

1% Cap Justification per District School Year 2022-2023

Aguila Elementary District (4249)

The Aguila Elementary School District #63 has a unique situation that leads to a higher-than-average percentage of students eligible for alternate assessment. The district is a single school district with fewer than 100 students participating in state assessments. Specifically, in the 2022-2023 school year, 88 students participated in the Arizona's Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) for Math and ELA, and 29 students participated in the AASA-Science.

Given the small total number of students, having just one student qualify for the alternate state assessment results in a percentage that appears disproportionately high.

In a larger district, one student out of several hundred or thousand would result in a much lower percentage. However, due to the small size of Aguila Elementary School District #63, even one student qualifying for the alternate assessment pushes the percentage above the typical 1% threshold.

Thus, the district's high percentage of students eligible for alternate assessment is not due to a large number of such students, but rather because the overall student population is very small.

Ajo Unified District (4409)

The Ajo School District has been experiencing a significant increase of students with significant disabilities. There has been an increased population growth in the Ajo School District and surrounding areas. The local community has been experiencing growth, which has led to an increase in student population. There has been a significant increase with enrollment in the Kindergarten and the Head Start program in the Ajo School District. The school has seen students returning to the district whose parents grew up in the area and are now returning to the city.

The School District has undergone a significant change in administration in the last few years. This has led to policies and procedural changes. The SPED Department has previously relied on what the team felt would be in their students' best interests and they did not use the required data to determine eligibility for alternative assessments. The SPED department is now reviewing previous team's decisions to determine if decisions were made using data or some other means of determination.

Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School, Inc. (78966)

Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School Inc. (11-87-06-000) serves students whom do not qualify under the Bureau of Indian Education Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP). These students reside on the Gila River Indian Community but do not meet the required blood quantum to be eligible under ISEP. The charter school receives ADE funding for these students. The charter school does not receive IDEA funds for these students. Due to our charter school's location and unique enrollment eligibilities, students who qualify for MSAA who are not ISEP enrolled may exceed the 1% threshold.

Alhambra Elementary District (4280)

AESD has been accepting open enrollment for students in self contained classrooms, which is not a typical practice in surrounding districts. Some of those students were eligible for Alternate Assessments. Some surrounding districts have gone to a 4-day school week, and parents have requested to open-enroll in AESD so their children can go to school and receive services 5 days a week. Additionally, AESD has been holding enrollment fairs and other recruitment efforts in which the ESS department has been present to discuss programming with prospective parents. AESD's boundaries include several apartment

complexes, and the population is very transient. In addition, there has been an increase in the refugee population, and we have encountered an increase in students with significant cognitive disabilities and medical needs.

Alpine Elementary District (4161)

We are a small, rural district that services students from nearby cities. Our student population is only about 50% in district. Our district also takes the siblings of currently enrolled students and students on the waiting list for out of district enrollment. Our district is also the school of choice for many out of district families because of our small class sizes and the resources we provide. In addition, we are often unaware of the needs of our students or the extent of their disabilities when they transfer in from out of district until after enrollment.

Altar Valley Elementary District (4418)

Demographic Complexity: The rural community has a notable population of grandparents raising grandchildren, many of whom have special needs. This unique familial structure demands tailored educational approaches and assessments.

Care Dynamics: A significant foster care community exists, adding layers of complexity to student backgrounds and educational needs.

Migration for Educational Environment: Families are moving to the area specifically for the benefits of a rural, small school environment, indicating a diverse influx of students with varying needs and expectations.

Amphitheater Unified District (4406)

Our LEA has several specialized programs throughout our attendance area that attract students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and their families. Additionally, the state introduced the Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt ELPA) last year, extending the scope of alternate assessments to include kindergarten, first, and second grades. This policy change resulted in a higher number of students needing alternate assessments in our district, contributing to our LEA's surpassing the 1% threshold.

Apache Junction Unified District (4443)

There are several special circumstances that affect the number of students enrolling in AJUSD who are eligible for Alternative Assessment:

High Transient Population of Students with Disabilities: As a condition of the high existence of child placement programs, foster programs, and group homes in our community, our district serves a significant number of students who transfer in with cognitive disabilities, many of whom require specialized instruction and accommodation in Math and ELA. This often necessitates alternative assessments, which can impact our participation rates.

AJUSD is experiencing a reduction in our overall enrollment which has been occurring for several years (over a five-year period). We are seeing an increase in overall enrollment for special education, with enrollment being the highest for students with more significant cognitive disabilities, behavior, or developmental needs. Since the pandemic we have seen an increase in preschool enrollment. Incoming preschoolers are entering programs with intense multiple disabilities (PSD) that require extensive direct individualized instruction and a great amount of developmental support in order to meet their individualized IEP goals. We have also seen kindergarten and first grade students with significant cognitive and developmental needs entering as first-time enrollees having not attended schools prior to

enrollment. These variables have had a greater impact on the enrollment of nondisabled peers districtwide. This growth continues to affect our 1% cap as well as our overall special education percentage.

Staff Training and Implementation: With the influx of new teachers in our special needs classrooms, and across the state due to staff turnover and shortages, there is a heightened need for increased professional development, particularly for those writing IEPs. This need is critical not only at AJUSD but also for schools from which we receive transfer paperwork. Our action plan includes a thorough review process during transfer meetings to ensure all documentation is accurate and complete. To ensure the highest standards, we continuously monitor our processes and procedures, specifically focusing on alternative assessment eligibility. Data monitoring is essential for identifying areas where additional training and professional development are needed. By analyzing this data, we can pinpoint specific needs and tailor our efforts to strengthen our practices and support our staff effectively

Arizona Connections Academy Charter School, Inc. (87407)

Arizona Connections Academy is an online virtual charter school. We have students withdrawing and enrolling throughout the school year from all areas of Arizona. We review and hold transfer IEP meetings for special education students. If a student comes to us with alternative assessment in their IEP already, the team will review the information and data and determine if they continue to qualify. We have a high population as families feel their students with special needs could do better in the online environment. We do not deny enrollment to any student. We have open enrollments for all students and accept all special education students regardless of their eligibility. When the pandemic took place, we had a larger influx of students enrolling with us which included a larger population of students with special needs especially because families wanted to ensure their student was still able to get the supports, they needed as outlined in their IEP. The influx did include students who were considered to be self-contained and met the criteria for alternative assessment. We have also had a decline in students who participate in the regular state assessment overall since COVID. Less and less families want to have their students participate in anything that requires in person such as state testing.

Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (6393)

We are a small district with only two campuses. Enrollment comes from the entire state of Arizona, we are the school of placement by each district and not through open enrollment. One campus in Tucson (housing the school for the Deaf and the school for the Blind, as well as our dormitories), and one campus in Phoenix (Phoenix Day School for the Deaf). ASDB's student enrollment numbers who have the most significant cognitive disabilities in addition to their sensory impairment are much higher and that offsets the number of students in our general population. Our schools offer instruction in American Sign Language directly from teachers who are trained in the language acquisition for the Deaf, as well as instruction on reading braille and low vision assistive technology for the Blind.

Arlington Elementary District (4274)

Arlington Elementary School District is a single-school district. During the academic year in question, the district and surrounding community experienced an increase in population as families moved into the area. Arlington has always been a migrant community which can bring an influx of students depending upon the season; however, this year more families moved into the community as more jobs became available. Solar plants are being instituted in the surrounding area in addition to the growth and expansion of existing industries. For this reason, our district experienced its highest enrollment count including students eligible for the Alternative Assessments.

