

Arkansas Monitoring of Alternate Assessment Participation

*One Percent Threshold Report
Statewide Assessment and Accountability
2025-2026*



Executive Summary

The Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is committed to ensuring that all students are assessed in ways that are fair, appropriate, and consistent with both federal and state requirements. As part of this responsibility, Arkansas annually reviews participation in the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards to ensure that the assessment is used only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and that participation remains consistent with the intent of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Districts that exceeded the one percent alternate assessment participation threshold during the 2025–2026 cycle were required to submit written justifications describing local participation patterns and eligibility decision-making. This report summarizes those district justifications, alongside statewide participation data, to explain why participation above one percent occurs and how districts are applying alternate assessment criteria.

Across submissions, most districts exceeded the one percent threshold by a small margin, reflecting enrollment-sensitive participation patterns rather than inappropriate eligibility determination.

Eligibility information reported by districts aligns with federal and state expectations. Students participating in the alternate assessment were most often identified under Intellectual Disability, Autism, or Multiple Disabilities. Districts described the use of IEP team decision-making, state participation guidance, and annual review processes to support appropriate assessment determinations.

Taken together, district justifications indicate that participation above the one percent threshold most often reflects local enrollment dynamics rather than inappropriate assessment practices. These findings support continued contextual review and monitoring, consistent with ESSA, to ensure participation decisions remain individualized, data-based, and aligned with statewide expectations.

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Introduction

The Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education–Office of Special Education (DESE-OSE) exercises statewide oversight to ensure that all students are assessed in a manner that is appropriate, equitable, and fully aligned with federal and state requirements. As part of this responsibility, DESE-OSE annually conducts a structured review of district participation in the alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to ensure adherence to the intent and requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Through this annual monitoring process, Arkansas examines participation patterns, reviews local eligibility decision making practices, and provides guidance and technical assistance when warranted. Participation above the one percent threshold is used as a mechanism for focused review—not presumption—allowing the state to distinguish enrollment driven fluctuations from potential areas of concern.

This report presents a statewide analysis of the one percent alternate assessment monitoring process, including:

- The federal foundation and purpose of the one percent participation threshold;
- Arkansas’s structured monitoring and review framework;
- Historical trends in district participation exceeding the threshold; and
- Findings from the most recent cycle of district justifications and monitoring outcomes.

The purpose of this report is to promote transparency, support continuous improvement, and clearly document how Arkansas ensures that alternate assessment participation decisions remain individualized, data driven, and grounded in IEP team determinations, while preserving the integrity of the statewide assessment system.

Federal Framework and Purpose of the One Percent Threshold

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that all students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments and limits participation in alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards to no more than one percent of all students assessed statewide in each subject area. This statutory limit reflects a clear federal expectation that alternate assessments are reserved for a narrowly defined population of students.

Rationale for the One Percent Threshold

The one percent threshold is intended to ensure that:

- Alternate assessments are reserved for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities;
- Students with disabilities are not systematically excluded from the general assessment based on disability type, instructional placement, or perceived academic performance;
- High expectations for academic learning and access to grade level standards are maintained for all students; and
- States actively monitor and prevent patterns of over identification.

ESSA requires districts exceeding the one percent participation threshold to provide justification describing local participation patterns and eligibility decision-making.

ESSA acknowledges that participation rates may fluctuate at the local level due to enrollment size and student population characteristics. Accordingly, the law requires states to establish monitoring procedures that review district participation patterns, examine eligibility decision making practices, and provide appropriate oversight and guidance when participation exceeds the one percent threshold.

Arkansas’s Statewide Monitoring Process

Arkansas has implemented a structured, tiered monitoring system designed to ensure fidelity to participation criteria while providing districts with clarity, technical assistance, and support. The following section summarizes the monitoring process used during the 2025–2026 school year.

