

# Using Multiple Assessment Measures to Inform Instruction of Students on the Cusp Between the Alternate Assessment and the General Assessment

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NCSA  
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MAKING IMPROVED DECISIONS FOR STUDENTS ON THE CUSP OF  
ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION USING MULTIPLE MEASURES OF  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES

# Outline

- Learning Objectives
- Project Overview
- Research Activities
- Discussion

# Learning Objectives

1. Identify the advantages and challenges of including students on the cusp of the alternate assessment and general assessment for inclusion in the general education curriculum
2. Describe the types of multiple measures teachers use in their instructional decision making for students on the cusp.
3. Describe professional development needs related to using multiple measures.

# Project Overview

**Making Improved Decisions for Students on the Cusp of Alternate Assessment Participation Using Multiple Measures of Academic Achievement from Multiple Sources (MIDAS)**

Funding source: Competitive Grants for State Assessments grant

Time: 4 years, 2022–2026

# State Partners

In collaboration with:



For more information, see <https://themidasproject.org/>



The Making Improved Decisions for Students on the Cusp of Alternate Assessment Participation Using Multiple Measures of Academic Achievement from Multiple Sources (MIDAS) project is supported by a contract (state of Arkansas Award #CON000000099314) based on a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (Award #S368A220001). Collaborating states include North Carolina and West Virginia. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Arkansas Department of Education, collaborating states, or the U.S. Department of Education (or Offices within it). Readers should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

# Why The MIDAS Project?

- 2015 reauthorization of ESEA
  - 1% cap on student participation in the AA-AAAS (Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards – AA-AAAS)
  - Issue: States > 1% cap
- Challenge: Students' AA-AAAS transition to general state assessment
  - Issue: Educators unprepared

# Purpose

- To inform instructional decision making for students with disabilities, including English learners (ELs) with disabilities, who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment.
- To create customizable templates, professional learning modules, and supporting materials for educators on the use of data from multiple measures of academic achievement.

# Project Goals

- To increase capacity of state education agencies (SEAs) to provide technical assistance (TA) to local education agencies (LEAs) on the use of multiple measures of academic achievement from multiple sources to improve instructional practices for students with disabilities who move from the alternate assessment based on alternate academic standards (AA-AAAS) to the general assessment.
- To increase capacity of special education and general education teachers to successfully instruct students with disabilities who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment.

# Project Activities

- Identify existing instructional resources and measures of academic achievement that could inform instruction of students who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment
- Conduct online focus groups with teachers
- Conduct classroom observations and follow-up teacher interviews
- Parent interviews
- Conduct targeted state data analyses

# Multiple Means of Assessment to Inform Learning & Instruction



# Interim Assessment

## Interim Assessment

- Broad range of commercial products often embedded within curriculums
- Used for various purposes
- Make sure the assessment is appropriate for students with disabilities
- Ways they might inform instruction

# Formative Assessment Practices

## Formative Assessment Practices

- Research supports positive impacts for *all* learners - whole class & individual students
- Integrating into instruction requires focused skill development by teachers
- May need to be adapted for students with disabilities, especially students with more extensive disabilities
- The principles of Universal Design should be applied to assessment (UDA) as well as learning (UDL)

# Key Takeaways

1. High expectations for *all* students.
2. Use data from multiple data points and from multiple measures.
3. Ensure interim assessments are appropriately used.
4. Focus on formative assessment practices that are effective for entire classroom.
5. Integrate use of formative assessment cycle and Universal Design
6. Pre-service and professional development on assessment participation and use of assessment data.

