3-8 and high school in school years 2017-2018 through 2022-2023.

**Table 1: Ohio's Participation in Alternate Assessment by Subject Across Years (EdPass)**

School Year	Reading	Mathematics	Science
2017-2018	1.9%	1.9%	2.0%
2018-2019	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
2020-2021	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%
2021-2022	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
2022-2023	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

As stipulated in the Every Student Succeeds Act, Ohio's improvement plan includes:

- Annually requiring justification from districts and community schools exceeding the 1.0% threshold
- Supporting and monitoring districts and community schools to ensure appropriate use of the state's eligibility guidelines for the alternate assessment
- Using a statewide tiered system of support to provide appropriate oversight and support to districts that exceed the 1.0% threshold

Ohio's participation rate is below 1.0% for reading, mathematics and science. The Ohio Department of Education 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 the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities. An Alternate Assessment Participation 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:

- The National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) Community of Practice
- The TIES Center

- The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative for Assessment, Standards and Education of Students with Disabilities (ASES)
- The Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) annual [OCALICON Conference](#), an international conference
- The learning and development of Ohio's [state support teams](#)

The Workgroup has consulted with numerous stakeholder groups such as the Ohio State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children, the Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators and the special education statewide testing advisory committee to gather input and feedback throughout the school year.

Ohio continues to build on its system of regional state support teams to provide technical assistance and monitoring to local districts and community schools. The Department collaborates with state support team directors and consultants 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 assessments.

As stipulated in the Every Student Succeeds Act, districts and community schools that expect to exceed 1.0% participation are required to complete and submit an electronic justification and assurances.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the Department communicated with 951 districts to collect alternate assessment justification and assurances. Districts and community schools were required to complete the assurances and submit a district justification if they anticipated testing more than 1.0% of their students in the AASCD. The Department received 99% of the district justification and assurance forms. The Office for Exceptional Children followed up with the two nonresponding districts to receive justification and assurances.

The alternate assessment team has worked diligently to ensure all districts and community schools complete the district justification and assurances and are aware of the available state resources for implementing Ohio's alternate assessment program efficiently. The team's efforts included adding the following attachments to the alternate assessment district justification form as helpful resources:

- [District Justification and Assurance Form Template](#)
- [AASCD Decision-Making Tool](#)
- [AASCD Decision-Making Tool FAQs](#)
- [Teacher and Family resources](#)
- [District Alternate Assessment Self-Reflection Guide](#)
- [AASCD Test Administration Certification Course](#)
- [Ohio Accessibility Manual](#)

Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, the Department will post the alternate assessment district justification and assurances in the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP). The CCIP is a unified grants application and planning system used by the Department.

### **Alignment to Ohio's Priorities for Education**

Ohio is committed to meeting the needs of the whole child, which is an opportunity to ensure positive and meaningful educational experiences for students with disabilities that will lead to academic and postsecondary success. The Department's work on alternate assessment participation aligns with the purpose and goals of [Future Forward Ohio](#), Ohio's strategic priorities for helping students recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Overcoming Obstacles to Learning
- Preparing Students for Future Success
- Accelerating Learning

The Department is working to reduce participation in alternate assessments not solely to meet federal requirements but to ensure each student has access to rigorous curriculum and assessments that prepare them for future success. Ohio's goal is, and will continue to be, to ensure the right students are taking the right tests.

The Ohio Department of Education convened [stakeholders](#) to craft a plan aimed at improving learning experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities. Beginning in January 2019, stakeholders and staff from the Department worked together to identify a set of recommendations for increasing literacy skills, improving disproportionality, promoting postsecondary success, fostering inclusive leadership, and advancing high-quality instructional practices among educators who serve students with disabilities.

These recommendations ultimately resulted in the development of [Each Child Means Each Child: Ohio's Plan to Improve Learning Experiences and Outcomes for Students with Disabilities](#). *Each Child Means Each Child* offers recommendations, tactics and action steps to ensure Ohio's 270,000 students currently enrolled in public schools who have been identified with disabilities benefit from the vision and core principles heralded in Ohio's priorities for education.

*Each Child Means Each Child* uses data to illustrate what education looks like for Ohio's students with disabilities. Additionally, it organizes recommendations, tactics and actions to improve these educational experiences into three major focus areas:

- Getting to the Problem Early via Multi-Tiered System of Support
- Building Educators' and Systemwide Capacity via Professional Learning
- Educating for Living a Good Life via Postsecondary Readiness and Planning

*Each Child Means Each Child* recognizes that equity of educational achievement is a persisting challenge. Access to academically challenging standards is fundamental to achieving equity in education and overreliance on Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities. The alternate assessment should not limit students' access to rigorous curriculum and assessment that meet 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. Ohio's *Each Child Means Each Child* promotes a focus on meeting the needs of the whole child. As Ohio improves its ability to meet students' individual learning and 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 take the alternate assessment.