ASU Preparatory Academy (90273)

ASU Preparatory Academy (90273) is a Charter with a small student population, serving third through sixth grades. Because the student population is low, even a small number of students testing in alternate assessments skews total participation percentage.

Avondale Elementary District (4272)

Over the past four years, the Avondale and Goodyear area has seen a significant increase in new homes and apartments. This expansion has increased the Avondale District's overall enrollment, in turn raising the number of students enrolling who also receive special education services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). In review, the number of IEPs that include the MSAA eligibility requirements has also risen.

Along with this population growth, Avondale District offers multiple cross-categorical programs. Avondale currently offers 16 programs that are specifically targeted to address the needs of students whose “cognitive, adaptive, and behavioral needs indicate a disability(s) that significantly impact their intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.” The students that are enrolled in these programs have IEPs with goals that align with the student(s) significantly adverse academic and functional needs. The specially designed instruction that is required for these students to master their goals is only attainable through rigorous grade-level instruction with a modified curriculum.

The enrollment process for students with special educational needs is particular. When an enrollment packet indicates a need for special education services, Avondale cannot immediately invalidate the IEP that a student enters with. The district implements a process to review the information within the IEP and MET. A team determines whether the IEP meets the true, valid, and accurate data. The team must ensure that the information in the IEP is the best representation of the student so that they may successfully access the general education curriculum. Through this thorough review process, Avondale can ensure that only students who meet the criteria for MSAA are eligible and participate in the assessment. This process is indicated in Avondale’s action plan below.

Baboquivari Unified School District #40 (4412)

Our student population is comprised primarily of Tohono O’odham students. The Tohono O’odham are recognized to have the highest rate of diabetes in Arizona as well as in the United States. Type 2 diabetes primarily affects adult tribal members; however, children and adolescents are also affected.

The United States Census Bureau for 2022 reported the poverty rate for the Tohono O’odham Nation at 47.0% compared to the overall poverty rate of 12.2% for Arizona. The United States Census Bureau for 2022 reported the employment rate for the Tohono O’odham Nation at 32.3% (most are labor jobs) compared to the overall poverty rate of 54% for Arizona. The United States Census Bureau for 2022 reported the presence of Cognitive difficulty on the Tohono O’odham Nation at 6.2%.

Parents of some of the transfer students have stated that BUSD40 has a better educational program and their student(s) will receive a better education despite their home being within closer proximity to other schools. For some of these students, they travel an hour or more one way to get to school, but this is not a deterrent. Many households on the Tohono O’odham Nation do not have internet access. Resources are lacking on the Tohono O’odham Nation that would provide students with cultural knowledge. There is no public library, limited social events, a limited number of recreational facilities, no public transportation, a limited number of medical facilities, etc.

The University of Arizona reports that 7% of grandparents in Arizona are raising their grandchildren who are under the age of 18 years old. This can cause hardship for grandparents and the grandchildren. Figures reported in the 2000 census show a 73.8 percent increase since the 1990 census with Arizona ranking

fourth highest in increase of grandparent-headed households nationally. Many organizations that provide services for both generations are not prepared to deal with the special needs that may arise. I was unable to obtain the statistics specific to the Tohono O’odham Nation; however, it is located in Arizona. Many of our students are raised by their grandparents. Many grandparents caring for their grandchildren lack the understanding of technology, homework, or social issues the student may be experiencing. Some grandparents are in ill health and are not able to meet the student's general needs.

We are a Title I school due to the significant overall needs that are present on the Tohono O’odham Nation. BUSD40 is currently at 100% free meals for our students. We have a high number of students identified for McKinney-Vento. We currently have 200 (20%) students who qualify for McKinney-Vento services, which places BUSD40 in a significant range.

Ball Charter Schools (Dobson) (79204)

Dobson Academy is a small school with strong support for our students with special needs. As such, the student population for students with disabilities has steadily increased over the past few years. This is despite the overall population of students declining. This increase of students with disabilities paired with the decreased of overall student population has increased our proportionality weighing higher on the side of students with disabilities. In surveying families with disabilities, it is discovered that word of mouth has brought families with students with disabilities to Dobson Academy. There are support groups in the area as well as professional referrals from psychologists and treatment centers that have made recommendations to families that Dobson Academy will support their child who has an IEP. Dobson Academy also takes very seriously its obligation to provide a free and appropriate public education to all children and will not “coach out” families whose students have disabilities, even more significant disabilities.

Balsz Elementary District (4268)

We have had a decrease in our enrollment for general education students at all our campuses due to the increase in Charter Schools and online school options. Our Special Education Population has continued to increase; therefore, our Alternative Assessment numbers have increased. Another factor is, that we are close to Phoenix Children’s Hospital and have more affordable housing in our district boundaries that families with students who have disabilities chose to live in.

Beaver Creek Elementary District (4481)

Beaver Creek School is a small school district with an enrollment of around 300 students. This makes it very likely that we will exceed the 1% cap for any alternative testing. Our local demographics are a low-income area that struggles with poverty, arrests, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol misuse. Our enrollment for students who take the general assessments and the students who take the alternative assessments has remained fairly steady over the last few years. Our staff continues to put effort into providing students with special programming based on the students' needs.

Bell Canyon Charter School, Inc (79983)

As a very small public charter school, with a low overall enrollment (300 students), Bell Canyon Charter accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. Families often enroll multiple siblings where a sense of community is built, and families refer other families who have children with similar needs. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home after reporting concerns with previous enrollment in their home school. Additionally, Imagine Bell Canyon competes with large neighboring districts, where class sizes are also larger, and families report they prefer smaller student to teacher ratios for their child, so choose to enroll with us.

Benson Unified School District (79226)

BUSD is a small rural district about an hour away from Tucson. We have a diverse socio-economic status, but many new families are moving to this area from other places within and outside our state. Some of these incoming families reside with extended family and friends on larger, more rural land with room for travel trailers and living environments unavailable in larger cities/school districts. We also have many families with multiple children and extended family units. Some of our families have a high incidence/prevalence of disabilities and more fluid family units. More families have moved in and out of the District within the last year, and their more transient nature impacts our MSAA percentages.

Bonita Elementary District (4224)

Our overall enrollment, K-8 was 98 in the 2022-2023 school year. Our testing population, 3-8 was 65. Based on our small school size, any participation in Alternative assessment puts us over the 1% cap.

Bouse Elementary District (4513)

During the fiscal year 2023, Bouse School District had 43 students participate in state testing for ELA and Math, and 13 students participate on the Science test. Having a small population of students taking the AASA causes us to have a high percentage rate of students participating in the MSAA. Having any students that qualify for MSAA puts us over 1%.

Buckeye Elementary District (4269)

Buckeye is a growing community as it is currently has more affordable housing and services than other areas in the general vicinity (with-in 30 miles). General education rate of enrollment is also increasing, but is less percentage wise than students who receive services. Buckeye has a larger, more robust program than schools in the immediate area (10 mile radius). Informal data taken through parent input indicates that this is a consideration for parents as they move into the area. A concrete example of this increase is reflected in the number of students requiring a level C or higher need who moved in between January 5 and end of business on January 8, 2024. Eleven students enrolled in this span. While not all of the students, of course, qualified for MSAA, 70% did move in with IEPs indicating this need. Our plan should be connected to looking at needs for these students to make determinations upon move in. Consideration of students who are not considered “move in” was also a focus. Numbers of identification in preschool for students with significant cognitive needs has increased over time. Statistically these students remain in the district through 3rd grade. These factors contribute to Buckeye having above the 1% threshold for alternate assessments. The plan needs to contain whole group and individualized training to ensure the proper use of the criteria when making determinations.

