

NCEO Tool 8

A Five-Step
Process for
Developing and
Reviewing District
Justifications
for Exceeding
1.0% AA-AAAS
Participation

1% Toolkit

A Five-Step Process for Developing and Reviewing District Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation

Sharon Hall, Maureen Hawes, Kathy Strunk, and Martha Thurlow

A publication of: NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

In collaboration with

NCEO's 2019 1.0% Peer Learning Group 2 (PLG 2)

The Center is supported through a Cooperative Agreement (#H326G160001) with the Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. The Center is affiliated with the Institute on Community Integration at the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. The contents of this report were developed under the Cooperative Agreement from the U.S. Department of Education, but does not necessarily represent the policy or opinions of the U.S. Department of Education or Offices within it. Readers should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

Project Officer: David Egnor



All rights reserved. Any or all portions of this document may be reproduced and distributed without prior permission, provided the source is cited as:

Hall, S., Hawes, M., Strunk, K., Thurlow, M. L. (2019). *A five-step process for developing and reviewing district justifications for exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation*. National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Acknowledgments

This *Five-Step Process* was developed through the work of the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) 1.0% 2019 Peer Learning Group (PLG) 2, “Guiding and Evaluating District Justifications for Exceeding the 1% Cap.” which took place June – August, 2019.

In addition to the authors of this document, it took a team to ensure that PLG 2 was successful. Members of this team included, in addition to the authors (in alphabetical order): Anthea Brady, Duane Brown, Cesar D’Agord, Susan Hayes, Sheryl Lazarus, Judy Lee, Charity Tatah Mentan, Kate Nagle, Travis Peterson, Tanner Petry, Steve Ruffini, and Tony Ruggiero, and Mari Shikuzawa.

Staff from 48 states, the District of Columbia, and the Bureau of Indian Education participated in the PLG 2 webinar calls. The participating states are listed here. This *Five-Step Process* tool would not exist had it not been for their active participation in PLG 2.

Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Bureau of Indian Education
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan

Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
North Carolina
North Dakota
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

A Five-Step Process for Developing and Reviewing District Justifications for Exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation

The 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), includes a 1.0% threshold on state-level participation rates in the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). No limit was placed on district¹ or school rates, but districts must provide information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation and states are to provide support and oversight to these districts.

To meet these requirements states and districts need to examine their data on AA-AAAS participation as a basis for having discussions about the data and whether state participation guidelines are being followed and appropriate decisions are being made for individual students. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must use these data to provide information and evidence to their State Education Agencies (SEAs) justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. SEAs must review this information and determine support and appropriate oversight to these LEAs.

Federal Law

Alternate assessments were first developed in response to the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which required that all states and districts develop, by the year 2000, alternate assessments for those students with disabilities unable to participate in regular assessments even with accommodations. IDEA did not define who the students were who could participate in an alternate assessment, nor did it use the term “significant cognitive disability.” In 2003, regulations added to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) allowed states to count as proficient those students with significant cognitive disabilities who participated in the alternate assessment and met rigorous alternate achievement standards set by the state.

In 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA reaffirmed that an AA-AAAS is the appropriate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. ESSA placed a 1.0% cap on the state participation rate for each subject, based on the total number of all students in the state assessed in the subject (34 CFR 200.6(c)(2)). ESSA specified that states cannot place a cap on the participation rates of local education agencies (LEAs) in any subject (34 CFR 200.6(c)(3)(i)). This means that LEAs can exceed 1.0% participation in an AA-AAAS in a given subject, but the state as a whole cannot exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation in any subject.

ESSA required LEAs expected to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation to submit information justifying the need to exceed 1.0%. In addition, the state must provide oversight and monitoring of LEAs that submit justifications (34 CFR 200.6(c)(3)(ii-iii)).

¹ Term used synonymously with Local Education Agency (LEA).