# Focus Groups - Purpose

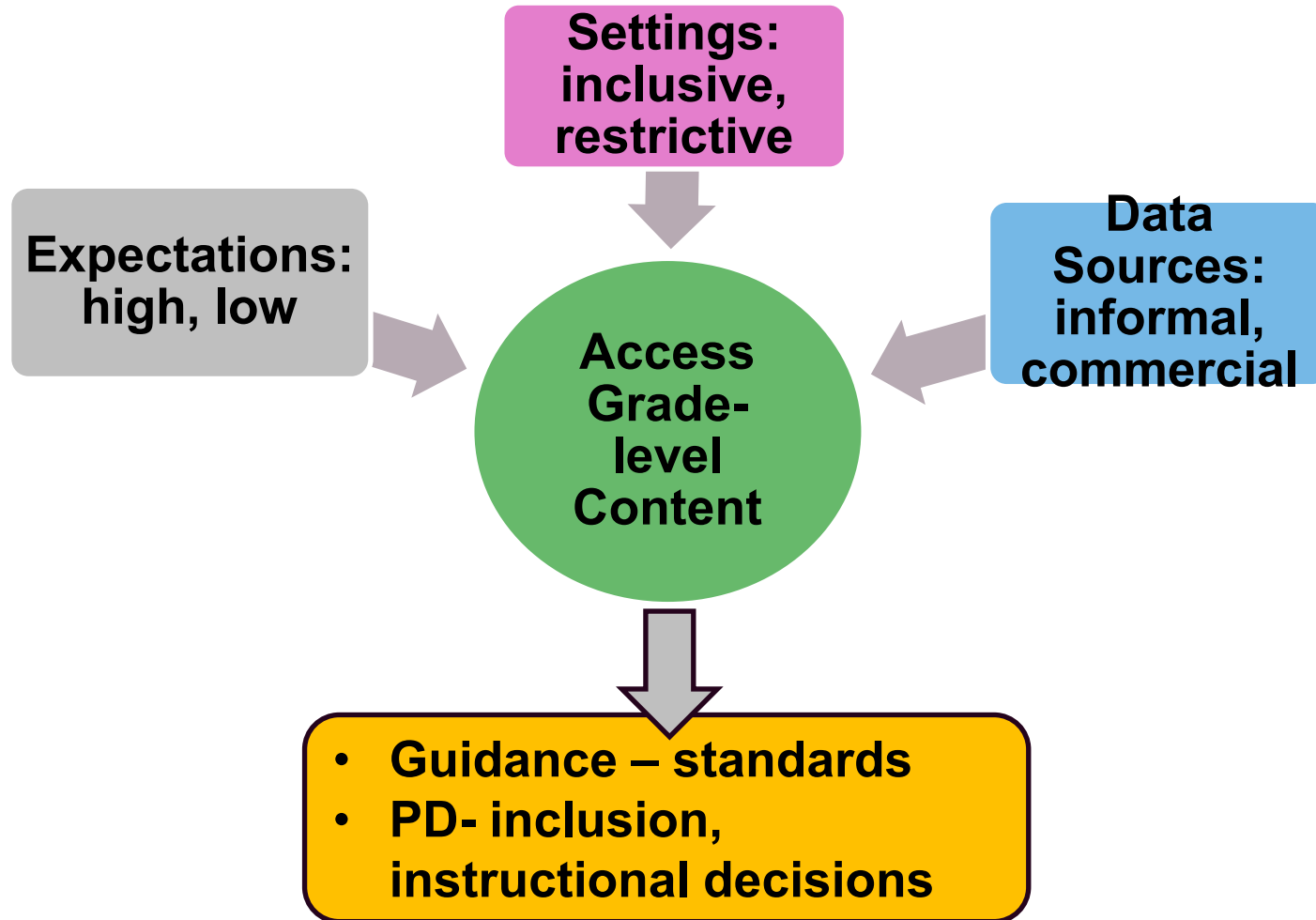
Learn more about teachers' experiences:

- Use of multiple measures to inform their instructional decision making for students on the cusp
  - 14 special education and general education teachers
  - Asynchronous online focus groups

# Research Questions

1. What factors influence teachers' instruction of students who transition from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment?
2. What types of materials are needed to support teachers in taking a data-informed approach to instruction for students who transition from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment?

# Results - Recommendations



# Teacher Interviews and Observations

The purpose of this study was to identify the successes and barriers that teachers face when educating students with disabilities who have moved from the AA-AAAS to the general state assessment. The research questions guiding the study were:

1. What instructional successes and barriers exist in classrooms that include students who moved from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment?
2. How are instructional successes and barriers similar or different across various classroom contexts?

# Classroom Observation Tool

**Time Sampling:** Record observations for 15 seconds at the end of each 45 second interval for the focus student who has moved from the alternate to general assessment. Circle or highlight all that apply for each interval.

	Y if evident    N if not evident    NA if not applicable to focus student														
	1 min	2 min	3 min	4 min	5 min	6 min	7 min	8 min	9 min	10 min	11 min	12 min	13 min	14 min	15 min
<b>Communication supported</b>	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA
<b>Instructional EBP</b>	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
<b>SDI</b>	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
<b>Opportunity to respond</b>	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
<b>Engaged in gen. ed. curriculum</b>	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO
<b>Engagement/Class routines</b>	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
<b>Interactions with whom</b>	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA

T= Teacher    P= Grade-level peer without disabilities    IA= Instructional Assistant

Adapted from TIES Center, 2022  
Updated : 12/19/22

# Interview Protocol

## General questions

- What are your thoughts on the lesson and how it went? Did it go as you planned/expected?
- Tell me how you know if the lesson went well? What did you expect to see?

## Student-specific questions

- How long has the student been in your class?
  - Where were they receiving instruction before?
  - Where do you see them receiving instruction in the next school year?

