

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AA-AAAS 1% THRESHOLD WAIVER REQUEST DRAFT
PURSUANT TO 34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4)
JULY 29, 2019

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) has adopted alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and measures the achievement of those standards with an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). Federal regulation 34 C.F.R. 200.6(c)(2) requires that, for each subject for which assessments are administered, the total number of students assessed in that subject using an alternate assessment with alternate academic achievement standards may not exceed 1.0 percent of the total number of students in the State who are assessed in that subject.

After reviewing multiple years of data and assessing the initial impact of improvement activities undertaken to ensure all students take the appropriate assessment, KSDE has determined that the Kansas AA-AAAS assessment participation percentage in Reading/Language Arts, mathematics, and science will likely be over 1.0% of the total number of students assessed in those subjects for the 2019-2020 school year. Consequently, KSDE submits this request that the Secretary waive the cap under 34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(2) for the subjects of Reading/Language Arts, mathematics, and science pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §200.6(c)(4).

KSDE seeks stakeholder input on this waiver request from multiple stakeholder groups as well as the general public, including the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) meeting on Tuesday, July 30, 2019; the ESEA stakeholder group through e-mail dissemination; local district administrators in special education and title services during the KSDE Leadership Conference general session on July 31; parents and families through dissemination by the state's Parent Training and Information Center, Families Together, Inc.; and from the general public through the KSDE SETS website.

State Testing Window

Kansas participates in the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) instructionally embedded assessment. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year reading/language arts and mathematics assessments will consist of two instructionally embedded test windows. Kansas' instructionally embedded assessment for reading/language arts and mathematics has a fall test window (September 9, 2019 – December 20, 2019) and a spring test window (February 3, 2020 – May 15, 2020). The science assessment will continue to be a summative assessment administered during the spring test window (February 3, 2020 – May 15, 2020). The DLM testing schedule for 2019-2020 is located at <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=887>.

State-level Data on participation in AA-AAAS in subject area by subgroup

Refer to Tables 1, 2, and 3 for Alternate Assessment Participation Rates for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science by subgroups in 2017-2018.

State-Level Data showing 95% participation overall and for students with disabilities subgroup

Kansas expects all students enrolled in public K-12 schools be assessed with accommodations, without accommodations or with an alternate assessment in Grades 3-8 and high school. Kansas follows the federal participation requirement and, to date has met or exceeded the federal guidelines set at 95%. Refer to Table 4 for participation rates of all students and students with disabilities.

State Assurance

By submitting this request, the Kansas State Department of Education assures that it has verified that each LEA that the state anticipates will assess more than 1.0 percent of its assessed students in a subject using the AA-AAAS followed the state's participation guidelines; and will address any disproportionality in the students taking the AA-AAAS.

KSDE has reviewed 2017-2018 data and is reviewing preliminary local district data. Data reflects 124 out of 286 total districts that tested over 1.0 percent of their assessed students on the DLM in one or more subject area, during the 2018-2019 school year. On July 3, 2019, KSDE contacted each LEA that the state anticipated assessed more than 1.0 percent of its assessed students in a subject on the DLM for 2018-2019 to provide written assurances.

The LEA must submit assurances for each of the following five items:

1. Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams have correctly identified students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disability. <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=887>
2. The district has measured the achievement of, at least 95% of all students, including students with disabilities in tested grades.
3. Students who will be participating in an alternate assessment receive instruction aligned to the alternate academic achievement standards, the Essential Elements.
<https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/erp> ie https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sci_resources
4. Parents are informed of their child's participation in an alternate assessment and implications of participating.
5. Addresses any disproportionality in the percentage of students in any subgroup taking the alternate assessment.

To assist districts in determining if disproportionality of students participating in the DLM exists, beginning with 2019 DLM justifications, KSDE will provide districts with risk ratio data for each of the following subgroups: racial and ethnic groups, socio-economic status, migrant, English learner, gender, military connected, homeless, and foster care.

Plan and timeline for improving the implementation of participation guidelines (and possibly revising definition of *students with the most significant cognitive disabilities*)

The goal of this waiver component is to ensure each student eligible to take a Kansas State Assessment, is administered the appropriate form of the assessment. KSDEs plan and waiver request outlines several key strategies and action steps KSDE has recently taken and will take toward this goal: revising the state's participation guidelines to emphasize distinct criterion, revising the state-adopted definition of students with a most significant cognitive disabilities in the state; providing training, tools, and technical assistance to improve the implementation of the state's participation guidelines; and leveraging the concept of least dangerous assumption with the field.

First, KSDE has updated the DLM participation guidelines and Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart for 2019-20. The 2018-2019 DLM participation guidelines contained *three* criterion that all had to be "yes" for a student to participate in the DLM. Teams also had to ensure that the decision was not based on any of the fourteen not allowed considerations listed on the participation guidelines.