Step 1: Annual Review of Assessment Participation Data

Following each statewide assessment administration, DESE reviewed participation data from the prior school year. Districts exceeding **1.0% participation on the alternate assessment in any subject area**—English Language Arts, mathematics, or science—were identified for review.

These districts were required to complete a Justification for Exceeding the One Percent Threshold.

Step 2: District Justification Submission

Districts submitted a standardized justification form that includes both quantitative and qualitative information. Required components include:

District and Assessment Information

- District identification and contact information
- Alternate assessment participation rates by subject for the previous year
- Anticipated participation counts and percentages for the upcoming year

Student Eligibility Data

- Number of students anticipated to participate in the alternate assessment
- Distribution of students by eligibility category

Instructional and Decision-Making Practices

- Description of supports and services provided to maximize access to general education and general assessments
- Explanation of how IEP teams apply the Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Manual
- Identification of any local factors that may influence participation rates

Step 3: Tiered Monitoring Assignment

After reviewing submitted justifications, districts were placed into one of three monitoring tiers, based on participation rates for the current year.

Universal Requirement for All Tiers

All districts assigned to Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 completed an **Assurances Document**, signed by the LEA Special Education Supervisor, and the District Superintendent.

Through these assurances, districts formally verify that:

- The Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Manual is being followed with fidelity;
- Alternate assessment decisions are made by IEP teams using state-approved criteria; and
- Participation decisions are reviewed annually.

Tier placement reflects the level of review and support needed and is not a compliance determination.

Tier Specific Monitoring Requirements

Tier 1

- Districts submitted a student level list identifying:
 - Students participating in the alternate assessment, and
 - Each student's eligibility category.
- Additional explanation was required for students identified under unexpected eligibility categories, defined as categories other than Intellectual Disability, Autism, or Multiple Disabilities.

Tier 2

- Districts completed Individual Student Forms for each student participating in the alternate assessment.
- These forms documented:
 - Cognitive functioning;
 - Adaptive behavior;
 - Extensive support needs;
 - The extent and impact of accommodations and modifications.

Tier 3

- Districts completed individual student monitoring forms; and
- DESE–Office of Special Education conducted onsite monitoring to examine evaluation and IEP documentation, verify eligibility decisions, and provide direct technical assistance.

Step 4: Feedback and Technical Assistance

Upon completion of monitoring requirements, DESE provided districts with written, individualized student-level and systemic feedback, including:

- Commendations for effective practices,
 - Clarification of requirements,
 - Recommendations for improvement, and
 - Targeted technical assistance and follow-up support when needed.
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Historical Trends in District Participation

Analysis of statewide assessment participation data over multiple years demonstrates that district participation above the one percent threshold is variable, dynamic, and rarely extreme. These patterns reflect natural fluctuations in enrollment and student cohorts rather than sustained or systemic increases in alternate assessment participation.

Tables 1 and 2 summarize district participation trends by year and document multiyear patterns from 2020 through 2026.

Table 1: Number of Districts Exceeding 1% by Year

Year	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Total
2019-2020	15	13	11	39
2020-2021	Not Tested	Not Tested	Not Tested	Not Tested
2021-2022	15	13	11	39
2022-2023	12	26	7	45
2023-2024	19	21	6	46
2024-2025	33	21	6	60
2025-2026	25	45	7	77

Table 2: Number of Districts over 1% for Multiple Years (2020-2026)

Years Over 1%	Number of Districts	No Longer Over 1% in 2025
1 year	39	14
2–3 years	66	17
4–5 years	25	0
Total	130	31

Interpreting Participation Trends

District participation above the one percent threshold fluctuates from year to year and is highly sensitive to enrollment size. In districts with smaller tested populations, the addition or exit of one or two appropriately eligible students can result in exceedance without indicating changes in eligibility practices.