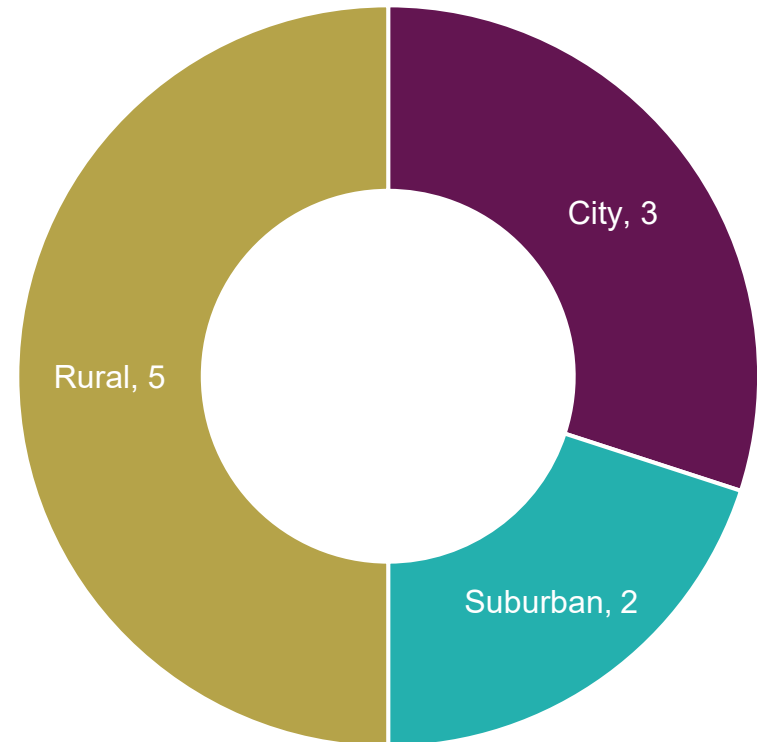
# Interview Protocol

## Successes and barriers

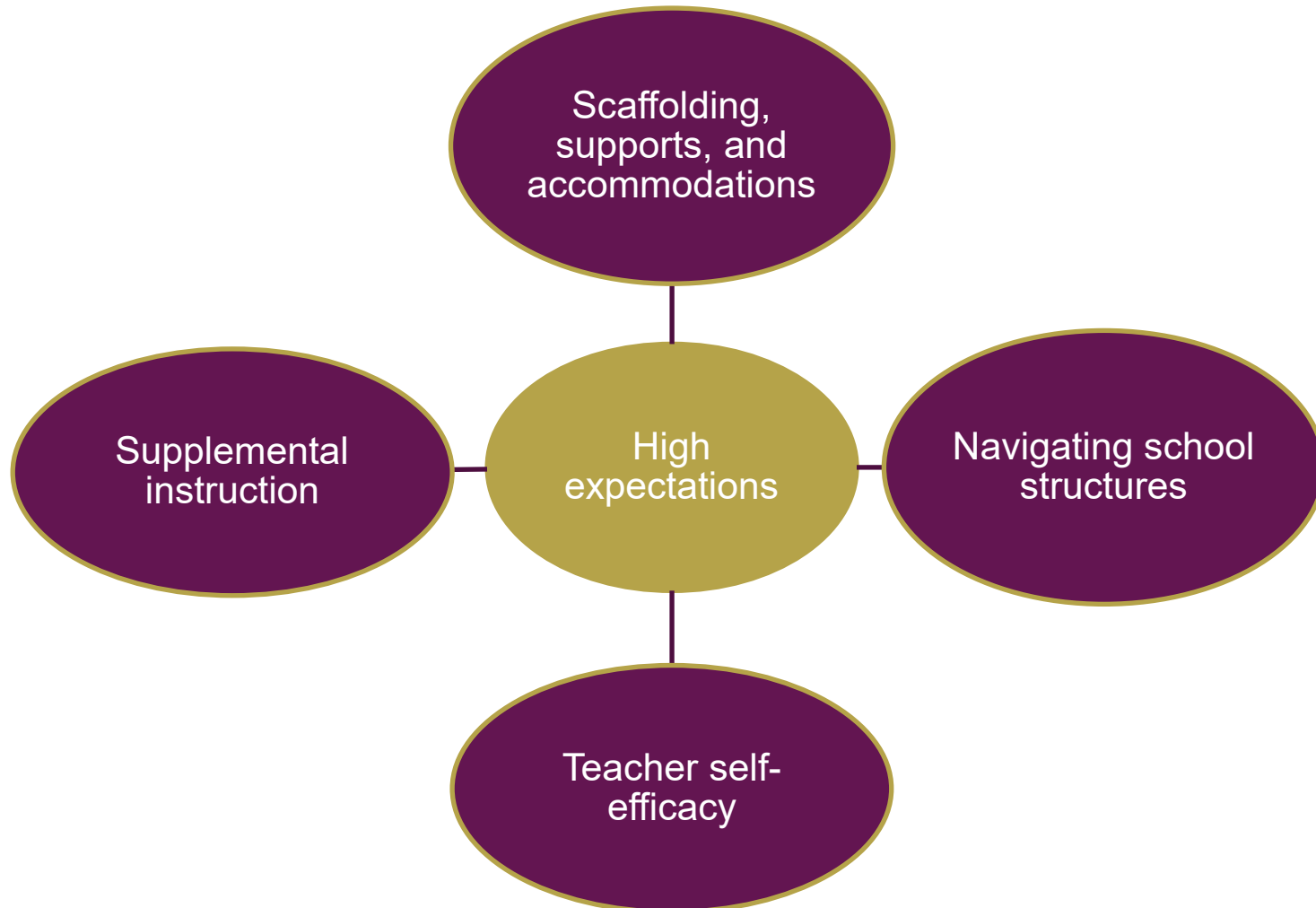
- How is it going?
- What are the successes you've had?
- What data, if any, do you find most helpful to plan instruction?
  - Pain points?
- Level of collaboration
- Follow up on classroom demographics form, if needed