Bullhead City School District (4378)

We are the only elementary public-school district within the city limits. The charter schools in our area do not accept students that require a higher level of service. We are located in a rural area that has a highly transient population. The smaller rural schools are sending students to our district as they do not have the staffing to provide the services required to meet the student level of needs.

Camp Verde Unified District (4470)

Camp Verde Unified School District is a relatively small school in a rural area. While most students residing in Camp Verde have other options for their education, students with significant cognitive disabilities only have the special education/life skills program offered through the district. Due to this lack of educational resources for students having a cognitive disability, the district's number of students taking the alternate assessment is higher. For each student administered the alternate assessment, IEP teams reviewed evaluation data, current academic performance, instructional and adaptive behavior needs confirming each met the eligibility criteria and documented in their individualized education plans.

Canon Elementary District (4484)

Canon Elementary School District conducted a root cause analysis of our school exceeding the 1% threshold and the results are outlined below:

Canon Elementary is a small, K-8 school district (126 students) in rural Arizona. Given our small student population, we're consistently challenged to stay below the 1% threshold for alternative state testing. Canon is located in a small rural town with a very poor and transient population. The district has a 33% homeless need and the poverty rate based on Free and Reduced Lunch is 83% percent. The percentage of special education students is 22%, which is also higher than the state average. Canon is a Title I school (school-wide 3) with a high percentage of students who enter kindergarten/1st grade with a lack of academic preparedness.

Casa Grande Elementary District (4446)

Our community has experienced a surge in families relocating to Casa Grande. Consequently, there has been a rise in students transferring to CGESD who have already been identified as eligible for special education services. These students possess Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that specify the necessity for alternative assessments. This influx may be influenced by various community factors such as increased awareness and access to services, as well as programmatic factors like the implementation of inclusive education practices and the availability of support programs within the district. Additionally, shifts in local demographics, such as changes in population density or socioeconomic status, could also contribute to the increased enrollment of students requiring special education services. Notably, there has not been a corresponding growth in enrollment for students who take general assessments, highlighting the specific needs of this student population.

Casa Grande Union High School District (4453)

With our history as a rural community our feeder communities have covered a large geographical area. We have four K-8 districts that feed into our 9-12 High School district. These schools have identified these students and we receive higher percentages of students taking the alternate assessment. We consistently have approximately 2-3% of our students in grade 11 taking the alternative assessments. This number is lower when our students enter in 9th grade due to larger cohort sizes. For the 2022- 2023 school year the COVID 19 pandemic could be a contributing factor as student remain online and did not return to our brick and mortar district to complete their high school career.

Chinle Unified District (4158)

The circumstances that are affecting the participation rate for our district is that we found that our General Education population of student enrollment has decreased. The decline of enrollment has decreased in the last four years from SY 2019 having 3,310 enrolled students to SY 2023 having 3050 enrolled students and we have seen an increase of students who transition into our programs through AzEIP and/or our ESS Preschool programs, throughout the years and they seem to be consistent with staying enrolled into our district.

CITY Center for Collaborative Learning (85448)

City Center for Collaborative Learning is a small charter high school with an enrollment cap of 180 students. City has not had more students enrolling who are eligible for Alternative Assessments. The science percentage was greater than 1% was because in 2022-2023 when the Science Assessment was administered, 94 students took the Science Assessment. Because there were less than 100 students taking the assessment a threshold of greater than 1% occurred. There may have been a change in student attendance to take the Science Assessment due to being absenteeism.

Colorado City Unified District (4370)

We have a high percentage of special education students in our district. We are a small school district and with that we have a large number of special education students. Our general education classes are small so having our high needs students alternative test it pushes us over the 1%.

We have an exceptional special education program because we push students into the classrooms and support them more than the other schools around us. We have a caring atmosphere and pride ourselves on having a program that knows every student individually.

We however have lost many students to the voucher system, and most (not all, but most) of the students that have left our general education students, which again make our percentage of special education even higher. We are the highest area per capita that is using the voucher system in Arizona. This is causing many problems, but one of them is percentage increase in our special education system.

We have also built a great self-contained system in our schools that serves the individual student with great care and is known in the community for being the best. We pride our self in our self –contained program that we have but because of this our high needs enrollment has grown tremendously. Our program brings in as many related services as the student needs, we also bring in life skills, and we push the students in all the areas they need. However, unlike many schools in the area we push to have our high needs students in the classroom as much as possible, so they are not isolated and become part of the school community and their class community.

Our special education program in our school is exceptional and the most desired in the area, and because of this we have a higher percentage of students that need to take the alternative assessments.

Colorado River Union High School District (4381)

Our LEA likely exceeded 1% participation due to our local demographic area, and our special classrooms for life skills seem to keep growing which increases the chances of a new students qualifying for the alternative assessment. Our life skills students who qualify for alternative continue to grow due to our demographical area. Our area consists of low income families, transit families, and a high McKinney Vento population in our community.

Congress Elementary District (4479)

The Congress Elementary School community consists of a large population of students that live with their grandparents. Many of which do not have access to medical facilities, they are not English speaking and are not sure of what educational programs are available for their students' needs. The IEP teams make the decisions to put in place the needed accommodations for the students to be successful in the learning environment.

Continental Elementary District (4416)

Our school is small, with an enrollment of 644 for preschool through 8th grade. Out of the total enrollment, our Special Education population for preschool through 8th grade is 93. Out of the 93 pre-school to 8th grade students who receive special education services, 55 are eligible to take the state assessments. Each student who a team deems eligible for the alternative assessments is one whose eligibility is reviewed very carefully. Trends for our students have indicated there will be years where there is a higher population of students who may be found eligible for alternative assessments, and other years where it will not be as high, all based on the demographics, category of eligibility and learning profile. As housing developments are continuing to be built, there are more opportunities for families to

move into our school boundaries. There are families moving from out of state, neighboring cities, and communities. Families move into our boundaries because we are a small community.

Deer Valley Unified District (4246)

Deer Valley Unified School District served 33,669 students as of April 1, 2023. Our 42 schools serviced approximately 4,382 students with IEPs during 2022-2023 School Year. 198 (200 enrolled) students with IEPs were assessed using the MSAA FY 2022 administration. Our overall special education count in 2021 was 4,219 students; in 2022 we grew to 4,382 (according to Oct. 1 State Reports). Deer Valley Unified School District follows very strict guidelines for eligibility for MSAA, however, we receive many transfers from other districts who appear not to follow the same consideration process that DVUSD adheres to. As a result, we receive eligibility for MSAA that DVUSD would not necessarily accept. There is a process to correct and remedy this in DVUSD. At the next IEP meeting for each student, the IEP team will review the need for MSAA eligibility. Students who qualified in other school districts, at times, are not found eligible for MSAA.

Dysart Unified District (4243)

Dysart Unified School District serves over 23,000 pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students in the Northwest Phoenix Metropolitan area. The district encompasses 140 square miles, serving parts of El Mirage, Glendale, Surprise, Youngtown, and Maricopa County. The district is home to four K-4 elementary schools, four middle schools serving grades 5-8, 12 K-8 elementary schools, four comprehensive high schools, a preschool, and one alternative program.

Over the past several years, there has been a significant increase in the number of charter schools that serve the Dysart community and can be found within the Dysart Unified School District's physical boundaries. Dysart has seen a decrease of over 3200 general education students (the assumption is that many of these students are being served in the aforementioned charter schools) however, our overall special education population has increased by nearly 400 students. Therefore, Dysart's overall special education percentage have increased due to this decrease in general education students.