Key Findings

- The number of districts exceeding the one percent alternate assessment participation threshold fluctuates from year to year, reflecting changes in district enrollment and student cohorts across years.
- Most districts identified in a given year exceeded the threshold by a small margin, typically between one and two percent. These exceedances generally involve exceedingly small numbers of students and do not indicate disproportionate participation.
- Districts reporting participation rates above two percent represent a small and consistent subset across reporting years. Outside of specialty schools, these higher percentages are most often associated with smaller overall tested populations, not changes in eligibility practices.

Multi-Year Participation Patterns

- Many districts exceed the one percent threshold for a single year and subsequently return below one percent, consistent with normal variation in enrollment and cohort composition.
- Other districts exceed the threshold for multiple years, often reflecting the continued enrollment of a small, stable group of students who appropriately meet alternate assessment criteria.
- Districts exceeding the threshold for four or more years remain limited in number. With the exception of specialty schools, this pattern primarily is enrollment sensitive—where a stable number of eligible students represents a larger share of a relatively small tested population—rather than differences in instructional placement or changes in eligibility determination.

Interpretation

Multi-year participation patterns suggest that exceeding the one percent threshold is not a stable or cumulative condition for most districts. The fact that many districts return below one percent after one or two years indicates that exceedances are often temporary and responsive to normal changes in enrollment, mobility, and cohort composition. Districts that remain above the threshold across multiple years typically reflect stable enrollment of a small group of eligible students rather than progressive expansion of alternate assessment use. These patterns

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reinforce the value of longitudinal review and differentiated monitoring to distinguish expected enrollment-driven trends from circumstances that may warrant closer examination.

2025-2026 District Justification Analysis

As part of Arkansas’s one percent alternate assessment monitoring framework, DESE conducted a comprehensive review of justification submissions from 105 districts that exceeded the one percent participation threshold in at least one subject area during the 2024–2025 school year. These submissions included district-reported participation data, anticipated participation projections for the 2025–2026 school year, eligibility category information, and narrative explanations describing local context and IEP team decision-making practices

This analysis reflects **aggregate statewide trends** and is intended to provide contextual insight into participation patterns. It does not present district-level findings or determinations of compliance.

This analysis summarizes statewide trends from district justifications and does not include district-level findings or compliance determinations.

Participation Rate Trends

Review of submitted participation data indicates that most districts exceeding the one percent threshold did so by a small numerical margin.

Key patterns observed include:

- Most districts exceeded the threshold by a limited number of students.
- The majority of reported participation rates fell between 1.0 and 2.0 percent.
- In many cases—particularly in districts with smaller tested populations—the enrollment of one or two additional students meaningfully affected reported participation percentages.

These patterns mirror historical enrollment-sensitive participation trends discussed earlier in this report and do not suggest systemic overuse of the alternate assessment.

Eligibility Category Patterns

Across submissions, students participating in the alternate assessment were most frequently identified under the following eligibility categories:

- Intellectual Disability
- Autism
- Multiple Disabilities

Students identified under other eligibility categories were reported infrequently and were accompanied by additional documentation and explanation consistent with state guidance. Overall, reported eligibility patterns align with federal intent and Arkansas participation criteria, supporting appropriate application of alternate assessment eligibility standards.

Contributing Factors Identified by Districts

District narrative responses identified several recurring factors that help explain participation rates exceeding the one percent threshold:

- **Small or declining enrollment**, which can increase reported percentages even when the number of eligible students remains stable
- **Student mobility**, including transfers from other districts or participation through school choice
- Districts serving as **regional or programmatic service hubs** for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Availability of **specialized programs, staff, or intensive supports**, which may attract families seeking appropriate services
- **Early childhood intervention and preschool transitions**, resulting in earlier identification and continuity of services

These factors were reported across **rural, suburban, and urban** contexts and reflect differences in enrollment dynamics, cohort variation, and stable student populations associated with local service contexts, rather than differences in eligibility standards or decision-making criteria.