While the Department is working to reduce the percentage of students participating in the alternate assessment, another priority is to ensure that all students are taking the most appropriate assessments given their unique needs. The Department is working with regional state support teams, districts and community schools to ensure that Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams are using guidance documents appropriately, consistently applying the criteria for alternate assessment participation and using the available accommodations to provide students with disabilities access to Ohio's State Tests.

**Ohio is taking significant steps toward improving the appropriate use of the alternate assessment statewide. These steps include but are not limited to the following:**

1. The Department continues to implement the [Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Tool](#), which was developed in the fall of 2020. Embedded in the state's IEP documents, the Tool must be utilized when statewide testing is considered. The regional state support team consultants will continue to provide district training on the Decision-Making Tool prior to the spring 2024 AASCD test administration window. The Department will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the state support teams Decision-Making Tool trainings by:
  - Reviewing district feedback regarding the changes implemented due to the decision-making

procedures

- Reviewing what practices were developed and implemented by districts after the Decision-Making Tool training was provided by the state support team consultants
  - Evaluating how the training contributed to AASCD participation decisions
  - Inquiring about what frequently asked questions and family resources brought adequate guidance to parents and districts
2. The Department continues to annually update its Ohio Accessibility Manual as needed to address technical edits for accessing Ohio's statewide assessments that are online with paper testing as an accommodation.
  3. The Department continues to promote the use of the [Ohio Alternate Assessment Test Administration Certification course](#) as an option to fulfill district AASCD administration training requirements.
  4. The Department continues to provide accommodating resources for educators teaching students with complex needs. Beginning September 11, 2023, Ohio's AASCD items will be available to the education community in the Assessment Authoring system. This system will enable AASCD teachers to create their own tests from a bank of Ohio's released AASCD test questions, administer these tests to their students using the familiar Test Delivery System, and view results in the [Centralized Reporting System \(CRS\)](#). Features include the following:
    - Creating custom, teacher-authored tests aligned to Ohio's Learning Standards – Extended (OLS-E); A bank of AASCD specific test questions (items); Collaboration tools to allow educators to work within and across schools to create tests; Test sharing to allow created tests to be administered by teachers within or across schools; Printing of individual test questions or complete tests.
  5. The Department continues to promote the [one-page flyer](#) that is designed for families and to serve as a companion to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), both of which were created to describe the AASCD. This family resource provides information on how IEP teams determine alternate assessment eligibility in Ohio and provides a reminder that ESSA requires all students to participate in statewide assessments. The purpose of the one-page flyer is to serve as useful guidance to IEP teams, especially parents, during special education meetings regarding AASCD inquiries, eligibility and participation.
    - The one-page flyer and the [Assessment Toolkit for Parents](#) alongside the newly created [Evaluation Roadmap](#) are on the Department's new family engagement [website](#).
  6. The Department continues to provide internal guidance to ensure all appropriate specialists are well informed of federal AASCD requirements and Ohio's AASCD program.
  7. The Department continues to annually publish alternate assessment participation rates to both the [Special Education Profiles](#) and [Special Education Ratings](#). 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% threshold with a 3.5% or higher participation rate are assigned to Tier 3 status of the Special Education Program Monitoring process. Districts and community schools identified for Tier 3 monitoring are required, with the assistance of regional state support team consultants, to complete a self-review summary report and an improvement plan. Thirteen Tier 3 districts were identified in 2022-2023 school year and completed Self-Review Summary Report and an Improvement Plan. These activities are monitored at the state level through the Special Education Program Monitoring process.
  8. The Department's Office of Graduate Success and the Office for Exceptional Children anticipates releasing a Graduation Decision-Making Tool for Students with an IEP at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year. IEP teams can use the Tool to determine whether a student will graduate with a regular diploma. In Ohio, students with disabilities who take the AASCD do not earn a regular diploma under IDEA Indicator 1 reporting purposes; however, they do earn an Ohio diploma. The use of the

Graduation Decision-Making Tool for Students with an IEP will initiate productive conversations between families and IEP teams about how participating in Ohio's AASCD may affect their student.

