

2025-26 Alternative Assessment Justification

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Justification and Assurances for Exceeding the 1.0 Percent Cap

Purpose

In accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(c), local educational agencies (LEAs) contributing to the state exceeding the 1.0 percent cap must submit a justification and assurances.

1. Select LEA Name and ID#

950 - Wilson County

2. Enter the Last Name, First Name of the individual submitting this form.

Burge, Tracey

3. Identify your role within the LEA. Special Education Director

- a. Special Education Director
- b. Special Education Coordinator
- c. Other

ELA Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through 2025-26

4. **ELA Participation Rates 2020-21** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

0.95

5. **ELA Participation Rates 2021-22** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

0.93

6. **ELA Participation Rates 2022-23** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.25

7. **ELA Participation Rates 2023-24** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.09

8. **ELA Participation Rates 2024-25** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

0.99

9. **ELA Participation Rates 2025-26** **2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data.* *

0.99

Math Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through

10. **Math Participation Rates 2020-21** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

0.95

11. **Math Participation Rates 2021-22** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.01

12. **Math Participation Rates 2022-23** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.29

13. **Math Participation Rates 2023-24** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.13

14. **Math Participation Rates 2024-25** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

0.87

15. **Math Participation Rates 2025-26** **2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data.* *

0.85

Science Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through 2025-26

16. Science Participation Rates 2020-21 *

0.83

17. Science Participation Rates 2021-22 *

1.01

18. Science Participation Rates 2022-23 *

1.16

19. Science Participation Rates 2023-24 *

1.11

20. Science Participation Rates 2024-25 *

1.05

21. Science Participation Rates 2025-26 *2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data. *

1.31

Number of Students Scoring

To calculate: Log into KITE - Reports - Alternate Assessment Reports - Year 2025 - LEA Name and select the .PDF file. The first table in the report provides the number of students scoring Advanced by grade and subject. Calculate the total number of students scoring Advanced for each subject.

22. In school year 2024-25, list the total number of students scoring **"Advanced"** for **ELA**. *

18

23. In school year 2024-25, list the total number of students scoring **"Advanced"** for **Math**.

10

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion One

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

Criterion One: The student has a significant cognitive disability. Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should be considered for the alternate assessment.

You must also describe the process for reviewing alternate assessment eligibility for any student scoring Advanced in at least one subject. Advanced performance scores may indicate that the student's skills exceed the eligibility criteria and should prompt a review of the student's continued participation in the alternate assessment.

In the questions below, describe the process used to ensure the IEP team considers only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (approximately 1.0 percent of the student population).

24. How are IEP teams informed of the criterion and expectations for determining if the student meets expectations for participation? *

The guidance comes from a top-down approach: the State (TDOE) sets the criteria, the software (TNPULSE) enforces the documentation, and the District (WCS) provides the training to ensure everyone follows the rules consistently every year. In Wilson County Schools (WCS), IEP teams are informed through a mix of mandatory state tools, digital prompts, and local administrative training. Here is the direct breakdown of how that information reaches the team: 1. The TN PULSE System (Digital Guardrails) The primary way teams are "informed" is through the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Determination Worksheet embedded in TN PULSE. As the team fills out the IEP, the system prompts them to address three specific legal criteria: • Significant Cognitive Disability: Evidence of intellectual and adaptive deficits. • Modified Standards: Confirmation that the student is not meeting the full grade-level curriculum. • Extensive Direct Instruction: Documentation that the student requires constant, specialized support. 2. TDOE Decision-Making Flowcharts The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) provides a visual Decision-Making Tool. This flowchart is used during meetings to walk the team through a series of "Yes/No" questions. It serves as a physical reminder that the decision must be based on data—like psychological evaluations and progress monitoring—rather than a student's disability label or English Learner status. 3. Local Training and the "1% Cap" The WCS Special Education Department provides annual training to teachers and administrators. A key piece of information shared in these sessions is the Federal 1% Cap. Teams are informed that because only about 1% of all students should be taking an alternate assessment, their justification must be rigorous and clearly documented to withstand state auditing. 4. Mandatory Parent Consultation The team is also informed of their legal obligation to explain the long-term stakes to parents. This includes a specific requirement to discuss how moving to an alternate assessment (TCAP-Alt) impacts a student's ability to earn a regular high school diploma. By requiring this discussion, the state ensures the entire team understands that this choice has permanent implications for the student's post-secondary path.

