

1.0 Percent Participation Justification Form 2017-18

The *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* requires each district and charter school to complete and submit a justification when it anticipates exceeding 1.0 percent of students assessed in a subject area with the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment. Justifications from each district and charter school will be reviewed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), and follow up actions will be determined based on the information found in the justification document. Staff from the Exceptional Children and Accountability Divisions in each district and charter school should collaborate to provide the following information on the justification document. Responses to numbers 1-4 are required; it is optional to include additional information (see page 3). This justification document will be publicly posted. As such, the document **must not contain any personally identifiable information**. If necessary, additional pages may be attached to this form.

1. Enter contact information for the primary district/charter school staff member responsible for overseeing the completion of the justification form.	
3-Digit LEA/Charter Code: 350	District/Charter Name: Franklin County Schools
Contact Name: Windy Edwards	Contact Title: Director of Exceptional Children
Contact Phone No.: 919-496-2457 ext. 230	Contact E-Mail: windyedwards@fcschools.net

2. Enter a description of how the district/charter school will assure that Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams are adhering to the eligibility criteria as outlined in the *Testing Students with Disabilities* publication when determining student eligibility for participation in the alternate assessment.

FCS has a policy stating that a full explanation needs to be given to parents if an IEP team is considering moving a student to the adapted curriculum. After this discussion, we have a form for parents to sign which stated the following information in writing: I have been informed that my child: _____ is being placed in a Self-Contained EC Classroom to address his specific academic and/or behavioral needs. I fully understand that he/she is being removed from the regular Standard Course of Study/Common Core Curriculum and will not be eligible to receive a regular High School diploma. State, local and district wide assessments will be based on the NC Extend I standards and skills, which is an alternate assessment.

Before any meeting where the team is anticipating a discussion about a move to the adapted curriculum, the student's case manager is required to notify the EC program specialist for that student's school. The program specialist reviews the student's records and if warranted, will contact our FCS adapted curriculum specialist to request a records review, student observation, and/or consultation with the case manager. Throughout this process, the program specialist and adapted curriculum specialist coach the case manager through ensuring that the student meets the eligibility criteria as outlined in the *Testing Students with Disabilities* publication before the IEP team makes the determination. Teams are also reminded to increase in-class supports and interventions for struggling students, and consider increasing special education service time in a resource room setting for students who still do not make progress with appropriate classroom interventions, before considering a move to adapted curriculum.

We also provide necessary supports to our teachers and schools to meet the needs of students who may be considered for a move to the alternate curriculum. This year, countywide, we began a program which placed a behavior support assistant in each elementary school to support students with serious behavioral needs. We also train and coach teams to avoid making decisions about moving a student to an alternate classroom because of behavioral needs. We have a behavior specialist for the county who supervises this program and helps to support IEP teams in conducting functional behavior assessments, creating behavior intervention plans, and determining appropriate behavioral interventions.

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3. Enter a description of how any disproportionality among race, gender, or socioeconomic status groups is defined and plans for how that disproportionality will be addressed.

- Description of how any disproportionality among race, gender, or socioeconomic status groups is defined:

In all grades except 7th, the percentage of males assessed with Extend 1 is disproportionately higher than the percentage of all males in the district. In 7th grade, the percentage of females is disproportionately higher.

In all grades except 7th, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students assessed with Extend 1 is disproportionately higher than the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the district.

With regard to race, there are some specific grade levels/tests where the percentage of students assessed with Extend 1 who are Hispanic, black, white, and multiracial is higher than the percentage of all students of that race for that grade level. However, this is very inconsistent and it does not appear that this is any more likely for one race than any of the others. Given that we are such a small county with such a small number of Extend 1 students (between 2 and 14 students at each grade level), even one student can change the percentages greatly.

- Plans for how disproportionality will be addressed:

- Males - Training will be provided to staff about the importance of determining whether difficulties a student is having are due to a cognitive impairment, or are caused by a behavioral problem which could limit a student's progress or even access to educational opportunities. Such behavioral issues could be more prevalent in males.

- Economically disadvantaged students - Pre-k programs in our county help to address this concern by providing learning opportunities for children living in poverty, whose parents may not be able to provide early learning experiences for their children. Also, training will be provided for staff about the importance of careful discernment between a student who is struggling due to a cognitive impairment and a student who is struggling due to lack of access or opportunity.

4. Enter additional justification of variables not covered but deemed essential to understanding why the district/charter school has a higher rate of alternate assessment participation.

We are a small rural county with a high poverty rate. While we need to ensure that students placed on the alternate curriculum legitimately have significant cognitive disabilities and that their difficulties with learning are not due to lack of exposure to learning opportunities, families living in poverty also have a higher rate of other factors which can lead to significant disabilities in their children, such as drug abuse, fetal alcohol syndrome, poor health/nutrition for pregnant mothers, and nutritional deficits in infancy and early childhood.

Signatures

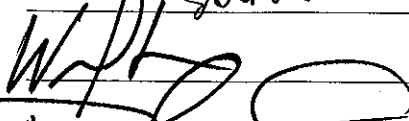
Superintendent/Charter School Director



Date

5/3/18

Exceptional Children Director



Date

5/3/18

LEA/Charter Test Coordinator



Date

5/3/18

The completed justification form must be signed by the superintendent/charter school director, exceptional children's director, and testing coordinator. The form must be scanned and emailed to alternateassessment@dpi.nc.gov by **May 4, 2018**.

The NCDPI will notify districts/charter schools in writing if further information is needed and will include next steps. For questions, please contact your Exceptional Children Director or Regional Accountability Coordinator.

Note: See page 3 for additional information that can be included but is not required.