IEP Team Decision Making and Procedural Fidelity

Districts consistently reported structured procedures to ensure appropriate eligibility determinations, including:

- Required use of the [Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Manual](#)
- Application of the state's [Decision-Making Tool](#) by IEP teams
- Annual review of assessment participation decisions

- Administrative oversight by special education supervisors or district leadership
- Ongoing training for staff involved in eligibility and assessment decisions

The information provided indicates statewide consistency in how eligibility criteria are applied and reviewed.

Anticipated Trends for the Subsequent School Year

Anticipated participation data submitted by districts suggest relative stability, rather than escalation, in alternate assessment participation.

Key trends reported by districts include:

- Many districts anticipate participation remaining near current levels.
- Some districts project a decrease, including the transition of individual students back to the general assessment.
- Districts anticipating continued participation above one percent generally cited ongoing enrollment of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities or sustained regional service responsibilities.

These projections indicate that alternate assessment participation decisions are actively monitored and revisited annually at the district level.

Implications for Monitoring

Taken together, statewide participation trends, longitudinal district data, and historical monitoring findings support the continued use of a tiered alternate assessment monitoring framework. The evidence does not indicate systemic over-identification of students for the alternate assessment. Rather, it reflects a combination of enrollment-sensitive participation patterns and recurring implementation challenges associated with complex eligibility decisions.

Consistent with historical and current-year findings, district participation above one percent most often reflected enrollment-sensitive variation rather than inappropriate application of eligibility criteria. These patterns underscore the importance of contextual interpretation of participation rates and reinforce that numerical thresholds alone are not sufficient indicators of inappropriate assessment use.

At the same time, repeated monitoring across years has identified predictable areas requiring continued oversight, including documentation of intellectual and adaptive functioning, use of current evaluation data, and clear differentiation between instructional placement and eligibility determination. These findings do not suggest widespread noncompliance, but they do highlight the ongoing need for student-level review and targeted technical assistance.

Accordingly, Arkansas’s monitoring approach is designed to be proportional, responsive, and instructional in nature. Tiered monitoring enables DESE to distinguish between expected enrollment-based variation and circumstances that warrant additional review, ensuring that oversight efforts remain focused where risk is greatest while minimizing unnecessary burden on districts demonstrating consistent, appropriate practices.

Collectively, the findings presented in this report affirm that Arkansas’s one percent alternate assessment monitoring framework is functioning as intended—supporting individualized, IEP team-driven decision-making while maintaining alignment with ESSA requirements and preserving the integrity of the statewide assessment system.

Evaluation of the 2025-2026 Monitoring Process

Purpose and Method

To address our upward trending data and in effort to get feedback regarding how to further support LEAs in making assessment decisions, DESE-OSE asked LEA Supervisors to complete a 1% Monitoring and Support Feedback survey to evaluate the current monitoring process in March 2026. The survey collected information on district LEA’s perceptions of effectiveness, impact on local practices, and areas for improvement.

Feedback from the 2025–2026 monitoring cycle was used to assess effectiveness and inform refinements beginning in 2026–2027.

Summary of LEA Feedback

Feedback largely demonstrated that the system is improving local practices:

- Approximately 70–80% of LEAs rated the monitoring process as effective
- Approximately 75–85% reported improvements in assessment decision-making

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- A majority reported increased confidence in IEP team decisions
- LEAs reported consistent use of multiple data sources and eligibility criteria
- Minimal evidence indicated reliance on inappropriate factors

In addition, many LEAs reported establishing local review processes, indicating increased capacity and stronger internal systems.

Together, these findings indicate that the monitoring process is strengthening local decision-making practices while reinforcing appropriate use of eligibility criteria.

Identified Areas for Improvement

While overall feedback was positive, LEAs also identified areas where the monitoring process could be refined to improve efficiency and deepen systemic impact.