Introduction

This resource was created collaboratively by the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) and the 2019 NCEO Peer Learning Group 2 (PLG 2). The outcomes of this work included:

- Identifying what should be required in district information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation
- Identifying and creating tools that all states can use to evaluate district information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation
- Increasing knowledge of SEAs to evaluate district justifications and select support, appropriate oversight, and meaningful steps to implement in LEAs
- Identifying practices to make the 1.0% threshold process more systematic in states

Purpose of Tool

The purpose of this tool is to provide SEAs a systematic process to support the implementation of requirements for (a) LEAs to provide information justifying the need for AA-AAAS participation rates over 1.0%, and (b) SEAs to review this information, provide support and appropriate oversight, and take meaningful steps to ensure that, under state and LEA policies, only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are assessed with an AA-AAAS, consistent with the statutory requirement limiting participation in the AA-AAAS. This tool does not address situations in which a state discovers that students who should participate in the AA-AAAS are being assigned to the general assessment, even though this may be identified in a root cause analysis.

This tool presents a five-step process to address the 1.0% threshold requirements for reviewing LEA justifications and providing support, oversight, and technical assistance when appropriate. It includes: (a) three templates for SEA and LEA use; (b) a continuum of support, oversight, and technical assistance SEAs may provide; and (c) additional resources for SEAs and LEAs.² Appendix A provides definitions of key terms used in this tool.

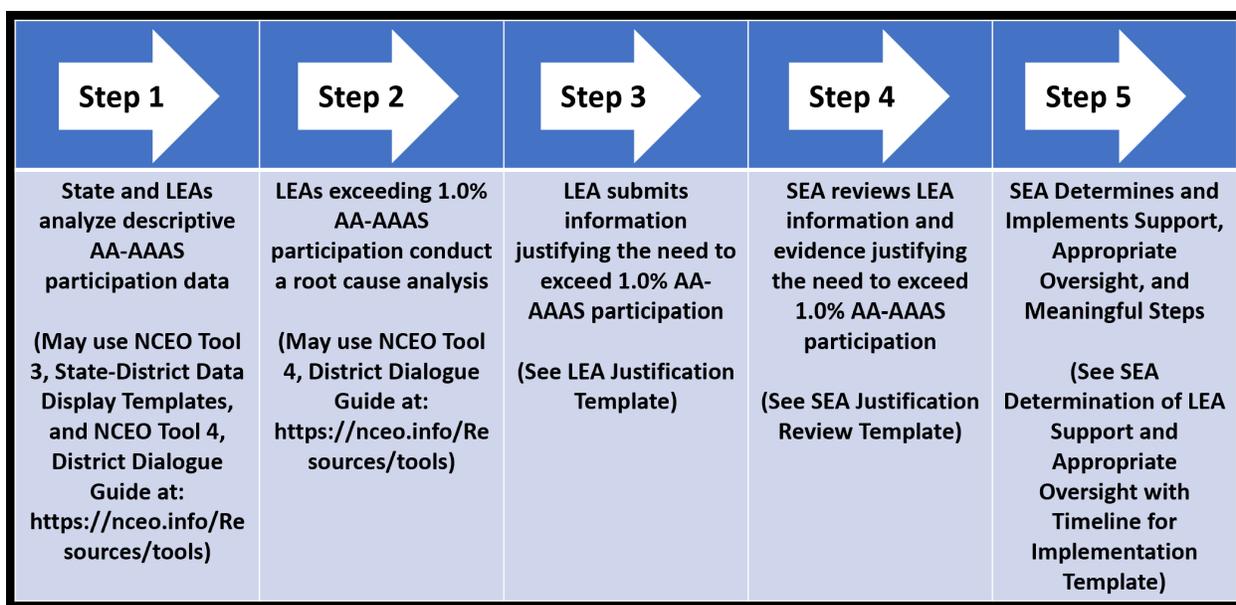
² States may wish to use this resource in conjunction with three tools that were developed collaboratively by NCEO and PLG 1. The resources are intended to support states as they examine data associated with district justifications for exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. Each of these tools may be found at <https://nceo.info/Resources/tools>. The tools are:

- *Data Analysis and Use Planning Tool for Examining AA-AAAS Participation: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 2)
- *State-District Data Display Templates: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 3)
- *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 4)

Overview of Five-Step Process

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of a five-step process. Step 1 of the recommended five-step process involves the SEA and LEA identifying and providing descriptive data about AA-AAAS participation. In Step 2, LEAs that exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation conduct a root cause analysis. Next, in Step 3, the LEA submits information to the SEA justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation, with the information being based on its root cause analysis. In Step 4, the SEA reviews the LEA information and decides whether the LEA-submitted evidence supports the need to exceed 1.0%. For Step 5, the SEA determines and implements the kind of support, oversight, and meaningful steps it will provide to the LEA, including an implementation timeline, with the goal being to ensure that students are identified appropriately for participation in the AA-AAAS.

