

Guidance and Procedures for Implementing the Decision-Making Tool

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Delaware's Waiver Status

Delaware was not granted a Waiver Extension Request.

- The State failed to meet Participation Rate requirement in 2018-2019.
- The State did not show Substantial Progress in reducing the 1% participation rate.
- The State must demonstrate effort to reduce the 1% Cap.
- The State submitted a Compliance Plan for Science – October 2020

Delaware will apply for new Waiver December 2021.

- The State will submit the new Decision-Making Tool as evidence it has demonstrated effort to reduce the 1% Cap.

Delaware re-designed the Decision-Making Participation Tool

- The state received feedback and input from Spec Ed Leadership, DTCs, EDs and AGECE on the creation of the tool.
- The DeSSA-Alt Decision-Making Tool released July 1, 2021
- The State revised the Companion Guide to the DeSSA-Alternate Decision-Making Tool – Fall 2021.
- The State created this Guidance document and questions were added to the DeSSA-Alt FAQs in Fall 2021.
- The state received feedback and input from Spec Ed Leadership, DTCs, EDs and AGECE during the implementation of the tool – September-November 2021.

IMPLEMENTATION IMPLICATIONS:

Guidance on IEP Meetings

- IEPs do not need to be revised for all students currently placed on the alternate assessment until their **annual IEP** meeting as in the past.
- The DeSSA-Alt Decision-Making Tool is completed annually at the IEP Team meeting.
- Parents play an active role in the decision-making and can provide information on their child's personal needs.
- [Decision Tree: Alternate Assessment](#)

Guidance on Instruction

- Course 28138: Inclusive Practices linking Assessment to Instruction
- Educators should complete AAS trainings in content areas.
- Delaware's Alternate Assessment Standards (DLM EEs) provide access to the Delaware Content Standards. Students on the alternate assessment access the standards using the DLM Essential Elements.
- Teachers can begin using the Successor linkage levels which go beyond the essential element for those students who will be moving from the alternate assessment to the general content area assessment. Then shift instruction to the Delaware content standards the following year.

ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS AND TESTING:

- If a student is found eligible to participate in the alternate assessment using the tool but **has not yet received** instruction using the Delaware Alternate Achievement Standards (DLM EEs), then next steps are:
 - If the annual meeting occurs between September—December; test in the Spring.
 - Example: The annual meeting occurred October 2021; the student would take the alternate assessment Spring 2022.
 - If the annual meeting occurs between January – May; Take the general assessment in Spring and then shift to the alternate assessment in the Fall of the following year.
 - Example: The annual meeting occurred February 2022; the student will continue on the general assessment in Spring 2022 and take the alternate assessment in Fall 2022.
- With the shift to the Instructionally Embedded Model, if the student has **already completed** a content area testlet, and then found ineligible, the student will remain on the alternate assessment for the remainder of that school year. The student will make the shift to the general assessment the following year.
 - Example: The annual meeting occurred October 2021; the student has taken ELA and Math content area testlets. The student will remain on the alternate assessment for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022. The student would move to the general assessment Fall 2022.
- A change in participation eligibility **should not** affect the least restrictive environment (LRE).
 - One of the exclusions established by ESSA is that educational placement/setting should not determine eligibility decision-making.
 - Example: There are students in the alternate assessment who may be placed in a gen ed classroom.
- A student’s primary disability does not decide placement on the alternate assessment.
 - Example: Data shows that the majority of LD students participate in the general assessment but a LD student may also participate on the alternate assessment if that student meets the eligibility requirements of the Decision-Making Tool
- The alternate assessment is not linked to the alternate achievement diploma.
 - [Delaware's High School Diploma versus Diploma of Alternate Achievement Standards](#)

Resources:

- [DeSSA-Alt FAQs](#)
- [Companion Guide for the DeSSA-Alternate Decision-Making Tool](#)