9. The Department's Office of Assessment continues to host an annual Ohio Assessment Conference. Since 2021, the Office of Assessment has invited educators across the state to learn about a variety of topics related to Ohio's assessment programs.
  - During the [2023 Ohio Assessment Conference](#) 2,500 attendees were present to hear various updates regarding Ohio's assessment programs including the Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities and Ohio's Accessibility Manual. Conference attendees included the following roles: district test coordinators, district administrators, district reporting users, building test coordinators, building reporting users, test administrators, teachers, data coordinators, technology coordinators and others.
10. The Department collaborated with OCALI by recording a [webinar](#) to continue efforts of educating parents/guardians on Ohio's AASCD.
  - The Department continues to promote OCALI's Literacy Access for ALL/Ensuring Access to the General Curriculum for All Learners [website](#) as a resource for educators. The Literacy Access for ALL/Ensuring Access to the General Curriculum for All Learners website provides educators and other specialists with the strategies, research and support resources to effectively design instruction and assessment in a way that provides universal access to courses, lessons and learning activities across all grade-levels.
  - The Department continues to work in partnership with stakeholder groups like OCALI's [Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials Center](#) (AT&AEM), Improving Outcomes for Learners with Complex Needs 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.
11. Alternate Assessment Workgroup members from across the Department, along with selected stakeholders, continue to participate in ongoing national learning and networking opportunities. These opportunities include:
  - The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) Communities of Practice
  - The TIES Center
  - Membership in The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative on Assessment, Standards and Education of Students with Disabilities (ASES)
  - The Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) annual [OCALICON](#) international conference

The 2023-2024 state waiver extension request was posted for public comment **Oct. 31-Nov. 14, 2023**. The department received [.....] comments during the public comment period.

## 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 AASCD opens Feb. 26, 2024. Ninety days prior to the start of Ohio’s testing window (Nov. 24, 2023), the Department will submit a waiver extension request to the U.S. 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.**

Component 2 of Ohio’s 1.0% waiver extension request includes the number and percentage of students assessed in each subgroup of students who took the AASCD (See Tables 2A-2C).

**Table 2A: 2022-2023 Participation in the Reading Alternate Assessment (Grades 3-8 and High School)**

Subgroup	Number of Students Who Took the Standard Assessment	Number of Students Who Took the Alternate Assessment	All Students Tested	Percent Alternately Assessed
<b>All Students</b>	<b>868,960</b>	<b>7,903</b>	<b>876,863</b>	<b>0.90%</b>
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,179	9	1,188	0.76%
Asian or Pacific Islander	25,994	272	26,266	1.04%
Black, Non-Hispanic	147,653	1,809	149,462	1.21%
Hispanic	64,913	580	65,493	0.89%
Multiracial	53,732	440	54,172	0.81%
White, Non-Hispanic	575,489	4,793	580,282	0.83%
Students with Disabilities	136,377	7,881	144,258	5.46%
Economically Disadvantaged	442,071	4,648	446,719	1.04%
English Learners	34,358	493	34,851	1.41%

**Table 2B: 2022-2023 Participation in the Mathematics Alternate Assessment (Grades 3-8 and High School)**

Subgroup	Number of Students Who Took the Standard Assessment	Number of Students Who Took the Alternate Assessment	All Students Tested	Percent Alternately Assessed
<b>All Students</b>	<b>853,373</b>	<b>7,911</b>	<b>861,284</b>	<b>0.92%</b>
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,141	9	1,150	0.78%
Asian or Pacific Islander	25,160	274	25,434	1.08%
Black, Non-Hispanic	144,232	1,795	146,027	1.23%
Hispanic	63,598	573	64,171	0.89%
Multiracial	52,577	439	53,016	0.83%



White, Non-Hispanic	566,665	4,821	571,486	0.84%
Students with Disabilities	133,563	7,889	141,452	5.58%
Economically Disadvantaged	433,160	4,624	437,784	1.06%
English Learners	33,195	481	33,676	1.43%

**Table 2C: 2022-2023 Participation in the Science Alternate Assessment (Grades 3-8 and High School)**

Subgroup	Number of Students Who Took the Standard Assessment	Number of Students Who Took the Alternate Assessment	All Students Tested	Percent Alternately Assessed
<b>All Students</b>	<b>381,037</b>	<b>3,619</b>	<b>384,656</b>	<b>0.94%</b>
American Indian or Alaskan Native	511	3	514	0.58%
Asian or Pacific Islander	10,917	118	11,035	1.07%
Black, Non-Hispanic	63,348	876	64,224	1.36%
Hispanic	28,971	235	29,206	0.80%
Multiracial	22,182	181	22,363	0.81%
White, Non-Hispanic	255,108	2,206	257,314	0.86%
Students with Disabilities	57,647	3,907	61,254	5.89%
Economically Disadvantaged	187,681	2,093	189,774	1.10%
English Learners	13,647	213	13,860	1.54%

**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 34 CFR 200.6(c)(4)(ii)(B). 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 in reading, mathematics and science. Data in Table 3 indicates that the Department met the requirement and measured achievement of more than 95% of all students and students with disabilities enrolled in grades and courses for which an assessment is required.