Figure 1. Five-Step Process



Step 1: State and LEAs analyze descriptive AA-AAAS participation data

SEAs analyze participation data necessary for identifying districts that may need to submit a justification, and LEAs analyze participation data needed to begin a process of root cause analysis if participation exceeds 1.0% (see Step 2).

The SEA uses:

State-District Data Display Templates: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment (NCEO Tool 3)³ to examine the data displayed. This will help the state determine whether there are any unusual results that require further examination and discussion

³ All PLG 1 and PLG 2 Tools may be found at <https://nceo.info/Resources/tools>.

(e.g., more English learners than in the overall special education population participating in the AA-AAAS), and whether any districts have unusual data.

An LEA uses:

Data Analysis and Use Planning Tool for Examining AA-AAAS Participation: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment (NCEO Tool 2). This provides the LEA with a four-step data analysis framework.

Several resources to support this step are provided in Appendix B.

Step 2: LEAs exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation conduct a root cause analysis

LEAs exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation should conduct a root cause analysis to determine possible reasons for exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation.⁴ LEAs may use the *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 4) to guide the root cause analysis process. Tool 4 includes procedures, topics, and questions to guide discussions within districts. Use of Tool 4 might be a final step in the process of digging into data.

Resources to support this step are provided in Appendix C.

Step 3: LEA submits information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation

Section 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(II) requires an LEA that exceeds 1.0% participation in the AA-AAAS to submit information to the SEA justifying the need to exceed 1.0%. After the LEA has conducted its root cause analysis, it submits information to the SEA justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. The justification should be based on the LEAs root cause analysis.

The *Template for LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation* (see Figure 2, Step 3) provides a format for LEA selection of information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. The template includes four categories of information that could be part of a justification of the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation; examples of detailed statements that might be relevant are included for some of the categories. The four categories of information are:

⁴ When states conduct a root cause analysis, they may discover that there is a lack of clarity about participation decision making (e.g., participation guideline issues, need for more targeted professional development, etc.) that leads to general misidentification issues. Misidentification might include not identifying students who should participate in the AA-AAAS as well as identifying students in the AA-AAAS who should not be.

1. **Program.** The district includes specialized schools or programs, community programs, or health program(s) that draw large numbers of families of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to live in the district.
2. **Small Size.** The district has a small overall student tested population and it takes only a very few students participating in the AA-AAAS to exceed 1.0%.
3. **IEP Decisions.** IEP teams in some schools may not consistently follow the state's guidelines for making assessment participation decisions.
4. **Variability.** Participation rates vary based on setting/program/school or AA-AAAS content area assessed.

Of course, states may change the categories or information related to each one to fit their own context.

LEAs should review each statement in the categories on the template and, based on their data, indicate **Yes** or **No**. If the LEA selects **Yes** for any statement in a category, a brief description and supporting evidence should be entered (e.g., data or contextual information). The entered information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation must reflect outcomes of the LEA's data analysis and contextual information.

Resources to support Step 3 are provided in Appendix D.

