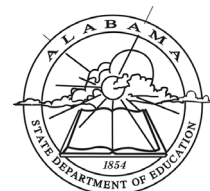




STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

September 4, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

RE: One Percent (1%) Cap on the Percentage of Students Who May Be Assessed With an Alternate Assessment and Achievement Measurement of at Least 95 Percent of Students

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) requires states to ensure that the total number of students assessed in each subject using an alternate assessment (for a student with a significant cognitive disability) does not exceed one percent (1%) of the total number of students in the state assessed with statewide assessments. In Alabama, *the definition of a student with the most significant cognitive disability is a student with an intelligence quotient (IQ) of three standard deviations below the mean which is an IQ score of 55 or below that significantly impacts intellectual functioning and that exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive functioning (defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life).*

The Alabama State Department of Education will notify those districts that did not meet the requirements no later than September 11, 2026. At this time, districts will be provided with data, information about mandatory training, and obligations for the upcoming year. The virtual meeting for this requirement is scheduled for September 11, 2026, at 10 a.m. The link to attend the meeting will be emailed one week prior to the meeting.

The ESSA also requires the state **to prove it has measured the achievement of at least 95 percent of all students and 95 percent of students with disabilities.** Schools and districts not meeting the required 95 percent participation rate for statewide assessments will be required to complete a plan for failing to meet this requirement. The virtual meeting for this requirement is scheduled for September 21, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. The link to attend this meeting will be emailed one week prior to the meeting.

If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Maggie Hicks, Student Assessment, by email at mhicks@alsde.edu or by telephone at 334-694-4817.

EGM/MH/KM

cc: District Test Coordinators
District Special Education Coordinators
Mrs. Angela Martin
Mrs. Shanthia Washington
Dr. DaLee Chambers

FY26-2080

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