**Table 3: 2022-2023 Participation Rate of All Students and Students with Disabilities (Grades 3-8 and High School)**

Subject	Students Tested	Students Required to Test	Percent Achievement Measured for All Students	Students with Disabilities Tested	Students with Disabilities Required to Test	Percent Achievement Measured for Students with Disabilities
<b>Reading</b>	876,863	886,757	<b>98.88%</b>	144,258	147,245	<b>97.97%</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	861,284	872,883	<b>98.67%</b>	141,452	144,886	<b>97.63%</b>
<b>Science</b>	384,656	392,401	<b>98.03%</b>	61,254	63,475	<b>96.50%</b>

### 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.**

In school year 2022-2023, 99% of districts submitted justifications and assurances by March 30, 2023. Districts

and community schools were required to complete the assurances and submit a district justification if they anticipated testing more than 1.0% of their students in the AASCD. The two non-respondents were referred to the Department's special education program monitoring process to comply with the requirement. Districts and community schools that anticipate exceeding 1.0% participation are required to detail how they implement the Department guidelines for participation in the AASCD.

### **Evidence of Progress**

The Department received assurances from 99% of required districts and community schools. The regional state support teams supported the Department in obtaining district and community school completion. For a more efficient process, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, the Department will post the alternate assessment district justification and assurances in its [Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan \(CCIP\)](#). The CCIP is a unified grants application and planning system used by the Department. As a part of this transition process, starting January 2024, justification and assurances links will no longer be emailed to Superintendents. Instead, the entire process will be conducted through the CCIP dashboard offering a more centralized experience.

### **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 AASCD (See Table 2). The Department ensures each district or community school that assesses more than 1.0% of its student population in any subject using the alternate assessment will address any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any subgroup participating in the alternate assessment via completion and submission of the required district justification with the superintendent's signature. Districts and community schools that test more than 3.5% are required to analyze their disproportionality data for atypical differences within subgroups, specifically their risk ratio data using the disproportionality calculator from the [National Center on Educational Outcomes \(NCEO\)](#). This calculator can be used to review state or district participation, disproportionality and risk ratio on the alternate assessment. A risk ratio of 1.0% for a subgroup indicates the rate of participation in the alternate assessment is proportionate by students in the subgroup to the rate of participation for students not in the subgroup. The higher the risk ratio, the greater the chance that students in the subgroup will participate in the alternate assessment as compared to students not in the subgroup.

### **The Department has and will continue to address disproportionality concerns by:**

- Identifying districts and community schools assessing more than 1.0% of their student population in any subject using the alternate assessment
- Identifying subgroups of learners participating in the alternate assessment at disproportionate rates and providing resources and supports to those districts
- Reviewing district justification and assurance forms, self-review summary reports and improvement plans to identify patterns of disproportionate participation rates
- Continuing to provide technical assistance to Ohio school districts in partnership with the state support teams and OCALI on the appropriate use of [Ohio's Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool](#)
- Sharing the Departments [Alternate Assessment One-Page Flyer](#), created for IEP teams and families.
- Continuing to engage and support external stakeholder groups to address subgroup disproportionalities and ensure accurate guidance regarding Ohio's Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool.
- Providing resources to address [significant disproportionality](#) for districts and schools to address Equity, School Climate and Social-Emotional Supports, Staff Diversity, Culturally Responsive Practices and Academic Supports

- Continuing to seek professional development from NCEO, CCSSO as well as OCALI

### Evidence of Progress

In December 2022, the Department continued to include alternate assessment participation in [Special Education Profiles](#) and [Special Education Ratings](#). By incorporating alternate assessment participation, the Office for Exceptional Children identifies Tier 3 districts and community schools for the special education program monitoring process. This provides the opportunity and the platform to work with districts and community schools in analyzing their participation data. The Department’s electronic Special Education Profile compliance system notifies and alerts Tier 3 districts of required action steps such as completing a self-review summary report and improvement plan. The disproportionality calculator is required for districts who identify disproportionality as a focus for their improvement plan. The self-review summary report for alternate assessment requires analysis of participation rates by disability category, race and ethnicity to engage districts and community schools in a more rigorous data analysis, especially concerning disproportionality data. State support teams assist districts and community schools in completing the self-review and developing aligned improvement plans.