Additionally, while many of these charter schools may serve students with disabilities, we are not aware of any that focus on, or even provide options for students with more significant cognitive disabilities. Dysart however, has two programs that specifically support students who are eligible for Arizona State Alternate Assessments, should they require a more restrictive environment with more significant supports and modified curriculum (described below). This is In addition to being able to serve and support students in the general education and resource settings.

STC Program

The Structuring Teaching Classroom (STC) Program provides a highly structured environment with strategies to support communication embedded in the environment. Students who participate in the STC program must meet the criteria for the Arizona State Alternative Assessments in order for IEPs to consider the program as a least restrictive environment.

ASPIRE Program

The Assisting Student Participation in a Relevant Education (ASPIRE) program provides educational activities in a classroom environment with high levels of support in activities of daily living and functional life skills for students with limited mobility as well as complex communication and physical/medical needs. Dysart Unified School District does not discriminate against students with disabilities, and provides the full continuum of services and least restrictive environments and appropriate assessment based on individualized data and through an IEP team decision making process. Therefore,

Dysart is not in the position to inform a team or any of its campuses that we are not able to consider an individual student for alternative assessments due to already reaching a 1% cap.

Edkey, Inc. - Sequoia School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (81050)

This LEA has a lower student population because it includes two specialty schools, our Deaf school and our EDP school. The Sequoia School for the Deaf which houses a cross categorical room for students with multiple disabilities but also significant cognitive delays or vision and hearing deficits. We receive students from local districts whose parents feel their hearing needs are not being met in the life skills rooms. Parents report that they come to us because we can work on the needs that come with an intellectual disability but also the hearing loss. We offer a cross categorical classroom that provides intensive services for adaptive, cognitive, visual and cognitive needs.

Eloy Elementary District (4448)

Due to the overall low student enrollment at Eloy Elementary any student participation in alternative testing can put the district over the 1% cap. Eloy Elementary is a rural school district that serves a population of many families living below the poverty guidelines and in the past few years Eloy Elementary has seen an influx of families move into the district looking for housing under section 8. While there has been an increase of new families there has also been many families that leave the district and move to urban cities with more opportunities for employment. As such this has created the special education population to continuously change throughout the school year. When a new student enters the district identified as eligible for alternative assessments we review all information to determine if they meet all the guidelines for alternative assessment.

Flagstaff Montessori (4205)

- small districts (charter)
- families from different demographics have moved to the school since we have more outreach, changed to nonprofit, community, engagement
- student eligibilities were reviewed by the team and decisions were made by student data reviews and all criterions being made

Flagstaff Unified District (4192)

Flagstaff is a community with many charter schools and families that are selecting the Empowerment Scholarship. Charter schools and families on the Empowerment Scholarships have absorbed a number of students who participate in the AASA test but have not absorbed our students who qualify for the Alternative Assessment, which gives us a higher percentage. Overall enrollment in the Flagstaff Unified School District continues to decline, however our special education population is holding steady giving us a disproportionate number of students that are in special education and qualify for the Alternative Assessment.

Florence Unified School District (4437)

Due to the growing population of students who need specialty programs in self-contained classrooms but live out of the district, we have added additional classrooms each year for the past several years. We now have 33 specialty programs in our district K-12. With open boundaries and as knowledge of our exceptional specialty programs increases across the community, we are bringing additional students into our district who may have been previously served in other districts or charter schools who qualify for the alternate assessments. All our high schools now have a Transition from School to Work (TSW) program to help students with soft skills and hands on job experiences. As the programs grows it draws in students from outside our district boundaries.

Flowing Wells Unified District (4405)

The Flowing Wells Unified School District has experienced an influx of students with significant cognitive disabilities over time that continues to grow. We operate in a high poverty area with 71% of students across our District qualified for free-and-reduces lunch options for the 2022 – 2023 school year. That number may not represent the true number of students in need as it is voluntary and in the previous year the percentage was 79%. These percentages have fluctuated after COVID due to lunch being free to anyone regardless of application.

We continue to have a growing population of students who require significant supports due to low cognitive and adaptive scores on standardized assessments. In the school year 2018 – 2019 we had 99 who met state/federal qualification for the alternative assessment and were listed on our database. In less than five years that number has grown to 130 students in our system. These requirements are significant cognitive disability; learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards; and need for extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial support to achieve measurable gains in the grade appropriate curriculum.

We now qualify more students for the alternative assessment due to the Alt ELPA for students who are identified as English Language Learners and have significantly low cognitive and adaptive needs. For example, the first-time students could qualify for the during the 2022 – 2023 school year. Students in these grade levels do not take other state assessments.

Fowler Elementary District (4273)

The Fowler Elementary School District had declining enrollment during COVID. We are now experiencing an increase in student enrollment. Enrollment data indicates that transferring students have more needs than in the past. We have also seen a very large increase in refugee students who have significant cognitive disabilities. Our changing population and demographics have led to an increase of students who are eligible for alternate assessments. IEP teams will be reviewing all alternate assessment students for continued eligibility in the 2024-2025 school year.

Fredonia-Moccasin Unified District (4195)

Our school has had declining enrollment in the past 3 years and we are a small school district with fewer than 175 students in grades k – 12. This has created a situation where our percentage is above the 1% threshold. Any participation in alternate assessments puts us over the 1% rule due to low number of students enrolled for our district.

Gadsden Elementary District (4505)

At this time, many unknown variables are present to obtain the current outcome. We must address this statistically anomaly with data after careful review of all variables. We will consider our student population demographics in our targeted study as well as our eligibility determination process.

Upon further review it was discovered that some students did not meet the Severe Cognitive Impairment criteria. These cases have been identified as false positive for AA. Our internal analysis alongside our ADE Program Specialist considered IQ as a defining measure for qualification of AA. Consequently, given this variable our special education department focus will be on providing professional development for all stakeholders. We currently have the infrastructure to accomplish this goal within the 2024 – 2025 school year. Furthermore, to accomplish this task our focus will be on the eligibility criteria as well as reviewing current cases. These activities will be monitored with ADE Alternative Assessment Coordinator guidance.

Gila Bend Unified District (4238)

We have had an unusual number of referrals from parents, teachers, and outside sources for evaluations. The students have qualified for services and are receiving said services. When evaluated, they were deemed to qualify for the MSAA due to significant deficits, not just in IQ scores, but other disability factors. In addition, there seems to be a general increase in the number of students who have recently enrolled that have varying levels of disabilities. We attempt to train all of them as to how to take a test and as soon as they score "Meets the Standard" on the MSAA we reassign them to the AASA. But, the entire area is socio-economically low with a high incidence of drug use by parents during pregnancy.

Glendale Elementary District (4271)

Glendale Elementary School District has students with unique and diverse special education needs. Parents choose to enroll in Glendale due to a wide-range of special education services offered to families based on the student's needs. Families come to Glendale from other countries and other states. Glendale routinely enrolls students with little to no educational history, despite the student who presents significant developmental needs. The Glendale Elementary School District is a district with declining enrollment; however, the student counts in special education are not proportional to the enrollment decline. The sustaining numbers of students with severe cognitive delays compared to the decreasing general education numbers could be causing a discrepancy in the 1% count.