Figure 2. Template for LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0 AA-AAAS Participation

LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation	Yes	No
<p>Programs. This district includes specialized schools or programs, community programs, or health programs that draw large numbers of families with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to live in the district.</p>		
<p>Provide brief description of programs and supporting evidence (data or contextual information).</p>		
<p>Small size. The district has a small overall student tested population and it takes only a very few students participating in the AA-AAAS to exceed 1.0%, based on State definition of “small.”</p>		
<p>Provide brief description of student tested population and supporting evidence (data or contextual information).</p>		
<p>IEP decisions. IEP teams (school staff and parents) in some schools do not consistently implement the state’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS. They may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack understanding of the state’s definition of students with the most significant disabilities. • Use reasons for AA-AAAS participation decisions that are NOT included in the state’s participation guidelines. • Be concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for the student, or base assessment decisions on concerns about the impact of student scores on accountability ratings. • Not have considered whether students whose AA-AAAS scores of proficient or advanced, should participate in the general assessment with appropriate supports and accommodations. 		
<p>Provide brief description about IEP decisions and supporting evidence (data or contextual information).</p>		
<p>Variability. Participation rates vary based on setting/program/school or AA-AAAS content area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in restrictive settings are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS. • Students who attend (state inserts types of schools that may be state-specific) are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS. • Some students with disabilities participated in the general assessment in elementary school but were assigned the AA-AAAS when they transitioned to secondary (middle, high) school. • AA-AAAS participation rates are higher in some schools compared to other schools with same grade levels. • AA-AAAS participation rates differ in reading, mathematics, and science. 		
<p>Provide brief description of variability by setting, program, or school, or content area and supporting evidence (data or contextual information).</p>		

Step 4: SEA reviews LEA information and evidence justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation

In Step 4, the SEA reviews the LEA-submitted information justifying the need to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. The SEA may document the outcome of its review using *Template for SEA Review of LEA Information and Evidence Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation* (see Figure 3, Step 4).

Column 1 (LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1% AA-AAAS Participation) includes the four categories of justification statements that are the same as those in the *LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1% AA-AAAS Participation Template* (from Step 3).

Column 2 (SEA Review) includes the state's review of the information provided by the LEA. The state should indicate **Yes** if the descriptions and data-based or contextual-based evidence provided by the LEA support the selected statements. The state should select **No** if the descriptions and data-based or contextual-based evidence do not support the statements provided by the LEA.

Column 3 (Explanation of Outcome of Review) provides space for the state to explain its determination of whether the evidence provided by the LEA was sufficient. If the descriptions and data and contextual information evidence:

- **Support** the LEA-selected statement, the state should provide an explanation supporting this determination.
- **Do NOT support** the LEA-selected statement, provide an explanation supporting this determination.

Resources to support Step 4 are provided in Appendix E

Figure 3. Template for SEA Review of LEA Information and Evidence Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation

LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation	SEA Review (Yes = acceptable justification; No = non-acceptable justification)		Explanation of Outcome of Review
Program. This district includes specialized schools or programs, community programs, or health programs that draw large numbers of families with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to live in the district.	Yes	No	
Small size. This district has a small overall student tested population and it takes only a very few students participating in the AA-AAAS to exceed 1.0%, based on State definition of “small.”	Yes	No	
<p>IEP decisions. IEP teams (school staff and parents) in some schools in this district do not consistently implement the state’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS.⁵ They may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack understanding of the state’s definition of students with the most significant disabilities. • Use reasons for AA-AAAS participation decisions that are NOT included in the state’s participation guidelines. • Be concerned that the general 	Yes	No	

⁵ PLG 3 (Building Capacity of IEP Teams and Parents/Guardians in Making Decisions about Assessment Participation) has developed tools that address IEP decisions. These may be found at: <https://nceo.info/Resources/tools>

LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation	SEA Review (Yes = acceptable justification; No = non-acceptable justification)		Explanation of Outcome of Review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment will be too difficult or stressful for the student, or base assessment decisions on concerns about the impact of student scores on accountability ratings. • Not have considered whether students whose AA-AAAS scores of proficient or advanced, should participate in the general assessment with appropriate supports and accommodations. 			
<p>Variability. Participation rates vary based on setting/program/school or AA-AAAS content area. Students in restrictive settings are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who attend (state inserts types of schools that may be state-specific) are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS. • Some students with disabilities participated in the general assessment in elementary school but were assigned the AA-AAAS when they transitioned to secondary (middle, high) school. • AA-AAAS participation rates are higher in some schools compared to other schools with same grade levels. • AA-AAAS participation rates differ in reading, mathematics, and science. 	Yes	No	

Step 5: SEA determines and implements support, appropriate oversight, and meaningful steps