The Alternate Assessment Workgroup conducted a state-level targeted analysis to identify disproportionality data of student participation by 1) socioeconomic status, 2) race and ethnicity and 3) disability category (See Table 4). Data for English learner status has been added to this analysis. The Department understands the value of annually analyzing state disproportionality data to assist in creating a plan of where to focus future areas of technical assistance and guidance. The Department also believes analyzing state disproportionality data is important to ensure that IEP teams are positioned to make well-informed decisions on a student’s participation in the alternate assessment, based on the state’s guidelines and the student’s IEP goals.

**Table 4: State-level Targeted Analysis of Alternate Assessment Participation Data**

Disability Category	Participation Data			
	2018-2019	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Multiple Disabilities (other than Deaf-Blind)	13,957	10,154	9,087	8,572
Deaf-Blindness	52	29	46	30
Deafness (Hearing Impairment)	127	42	21	22
Visual Impairments	74	28	9	11
Speech and Language Impairments	16	9	6	2
Orthopedic Impairments	170	93	51	33
Emotional Disturbance	537	173	69	37
Intellectual Disabilities	13,810	7,435	3,661	2,769
Specific Learning Disabilities	1,057	288	76	63
Autism	10,537	8,383	7,161	7,065
Traumatic Brain Injury	620	439	350	333
Other Health Impaired (Major)	193	98	136	124
Other Health Impaired (Minor)	1,642	963	416	316

Race and Ethnicity	Participation Data				Risk Ratio		
	2018-2019	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	ELA	MATH	SCI
Asian	768	590	577	631	0.88%	0.90%	0.85%
Black or African American	10,535	6,571	4,833	4,448	1.44%	1.45%	1.48%
Hispanic/Latino	2,389	1,787	5,613	1,388	0.92%	0.92%	0.88%
American Indian or Alaska Native	49	37	37	21	1.07%	1.05%	0.98%
Multiracial	1,976	1,447	1,169	1,058	0.89%	0.90%	0.87%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	44	37	20	30	N/A	N/A	N/A
White	27,031	17,665	13,016	11,801	0.91%	0.91%	0.92%

English Learner Status	Participation Data				Risk Ratio		
	2018-2019	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	ELA	MATH	SCI
Yes	1,612	1,335	1,090	1,113	0.50%	1.40%	1.44%
No	40,957	26,660	19,899	18,142	N/A	N/A	N/A

Socioeconomic Status	Participation Data				Risk Ratio		
	2018-2019	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	ELA	MATH	SCI
Disadvantaged	28,527	17,227	11,855	11,328	1.27%	1.27%	1.28%
Not Identified as Disadvantaged	14,265	10,907	9,234	8,049	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Component 4A

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

The Department continues to make significant progress in improving the use of state guidelines for participation in the AASCD through Ohio's Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool. The 2022-2023 school year was the third full year of implementation for Ohio's required Decision-Making Tool. Ohio has provided significant training and technical assistance to reduce the number of students with disabilities taking the AASCD and being measured against alternate academic achievement standards. Since 2021, this has resulted in approximately 9,500 students with disabilities transitioning to the general education grade level assessment. The Department is investing in additional professional development focused on accessibility, Ohio Learning Standards – Extended, accessing the general education curriculum and specialized instruction for students with complex needs.

### **The Department has taken and will continue to take the following actions for improving the implementation of guidelines for participation in the alternate assessment by:**

- Requiring districts and community schools to utilize Ohio's Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool
- Providing Ohio's districts and community schools with Special Education Profiles and Special Education Ratings that identify AASCD participation data
- Notifying districts and community schools of Tier 3 identification regarding AASCD participation data above 1.0%
- Developing resources to assist districts and community schools, as well as IEP teams with appropriate AASCD eligibility
- Providing biweekly office hours during the AASCD testing window to provide technical assistance to educators, state support teams and parents
- Participating in the monthly Improving Outcomes for Learners with Complex Needs network meeting partnering with OCALI and regional state support team consultants
- Releasing a Graduation Decision-Making Tool for students with disabilities to help IEP teams determine if a student is following a typical pathway to meeting graduation requirements and earning an Ohio diploma
- Collaborating with the Department's supports and monitoring and data teams to identify systemic practices to support Tier 2 and Tier 3 identified districts
- The Office of Assessment, Office for Exceptional Children and OCALI will collaborate with state support team alternate assessment trainers throughout the school year and during the test administration window to discuss implementation of the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool and