# Participants

16 educators



# Instructional Successes



# Successes by Classroom Type



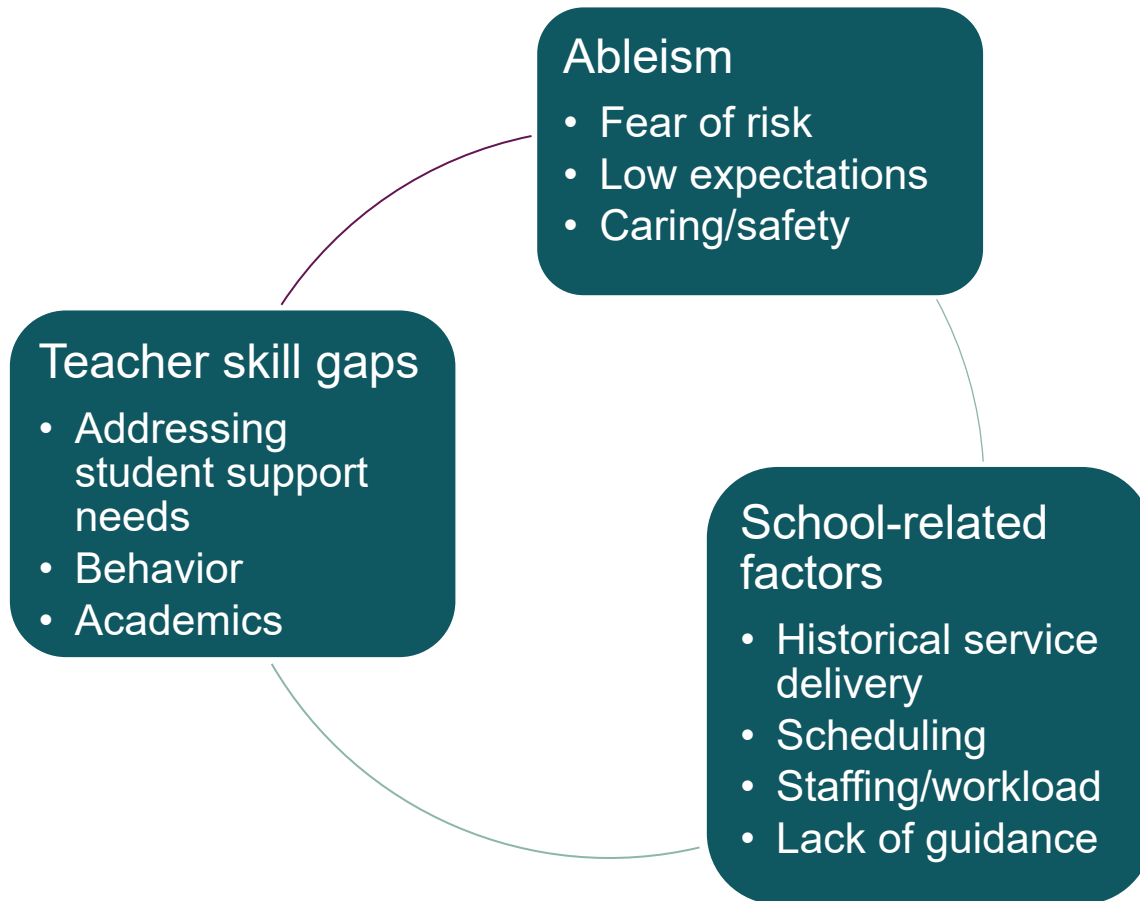
General  
education

- General education curriculum
- Flexibility
- Engagement with peers

Special  
Education

- Evidence-based practices
- Data collection/progress monitoring
- SDI
- High engagement with teachers

# Instructional Barriers



# Barriers by Classroom Type



## General Education

- Less SDI
- Student inexperience with class norms/behaviors
- Abrupt transitions
- Shifting roles in providing special education services

## Special Education

- No access to grade-level curriculum
- Limited knowledge of grade-level content standards
- Limited buy-in about teaching standards
- Rigidity in how to provide special education services when students are in general education

# Parent Interviews

- Invitations went out to parent groups before winter break
- Slow response from parents before winter break
- Second notice sent out after winter break
- Overwhelming response to second notice

# Progress So Far

- Received 100 + responses from parents interested in being interviewed
- Screened responses to ensure they met our requirements
- 8 total parents met our criteria and were interviewed

# Themes

- Theme 1. Lack of Knowledge Concerning Standardized Testing
- Theme 2. Lack of Involvement in the Decision-Making Process
- Theme 3. Lack of Involvement with the IEP Team
- Theme 4. Lack of Empathy/Understanding from the School/District
- Theme 5. Frustration with the Education System

# Recommendations

- Materials need to be created and distributed to parents explaining the importance of testing, and the different types of testing that are required by federal law. These materials should be easy to understand, with available contact information on where to go to if parents have questions.
- Materials need to be created and distributed to parents explaining the IEP process, their right to be heard, and their right to appeal decisions they disagree with. These materials must be easy to understand and include contact information for parents with questions.
- Personnel dealing with special education students need to be trained to listen to parents, be empathetic, and ensure that parents are involved in all decisions.

# Progress So Far

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# Research Questions

- **Consistency of AA-AAAS participation**
- Performance
- Relationship between AA-AAAS participation and performance
- Relationship between movement of test participation and performance
- Student characteristics

# Consistency of AA-AAAS Participation

- How **consistently** are individual special education students taking AA-AAAS for each content area (reading, mathematics, and science) over time?

# Sample

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
x	x	x	x	x			
	x	x	x	x		x	
		x	x	x		x	x

- Data selection
  - Students (grades 3-8 and HS) with test records **for five consecutive testing years** at any grade level
  - It included students **retained** at the same grade level(s)
  - Students with test records for **more than five** continuous testing years were also included in the analyses
  - Students with multiple records within a year
    - Same test (either AA-AAAS only or general assessments only)
      - Select the highest score for the same tests)
    - Different test (took both AA-AAAS and general assessments)
      - Deleted because students with same achievement level cannot pick which test record is better (ranges from 1-13 students depending on year and content)

# Consistency of Reading AA-AAAS Participation

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	n	%
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	4141	0.89
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	118	0.03
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	150	0.03
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	12	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	5	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	141	0.03
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	14	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	2	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	18	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	General	152	0.03
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	201	0.04
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	17	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	3	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	23	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	21	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	187	0.04
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	25	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	24	<.01
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	294	0.06
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	General	33	<.01
General	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	121	0.03
General	General	General	General	General	461957	98.78

\*5,728 students had at least one score from the Reading AA-AAS (1.22%) for five consecutive testing years.