Based on the SEA review of LEA information, the SEA determines and implements support, appropriate oversight, and meaningful steps that the SEA will provide for the LEA to ensure that students are appropriately identified for participation in an AA-AAAS. This is consistent with Section 1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III) of ESSA, which requires a State to provide “appropriate oversight, as determined by the State,” of any such LEA:

The State will monitor and regularly evaluate each such LEA to ensure that the LEA provides sufficient training such that school staff who participate as members of an IEP team or other placement team understand and implement the guidelines established by the State . . . so that all students are appropriately assessed . . . Section 200.6(c)(4)iv(B)I

Using *Template for SEA Determination of LEA Support and Appropriate Oversight with Timeline for Implementation* (see Figure 4, Step 5), the SEA can document its decisions and timelines for implementation of support and appropriate oversight.

Column 1 (LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1% AA-AAAS Participation) lists the four categories and statements included in the Templates for Steps 3 and 4.

Column 2 (Determination of Support and Appropriate Oversight for LEA) provides space for the SEA to identify the support and oversight the SEA could provide the LEA to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are assessed with an AA-AAAS. Figure 5 (*SEA Support and Appropriate Oversight: A Continuum of Technical Assistance*) provides examples of possible support and appropriate oversight, based on the intensity of needs of an LEA.

Column 3 (Timeline for Implementation) provides a state a place to indicate the timeline to provide each of the selected supports and oversight to the LEA.

Resources to support Step 5 are provided in Appendix F.

Figure 4. Template for SEA Determination of LEA Support and Appropriate Oversight with Timeline for Implementation

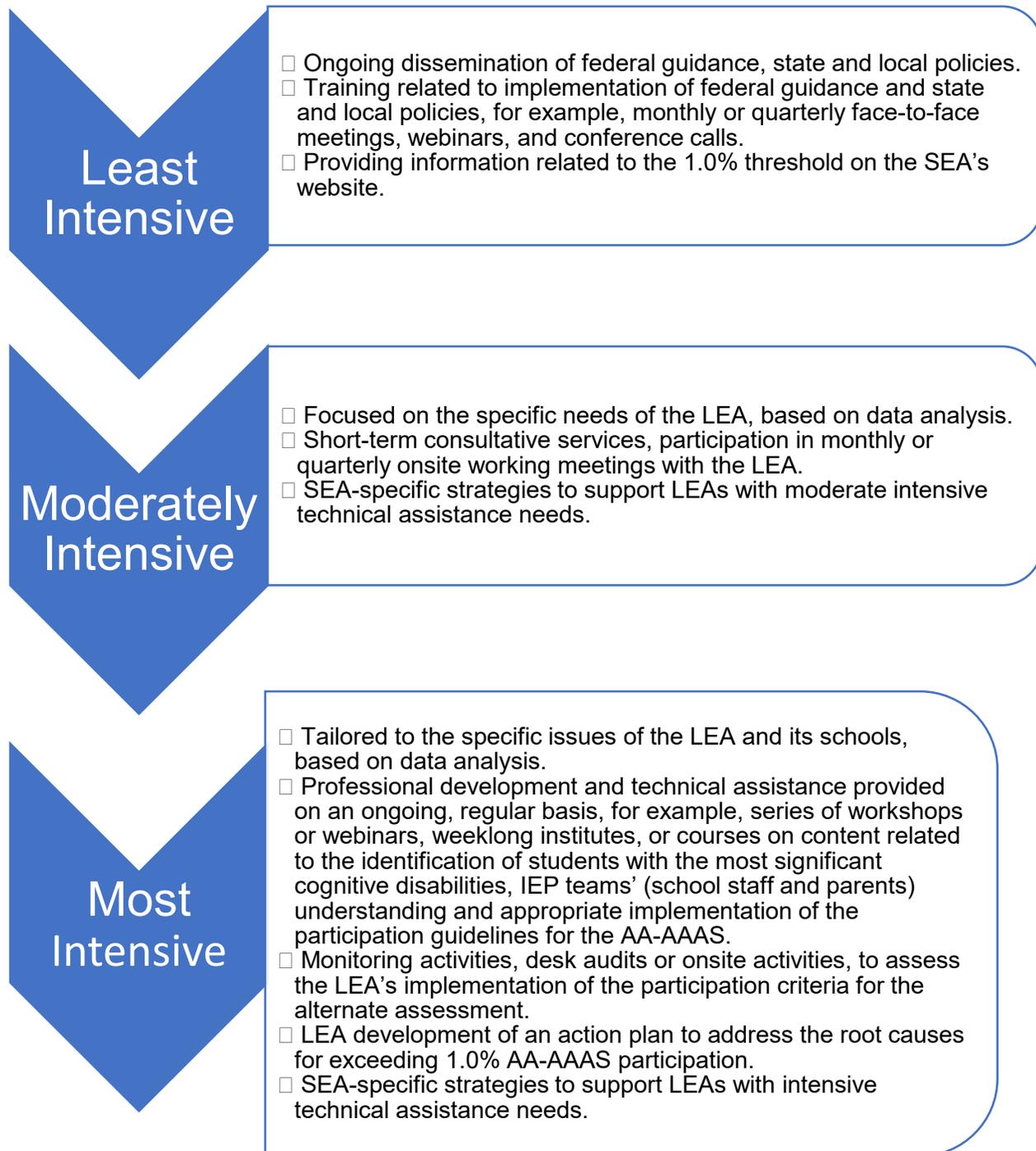
LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation	Determination of Support and Appropriate Oversight for LEA	Timeline for Implementation
<p>Program. This district includes specialized schools or programs, community programs, or health programs that draw large numbers of families with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to live in the district.</p>		
<p>Small size. This district has a small overall student tested population and it takes only a very few students participating in the AA-AAAS to exceed 1.0%, based on State definition of “small.”</p>		
<p>IEP decisions. IEP teams (school staff and parents) in some schools in this district do not consistently implement the state’s guidelines for participation in the AA-AAAS.⁶ They may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack understanding of the state’s definition of students with the most significant disabilities. • Use reasons for AA-AAAS participation decisions that are NOT included in the state’s participation guidelines. • Be concerned that the general assessment will be too difficult or stressful for the student, or base assessment decisions on concerns about the impact of student scores on accountability ratings. • Not have considered whether students whose AA-AAAS scores of proficient or advanced, should participate in the general assessment with appropriate supports and accommodations. 		