25. What data are used to make the determination (e.g., cognitive and adaptive behavior data)? *

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion One

In Wilson County Schools (WCS), the determination for special education services—specifically for Intellectual Disabilities or Functional Delays—follows the Tennessee Department of Education's strict eligibility standards. The district uses a "multidisciplinary team" approach, meaning they don't look at just one score, but a full profile of the student. Here is the breakdown of the specific data used to make these determinations:

- Cognitive (Intellectual) Data**
The district measures a student's "general intellectual functioning."
 - **Standardized IQ Tests:** They look for scores that are two or more standard deviations below the mean (typically an IQ of 70 or below).
 - **Non-Verbal Measures:** If a student has significant language barriers or a lower verbal index, the district must also administer a non-verbal measure of ability to ensure the assessment is fair.
 - **Standard Error of Measurement (SEM):** The team is required to consider the SEM to ensure a student isn't disqualified based on a single point if their overall profile suggests a disability.
- Adaptive Behavior Data**
Cognitive data alone isn't enough; the district must also prove the student struggles with "real-world" life skills.
 - **Home & Community Scores:** A standardized assessment (like the Vineland or ABAS) is typically completed by the parent or primary caretaker.
 - **School Scores:** A similar assessment is completed by a teacher to see how the student functions in a classroom setting.
 - **Required Deficit:** The student must score two or more standard deviations below the mean in either the composite score or in at least one specific domain (Conceptual, Social, or Practical skills).
 - **Observations:** If the home and school scores don't match, a specialist must conduct a systematic observation to provide a professional "clinical judgment."
- Educational Impact & History**
To qualify for an IEP, the data must show that the disability adversely affects the student's performance in school.
 - **Developmental History:** Documentation showing that these cognitive or adaptive delays were present during the developmental period (birth to age 18).
 - **Classroom Performance:** Evaluation of current work samples, Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) data, and district-wide assessments such as Dynamic Learning Maps, Alt-Assessment, i-Ready, Easy CBM, and Brigance.
 - **RTI² Data:** For Specific Learning Disabilities, Wilson County Schools heavily weigh Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) data to see how the student responds to intensive, small-group support.
- Evaluation Participants**
In Wilson County, the "Determination Team" must legally include:
 - The parent(s).
 - A licensed school psychologist.
 - A special education teacher.
 - A general education teacher.
 - A licensed medical provider (if the disability is health-related, like OHI).

26. How is adaptive behavior data incorporated into the decision-making process? *

The main goal of gathering adaptive data is to prove that a student's challenges are not just academic. For a student to qualify for an alternate assessment, the data has to show a significant deficit—meaning they score two or more standard deviations below the mean. The team looks for these gaps in three specific areas:

- **Conceptual:** Language, reading, writing, math, and memory.
- **Social:** Empathy, social judgment, and communication skills.
- **Practical:** Personal care, job responsibilities, and money management.

Adaptive data acts as a reality check for IQ scores. If a student has a low IQ score but functions well in daily life (high adaptive scores), the team will likely decide they do not qualify for an alternate assessment. The two sets of data need to align to show a consistent, significant cognitive disability.

Solving "Home vs. School" Differences: It's common for a student to behave differently at home than they do at school. If the parent's rating scales do not match the LEA's, the team cannot just pick one. Instead, a specialist such as a School Psychologist or Special Education teacher must step in, observe the student directly, and use their professional judgment to settle the discrepancy. The team uses this data to make sure the student's struggles are actually due to a disability. They must rule out "outside" factors like:

- **Attendance:** Is the student struggling because they've missed too much school?
- **Instruction:** Have they been given access to the right materials and RTI² support?
- **Language:** Is a language barrier or cultural difference the root of the issue?

Ultimately, if the adaptive data shows the student needs intensive help with basic social or practical skills, it justifies moving them to a curriculum that is linked to state standards but modified for their specific needs. It confirms that the standard state test would not be an accurate measure of what they know.

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility: Criterion Two

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

Criterion Two: The student is learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards. All students, regardless of the assessment or the least restrictive environment (LRE) should receive standards-aligned instruction that is rigorous, meaningful, and sufficient in duration to increase student outcomes. Special education services are provided in addition to, not in place of, standards-based instruction.