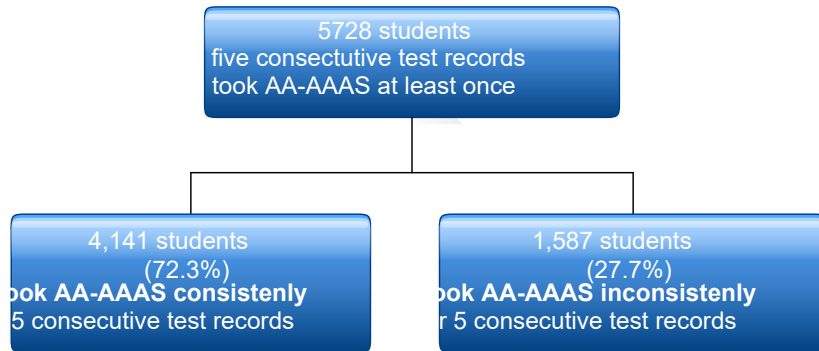
# Consistency of Math AA-AAAS Participation

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	n	%
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	4132	0.662
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	126	0.02
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	11	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	160	0.026
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	11	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	5	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	161	0.026
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	13	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	2	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	18	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	General	174	0.028
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	204	0.033
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	19	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	3	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	27	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	23	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	190	0.03
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	28	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	26	<.01
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	294	0.047
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	General	35	<.01
General	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	125	0.02
General	General	General	General	General	618029	99.07

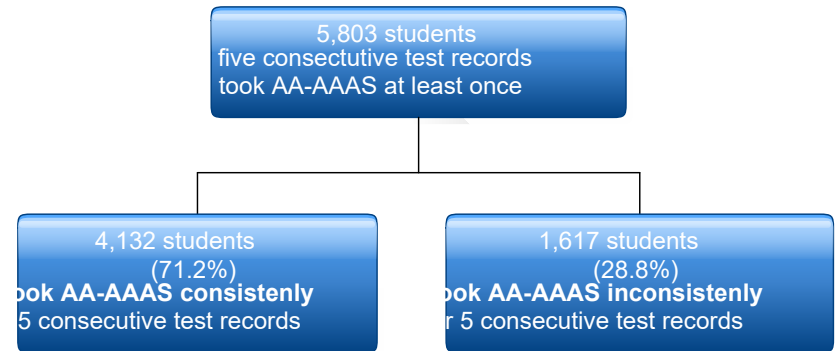
\*5,803 students had at least one score from the Math AA-AAS (0.93%) for five consecutive testing years.

# Summary

## Reading AA-AAAS



## Math AA-AAAS



- There is a need to look at the performance level and student characteristics for students who are in the cusp.

# Stakeholders' Meeting



To get input on the objectives' results so that we can develop materials (e.g., templates, modules, supplemental materials) for teachers that will lead to improved instruction and outcomes for students who are on the cusp between the AA-AAAS and the general assessment.

# Prioritized Topics

- Transitioning from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment
- Specially designed instruction (SDI)
- Mindset and advocacy
- Making grade-level, standards-based instruction more accessible
- Effective co-teaching and collaboration within the school
- Developing and using standards-based assessments to make informed decisions
- Effective, strategic, and ongoing collaboration between parents, administrators, and other team members
- Monitoring progress, including self-assessment

# Preferred Types of Materials

- Self-assessment tool
- Reels/videos/promotional stories
- Printed materials (e.g., tri-fold)
- One-pagers (consistent template with chapters, customizable) or newsletters
- Podcasts
- Mastery-based online module that models topics/teachings
- Webinar/PD development package (train the trainer), including teacher meet-up (virtual and in-person) guide/toolkit