⁶ PLG 3 (Building Capacity of IEP Teams and Parents and Guardians in Making Decisions about Assessment Participation) has developed tools that may support this step. The tools may be found at: <https://nceo.info/Resources/tools>

LEA Information Justifying the Need to Exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS Participation	Determination of Support and Appropriate Oversight for LEA	Timeline for Implementation
<p>Variability. Participation rates vary based on setting/program/school or AA-AAAS content area. Students in restrictive settings are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who attend (state inserts types of schools that may be state-specific) are more likely to participate in the AA-AAAS. • Some students with disabilities participated in the general assessment in elementary school but were assigned the AA-AAAS when they transitioned to secondary (middle, high) school. • AA-AAAS participation rates are higher in some schools compared to other schools with same grade levels. • AA-AAAS participation rates differ in reading, mathematics, and science. 		

Figure 5 shows a possible continuum of technical assistance that an SEA might implement to provide support and oversight to LEAs.

Figure 5. SEA Continuum of Technical Assistance for LEAs



As shown in Figure 5, the levels are:

Least Intensive Support, Oversight, and Technical Assistance

The state provides the **least intensive** types of technical assistance to all LEAs. LEAs will receive federal guidance, state and local policies, and training related to implementation of such guidance and policies. Training for LEAs could include monthly or quarterly face-to-face meetings, webinars, conference calls, and provision of information on the SEA's website related to the AA-AAAS participation and the state-level 1.0% threshold.

Moderately Intensive Support, Oversight, and Technical Assistance

For LEAs that an SEA anticipates may exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation, the SEA will provide **moderate intensive** technical assistance. Examples of support that the SEA may provide these LEAs include short-term consultations and participation in monthly or quarterly onsite working meetings with the LEA. The technical assistance and professional development provided at this level should be focused on the specific needs of the LEA, based on data analyses.