The 2019-2020 DLM participation guidelines now have *four* criterion that all have to be “yes” for a student to participate in the DLM. KSDE separated the previous first criterion into two criteria for 2019-2020 to emphasize the importance of students needing to have significant deficits in adaptive behavior. The four criterion for 2019-2020 are:

1. The student has a most significant cognitive disability (intellectual disability).
2. The student has significant deficits in adaptive behavior.
3. The student is primarily being instructed (or taught) using the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements as content standards.
4. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in all grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.

KSDE recently added a rubric for determining participation on the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) to assist IEP teams in making appropriate decisions regarding participation in the AA-AAAS for students with a most significant cognitive disability. The updated 2019 Dynamic Learning Maps Participation Guidelines for Kansas, Kansas Alternate Assessment Flow Chart, and Rubric for Determining Participation on the Kansas Alternate Assessment (DLM) are located at <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=887>.

During the December 2018 DLM webinar and January 2019 Directors call, KSDE also provided guidance for IEP teams to utilize the Least Dangerous Assumption when making assessment and IEP team decisions.

The Theory of Presuming Competence: Least Dangerous Assumption

“...in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions ought to be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on the likelihood that students will be able to function independently as adults. Furthermore, we should assume that poor performance is due to instructional inadequacy rather than to student deficits.” Jorgensen, C (2005) The Least Dangerous Assumption A Challenge to Create a New Paradigm. Disability Solutions, 6(3), 1, 5-9.

At least quarterly, KSDE staff will continue participation in national consortiums such as the CCSO-SCASS and/or meetings sponsored by the Department for the purpose of informing state-level policies, practices and/or procedures in relation to the state-level 1.0 percent requirement and identifying enhancements or additions to the technical assistance and tools provided to LEAs in the state.

Further, KSDE will continue to disseminate, increase knowledge, and improve systems implementation of the previously described participation guidelines, flow chart, and rubric through the following activities:

- Six statewide and/or regional events scheduled for the months of July and August 2019
- Six DLM webinars are scheduled for the 2019-2020 school year
- Monthly calls for special education administrators, district level administrators, and test coordinators are scheduled throughout 2019-2020.
- Provision of on-site technical assistance and/or professional learning
- Continued online availability of participation guidelines, flow chart and rubric.

Plan and timeline for taking steps to support and provide appropriate oversight to districts anticipated to exceed 1.0 percent

KSDE will take additional steps to support and provide appropriate oversight to each LEA that tested more than 1.0 percent of students with AA-AAAS to ensure only students with a most significant cognitive disability take the AA-AAAS. Annually, based upon review of district data, KSDE will request assurances from districts with participation rates of over 1.0 percent of students in one or more subject areas.

Early each December, KSDE will send a letter to districts advising them to review their 2018-2019 DLM participation data available in the KSDE Authenticated Application. If the percentage of students taking the DLM exceeds 1.0 percent in any subject area, the district must complete and submit a justification form to KSDE. Upon receipt, KSDE will assess each district justification and respond, as necessary via letter, phone call, and/or onsite technical assistance.

Each February, KSDE will make these justifications publicly available, provided that such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student as is required by 34 CFR 200.6(c)(3)(ii) and (iv). Justifications for 2017-2018 are publically available online at: <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=567>.

Oversight will also occur by creating and offering a customized data display template for each district. The data will provide KSDE with three years of data on AA-AAAS for each district in Kansas. KSDE will use this data to flag districts who may be using practices which result in students taking an inappropriate form of Kansas State assessment in reading/language arts and /or mathematics.

KSDE staff will analyze variables for students who took the DLM for the 2018-2019 school year. Identified variables include disability categories that are not usually associated with students with a most significant cognitive disability (SLP, SLD, and ED), instructional setting, reading levels, writing skills, computation skills, and performance level for the 2018-2019 assessments. This data is available in the DLM first contact survey and DLM score reports.

KSDE staff will then utilize this data analysis to:

1. Make personal contact with LEAs whose data reflects variables that show potential red flags.
2. Verify that LEAs are using the most up to date DLM participation guidelines, Least Dangerous Assumption, and maximizing available accommodations for the general assessment.
3. Provide on-site technical assistance to districts who request and districts who exceed the threshold and have high rates of potential red flags.
4. Complete DLM test observations in districts that test over 1.0 percent of students on the DLM and districts that have high rates of potential red flags for their students taking the DLM.