# ARKANSAS



# ALL IN



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

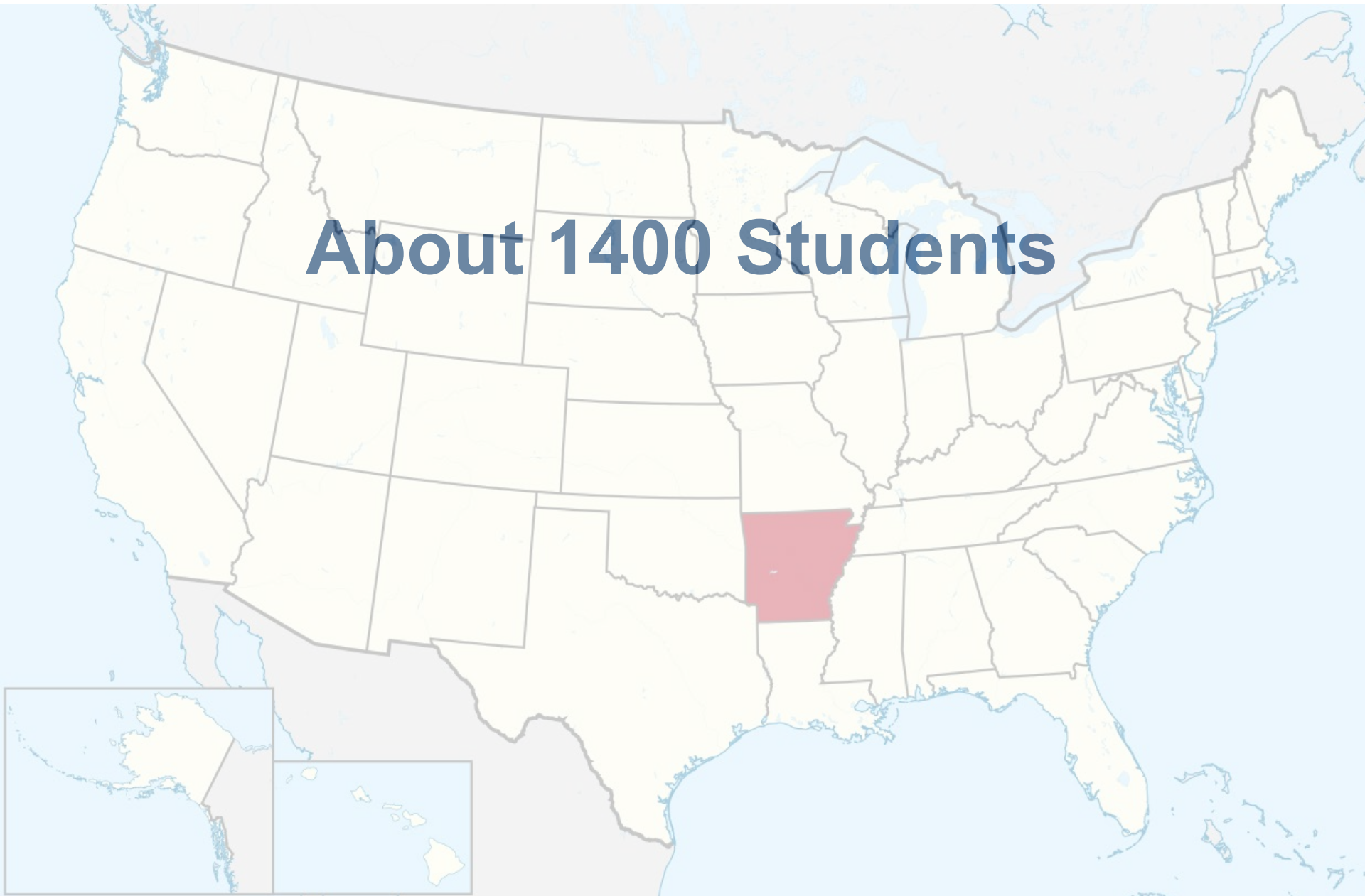
# Beginning Percentage on Alt - 2017

Content	# of Students	% of Students
ELA	3981 students	1.37%
Math	4054 students	1.39%

# Percentage on Alt - 2023

Content	# of Students	% of Students
ELA	2657 students	0.89%
Math	2653 students	0.89%

**About 1400 Students**



# Why did Arkansas participate?

- Placement
- Lack of access
- Low expectations
- Lack of educator knowledge
- Lack of collaboration

# Value of the Stakeholder Meeting

- Operationally defined the existing problem
- Established relevance
- Gained perspective from the field
- Held state work groups
- Shared ideas with other states
- Learned the best ways to disseminate information

# Contact

Amy Lloyd

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Robin Stripling

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# The MIDAS Project

*The North Carolina Perspective*

*Molly Britt  
Matthew Martinez*

# Why?

Making Improved Decisions for Students on the Cusp of Alternate Assessment Participation Using Multiple Measures of Academic Achievement from Multiple Sources

# **1.0 Percent Participation Justification Forms and Relevant Data**

# 1.0 Percent Data

Subject and Grade(s)	Participation Rate Percentages				
	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
<b>Mathematics Grades 3–8</b>	1.1%	Testing Waived	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%
<b>Mathematics Grade 11</b>	1.1%		0.2%	1.6%	1.0%
<b>ELA/Reading Grades 3–8</b>	1.1%		1.0%	1.1%	1.1%
<b>ELA/Reading Grade 10</b>	0.9%		0.8%	0.9%	1.0%
<b>Science Grades 5 and 8</b>	1.1%		1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
<b>Science Grade 11</b>	1.1%		0.2%	1.0%	1.0%

