



OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

Statewide Alternate Assessment Eligibility Process – School Year 2023-24

Updated October 2023

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is committed to providing equitable assessment opportunities for all students in the District of Columbia. We are committed to working with our stakeholders to provide assessment options for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Alternate statewide assessments are available for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities as an alternative to participating in the general statewide assessments.

General information regarding the following alternate assessments can be found on OSSE's [Alternate Assessments](#) webpage:

- Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11, and students enrolled in the third year of the Certificate of IEP Completion pathway
- Dynamic Learning Maps Science Alternate Assessment (DLM) for grades 5, 8 and students enrolled in high school biology
- WIDA Alternate ACCESS English Language Proficiency (ELP) for grades K-12

Local education agencies (LEAs) must complete OSSE's application process for students to be determined eligible to participate in alternate statewide assessments. OSSE makes determinations for students in grades 3-12. Individualized education program (IEP) teams make determinations for students in grades K-2. OSSE has published [guidance](#) for IEP teams to support them in making statewide assessment participation decisions for students with significant cognitive disabilities. To be determined eligible for alternate assessment participation, students must first meet all the following minimum requirements:

1. The student has a significant cognitive disability;
2. The student is learning content linked to grade-level Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and WIDA English Language Development standards (ELD); and
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial support in the grade-appropriate curriculum.

Please note: Meeting the above requirements does not guarantee automatic alternate assessment participation.

Applying for Alternate Assessment Eligibility in the Special Programs Database

For the 2023-24 school year, the overall process to apply for alternate assessment participation is largely consistent with prior years. Updates have been made to reflect OSSE's migration from the Special Education Data System (SEDS) to the Special Programs database and provide additional clarity about application deadlines and needed documentation.

Eligibility for participation in any alternate assessment for the 2023-24 school year begins with LEAs completing the appropriate documentation in the Special Programs database. During the IEP development process, or through an IEP amendment, IEP teams are to carefully review and fully complete the DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Documentation Form to identify individual students for whom it may be most appropriate to participate in the alternate assessment program. OSSE will review applications based on the Participation Decision Documentation Form¹ and will review all sources of supporting evidence related to the application to make a determination. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are determined eligible for alternate assessment participation) will take the following assessments in the 2023-24 school year, as applicable:

- MSAA in grades 3-8, grade 11, and students enrolled in the High School Achievement Certificate pathway
- DLM Science alternate assessment in grades 5, 8 and high school biology
- WIDA Alternate ACCESS in grades K-12

Alternate assessment participation determinations for students in grades 3-12 are made by OSSE. Alternate assessment participation determinations for students who are English learners in grades K-2 are made by LEA IEP teams.

Every fall, OSSE reviews new applications and student records to determine eligibility for alternate assessment participation for the current school year. For OSSE to review a student for alternate assessment eligibility for the 2023-24 school year, LEAs must ensure the following documentation is present in the Special Programs database:

1. An active IEP that indicates “Alternate Assessment” selected by the IEP team;
2. A current “DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Form,” fully completed and submitted; and
3. All sources of supporting evidence for the alternate assessment decision form.

The DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Form and all sources of supporting evidence must be dated within the last three calendar years in order to be considered current and acceptable.

OSSE recommends that IEP teams begin completing the appropriate documentation in the Special Programs database as soon as the new school year begins.

Students who were determined eligible for the 2022-23 school year will automatically be determined eligible for the 2023-24 school year with the above-mentioned documentation in place.

Application Scenarios: New Applications and Annual Renewals

New Applicants

For new students requesting eligibility for alternate assessment participation in the 2023-24 school year, LEAs are to follow the steps below:

- Ensure there is an active IEP in the Special Programs database that indicates “Alternate Assessment” selected by IEP team.

¹ Beginning in school year 2023-24, this form is embedded in the Special Programs database as the Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria form

- *If the IEP does not indicate “Alternate Assessment,” an IEP amendment is needed to reflect this requirement.*
- Complete the “DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Documentation Form” electronically in the Special Programs database. This form is embedded in the Special Programs database as the Statewide Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria form.
- Upload all sources of supporting evidence in the Special Programs database.

Annual Renewals for Alternate Assessment Eligibility

For students renewing eligibility for alternate assessments in the 2023-24 school year, LEAs are to follow the steps below:

- Ensure there is an active IEP in the Special Programs database that indicates “Alternate Assessment” selected by IEP team.
 - *If the IEP does not indicate “Alternate Assessment,” an IEP amendment is needed to reflect this requirement.*
- Ensure the “DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Documentation Form” is completed electronically in the Special Programs database and is dated within the last three calendar years.
- Ensure all sources of supporting evidence are in the Special Programs database and are dated within the last three calendar years.

Please note, for students previously approved to participate in alternate assessments, new applications are **not** required. The alternate assessment participation decision carries over to the next academic school year if all other supporting documentation is current and present in the Special Programs database.