Grand Canyon Unified District (4194)

Again our ESS population is 23% of our total population. We are a unique small school community in that employers here at the Grand Canyon provide reasonable low cost subsidized housing which is attractive to many families with particularly high needs. It is also a safe, friendly community which is attractive to families. I also believe we have earned the reputation for having a strong ESS program for being a small rural remote school. I honestly believed that the students identified for alternate assessment qualified under the criteria set forth.

Higley Unified School District (4248)

HUSD is surrounded by Charter schools that cannot always meet the needs of students who are often found eligible for alternative state assessments. HUSD has had a decrease in enrollment of students who do not qualify for alternative state assessments, but enrollment for those who meet the qualification for alternative state assessments has not decreased but has increased. HUSD is a district sought after by families due to a nationally recognized Best Buddies Program, Unified Sports Program, and the caliber of special education teachers we hire and retain.

Holbrook Unified District (4389)

Overall population of students with cognitive disabilities is increasing in the district due to an increased rate of children with genetic and other disorders impacting cognitive skills. We are a geographically large district of 1500 square miles and we serve many small communities with limited access to medical care, impacting prenatal care and some of the increase we have seen in disabilities. The school district is relatively small in population and the increase in this student demographic, even by only a few students, significant impacts percentage of students participating. IEP teams are identifying eligible students appropriately.

Humboldt Unified District (4469)

Humboldt Unified encompasses the Dewey/Humboldt, Prescott Valley, Castle Canyon Mesa, and surrounding newer developments. As families are entering the area, they may be choosing alternate methods of education. Often times, if their children have a significant cognitive delay, they are not choosing the charter, private, or micro school options in the area. They are choosing HUSD to educate their child. This ultimately brings up the 1% threshold as homeschool and other options are only taking from the population that does not have IEPs. We do have an increase in the number of families moving to our area with students who are eligible that naturally results in more eligible students in our district. A number of families are relocating from California which have different eligibility requirements especially at the preschool level that move into our district. Our district does offer special education services for a wide range of disabilities within a wide range of environments and within preschool to high school. These programs will increase participation rates for the alternate assessment. Our area offers residents a suburban rural mix feel and most residents own their own homes. Our area offers many parks and our public schools are above average. Data shows that our crime rate is 65% safer than the average in Arizona which is appealing to those wanting to move to our area and put their children in Humboldt Unified. Many move to this particular area due to climate and outdoor activities. Families are able to enjoy year-round outside activities. Upon investigation of comparing last year students who took the general assessments with this year students who took the general assessments, I found an increase of 50 students taking the general assessments. This increase may contribute to the justification of the participation rate of the alternate assessment.

Imagine Avondale Elementary, Inc. (89784)

Imagine Avondale Elementary Inc. has had ongoing support and training in enrollment procedures, and accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home after reporting concerns with their home school. Additionally, Imagine Avondale Elementary School competes with a large neighboring district, where class sizes are also larger, and families report they prefer smaller student to teacher ratios for their child, so choose to enroll with us. Policies and procedures are in place for MET1, MET2, and IEP meetings, including gathering data to make informed educational decisions, to ensure IEP teams are not over qualifying students.

Imagine Avondale Middle, Inc. (90162)

As a very small public charter school, with a low overall enrollment (250 students), Imagine Avondale Middle Inc. has had ongoing support and training in enrollment procedures from the ESS regional team, and accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home after reporting concerns with their home school. Additionally, Imagine Avondale Middle School competes with a large neighboring district, where class sizes are also larger, and families report they prefer smaller student to teacher ratios for their child, so choose to enroll with us.

Imagine Camelback Middle, Inc. (89561)

As a very small public charter serving grades 6-8, with a low overall enrollment (167 students), Imagine Camelback Middle, Inc. accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. The demographics of this neighborhood include highly migrant and transient families, including a diverse enrollment of students with disabilities. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home, which frequently changes for many students in this demographic. Additionally, Imagine Camelback Middle, Inc. competes with a large neighboring district, where class sizes are also larger, and families report smaller student to teacher ratio preferences for their child, so chose to enroll with us.

Imagine Prep Surprise, Inc. (89790)

As a very small public charter high school serving grades 9-12, with a low overall enrollment (304 students), Imagine Prep Surprise, Inc. accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. The demographics of this neighborhood include families with multiple enrollments. This builds a sense of community where families refer other families who have children with similar needs, including a diverse sample of disabilities. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home after reporting procedural and FAPE concerns at their home school. Additionally, Imagine Surprise, Inc. competes with a large neighboring district, where class sizes are also larger, and families report smaller student to teacher ratio preferences for their child, so chose to enroll with us.

Imagine Superstition Middle, Inc. (90160)

As a very small public charter school, with a low overall enrollment (127 students), Imagine Superstition Middle Inc. accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. The demographics of this neighborhood include highly migrant and transient families, including a diverse enrollment of students with disabilities. School choice gives families the opportunity to still enroll in schools close to home after reporting concerns with their home school. Additionally, Imagine Superstition Middle School competes with a large neighboring district, where class sizes are also larger, and families report they prefer smaller student to teacher ratios for their child, so choose to enroll with us.

J O Combs Unified School District (4445)

Our community is surrounded by several charter schools and other schools of choice as enrollment options. As a result, approximately 69% of students that reside within our district boundaries choose to attend schools outside of the district boundaries. In looking at student withdrawals, and requests for evaluations, it appears that most of those students who do not attend our schools are not individuals with disabilities or are not students with significant cognitive impairments that impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior and require Alternative State Assessments. Our enrollment of students who participate in regular state assessments has declined. In our district boundaries there are several group homes, some of which are structured to support students with disabilities. Additionally, other families are moving to our district boundaries seeking affordable housing, and desires to have their students with significant disabilities attend our district programs. Frequently these families contact the district to get information about our special education programs, prior to relocating into our area. As a result, our percent of students with disabilities has increased in comparison to our population of students without disabilities. Our SPED percentage for the 2022-2023 school year was approximately 15% and for the 2023-2024 school year was approximately 15.5% at our Oct. 1 count. This is higher than the state average. Due to a high turnover of teachers and school psychologists, practices and meaningful conversations, related to alternative assessments, have not been as consistent as desired. Despite these challenges, our percentages for alternative assessment participation continue to decrease and are currently lower than were historically reported.

Joseph City Unified District (4388)

We are a small school district and our overall testing numbers will put us over the threshold of the 1% cap. Action Plan (List the steps as measurable actions that directly address your unique issues related to the 1% Cap and can be completed within the annual timeline.) Action Plans should include, at a minimum, dependent on your LEA's Tier assignment: The district test coordinator will provide the training on participation requirements and eligibility criteria to all personnel who administer alternate assessments. Tier 1 (LEA's with 1.0-1.50% over the Cap) training for these LEAs will focus on participation requirements for Alternate Assessments. Tier 2 (LEA's with 1.51-2.00% over the Cap) LEAs will receive technical assistance focusing on training regarding participation requirements and examining

LEA policies regarding participation requirements for Alternate Assessments. Tier 3 (LEAs with 2.01% over the Cap) LEAs will receive technical assistance focusing on training regarding participation requirements. In addition, a LEA identified team and ADE will work collaboratively focusing on training, LEA participation policies, understanding the purpose and characteristics of students who have participated in the State's Alternate Assessment.

Kaizen Education Foundation dba South Pointe Elementary School (79233)

The size of the school is one factor in SPES exceeded the 1% threshold, being a small school with 138 FAY students 3rd – 6th grade is the. In addition, SPES is an identified alternative school. Part of this identification is due to the number of students that enter SPES one year or more behind academically, some of which are identified as having academic learning disabilities. As a public charter school, it is our policy to accept all students.