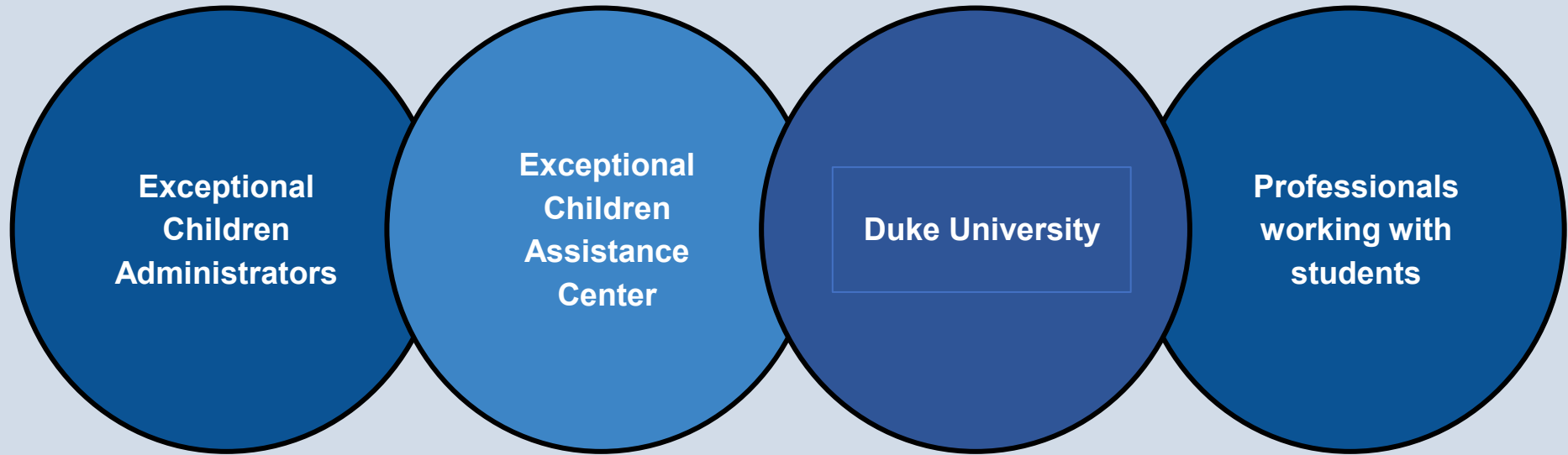
# Tracking Students Across Years

8th Grade Students	10th Grade Students	Difference
1303 (2018–19)	873 (2020–21)	430
1345 (2020–21)	1147 (2022–23)	198

# 1.0 Percent Justification Form

Describe the public school unit's process for transitioning a student's instruction from the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* to the *Extended Content Standards* or from *Extended Content Standards* to the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*.

# North Carolina Involvement



# North Carolina Stakeholders

“My main belief and focus of teaching is that ALL kids CAN learn. I feel that every student should be approached with high expectations and given opportunities to participate in the general curriculum.”

“ . . .to develop appropriate professional development and materials for teachers to bridge the instructional gap for students and build confidence in teachers. . . .”

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# West Virginia Department of Education

## MIDAS Project

Sonja Phillips

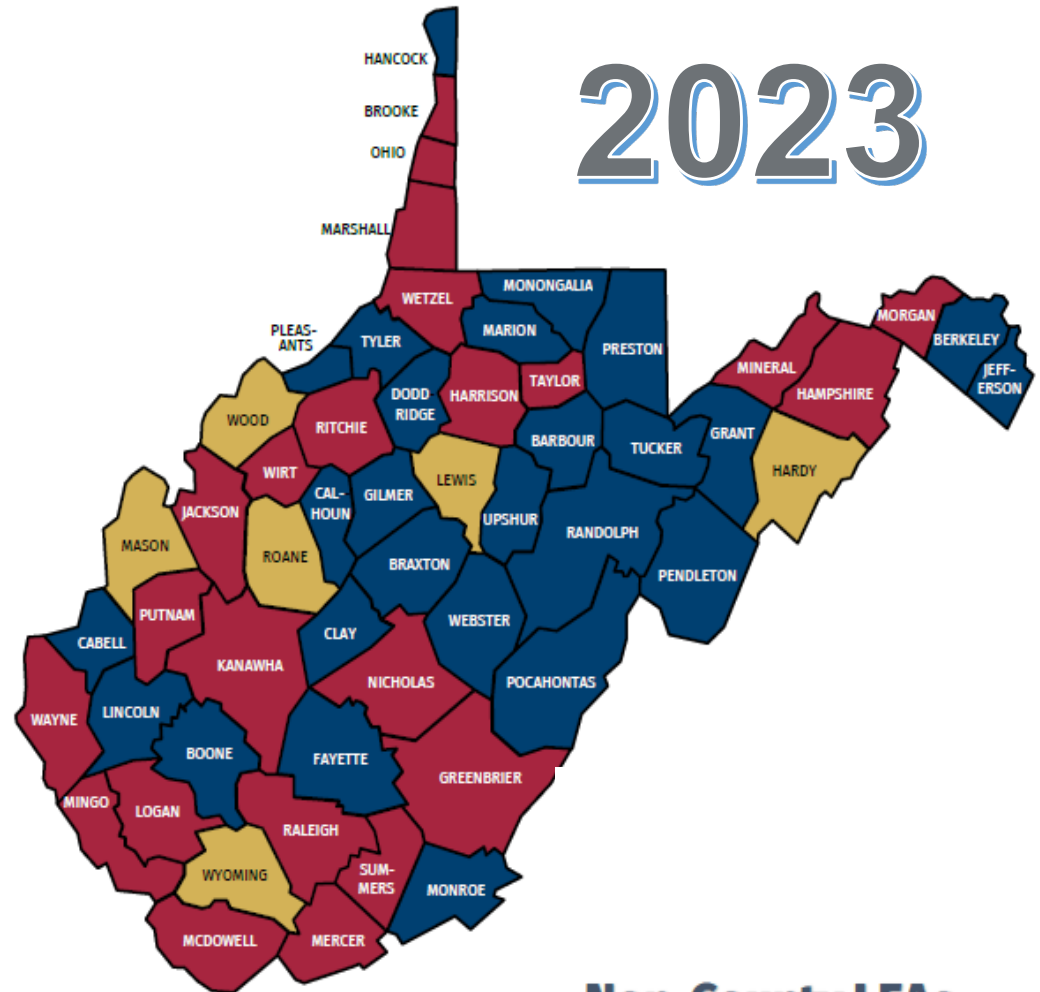
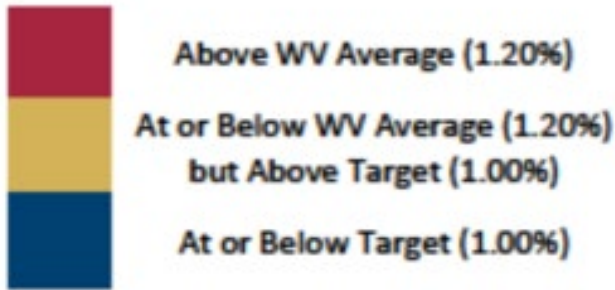
[sonja.phillips@k12.wv.us](mailto:sonja.phillips@k12.wv.us)