Plan and timeline for addressing any disproportionality in percentage of students taking the AA-AAAS

Under IDEA, the Kansas Department of Education annually collects data and monitors LEA compliance with Part B indicators on the State Performance Plan. KSDE requires LEA's to review data under IDEA Part B Indicators 4, 9 and 10 to identify and address disproportionality in special education that is a result of inappropriate identifications and analyzes data regarding identification, placement, and discipline for disproportionality through its significant disproportionality work. KSDE is now also examining the data on subgroup participation, as reported in ESSA, on the alternate assessment, to identify and address any

disproportionality in the students taking the AA-AAAS. KSDE has been analyzing risk ratio data by subgroup for each subject area for the alternate assessment for 2017-2018. Refer to table 5, 6, 7 for risk ratio by subgroup for Reading/language arts, mathematics, and science for 2017-2018.

KSDE will soon have available and be examining subgroup participation, risk ratio data, as well as, the data on primary exceptionalities participating in the alternate assessment for the 2018-2019 school year.

Building upon the current capacity and work around disproportionality, KSDE will utilize this new data set to:

1. Examine the data on subgroup participation, as reported in ESSA, on the alternate assessment.
2. Provide data to districts on subgroup participation, as reported in ESSA, on the alternate assessment through the authenticated application used for completing alternate assessment justifications every year.
3. Ensure districts will communicate how they address any disproportionality in the justifications.

KSDE sincerely appreciates the opportunity to improve the state system supporting AA-AAAS implementation. KSDE will submit the 2018-2019 state-level participation data to the Department once it has been approved by the state board in October 2019. For more information or questions, please contact Beth Fultz, bfultz@ksde.org Assistant Director of Career Standards and Assessment Services, Division of Learning Services, Kansas State Department of Education.

Table 1: Alternate Assessment Participation Rates for 2017-2018 for Reading/Language arts

Student Sub-Group	# Students Participating in Regular Assessment	# Students Participating in Alternate Assessment	Total # Students Assessed	Percentage Participating in Alternate Assessment
All Students	259217	2977	262194	1.14%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2273	20	2293	0.87%
Asian	7241	95	7336	1.29%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	469	8	477	1.68%
African-American Students	17271	322	17593	1.83%
White	167792	1806	169598	1.06%
Multi-Racial	13462	174	13636	1.28%
Hispanic	50709	552	51261	1.08%
Free and Reduced Lunch	118947	1765	120712	1.46%
Free Lunch only	95215	1471	96686	1.52%
Reduced Lunch only	23732	294	24026	1.22%
Self-Paid Lunch only	140270	1212	141482	0.86%
Migrant	1464	9	1473	0.61%
English Learner Students	24885	94	24979	0.38%
English Learner with Disabilities	3139	88	3227	2.73%
Non-English Learner Students	234332	2883	237215	1.22%
Male	132014	1887	133901	1.41%
Females	127203	1090	128293	0.85%
Military Connected Students	6302	69	6371	1.08%
Homeless	3193	25	3218	0.78%
Foster Care	2599	111	2710	4.10%

Table 2: Alternate Assessment Participation Rates for 2017-2018 for mathematics

Student Sub-Group	# Students Participating in Regular Assessment	# Students Participating in Alternate Assessment	Total # Students Assessed	Percentage Participating in Alternate Assessment
All Students	260387	3017	263404	1.15%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2276	20	2296	0.87%
Asian	7447	96	7543	1.27%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	479	8	487	1.64%
African-American Students	17286	323	17609	1.83%
White	167701	1802	169503	1.06%
Multi-Racial	13448	174	13622	1.28%
Hispanic	51750	954	52704	1.81%
Free and Reduced Lunch	119751	1805	121556	1.48%
Free Lunch only	95895	1506	97401	1.55%
Reduced Lunch only	23856	299	24155	1.24%
Self-Paid Lunch only	140636	1212	141848	0.85%
Migrant	1572	9	1581	0.57%
English Learner Students	26437	144	26581	0.54%
English Learner with Disabilities	3217	136	3353	4.06%
Non-English Learner Students	233950	2873	236823	1.21%
Male	132607	1913	134520	1.42%
Females	127780	1104	128884	0.86%
Military Connected Students	6349	69	6418	1.08%
Homeless	3292	24	3316	0.72%
Foster Care	2582	110	2692	4.09%

Table 3: Alternate Assessment Participation Rates for 2017-2018 for science

Student Sub-Group	# Students Participating in Regular Assessment	# Students Participating in Alternate Assessment	Total # Students Assessed	Percentage Participating in Alternate Assessment
All Students	109350	1130	110480	1.02%
American Indian or Alaska Native	943	10	953	1.05%
Asian	3293	31	3324	0.93%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	204	1	205	0.49%
African-American Students	6948	121	7069	1.71%
White	71695	693	72388	0.96%
Multi-Racial	5334	69	5403	1.28%
Hispanic	20933	205	21138	0.97%
Free and Reduced Lunch	47288	635	47923	1.33%
Free Lunch only	37335	521	37856	1.38%
Reduced Lunch only	9953	114	10067	1.13%
Self-Paid Lunch only	62062	495	62557	0.79%
Migrant	567	2	569	0.35%
English Learner Students	10016	49	10065	0.49%
English Learner with Disabilities	1200	47	1247	3.77%
Non-English Learner Students	99334	1081	100415	1.08%
Male	55913	684	56597	1.21%
Females	53437	446	53883	0.83%
Military Connected Students	2238	22	2260	0.97%
Homeless	1263	6	1269	0.47%
Foster Care	1098	33	1131	2.92%