In the questions below, describe the evidence used to ensure the student was provided access to grade-level, standards-aligned instruction. This should include an explanation of the process used to ensure the student received instruction aligned to grade-level standards at an appropriate level of rigor, intensity, and duration comparable to their peers.

27. How does the IEP team ensure the student's performance and skill level are due to a significant cognitive disability rather than an instructional disadvantage? *

The team first must prove that the student has been given every chance to learn in the same way as their peers. This means checking that the instruction was: • Standards-Aligned: The student was taught using the same grade-level standards as everyone else, not a different or simplified curriculum. • Rigorous: The work was challenging and meaningful, even if it required heavy modifications. • Consistent: The student received this instruction for the same amount of time and with the same intensity as their peers. The team looks at several specific data sources to ensure the student is not just "behind" due to poor teaching or missing school. They use: • Screeners & Progress Monitoring: Data from tools like i-Ready or EasyCBM to track how the student responds to RTI² interventions. • Classroom Records: Evidence that the student requires "substantial supports" and one-on-one attention just to make small gains. Before the team can blame a disability for low scores, they must confirm that the following factors are not the primary cause: • Attendance: Is the student frequently absent? • Environment: Did the student have a lack of access to quality materials? • Social/Cultural Factors: Is a language barrier or a specific cultural background affecting their performance? The core of this process is distinguishing between supports available to everyone in the classroom and the extensive, individualized instruction required specifically by the student's disability. If the student is still struggling significantly despite high-quality, rigorous instruction and multiple interventions, the team can confidently conclude that the performance is due to a Significant Cognitive Disability.

28. What data are used to make an informed determination? *

The process of deciding if a student qualifies for a different kind of assessment looks at the student's entire educational experience to ensure that the decision is based on a real, significant cognitive disability, not just a lack of opportunity. It starts by carefully examining numbers—specifically, cognitive and adaptive skill tests. By reviewing IQ scores along with assessments of everyday skills from both home and school, the team understands how the student processes information and manages daily tasks. This approach makes sure that the student's eligibility is based on consistent, meaningful challenges in areas like communication, safety, and self-care across different settings, not just in one place. Next, the team looks at what happens in the classroom. They review how the student responds to instruction and how they have improved over time. Using data from tools like i-Ready and progress tracking within the RTI² (Response to Instruction and Intervention) system, they check if the student is making real progress. Even with the best support and a challenging curriculum similar to what other students are learning, a student with a significant cognitive disability will still need a lot of personalized help to succeed. This part of the evaluation confirms that the student's needs come from their disability, not from a lowered standard of learning or insufficient support. In the final step, the team makes sure there are no outside factors affecting the student's performance. They look at real-world examples, like work samples and detailed teacher observations, to tell the difference between a student who is simply behind and one who needs a very different learning approach. They also review attendance, previous

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion Two

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence. instruction, and consider cultural or language differences to ensure the student has had a fair chance to learn. This thorough review, as explained in the Alternate Assessment Justification, helps confirm that the special assessment is only used for students who truly need it to show what they've learned.

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility: Criterion Three

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

Criterion Three: The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

In the questions below, describe the process used to determine that the student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports.

29. What data are used to support this determination? *

The determination that a student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports is based on multiple sources of data reviewed by the IEP team. This includes results from comprehensive evaluations such as cognitive assessments, adaptive behavior scales, and academic achievement testing. The team also reviews ongoing classroom data, including progress monitoring, grades, work samples, and teacher observations. Additional data may include results from intervention programs, response to instruction within the RTI² framework, and input from related service providers (e.g., speech and occupational therapy). Functional performance data, including communication, social, and daily living skills, are also considered. The IEP team looks for consistent evidence across these data sources that the student requires significant, ongoing support and individualized instruction to make progress, even with high-quality core instruction and interventions. Decisions are made collaboratively, ensuring the determination is based on a comprehensive understanding of the student's needs rather than a single data point.