Kaizen Education Foundation dba Vista Grove Preparatory Academy Middle School (79871)

Vista Grove Preparatory Middle School, there is an extremely small student population (15 FAY students in grades 7th – 8th). In addition, VGMS is an identified alternative school. Part of this identification is due to the number of students that enter VGMS one year or more behind academically, some of which are identified as having academic learning disabilities. As a public charter school, it is our policy to accept all students.

Kingman Academy Of Learning (4383)

We are a charter school that attracts SWD's due to class size cap. Parents seek these small classes with lower adult/student ratio's for their students. In addition, the school has a reputation for providing a caring/supportive environment as well as challenging all students, including those with disabilities to make academic progress.

Laveen Elementary District (4276)

Laveen is a growing district. The percentage of students qualified for special education services in the district has shown a steady increase over the last 14 years. In 2008, 10.9% of the overall student population qualified for special education services compared to 13.65% in 2022. According to the Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services (ESS) Special Education Advisory Panel's (SEAP) November 15, 2022 report: K-12 and Preschool Special Education Trend Data, our district percentage exceeded the state average percentage of SPED population by 1.34% in 2022. Our population continues to increase, as of 10/1/2023 we had gone up another percent, leaving us at 14.65% of our student population qualifying for SPED services.

Laveen is a sought-after district. Over the past five years, District enrollment has increased by 835 students, with 61% of those students coming from outside of the District. Parents from surrounding districts want their students in our programs. Our developmental preschool has grown by 83% over the past 5 years. We have a continuous waitlist of 3- and 4-year old's awaiting evaluations to determine eligibility. 23% of our preschoolers that are transitioning to kindergarten this year will be moving on to attend in our specialized programs as level C students for kindergarten.

Laveen is a Title 1 district, with 71.95% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The district now qualifies for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The overall purpose of the CEP is to improve access to nutritious meals for students in high poverty areas by providing meals to all students "at no cost". Poverty affects all aspects of child development, emotional and physical, which limits a child's ability to learn and perform well in school.

The Laveen community also has a growing number of group homes within its boundaries; therefore, we have a growing number of students in foster care attending our school. We have seen a 15% increase in the number of students in foster care over the past 5 years. The data shared gives insight into the demographics of our district and factors within our growing community that are impacting the number of students that qualify for the Alternate Assessment. We will continue to be critical in our evaluation of students that qualify for the alternative assessment, ensuring only those students whose disability significantly impacts their intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior are taking the alternative assessment.

Legacy Traditional School - Deer Valley (1001398)

Legacy Traditional School - Deer Valley opened in August 2021. Student population has increased significantly since the year we opened, please see 100th day enrollment by year:

- 2021-2022: 336 students
- 2022-2023: 446 students (increased 110)
- 2023-2024: 493 students (increased 47)

We currently have a confirmed enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year of 546 students (increase of 53 students). In addition to increasing student population at high rates each year, we are also located in a high transient area. Many of our families qualify as McKinney Vento, and we see high turnover rates due to rent increases and families relocating to save money. This rate of turn over directly results in students withdrawing and enrolling in a new school - there is a lack of consistency in their educational history. This can at times result in wide achievement gaps and/or later identification of Special Education students due to not staying in the same school for a long enough period for ample academic achievement and/or progress toward goals.

Legacy Traditional School - East Tucson (1001399)

Legacy Traditional School-East Tucson opened in the 21-22 school year. Many students who were eligible for Special Education Services came to the school due to parent dissatisfaction with the local district schools. Legacy has strong Special Education Programming with a full spectrum of services offered. Legacy also provides opportunity for students to engage in extracurricular activities, small group tutoring, and has strong parental involvement. Legacy Traditional School-East Tucson is a small campus. Campus enrollment was at approximately 300 students, but has grown to over 400 students in the past year. This was the major factor for having percentages over the 1% threshold in the 22-23 school year, however, at this time LTS-East Tucson is no longer over the 1% threshold.

Legacy Traditional School - Peoria (850099)

We have a strong reputation for ESS in our area with a strong team. Families from other schools talk about this and some have been seeking us out. We have not seen any real significant changes to gen ed student testing. We see an on-par avg of withdrawals and enrollments that keeps it very similar. In the 22-23 school year, we also stopped offering 8th grade, thus lowering our total enrollment for the year. Due to this, our cap was 0 students taking the MSAA Science. From 2021/22-2022/23 the Peoria campus's special education population with sped proficiency grew 14%- from 13% to 27%. That may be appealing to parents in our area who are deciding to enroll. This shows our ESS population growth and then adding more testers.

Liberty Elementary District (4266)

Prior to the school year 2022-2023, Liberty did not have a level C placement for students with moderate to severe disabilities. These students were outsourced to level D placements outside our district because we did not have the qualified staff and supports to meet the needs of these students with higher needs. Moreover, these outsourced (level D placement) students were not in our MSAA count. In the 2022-2023 school year, we found highly qualified/certified staff, and opened up a moderate to severe self-contained program at one of our campuses. This enabled us to bring back those students who were previously placed outside of our district. Additionally, with our district offering more programs for students with special needs, (including those with moderate to severe needs), has led to parents requesting more information about the programs we offer to students with special needs. This includes parents from out of state asking to schedule tours of our special education programs when they are making decisions on where to relocate (purchase a home) in the West Valley, which has also impacted growth in our special education enrollment. As a side-note, in the 2022-2023 school year, our percentage over the 1% threshold was ELA 1.65 and Math 1.69 (as listed above). For the 2023-2024 school year, we were notified in January 2024 that our percentages were ELA 1.4541 and Math 1.478. This is a difference of 0.1959% for ELA and 0.212 % for Math; indicating, we are moving closer to our goal of 1% or less in each area. In saying this we need to make sure that the students found eligible for the MSAA are students who truly need to take it.

Litchfield Elementary District (4281)

Litchfield Elementary School District has been growing rapidly in special education. Since the 2015 school year we have added two brand new schools to the district. In addition, building school 17 now to be open in 2026. We offer 8 specialized programs for all of our schools. That includes (CHAT, ARISE, GAINS, LABS, PEER, SAILS, STRIDE and TK)

- We have 1,478 special education students in the district
- 10,479 total students in the district
- 14% of the students in the district are special education
- We have 372 students in our specialized programs (Level C)
- 25.6% of our special education students are in a specialized program (Level C)

Mammoth-San Manuel Unified District (4439)

Upon review of all applicable factors regarding student selection for participation in alternative assessment, Mammoth San Manuel Unified has identified that student new students enrolling into the school district with cognitive disabilities as well as existing student with cognitive disabilities who promoted to 3rd grade and above has contributed to the exceeding the 1% cap. Currently, Mammoth San Manuel has only 10 students identified as eligible for participation in the Alternative Assessment. In 2023 only 6 students were in testing years (3-8 + 11) but given the very small population of the school district (264 students in testing years) all it takes is to have more than 2 children eligible for alternative assessment to exceed the 1% cap. Identification of students for participation in Alternative Assessment was determined to have been appropriate but documentation of the determining factors was found to be a weakness within the IEP team process. Inconsistencies were found in the documentation of the justification for participation within the Alternative Assessment Eligibility Form. Special Education Teachers did not always provide the descriptive details regarding student limitations that would qualify them for consideration of Alternative Assessment within the Eligibility Form because they were indicated within the IEP already.