LEA Rolling View of Applications via Alt Assessment Quickbase and Qlik Applications

LEA Assessment Managers and LEA Special Education points of contact (POCs) will be granted access to the following applications listed on the table below:

Application	Access to Application Begins
Alternate Assessment MSAA Quickbase	Nov. 2, 2023
Qlik	Nov. 2, 2023

In both the Alternate Assessment Quickbase and Qlik applications, LEAs will be able to see if the application steps have been completed in the Special Programs database for each student. In addition, LEAs will be able to see if any intended applicants are missing from these feeds. If there are students missing, or any missing requirements, LEAs are responsible for making corrections to the students’ records in the Special Programs database. The final application deadline is **Nov. 13, 2023**.

The Qlik feed will be updated daily. Please note that if you complete the electronic participation decision form in the Special Programs database after **Nov. 13**, that student’s application will not be reviewed until the late submission/appeals window and will be reflected in the Qlik feed during the appeals window starting on **Dec. 1, 2023**. If your LEA foresees challenges with meeting the **Nov. 13** application deadline, please reach out to OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov.

Applications Submitted After the Alternate Assessment Application Deadline

The deadline for application submission is **Nov. 13, 2023**. OSSE strongly recommends LEA Assessment Managers and Special Education POCs ensure all student application requirements are met by this date. Any applications submitted between **Nov. 14** and **Dec. 19** will be marked with a late flag in the Alternate Assessment Quickbase application and will not be reviewed until the late submission/appeals window, **Nov. 14-Dec. 19**. Applications marked with a late flag will receive a final determination on **Jan. 12, 2024**.

OSSE will only review applications submitted after **Dec. 1** for students who:

- Are transfer students (new to the LEA)
- Meet the criteria outlined in the [OSSE guidance](#) for IEP teams, due to a new disability determination

Applications submitted after **Dec. 1** for students who do not meet the above conditions will **not** receive an alternate assessment eligibility determination. These students are expected to participate in the applicable statewide general assessments in spring 2024 and can apply for alternate assessment eligibility in fall 2024.

LEA Assessment Managers and/or Special Education POCs are responsible for ensuring alternate assessment participation application(s) are complete and should reach out to OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov for assistance with this process.

OSSE Review of Applications for Alternate Assessment Eligibility

Starting on **Nov. 2, 2023**, OSSE will review all alternate assessment eligibility applications submitted for the 2023-24 school year. Eligibility determinations will be returned to LEAs in the Special Programs database on **Dec. 1, 2023** for applications received by Nov. 13.

Determination Appeals

Complete applications submitted by the deadline of **Nov. 13** are eligible for appeal. If an LEA decides to appeal an eligibility determination, the LEA will do so through the Alternate Assessment Quickbase application. Access to the application and detailed user instructions will be provided to LEAs by **Nov. 2**. The Quickbase application will allow LEAs to communicate further with OSSE about the case via the secure platform. For most appeals, additional documentation that supports the IEP team's request will need to be uploaded in the Special Programs database (e.g., new evaluations, case records, or assessment results).

Timeline for the Alternate Assessment Eligibility Process for the 2023-24 School Year

Task	Deadline	System
<p>LEAs add or update documentation for alternate assessment applications in the Special Programs database. For OSSE to review eligibility, a student must have the following in the Special Programs database for the 2023-24 school year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An active IEP on file that indicates “Alternate Assessment” selected by the IEP team. 2. A current “DC Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Documentation Form” on file. 3. All sources of supporting evidence for the alternate assessment decision form have been uploaded. 	<p>Aug. 28, 2023 – Nov. 13, 2023</p>	<p>Special Programs database</p>
<p>LEAs can view the students who have alternate assessment applications in the Special Programs database through the Quickbase and Qlik applications.</p>	<p>Nov. 2, 2023 (Rolling updates)</p>	<p>Quickbase Qlik</p>
<p>Final deadline for LEAs updating alternate assessment eligibility documentation in the Special Programs database for the 2023-24 school year.</p>	<p>Nov. 13, 2023</p>	<p>Special Programs database</p>
<p>OSSE reviews documentation in the Special Programs database for students requesting eligibility for alternate assessments in the 2023-24 school year.</p>	<p>Nov. 2 – Nov. 30, 2023</p>	<p>Special Programs database</p>
<p>OSSE sends eligibility determinations to LEAs in the Special Programs database.</p>	<p>Dec. 1, 2023</p>	<p>Special Programs database</p>
<p>LEAs may appeal eligibility determinations in Quickbase and in most cases will need to submit additional evidence that supports the appeal to OSSE in the Special Programs database.</p> <p>As a rare exception, LEAs may submit new eligibility applications after the application window, only for transfer students or students who have new disability determinations.</p>	<p>Dec. 1 – Dec. 19, 2023</p>	<p>Quickbase Special Programs database</p>
<p>LEAs receive final eligibility determinations from OSSE in the Special Programs database.</p>	<p>Jan. 12, 2024</p>	<p>Special Programs database</p>

For more information and guidance for IEP teams on alternate assessment participation, please contact the Office of Assessments at OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov. For technical assistance with the Alternate Assessment MSAA Quickbase application or Qlik, contact [your LEA Data Liaison](#).