30. How do IEP teams determine the type and level of supports needed, including for students whose least restrictive environment (LRE) is a highly modified special education setting for all or part of the day? *

IEP teams determine the type and level of supports a student needs by reviewing multiple sources of data and matching those needs to the least restrictive environment (LRE). The team begins by reviewing current evaluation data, present levels of performance, and progress monitoring information. This includes academic data, adaptive behavior, communication skills, and input from teachers and related service providers. The team assesses how the student responds to instruction and interventions in general education and considers which supports have been successful. Based on this information, the team identifies the specific supports the student needs to make progress. This may include specially designed instruction, accommodations, assistive technology, behavior supports, or related services. The level of support is determined by the intensity and frequency needed for the student to access and make progress in the curriculum. The team then considers placement along the continuum of services, starting with the general education setting and adding supports as needed. If the data show that the student requires more intensive, individualized instruction than can be effectively provided in general education—even with supports—the team may determine that a more specialized setting is appropriate for all or part of the day. For students in highly modified special education settings, the team ensures that the placement is based on the student's individual needs, not the disability label or available programs. The team also considers opportunities for the student to participate with peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate. All decisions are made collaboratively with parent input and are documented in the IEP, ensuring that supports and placement are aligned to help the student make meaningful progress.

31. How does the IEP team distinguish between supports required due to the student's disability and supports that are available as part of the instructional environment? *

The IEP team distinguishes between supports needed due to a student's disability and supports that are part of the general instructional environment by carefully reviewing data and considering what all students receive versus what the individual student uniquely requires. The team first identifies the supports available to all students in the general

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion Three

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

education setting, such as high-quality Tier I instruction, differentiation, classroom routines, and universal supports provided through the MTSS/RTI² framework. These are not considered special education supports because they are available to any student. Next, the team reviews the student's individual data—evaluations, progress monitoring, classroom performance, and teacher and specialist input—to determine whether the student can be successful with only those general supports. If the student is not making adequate progress despite access to these supports, the team identifies additional, specialized supports that are directly tied to the student's disability-related needs.

Disability-related supports are those that require specially designed instruction, significant adaptation of content, individualized prompting, intensive intervention, or support from special education staff or related service providers. These supports go beyond what is typically available in the general classroom. By comparing what is universally provided to what the student uniquely needs to make progress, the IEP team ensures that special education services are clearly defined, appropriate, and based on the student's disability—not just general instructional practices.

Disproportionality

Using data by primary eligibility (disability) category and demographic groups, describe LEA patterns of participation in the alternate assessment, including any disproportionate participation and a plan for reducing or eliminating disproportionality. Include a description of the LEA population demographics as compared to statewide demographics.

32. Describe any identified disproportionality in alternate assessment participation and the LEA's plan to address and reduce disproportionate participation, as applicable.

The District conducted a review of alternate assessment participation across student subgroups and found that overall participation rates are proportionate for all groups, with one minor exception. The economically disadvantaged (ED) subgroup shows slight disproportionality: the ED subgroup represents 11% of the total student population but accounts for 14.39% of students participating in alternate assessments. While this difference is relatively small, the LEA will ensure that all assessment participation decisions are appropriate, individualized, and based on established eligibility criteria rather than subgroup characteristics. To address and reduce this disproportionality, the LEA will implement the following actions: Conduct a targeted review of eligibility decisions for students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup to ensure alignment with state guidelines for alternate assessment participation. Provide additional training for IEP teams focused on appropriate identification criteria, emphasizing that participation decisions must be based on a student's cognitive disability and instructional needs, not demographic factors. Strengthen oversight and monitoring, including periodic audits of alternate assessment decisions disaggregated by subgroup. Support schools through guidance and technical assistance to ensure consistent implementation of eligibility criteria across all settings. The District will continue to monitor participation data annually and adjust supports as needed to ensure equitable and appropriate access to assessments for all students.

*(For example, if the LEA student population is evenly distributed among White, Black, and Hispanic students, the alternate assessment participation data should reflect a similar distribution across those groups.) **

Informed Parent Participation

Students who participate in alternate assessments are significantly less likely to earn a traditional diploma due to the highly modified content and potential for lower expectations.

In the questions below, describe the processes and practices used to ensure parents are fully informed of the eligibility requirements and implications of alternate assessment participation.