# West Virginia Demographics

- 245,047 Public School Students
    - 54.2% Enrollment Identified as Low-SES
    - 19.7% Students with Disabilities
  - 1556 Grades 3-8 and 11 students participated in the 2023 alternate assessment
-

# WV Alternate Summative Assessment (WVASA) Participation Percent (%) SY2023

# 2023

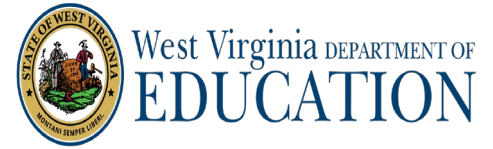


## Non-County LEAs

- West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
- West Virginia Schools of Diversion and Transition
- West Virginia Academy
- Eastern Panhandle Prep Academy
- Virtual Prep Academy of WV
- West Virginia Virtual Academy

Non-County LEAs

# Students Eligible for Alternate Assessment

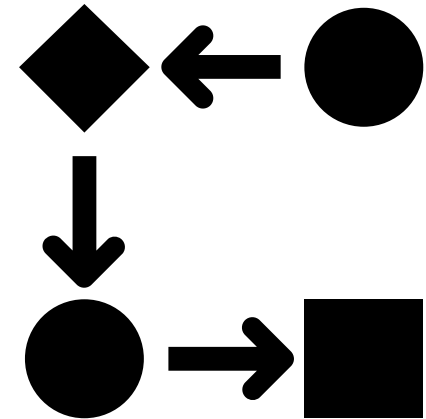


## WV PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT



# We were making progress!

- New eligibility guidance
- Moved from “modified” to “alternate” diploma
- Updated training on waiting until students are older to identify eligibility



# What happened?

- COVID
- West Virginia opened first charter schools
- HOPE Scholarships
- Declining enrollment
- Staff turn-over





West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

**Enter MIDAS Project!**

THE  
**MIDAS**  
PROJECT





THE  
**MIDAS**  
PROJECT



Making Improved Decisions for Students on the  
Cusp of  
Alternate Assessment Participation  
Using Multiple Measures of  
Academic Achievement from Multiple Sources

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# Teacher Stakeholder Meeting – January 2024

## 5 West Virginia teachers

- All had students in their classrooms who had previously received instruction through WVAAAS, but their IEP team determined later they were no longer eligible – moving them to general assessment eligibility and instruction through the West Virginia College & Career Readiness Standards.
  - Diverse group of teachers – geographic, credentials, and experience
  - “Teacher leaders” in their schools
  - Provided input on current challenges of supporting students
  - Provided input on challenges teachers experience with extremely diverse classrooms
-

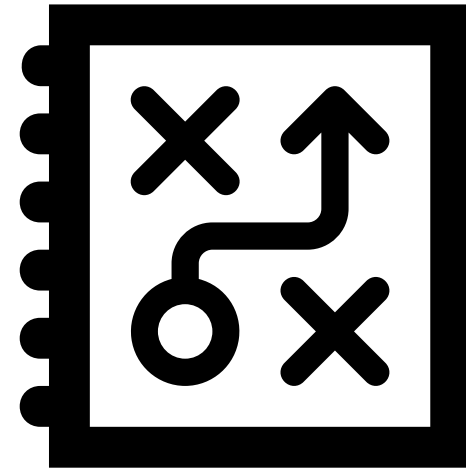
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  - Provided input on current challenges of supporting students
  - Provided input on challenges teachers experience with extremely diverse classrooms
-

# Challenges?

- Expectations
  - Teachers
  - Family
  - Students
- Experienced educators
- Available resources
- Continuing support





# West Virginia Department of Education

## MIDAS Project

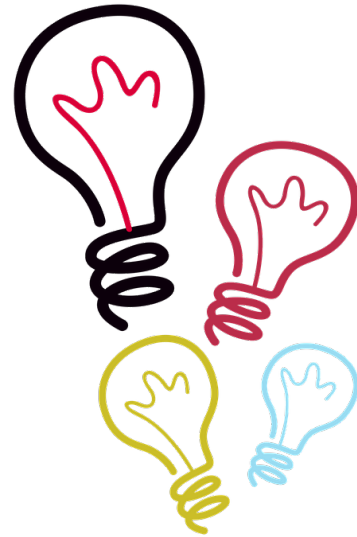
Sonja Phillips

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# Discussion

- How has your state addressed the move of students from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment? What has worked well? What has been a challenge?
- What assessments are currently being used in your state to help in this transition?

**Thoughts?  
Questions?**



# Contact Information

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