## Evidence of Progress

Since the implementation of clarified eligibility guidelines in October 2020, Ohio has reduced alternate assessment participation significantly. A beneficial measure the Office of Assessment, Office for Exceptional Children and OCALI took during the spring 2023 test administration window was to meet biweekly with alternate assessment regional state support team trainers between February 2022 and April 2022, to discuss the use of the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool, test administrator training and specific questions about supporting a region during the test window.

In January 2023 the Department provided training and released an optional support guide titled [District Alternate Assessment Self-Reflection Guide](#). This Guide targets districts with an alternate assessment participation rate of 1.1%-3.4%; however, it is an available resource to all districts. The Guide (Appendix C) is a resource for districts that have been identified as needing moderate support based on their alternate assessment participation data. The District Alternate Assessment Self-Reflection Guide is designed to support districts in their data review process to address the appropriate eligibility of student participation in the alternate assessment. This Guide best serves districts that are interested in being proactive regarding their alternate assessment participation rates. Each section provides the Department's best practices following the Every Student Succeeds Act along with guiding questions and resources.

In January 2024, the Department's Special Education Profiles will identify Tier 3 districts with alternate assessment participation rates that exceed 3.5%. The self-review summary report requires district teams to review guiding questions that address data-reporting errors, noncompliance of policies, practices and procedures, district staff training, family involvement, student data exploration and disproportionality. The district teams will complete the disproportionality calculator with required support from the regional state support teams when disproportionality for alternate assessment participation is an area of concern. District teams will also submit an improvement plan with long- and short-term goals to complete and submit as system improvement/evidence by Sept. 27, 2024.

## Timeline for Improving Implementation of Guidelines

**August 2022 through November 2023:** The Alternate Assessment Workgroup provided support and training to external stakeholder groups, including the following:

- The State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC)
- The Ohio Association of Pupil Services Administrators (OAPSA)
- The Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee
- The Ohio Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials network
- The Low Incidence and Autism Spectrum Disorder network
- The State Support Team Directors
- The State Support Team Alternate Assessment trainers
- The Alternate Assessment Content and Fairness review committees
- The Ohio Test Steering Committee
- The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaborative on Assessment, Standards and Education of Students with Disabilities (ASES)
- The National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO)
- The TIES Center
- The Ohio State University Family Engagement Center
- Central Ohio Special Education Administrators (COSEAS)
- Urban District Special Education Directors
- The Ohio State University: Center on Education and Training for Employment (CETE)
- The OCALI Outreach Center for Deafness and Blindness
- Educational Services Centers

- Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)
- Georgia Department of Education
- New Mexico Public Education Department
- Maryland State Department of Education
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Texas Education Agency
- The 2023 Office of Special Education Programs Leadership and Project Directors Conference
- The Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD)

**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 multifaceted approach is a system of tiered intervention and monitoring designed to improve application of state guidelines for participation in the AASCD. For Tier 1 districts and community schools, the Department provides professional learning opportunities, tools and resources. For Tier 2 and 3 districts and community schools, the Department collaborates with state support teams to provide additional intervention, support and monitoring through the self-review summary report and improvement plan process in addition to other training opportunities.

Using submitted justifications, [Ohio School Report Card](#) data and Special Education Profiles, the Department annually identifies the districts and community schools with the greatest need of intervention and support. The Department uses a multipoint rubric to identify districts for tiered monitoring and support:

- Failure to submit district assessment data
- Failure to submit a district justification
- Percent greater than 3.5
- Three-year increase in participation
- Spike in participation in a year (>1%)
- Disability type anomaly

Additional information is listed in the 2023-2024 Alternate Assessment Indicator Manual (Appendix F).

**Table 5: History of Tier 3 (3.5%+) Identified and Monitored Districts**

School Year	Number of Identified Tier 3 Districts
2019-2020	83
2020-2021	52
2021-2022	13
2022-2023	5

**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 related to alternate assessment were strengthened greatly in 2021-2022 due to the use of the Special Education Profiles and Compliance Dashboard. These two resources allowed the Department and regional state support teams to work together to assist and monitor improvement efforts in Tier 3 districts and community schools. The Special Education Profiles informed 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-review summary reports, improvement plans and upload documentation of completed action steps. Specialists in the Department’s Office for Exceptional Children review and monitor documentation. State support teams assisted district teams with analyzing data using the Self-Review Summary Report, developing and submitting Improvement Plans, and implementing planned action steps.