Most Intensive Support, Oversight, and Technical Assistance

LEAs identified as exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation need the most intensive supports to address the identified root causes for exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. This **most intensive** support requires more resources, including time, and must be tailored to the identified root causes of the LEA and its schools. The provision of technical assistance and professional development should occur on a regular, ongoing basis for these LEAs. Examples of technical assistance an SEA might provide these LEAs include a required series of webinars, weeklong institutes, or courses on content related to the identification of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, increasing IEP teams' (school staff and parents) understanding and appropriate implementation of the participation guidelines for the AA-AAAS, and conducting monitoring activities, either desk audits or onsite observations and consultations, to assess the LEA's implementation of the participation criteria for the AA-AAAS. The SEA may require the LEA to develop an action plan to address the root causes for exceeding 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. SEAs may have additional strategies to support LEAs with intensive technical assistance needs.

Appendix A

Definitions of Key Terms

PLG 2 participants recognized that several terms they used might not have a common meaning across states. To support its work and a shared understanding and communication among SEA and LEA users of this resource, PLG 2 participants agreed on the definitions of several terms. States may want to review definitions provided in federal laws, as well as those presented here.

Data Analysis – Data analysis usually refers to a deep investigation of relevant data using a variety of methods to make comparisons, identify patterns, trends, themes, and problem areas that can inform important questions to ask, action planning, and decision making.

Data Review – In the case of the 1.0% ESSA requirements, data review provides an opportunity for the SEA and LEAs to identify, collect, manage, and examine data relevant to AA-AAAS participation to inform decisions that lead to student and program outcome improvement.

Justification – Although “justification” is not defined in ESSA, dictionary synonyms for “justify” include “defend,” “validate,” and “substantiate.”

Monitoring – Monitoring refers to the process of overseeing LEA practices related to data, educator, administrator, student, and parent needs; data review, and IEP reviews. Monitoring may be based on a pre-determined schedule or conducted as needed. A need for the provision of technical assistance and training and corrective action may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Professional Development – Professional development generally refers to a sustained process of learning and capacity-building opportunities that substantially advance educator knowledge, skills, and understanding and are aligned with the goals of the SEA or LEA; training generally refers to short-term learning opportunities to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills in specific areas. Professional development as a whole, is regularly evaluated for its effectiveness, with the findings of evaluations used to improve the quality of the professional development.

Root Cause Analysis – Root cause analysis is a process used to uncover causes of problems. A variety of methodologies may be used to enact a root cause analysis, including brainstorming, visualization tools, a team process, and a “strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats” analysis.

Small District – A small district is one in which the district’s population is such that only one or a few students may cause the LEA to exceed 1.0% AA-AAAS participation. Some states determine the definition of “small district” to plan 1.0% work activities and oversight.

Technical Assistance (TA) – Technical assistance generally refers to the provision of capacity building services, resources, and leadership for needs identified by educators, including assistance with administration and implementation of programs. A technical assistance provider and recipient may develop a plan identifying a series of activities that will be carried out in order to reach a valued outcome.

Appendix B

Resources for Step 1

State and LEAs Analyze Descriptive AA-AAAS Participation Data

- NCEO Brief 12. (2017). *Strategies for Meeting the 1% State-level Cap on Participation in the Alternate Assessment*.
<https://nceo.info/Resources/publications/OnlinePubs/briefs/brief12/brief12.html>
- NCEO Tool 2. (2019). *Data Analysis and Use Planning Tool for Examining AA-AAA Participation: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment*. <https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tool2DataAnalysisAndUse.pdf>
- NCEO Tool 3. (2019). *State-District Data Display Templates: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment*.
<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tool3DataDisplayTemplates.pdf>

Appendix C

Resources for Step 2

LEAs exceeding the 1.0% AA-AAAS participation conduct a root cause analysis

- Evans, C. M., & Domaleski, C. (2018). *Guidance for Examining District Alternate Assessment Participation Rates*. National Center on Educational Outcomes.
- NCEO Tool 4. (2019). *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment*.
<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tool4DialogueGuide.pdf>
<https://nceo.info/Resources/publications/OnlinePubs/briefs/briefOct2018/default.html>
- NCEO Brief 18. (2019). Evans, C., & Domaleski, C. *Guidance for Examining Disproportionality of Student Group Participation in Alternate Assessments*. National Center on Educational Outcomes.
<https://nceo.info/Resources/publications/OnlinePubs/briefs/briefOct2018/default.html>
- National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA) & National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO). *Guidance for Examining Participation Rates and Disproportionality: A Video Training Module*. <https://vimeo.com/325082455>.