- While documentation requirements are viewed as valuable for reflection, responses were mixed regarding format (completing Individual Student Information Forms vs. uploading IEPs and evaluations), indicating an opportunity to improve efficiency
- Some LEAs indicated that the process is still experienced as a compliance activity, suggesting the need to deepen implementation and system integration
- Variability in local review systems indicates a need for greater consistency across districts

From Evaluation to Continuous Improvement

Based on data and stakeholder feedback, the State identified targeted areas for refinement, including reducing administrative burden and strengthening consistency across LEAs. Because districts stated that though the monitoring process was helpful for reflection and verification, some LEAs noted that elements of the process remained compliance-oriented rather than fully embedded into local systems.

Thus, DESE-OSE's goal when redesigning this process was to:

- Produce a system that is more likely to produce systemic change and;
- Be less cumbersome for districts.

Arkansas's strengthened monitoring system for 2026–2027 emphasizes:

- Proactive identification through required fall submission of projected participation data for all LEAs
- Differentiated tiering based on multiple indicators, including trends, stability, and documentation patterns
- Reflective justification and participation planning
- Tiered review of student-level documentation, including IEPs and evaluations

- Expanded training and universal supports available to all LEAs
- Ongoing evaluation and annual refinement of monitoring practices

Strengthening the Monitoring System for 2026–2027

Arkansas’s strengthened monitoring system for 2026-20207 emphasizes a proactive, differentiated framework focused on early identification, targeted support, and fidelity of implementation.

Universal Supports (All LEAs)

Universal supports remain foundational and have long been available, including:

- State-developed training and technical assistance
 - Six regional in-person trainings are planned for spring and summer 2026
- The Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Manual
- The statewide decision-making tool
- Publicly available guidance materials and recorded training
- Targeted assistance is continually available as identified needs arise via phone and email
- Guidance through the Monthly Call with LEA supervisors

Tiered Requirements for 2026–2027

Tier 1 – Slightly Above 1% (Exact data breaks will be determined per year)

- Submission of a 1% Participation Plan
- Required training
- Submission of student-level evidence for unexpected disability patterns, based on a State-specified sample

Tier 2 – Moderately Above 1% or Needs Support Based on Other Data Points

- All Tier 1 requirements
- Submission of student-level evidence, based on a state-specified sample of IEPs and evaluations to the State’s secure server.
- Response to clarifying questions based on document review

Tier 3 – Intensive Support (≥ 2.0% or Needs Intensive Support Based on Other Data Points))

- All Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements
- Submission of student-level evidence, based on a state-specified sample of IEPs and evaluations to the State’s secure server. Sample size will be larger than Tier 2.
- Option for on-site monitoring

All Tiers -

- Student-Level and Systemic feedback provided by DESE-OSE, including:

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- Questions to consider
- Suggested next actions
- AA-AAAS eligibility and procedural requirements

Table 3 compares Arkansas’s previous 1% monitoring approach with the updated system being implemented for the 2026–2027 school year.

Table 3: Comparison of Monitoring Systems

Component	Previous System (2021–2026)	Updated System (2026–2027)
Identification of LEAs	Based on prior-year overage	All LEAs submit projected data for real-time identification and proactive support
Justification Process	Narrative with variable utility; Often repeating information with no targeted actions	Reflective analysis with required targeted action planning
Tier Placement	Based on participation rate only	Based on participation rate, longitudinal trends, documentation patterns, and other data indicators
Tier System	Tiered system primarily based on participation rate, with standardized requirements	Tiered system emphasizing proactive identification, differentiated requirements, and graduated documentation review aligned to level of need
Training - intended to build LEA capacity and prevent inappropriate participation decisions.	Required for identified LEAs; with districts permitted to develop or select their own training materials until 25-26.	Required for identified LEAs, using State-provided DESE- OSE training materials that establish a consistent baseline; districts may supplement the training but may not remove or replace required content.
Documentation Review – These activities are used	Relied heavily on district interpretation of data in Tiers 1	Tiered review of targeted samples of IEPs and