The alternate assessment team shares OCALI’s [Access to the General Education Curriculum](#) website as a resource for all districts, but especially for districts with high alternate assessment participation rates. OCALI Teaching Diverse Learners Center launched the website Access to the General Education Curriculum in 2021. The site is designed to provide information and guidance to educators working with learners beginning in kindergarten or when the student is identified as a student with complex communication, sensory, motor and/or cognitive needs. The site particularly addresses instructional supports for learners who have a range of needs but do not qualify for Ohio’s alternate assessment based on Ohio’s Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Tool.

**Evidence of Progress: Tier 3**

Tier 3 support is for districts and community schools that have participation rates above 3.5% requiring intensive support. The Department provided technical assistance and resources to Tier 3 districts and community schools as outlined in the 2022-2023 waiver extension request. 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 are available in the appendices (marked with an asterisk).

**Table 6: Evidence of Tier 3 Progress 2022-2023**

Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2022-2023
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office for Exceptional Children Special Education Program Monitoring Process</li> <li>• District Self-Review Summary Report*</li> <li>• District Improvement Plan Template*</li> </ul>
<p>2. Conduct a targeted analysis of student participation in alternate assessment by 1) socioeconomic status, 2) race and ethnicity and 3) disability category. This analysis will include data at the state level. An analysis of disproportionality data will help the Department identify statewide trends and support local districts and community schools in improving their use of alternate assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disproportionality Data from Data Team</li> <li>• <a href="#">Equity in Special Education: Disproportionality</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Center for Educational Outcomes Disproportionality Guidance</a></li> <li>• 2023-2024 Draft Alternate Assessment Indicator Manual*</li> <li>• <a href="#">Disproportionality Calculator</a></li> </ul>
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Self-Review Summary Report*</li> <li>• District Improvement Plan Template*</li> <li>• Special Education Profiles</li> </ul>

<p>4. Continue the rigor of the self-review summary report for Tier 3 districts and community schools. The Department will continue to engage districts and community schools in a rigorous data analysis, especially concerning disproportionality data utilizing the disproportionality calculator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Self-Review Summary Report*</li> <li>• <a href="#">Disproportionality Calculator</a></li> <li>• Disproportionality Data from Data Team (See Table 3)</li> <li>• Develop Tier 2 Self Reflection Guide*</li> <li>• 2022-2023 Alternate Assessment Indicator Manual*</li> <li>• InspirEd, Closer Look At Special Education Profiles: <a href="#">Part 1</a> and <a href="#">Part 2</a></li> </ul>
<p>5. Continue to receive technical assistance from the National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) as well as participate in the 1% Community of Practice and Peer Learning Groups hosted by NCEO and the TIES Center.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated and presented in biweekly community of practice meetings hosted by the National Center for Educational Outcomes</li> </ul>

**Evidence of Progress: Tier 2**

Tier 2 support is for districts and community schools that need moderate support. This tier includes continued Tier 1 support. The Department provided technical assistance and resources as outlined in the 2022-2023 waiver. Evidence of implementation for each action step is listed in Table 7 below. Some of the sample documents referenced are available via web-based links or are available in the appendices (marked with an asterisk).

**Table 7: Evidence of Tier 2 Progress 2022-2023**

Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2022-2023
<p>1. 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 IEP teams have the necessary resources and are using them properly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional meetings with special education administrators</li> <li>• Presentations at Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators meetings and other professional organizations</li> </ul>
<p>2. Expand the State Support Team Alternate Assessment Participation Professional Development Toolkit with new and updated content on how to apply the participation criteria, fully engage parents and improve their understanding of the alternate assessment participation decision making process and other elements covered in the self-review summary report. Regional and local professional development will provide opportunities to dispel some of the misunderstandings observed in district and community school justification forms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://literacyaccessforall.org/">https://literacyaccessforall.org/</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">SST Training Data Collection MS Form*</a></li> <li>• Sharing of resources</li> <li>• State Support Team and school districts alternate assessment office hours during testing window</li> <li>• 2023-2024 Draft Alternate Assessment Indicator Manual*</li> </ul>

**Evidence of Progress: Tier 1**

Tier 1 support is for districts and community schools that are below the 1.0% participation threshold, as well as any districts or community schools seeking assistance with alternate assessment participation. The Department provided technical assistance and resources as outlined in the 2022-2023 waiver. Evidence of implementation for each action step is listed in Table 8 below. Some of the sample documents referenced are available via web-based links or listed in the appendices (marked with an asterisk).