Appendix D

Resources for Step 3

LEA submits information justifying the need to exceed the 1.0% AA-AAAS participation

- National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). (2016). *Characteristics of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: Data from NCSC's 2015 Assessment*.
<http://www.ncscpartners.org/Media/Default/PDFs/Resources/NCSCBrief8.pdf>
- TIES Center Resource: *Taking the Alternate Assessment Does NOT mean education in a Separate Setting!*
<https://tiescenter.org/resource/NO/yDQYeoQQe0thNgNp4chg>
- TIES Center Resource: *TIP #6: Using the Least Dangerous Assumption in Educational Decisions*. Adapted from Donellan, A.M. (1984). *The Criterion of the Least Dangerous Assumption*.
<https://tiescenter.org/resource/SH/Py-il1RbSn3Hb5fMYLZA>.
- State-specific Accommodations Manuals and Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific Alternate Assessment Guidance Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific professional development, trainings, and associated resources (State Department of Education websites).

Appendix E

Resources for Step 4

SEA reviews LEA information and evidence justifying the need to exceed 1.0% threshold

- NCEO Brief 12. (2017). *Strategies for Meeting the 1% State-level Cap on Participation in the Alternate Assessment*.
<https://nceo.info/Resources/publications/OnlinePubs/briefs/brief12/brief12.html>
- Thurlow, M. L., Lazarus, S. S., Albus, D. A., Larson, E. D., & Liu, K. (2019). *2018-19 Participation Guidelines and Definitions for Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards* (NCEO Report 415). National Center on Educational Outcomes. <https://nceo.info/Resources/Publications>
<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOREport415.pdf>
- Warren, S. H., Strunk, K., Lazarus, S. S., & Thurlow, M. L. (2019). *Forum on States and Districts Working Together on the 1.0% threshold*. National Center on Educational Outcomes. <https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOForumReport2019.pdf>
- TIES Center Resource: *Taking the Alternate Assessment Does NOT mean education in a Separate Setting!*
<https://tiescenter.org/resource/NO/yDQYeoQQe0thNgNp4chg>
- TIES Center Resource: *TIP #6: Using the Least Dangerous Assumption in Educational Decisions*. Adapted from Donellan, A. M. (1984). *The Criterion of the Least Dangerous Assumption*.
<https://tiescenter.org/resource/SH/Py-il1RbSn3Hb5fMYLZA>.
- State-specific Accommodations Manuals and Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific Alternate Assessment Guidance Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific professional development, trainings, and associated resources (State Department of Education websites).

Appendix F

Resources for Step 5

SEA determines and implements support, appropriate oversight, and meaningful steps

- *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 4)
- NCEO Brief 12. (2017). *Strategies for Meeting the 1% State-level Cap on Participation in the Alternate Assessment*.
<https://nceo.info/Resources/publications/OnlinePubs/briefs/brief12/brief12.html>
- *District Dialogue Guide: Addressing the Percentage of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment* (NCEO Tool 4)
<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/Tool4DialogueGuide.pdf>
- NCEO & TIES Center Brief. (2020). *MTSS for All: Including Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities*.
<https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOBriefMTSS.pdf>
- Warren, S. H., Strunk, K., Lazarus, S. S., & Thurlow, M. L. (2019). *Forum on States and Districts Working Together on the 1.0% Threshold*. National Center on Educational Outcomes. <https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/NCEOForumReport2019.pdf>
- State-specific Accommodations Manuals and Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific Alternate Assessment Guidance Resources (State Department of Education websites).
- State-specific professional development, trainings, and associated resources (State Department of Education websites).

INSTITUTE *on* COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

NCEO is an affiliated center of the Institute on Community Integration