Marana Unified District (4404)

As of 1/26/2023, there were 132 students in grades 3rd-8th and 11th, combined, enrolled in our Intellectual Disabilities Cluster Programs (“ID Programs”). This represents **1.97% of the District’s total enrollment** in those grades. These programs constitute our most intensive and restrictive instructional

setting for students with significant cognitive disabilities, although not all students meet eligibility requirements and participate in alternate testing.

The Marana Unified School District continues to grow as we have many areas that are building new home communities. This increase is seen across the district as our numbers grow at most schools. Our programs for students with disabilities are seeing a large increase in its population as well. Each team looks carefully at the qualifications to make sure only those who need to qualify do so.

Maricopa Unified School District (4441)

Maricopa Unified School District is a rapidly growing district, and we welcome new students from out of district and out of state. Because of the location of Maricopa, when families enroll, their students either go to our schools or to one of our local charter schools. We do not have a significant number of students who open enroll in other districts due to our location. Further, the majority of our students who enroll in charter schools do not have IEPs. Both of these factors increase our concentration of students who require alternative assessments.

Mesa Unified District (4235)

General education numbers have not drastically changed in the last three years. The total number of students participating in our alternate assessment program has significantly declined from 2020-21 to the present. In 2020-21, we had 383 (3.6%) students, whereas in the 2023-24 school year, participation dropped to 296 (2.83%) students.

Mesa Unified District's total special education population is slightly higher than a typical school district. In fiscal year 2024, the percentage of special education students statewide was 13.3%, while in Mesa it was notably higher at 18%. This in turn increases our percentage of participation for alternate assessment.

- Source - https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2023/11/Oct1Enrollment2024_publish.xlsx

Mesa Unified School District is well known for providing excellent services for those with Disabilities, we often have a slightly higher percentage of students with significant cognitive disabilities because of our specialized program offerings. For example, we opened two new Autism programs for the 2023-24 school year to meet our growing needs. We are projected to open 8 more for the 2024-25 school year. Community members with children who qualify for the alternate assessment are staying in our district.

Miami Unified District (4211)

Our district is experiencing a decrease in enrollment of our student body. Several students are moving out of our area or enrolling in online programs. As a general rule the students not leaving our district fall into the special education category. During the years we have noticed this trend and have found that most families trust our special education programs and have seen growth in their students. Although we are proud of program, it also means that we have several families move into our district in order to place them in our special education program. These students range from SLD to MIID. However, we are very careful to ensure eligibility is correct and the appropriate placement happens.

Our community has a low SES with many of our families qualifying for all the assistance they can receive. The district has an overall free and reduced average of 72%. Many of our students live in very poor conditions. Families either live off of state assistance or work at low paying jobs. Parents may have graduated from high school, but have no other training to increase work possibilities.

Milestones Charter School (79207)

Milestones Charter School is a small, one district school that serves students in grades K-8th. Our enrollment in all grades does not exceed 200 students, with less than that being assessed in grades 3-8. The decision to recommend the alternate assessment is always based on a team decision through the IEP. Our school has a highly touted special education department that focuses on small group support, inside and outside of the general education setting, with accommodations and modifications for students in need. We have a small teacher to student ratio that allows for parents to feel comfortable entrusting their child's education with us, especially when their child has special needs in areas related to cognitive impairment, academics, social emotional needs, adaptive skills, communication, and motor/sensory support. Word of mouth has spread within the surrounding community that our small school offers support in the above areas and students with severe cognitive impairments are treated fairly and as equals with their grade level peers which parents are striving to find for their child. We focus on the child, their individual needs, and the areas in which they will need to learn life skills outside of the classroom to further their learning. Therefore, with a positive word of mouth, we have experienced parents' desire to enroll their students with low cognition and adaptive skill deficits into our school. Thus, requiring the need for such students to be recommended for the alternate assessment.

Mohave Valley Elementary District (4379)

District enrollment has increased in the number of special education students as well as non special education students. The district enrollment of special education students is 15% of the overall enrollment. We are an "A" district. A Harvard study found that our district was 1 of 6 districts to show growth in math proficiency over the last 3 years, and we were 1 of 4 districts in the nation that showed ELA growth in the nation. This may be affecting our enrollment. The number of charter schools and online schools has increased. Parents may choose our district because we do have special education classrooms ranging from mild to more severe needing more resources.

Mohawk Valley Elementary District (4503)

Our school is a small rural school. During the 2022-2023 school year, we had an increase in students found eligible to participate in the Alternate Assessment. Some students found eligible for the Alternate Assessment during the 2022-2023 school year have since been promoted to high school. We currently have ~150 students enrolled at Mohawk Valley School. We have had several new students transfer to our school with significant needs just this school year. We have taken steps to implement a self-contained classroom to address our increasing student needs and implement the Star Autism Curriculum to enable us to meet the needs of all students enrolled at Mohawk Valley School. We currently have open enrollment for our district and accept all children from our local area. We do not deny or discriminate against students that come to Mohawk Valley School. We have had students enroll after being denied by other local school districts and we do not have private or charter schools or alternative programs within our boundaries.

Morenci Unified District (4230)

Our district exceeded 1% participation in the Alternate Assessments for the 2022/2023 school year in Science. Only grades 5,8, and 11 are assessed in Science so in any given year less students are able to test in the alternate assessment for Science. If all testing grade levels would have also taken the Science test we would have been under the 1% threshold. We are only one of two school districts in a county that serves three communities. Our communities are very diverse due to a copper mine being the main employer. The copper mine brings families from all over the world.

Murphy Elementary District (4265)

We had an influx of students with higher needs in our district for the 22-23 school year, some of whom had moved into our district boundaries from other countries and neighboring districts. These students were identified as needing alternative testing, which ultimately increased our overall population of students taking the alternative assessments. We had a decrease of student enrollment for students who take the general assessments, which impacted the overall percentage as well.

Nadaburg Unified School District (4252)

The Nadaburg Unified School District and its surrounding cities has grown over 200% in the last 10 years, which has caused exponential growth in our district enrollments. This area has grown immensely because it is a highly coveted location due to cost of housing being lower than most areas in the state. With all the new growth, 35-40 % of our new enrollments have come with special education services already in place that require a high level of service.

A large portion of our district has pockets of significant poverty which also contributes to our higher special education population. Many of these families have not had access to appropriate healthcare or are exposed to risk factors such as drug use, lack of nutrition, and homelessness. For these reasons, many of the children born in to these families have disabilities that require extensive special education services. Additionally, many children are being raised by grandparents who live in our boundaries and have trauma due to adverse childhood experiences and qualify for special education requiring high levels of service.

Our district is housed in a rural location and we have several smaller districts around us who do not have the ability to provide for significant disabilities like we are able to in our district. For that reason, many families have chosen to have their children placed within our special education program because of the exceptional service and care we provide to our families and also because of the closer proximity to their home versus specialized schools that would take over an hour on the bus.

Oracle Elementary District (4444)

The Oracle School District is a small LEA with a population of 401 students on our 100th day, preschool through eighth grade during the 2022-23 school year. We are a single school district. The Oracle School District has a higher than average special education population averaging 20%. The community is home to DCS placements where special education students from all over the state are placed throughout the year. Our open enrollment for all students is consistent and growing due to our rising state grade, however all transfer IEP's are reviewed for eligibility for the alternative assessment. The district ensures only students who have significant cognitive disabilities participate by providing training to special education teachers and administrators, and requiring documentation of meeting eligibility requirements.