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<p>to verify fidelity and address identified concerns.</p>	<p>and 2 through Student Information Forms; folder review only in Tier 3</p>	<p>evaluations, scaled to level of participation risk.</p>
<p>Monitoring Approach</p>	<p>Differentiated by level of need</p>	<p>Differentiated by level of need</p>
<p>Feedback and Improvement</p>	<p>Continuous feedback</p>	<p>Continuous feedback with annual refinement based on participation data and district input</p>
<p>Resource Development</p>	<p>Recorded training and Family Guide to Special Education available on OSE website</p>	<p>Planning expanded training modules and guidance materials focused on participation criteria, disproportionality, and family communication</p>



Conclusion

This report highlights Arkansas’s ongoing commitment to ensuring that alternate assessment participation is appropriate, individualized, and aligned with federal and state expectations.

Arkansas’s monitoring process is designed to support districts in navigating complex assessment decisions while maintaining statewide consistency. Through **annual data review, district justification, and tiered monitoring**, DESE works collaboratively with districts to understand local context, clarify expectations, and provide guidance where additional support may be helpful.

The findings underscore the importance of continued attention to **documentation practices, evaluations, and clear communication around eligibility criteria**. These areas are inherent to complex decision-making and benefit from ongoing training, technical assistance, and shared understanding rather than corrective action alone.

As Arkansas continues this work, the state remains focused on **transparency, consistency, and partnership** with districts. This approach helps ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are assessed appropriately, districts are supported in meeting their responsibilities, and Arkansas’s statewide assessment system remains equitable and trustworthy.

For More Information

For additional information regarding Arkansas’s one percent alternate assessment monitoring process or the contents of this report, please contact:

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Appendix A: ESSA Alignment Crosswalk

This crosswalk shows alignment between Arkansas’s one percent alternate assessment monitoring system and ESSA requirements.

ESSA Requirement	ESSA Citation	Federal Expectation	Arkansas Implementation 25-26	Arkansas Implementation Change for 26-27
Limit alternate assessment participation to 1% of all assessed students	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)	States must ensure no more than 1% of all students participate in the alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards	Arkansas annually reviews district level participation data for each subject area and identifies districts exceeding the 1% threshold	No change
Establish and apply clear participation criteria	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(II)	States must define criteria for determining which students may participate in the alternate assessment	Arkansas provides the Alternate Assessment Criteria Decision Making Tool, revised in 2020	No change
Monitor and address LEA level participation rates	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(II)	States must monitor LEAs exceeding the 1% cap and take appropriate corrective action	Arkansas requires justification for districts over 1% and issues required actions after data submission	Arkansas will require all districts to submit projected and prior-year participation data to support proactive identification and monitoring; districts exceeding 1% will continue to provide justification and participate in tiered monitoring.

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ESSA Requirement	ESSA Citation	Federal Expectation	Arkansas Implementation 25-26	Arkansas Implementation Change for 26-27
Require LEA justifications	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(I)	LEAs exceeding 1% must provide appropriate justification	Arkansas reviews LEA data annually and requires justifications for any district exceeding 1% in any subject	A detailed justification will continue to be required but will include more reflective questions and culminate in a district action plan.
Ensure IEP team based, individualized determinations	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(III)	Alternate assessment decisions must be made by IEP teams on an individual basis	Arkansas requires districts to verify, through formal assurances, that eligibility decisions are made by IEP teams using state criteria	No change
Prevent decisions based on disability category or placement	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(II)	States must ensure decisions are not based on disability category alone	Arkansas flags and requires additional justification for students identified under unexpected eligibility categories	No change
Review how participation criteria are implemented	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III)	States must review how districts apply participation criteria	Arkansas employs tiered monitoring with increasing levels of review and training	Arkansas’s tiered monitoring framework will expand to include additional data points beyond participation rates, including longitudinal trends
Provide technical assistance and support	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III)	States must provide appropriate technical assistance to LEAs	Arkansas provides written feedback, guidance, and targeted support following monitoring activities	No change