**Table 8: Evidence of Tier 1 Progress 2022-2023**



Planned Action Steps	Evidence of Implementation 2022-2023
1. The Department will continue to implement resources on appropriate alternate assessment participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Spring 2022 Alternate Assessment Directions for Administration Manual</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Online Test Administration Certification Course</a></li> </ul>
2. The Department will present at statewide conferences and other events for teachers, administrators and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Support Team weekly meetings during the test administration window</li> <li>• The State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC)</li> <li>• The Ohio Association of Pupil Services Administrators (OAPSA)</li> <li>• The Ohio State University Family Engagement Center</li> <li>• The Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee</li> <li>• The Ohio Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials network</li> <li>• Improving Outcomes for Learners with Complex Needs</li> <li>• Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)</li> </ul>
3. State support teams will continue to provide support on decision-making processes for Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate assessment participation rates added to Special Education Profiles and Ratings</li> <li>• Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee Meetings*</li> <li>• Frequently Asked Questions over the Alternate Assessment (<a href="#">English</a> and <a href="#">Spanish</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Online Test Administration Certification Course</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment 1-Page Flyer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment Practice Site</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment Item Release Site</a></li> </ul>
4. 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"> <li>• <a href="#">Ohio Learning Standards – Extended</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Spring 2023 Alternate Assessment Test Administration Manual</a></li> <li>• Frequently Asked Questions over the Alternate Assessment (<a href="#">English</a> - <a href="#">Spanish</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment 1-Page Flyer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Alternate Assessment Practice Site</a></li> </ul>
5. Technical support from the Department is available to all stakeholders through phone support and a dedicated email address ( <a href="mailto:AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov">AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov</a> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email support provided by Department staff via <a href="mailto:AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov">AAparticipation@education.ohio.gov</a></li> <li>• Phone support provided by Department staff at 614-466- 2650 or 1-877-644-6338</li> <li>• <a href="#">ODE AASCD Web Page</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ohio Alternate Assessment Test Portal</a></li> </ul>

## **ACTION STEPS FOR 2023-2024**

- 1.** The Department will conduct a targeted analysis of state-level alternate assessment data by disaggregating student alternate assessment participation data by 1) socioeconomic status, 2) race and ethnicity, 3) disability category and 4) English Learner status. Analysis of this data will direct improved guidance to regional teams that are supporting local Tier 3 districts and community schools in tiered monitoring support.
- 2.** The Department will continue to develop and disseminate resources and training to districts and families about alternate assessment eligibility. The Department will continue partnership with [OCALI](#) and the [Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities](#) to produce instructional support material and training resources to address students who transition to the general assessment. Regional and local professional development will continue to dispel misunderstandings observed in district and community school justification forms.
- 3.** The Department will continue participation in national networks and learning opportunities for state staff. Working collaboratively with members of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Assessment, Standards and Education of Students with Disabilities (ASES) State Collaborative and the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO).
- 4.** The Department will concurrently review and revise Ohio's Learning Standards and Ohio's Learning Standards – Extended to ensure grade-level access to the general education curriculum for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.
- 5.** The Alternate Assessment team will continue to annually revise the AASCD Test Administrator Survey as needed and respond to follow-up requests from teachers and staff.

## APPENDICES

- A. Alternate Assessment One-Page Flyer (Family Resource)
- B. Alternate Assessment Participation Decision-Making Tool Frequently Asked Questions
- C. District Alternate Assessment Self-Reflection Guide
- D. Draft 2023-2024 District Self-Review Summary Report Template
- E. Draft 2023-2024 District Improvement Plan Template
- F. Draft 2023-2024 Special Education Profile Required Actions Manual: Indicator Alternate Assessment
- G. Ohio Statewide Testing and Students with Disabilities Advisory Committee: Sample meeting agendas
- H. Ohio's PowerPoint Presentation for Ohio Association of Pupil Service Administrators meetings
- I. State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children: Sample agenda
- J. Assessment Test Steering Committee Agenda
- K. Improving Outcomes for Learners with Complex Needs: Sample Agenda
- L. Office for Exceptional Children, All-Staff Meeting: Sample Agenda
- M. State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children: Sample agenda