33. How are parents informed of the eligibility criteria and implications of participation? *

Wilson County Schools ensures parents clearly understand both the eligibility requirements and the impact of participating in alternate assessment. Parents receive this information during the IEP meeting, where the team reviews whether a student qualifies based on multiple data points, including academic performance and cognitive and adaptive skills. The team explains that alternate assessments are only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. During the meeting, staff also explain what participation means for the student's future. This includes how it may affect the type of diploma the student can earn and access to grade-level content. Parents are given time to ask questions and are included in the decision-making process. The information is documented in the IEP, and parents are provided with additional written resources to support their understanding. Staff are trained to communicate this information clearly and consistently. Through this process, the district ensures parents have the information they need to make informed decisions about their child's participation in alternate assessments.

34. How are parents included in the IEP team decision-making process? *

Parents are active members of the IEP team and are included in every step of the decision-making process. They are invited to attend IEP meetings at times that allow them to participate and are encouraged to share input about their child's strengths, needs, and goals. During the meeting, the team reviews all relevant data and discusses options, including whether alternate assessment is appropriate. School staff explain information in clear, understandable language and make sure parents have opportunities to ask questions and share concerns. Decisions are not made without parent input, and the team works together to reach agreement based on what is best for the student. All decisions, including assessment participation, are documented in the IEP, and parents are provided a copy. Through this process, parents are full partners in developing and approving their child's educational plan.

35. Participation in the alternate assessment must be reviewed at least annually. Students may transition to the general assessments at any time, as determined by the IEP team.

What processes are in place to ensure these decisions are fully discussed and reviewed at least annually? *Participation in the alternate assessment is reviewed at least once a year during the IEP meeting. At that time, the IEP team—including parents—reviews current data to determine whether the assessment decision remains appropriate. If a student's needs change, the team can decide at any time to move the student to the general assessment. This decision is based on what is most appropriate for the student and ensures flexibility as the student grows and progresses.

Ensuring Students Are Making Academic Progress

In *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*, the U.S. Supreme Court clarified that an IEP must be "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances." Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education denied the state's 2024-25 waiver request, noting that it did "not find that approving the waiver will advance student academic achievement, as required in section 8401(b)(1)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)."

Thus, LEAs that contribute to the state exceeding the 1.0 percent cap must provide assurances that students participating in alternate assessments are provided access to and engagement in standards-based instruction and are making appropriate academic progress.

36. Describe the policies, procedures, and practices used in your LEA to ensure students are provided instruction that meets the requirements set forth by ESEA and *Endrew F.*, and that students make appropriate

academic progress.* Our main policy is to give students access to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) academic standards through a tiered teaching approach. All students, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, get instruction aligned with their grade level standards. For students taking the alternate assessment, this is done by using Core Content Connectors, which help connect general education standards to accessible, measurable goals. Using tools like i-Ready and EasyCBM, we ensure our teaching is challenging and focused, making sure each student's IEP is designed to promote growth, not just provide minimal educational support. Our placement process follows a continuum of least restrictive environments. We offer a range of services starting with the regular classroom with some additional supports, then moving to resource support, and finally to more restrictive settings only if the student's disability makes success in less restrictive environments impossible. This approach ensures students aren't removed from their classmates unless necessary for their learning. Each year, the IEP team reviews data to confirm that students are placed in settings that give them the best possible access to the regular curriculum while still getting the personalized support they need to succeed. Lastly, our practices are based on ongoing data collection and regular evaluations. As detailed in our Justification for Exceeding the 1.0 Percent Cap, we review the number of students taking alternate assessments each year to ensure it's appropriate. By regularly checking students' progress with RTI² interventions, we make sure students are improving academically. This overall approach guarantees that we follow federal rules and actively help every student do their best.

Support Requested

37. Please describe any support needed from the department to assist in meeting the requirements outlined in this form. All reasonable

requests will be considered. * The district does not currently require additional support to meet the requirements outlined in this form; however, we request guidance and technical assistance from the department regarding the interpretation of alternate assessment participation rates in the context of changes to general education course offerings and sequencing. For the 2025–2026 school year, the district has implemented a revised high school science course sequence, resulting in fewer students participating in the Biology End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment for the current year only. As a result, the overall denominator of students assessed in science will decrease in the current year, potentially leading to a higher reported participation rate in the alternate assessment despite no substantive change in identification practices. The district would benefit from: Clarification on how course sequencing changes are considered when evaluating alternate assessment participation rates Guidance on communicating these impacts in accountability and compliance reporting