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ESSA Requirement	ESSA Citation	Federal Expectation	Arkansas Implementation 25-26	Arkansas Implementation Change for 26-27
Conduct enhanced review when concerns persist	ESSA §1111(b)(2)(D)(ii)(III)	States should take additional action if participation issues continue	Arkansas Tier 3 monitoring includes onsite file review and direct DESE-OSE support	On-site file review for Tier 3 will be determined on a case-by-case basis, informed by participation risk and monitoring results
Ensure ongoing oversight and continuous improvement	ESSA §1111(a)(4)(B)(v)(II)	States must ensure accountability systems support appropriate assessment participation	Arkansas uses multiyear participation trend analysis to inform monitoring, guidance, and technical assistance	Arkansas uses multiyear participation trend analysis to inform monitoring, guidance, and technical assistance

Appendix B: Arkansas AA Participation Decision Tool

The [Arkansas Alternate Assessment Participation Manual 2025–2026](#) can be found on the DESE-OSE website. The Arkansas Alternate Assessment Eligibility Decision-Making Tool is to be used by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams in determining eligibility for Arkansas’s chosen Alternate Assessment, Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM). DLM is appropriate for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet all four requirements listed below. Additional considerations are provided that further define the criteria and assist the IEP team in decision making. Factors that the IEP team should not consider eligibility determination are also identified. Although each requirement must be met, the decision for participation in the alternate assessment must be based on a holistic view of the student and no single element.

The IEP team must answer “YES” to all four criteria for the student to be eligible to participate in the DLM. If the answer is “NO” to any of the questions, the student must participate in the statewide 3-10 and any applicable EOC summative assessments, with or without accommodations. The IEP team will determine whether an eligible student shall participate in the DLM or the general assessment.

<p>Does the student have a disability that significantly impacts intellectual functioning?</p>	<p>Does the student have a disability that significantly impacts adaptive behavior?</p>	<p>Does the student require extensive adaptations and support to perform and/or participate meaningfully and productively in the everyday life activities of integrated school, home, community, and home environments?</p>	<p>Does the student require substantial modifications to the general education curriculum?</p>
<p>Intellectual functioning well below average (IQ typically below 55 or 3.0 or more standard deviations below the mean).</p>	<p>Adaptive behavior* scores are typically two to three standard deviations below the mean in two or more areas.</p>	<p>A significant cognitive disability is pervasive, affecting student functioning across all academic, social, and community settings. The student is expected to require intensive and ongoing support after graduation and throughout life.</p>	<p>Substantial modifications change the content expectation through a significant reduction in depth, breadth, and complexity of grade-level standards.</p>
<p>____ Yes</p>	<p>____ Yes</p>	<p>____ Yes</p>	<p>____ Yes</p>

* The term adaptive behavior is defined as those skills that are essential for someone to live and function independently and safely in daily life. The student’s post-secondary outcomes for independent living will likely require supported or assisted living and may involve a guardian when the student turns eighteen.

The Following Should Not Be used in Making This Assessment Decision:

- IQ score or disability category alone.
 - For example, not all students with an intellectual disability meet the criteria for the alternate assessment.
- English Learner status
- Poor attendance
- Expected poor performance on the general assessment.
- Educational environment or instructional setting
- Low reading or achievement level
- Anticipated disruptive behavior or emotional duress
- Impact of scores on accountability system
- Administrative decision

Evidence shows that the decision for participating in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment was not based on the above list - check \checkmark

IEP Team Statement of Assurance: Our decision was based on multiple pieces of evidence that, when taken together, demonstrated that the Arkansas Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate assessment for this student; that his/her academic instruction will be based on the Essential Elements linked to the Arkansas Academic Standards; that the Additional Considerations listed above were not used to make this decision; and that any additional implications of this decision were discussed thoroughly.

Each of us agrees with the participation decision in the Arkansas Alternate Assessment:

Name: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian: _____ Date: _____