Table 4: Participation Rate of All Students and Students with Disabilities (Grades 3-8 and High School) 2017-2018

Content area	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
Reading	248,943	251,130	99.13%	33,075	33,870	97.65%
Math	249,110	251,071	99.22%	33,103	33,839	97.82%
Science	104,578	105,796	98.85%	12,873	13,304	96.76%

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Table 5: Alternate Assessment Risk Ratio for 2017-2018 for Reading/Language arts

Target group	Comparison Group	Percentage of Target Group Participating in Alternate Assessment	Percent of comparison group participating in alternate assessment	Risk Ratio
American Indian or Alaska Natives	All other races	0.87%	1.14%	0.766624
Asians	All other races	1.29%	1.13%	1.145166
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders	All other races	1.68%	1.13%	1.478405
African-American Students	All other races	1.83%	1.09%	1.686202
Whites	All other races	1.06%	1.26%	0.842039
Multi-Racial	All other races	1.28%	1.13%	1.131532
Hispanics	All other races	1.08%	1.15%	0.936666
Free and Reduced Lunch	All self-paid lunch	1.46%	0.86%	1.70684
Migrants	All non - migrants	0.61%	1.14%	0.536725
English Learner Students	All non-English Learners	0.38%	1.22%	0.309635
Non-English Learner Students	All English Learners	1.22%	0.38%	3.229607
Males	All females	1.41%	0.85%	1.657941
Females	All males	0.85%	1.41%	0.602566
Military Connected Students	All non-military connected students	1.08%	1.14%	0.952767
Homeless	All non-homeless	0.78%	1.14%	0.681549
Foster Care	All non- foster care	4.10%	1.10%	3.708413

Table 6: Alternate Assessment Risk Ratio for 2017-2018 for mathematics

Target group	Comparison Group	Percentage of Target Group Participating in Alternate Assessment	Percent of comparison group participating in alternate assessment	Risk Ratio
American Indian or Alaska Native	All other races	0.87%	1.14%	0.766624
Asian	All other races	1.27%	1.13%	1.145166
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	All other races	1.64%	1.13%	1.478405
African-American Students	All other races	1.83%	1.09%	1.686202
White	All other races	1.06%	1.26%	0.842039
Multi-Racial	All other races	1.28%	1.13%	1.131532
Hispanic	All other races	1.81%	1.15%	0.936666
Free and Reduced Lunch	All self-paid lunch	1.48%	0.86%	1.70684
Migrant	All non - migrants	0.57%	1.14%	0.536725
English Learner Students	All non-English Learners	0.54%	1.22%	0.309635
Non-English Learner Students	All English Learners	1.21%	0.38%	3.229607
Male	All females	1.42%	0.85%	1.657941
Females	All males	0.86%	1.41%	0.602566
Military Connected Students	All non-military connected students	1.08%	1.14%	0.952767
Homeless	All non-homeless	0.72%	1.14%	0.681549
Foster Care	All non- foster care	4.09%	1.10%	3.708413

Table 7: Alternate Assessment Risk Ratio for 2017-2018 for science

Target group	Comparison Group	Percentage of Target Group Participating in Alternate Assessment	Percent of comparison group participating in alternate assessment	Risk Ratio
American Indian or Alaska Native	All other races	1.05%	1.02%	1.026149
Asian	All other races	0.93%	1.03%	0.909326
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	All other races	0.49%	1.02%	0.476463
African-American Students	All other races	1.71%	0.98%	1.754296
White	All other races	0.96%	1.15%	0.834486
Multi-Racial	All other races	1.28%	1.01%	1.264755
Hispanic	All other races	0.97%	1.04%	0.936707
Free and Reduced Lunch	All self-paid lunch	1.33%	0.79%	1.674559
Migrant	All non - migrants	0.35%	1.03%	0.342491
English Learner Students	All non-English Learners	0.49%	1.08%	0.452226
Non-English Learner Students	All English Learners	1.08%	0.49%	2.211285
Male	All females	1.21%	0.85%	1.421817
Females	All males	0.83%	1.41%	0.587035
Military Connected Students	All non-military connected students	0.97%	1.02%	0.950784
Homeless	All non-homeless	0.47%	1.03%	0.459399
Foster Care	All non-foster care	2.92%	1.00%	2.908436