



## Why Is It Called the 1% ?

### Fast Facts and Frequently Asked Questions about Maine's Alternate Assessments

**Q. Why is the population of students participating in the state's AA-AAAS sometimes referred to as the 1%?**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 established that in each state, no more than 1% of the student population participating in state assessments should be doing so using an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS). If a state does the 1% cap, that state is required to submit a waiver to the US Education Department 90 days prior to the next assessment window.

In order to meet this requirement, the Maine DOE reviews participation data from the most recent administration of state assessments.

**Q. How is alternate assessment participation (1%) calculated?**

Maine DOE calculates alternate assessment participation using the following formula:

**Number of students who participated in alternate assessments**

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**Total number of students who participated across state assessments  
(including alternate)**

As an example, there are 1,345 students enrolled in *District A* in grades 3-8 and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of high school. Of these 1,341 participated in a Maine state assessment in mathematics during Spring 2022. Of those 1,341, eleven are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who have been found eligible to participate in AA-AAAS, via the IEP Team. *District A's* 1% calculate would be as follows:

$$11/1,341 \times 100 = \mathbf{0.82\% ( < 1\% )}$$

## Q. What happens if my SAU exceeds the 1% cap?

SAUs exceeding the 1% threshold for AA-AAAS participation are contacted by Maine DOE at the beginning of each school year. The DOE provides each of these districts with a customized action plan template, including three years of alternate assessment participation data. The SAU completes the action plan, which includes justification for exceeding the participation threshold, and submits back to the Maine DOE.

## Q. What happens to a submitted action plan?

The Action Plan Review Committee carefully reviews each submitted plan. Occasionally, additional information/action is required and a Committee member will reach out to SAU leadership for additional context and next steps. **Please note:** per federal law, all SAU 1% Action Plans are publicly available documents. To request a specific district's 2021-2022 1% Action Plan, [please submit a request here](#).

## Q. Why are some SAUs consistently above the 1% threshold?

There are some SAUs which surpass the cap on participation due to mitigating circumstances. For example, if a district contains specialized programming for students with significant cognitive disabilities, there may be a higher than usual participation rate. Additionally, in smaller districts with just a few hundred students, one or two participants in AA-AAAS can equate to 2 or 3%. It's important

to remember that the 1% action planning process is not designed to exclude eligible students from participating in alternate assessments. Rather, this is a safeguard to ensure that districts have the information and supports necessary to continually monitor which students are participating in the AA-AAAS, and that **all** students are participating in the most appropriate assessment of grade level content.

**Additional questions about alternate assessments and the 1%?  
Please reach out!**

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