Page Unified School District #8 (4196)

Page Unified School District is a small PEA covering a large geographical area encompassing the Navajo reservation. This results in students being enrolled in PUSD that other schools on the reservation turn away due to unavailable services. This increases the percentage of students with more severe needs and services enrolled in the district.

Palominas Elementary School District 49 (4180)

The enrollment of the Palominas School District was down last year causing Alternate Assessment percentages to be just over the goal percentage. The Palominas School District has a well established functional program for students who qualify for the alternate assessment and are lower functioning cognitively. The program is well staffed with an excellent teacher- student ratio as well as focuses on

functional skills to include cooking, interactive science, speech, OT, PT, field trips, and inclusion with the school population. The environment in the classroom is welcoming, tailored to meet the needs of all students and fluid in the needs it serves. The campus is accepting of our lower cognitive kids and involves them in all aspects of school life and functions.

Pan-American Elementary Charter (79578)

Pan-American Elementary Charter School is a school with a small student population, serving kindergarten through twelfth grades. Because state testing in Science only occurs at three grade levels, and the student population is low, even a small number of students testing in alternate assessments skews our participation numbers.

Our enrollment has increased over the last few years as have our students with Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities. We have adjusted our programs to meet the needs of these students and have designed specific instruction models as determined by each IEP team. In addition, the the success and community recognition of our programs draw families into our district. Our IEP teams are guided to follow procedures including consideration of alternate assessment for each individual student. Our teams do not consider the 1% cap when determining what is best for the student. All of our students chosen for the alternate assessment have a primary disability category of MIID.

Paradise Valley Unified District (4241)

Our district has experienced a decrease in general enrollment and an uptick in enrollment of students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Parker Unified School District (4510)

Parker Unified School District (PUSD) is in the small, rural community of Parker, Arizona. We are in La Paz County. Parker demographics include: Hispanic 52.18%; Native American 28.31%; White 12.84%; and Other 6.30%. According to the Student Ethnic Distribution List, 52% of our students are Hispanic, 28% are American Indian, 13% are white, and 7% are Other.

The United States Census Bureau estimated that 16,535 people resided in La Paz County in June, 2022. The median household income for La Paz County for 2018-2022 was \$46,634.00. Approximately 46% of the households with school age children have a single parent with a per capita income of \$26,165.00. 20% of households with children under the age of 18 function at the poverty level. Only 12% of adults living in La Paz County hold a Bachelor's Degree.

Our community partially rests within the boundaries of the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) reservation. First Things First (FTF) is a state agency in Arizona. Every two years a report is published addressing the needs and assets of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region's children and families. The most recent data is available in the 2022 Needs and Assets Report. In speaking with board members regarding 2022-2023, data is not yet available but they estimate circumstances will not vary significantly from 2021-2022. Our rural community is facing struggling economic circumstances. According to this report, 7,077 people are part of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Region. There are 739 children under the age of 6; 57% of these children are living in poverty. There are 362 children under the age of 6 enrolled as CRIT members. Of these children living in a multigenerational household, most are provided care by a grandparent. An asset to these circumstances is that children have a strong sense of family. However, with approximately 49% of these children living in single parent households with a grandparent, most are not able to attend early learning programs to support educational goals. Single females raising children under the age of 6 earn a reported median income of \$17,000, which in part

contributes to the need for a grandparent to provide child care and the inability to afford quality early learning programs.

In 2022, FTF reported that the Colorado River Indian Tribes Total Regional Program Expenditures for quality child care and preschool was \$69,315.00. FTF projected the costs for infants to be roughly \$8,250.00 per year; \$7,250.00 for a 1-2-year-old child, and \$6,375.00 per year for a 3-5-year-old child. In looking at the 2022 annual CRIT child allotment, that would amount to about \$16.00 a month per family for quality child care. There are only two Quality First centers for the CRIT Region. These centers focus on improving early learning for children from birth to age 5. Only 20% of children from birth to age 5 are benefitting from Quality First centers (Data for fiscal year 2023 is not yet available).

The 2022 State of Hispanic Homeownership Report found 31.7% of Latino households are multigenerational. In 2018, Arizona State University began study on the Latino population in the United States and Arizona, with an emphasis on education. The study was formally published in 2020. The overall findings showed that Hispanics enter the workforce at a much younger age increasing their dropout rate. 30% of Latino students do not finish high school in Arizona compared to 6.8% of non-Latino students. The annual median earnings for Hispanic households in Arizona are approximately 37% less than other households. The poverty rate for Latino households for children under 5 was 26.5%.

Ninety percent of a child's brain develops prior to age 5. Arizona ranks as one of the top twenty states in the United States for having the least affordable child care for infants through age 4. La Paz County ranks number one in Arizona for having the most expensive infant child care; La Paz County is 5.2% higher than the states center-based affordability rate for infants; 3.2% higher for 4-year-old children. According to County-Level Child Care Costs in Arizona, the cost for infant child care in La Paz county is \$8,320.00/year; \$6,110.00 for 4-year-old children. These figures are based solely on child care and exclude any additional costs associated with quality early literacy care.

Parker Unified School District offers part-time preschool for 3 and 4-year-old students, three days/week. CRIT Head Start also has preschool. They are supposed to run five days a week however with the lack of teachers, they are often forced to close on Fridays. Early Learning Academy is a profit child care program that offers early literacy to children in Parker. The cost is \$45.00/day per child. However, they were closed due to mismanagement of funds. They have recently re-opened their doors. About half of the children living in Parker Unified School District boundaries are not exposed to literacy before the age of five. Lack of literacy impacts brain development which in turn causes our students in preschool and kindergarten to start their educational career already behind the state expectations for the Arizona state standards.

Children participating in quality early learning experiences are more likely to demonstrate higher academic performance in school. 51% of children between the ages of three and four do participate in in nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten. Of all the third graders tested for English Language Arts in Parker Unified School District's elementary school, 21% scored proficient or highly proficient; 28% for math. This would support the need for more children participating in quality early learning programs. A big concern for healthy child development is prenatal care. The most recent data provided from 2019 shows that only 41% of women in the CRIT Region began prenatal care in their first trimester. There were 135 births during this year so 55 children were at risk for low birth weight and possibly negative health issues. Data from 2020 shows that 68% of children in the CRIT Region were identified with developmental delays; 9% in preschool had severe delays; and 24% were identified with a Speech/Language Impairment. The number of children qualifying for AzEIP increased from 10 to 28 from 2019 to 2020.

Health issues also create hardships for Native American children attending Parker schools. Data available from 2018 shows the obesity/overweight rates among children in the CRIT Region to be more than double the state average: 37% to 16%, respectively. Research indicates that obese children have a lower life satisfaction, and are more prone to be bullied by schoolmates. This can potentially lead to lower class participation and reduced educational performance. Domestic violence contributes to poor performance in school. In 2021, FTF reported 31 children between the ages of birth and 5 were removed from their homes by the authorities; 137 between birth and 17. All of these children had to be placed outside their home. In 2021, there were 117 domestic violence offenses. There were 99 cases of child neglect and 51 referrals for alcohol or substance abuse incidents.

Patagonia Union High School District (4462)

We are a very small, rural school district with very small class sizes. We occasionally have changes in our enrollment that impact our assessment participation rate, but generally our population is stable. Our community is close knit and, due to our small size, we are able to provide more personalized educational experiences for students with and without disabilities. Our population of students with IEPs primarily consists of students with specific learning disabilities who do not participate in the alternate assessments. Students who have more involved disabilities have moved into our school district because services are much more personalized and the staff is very accessible.

Pathfinder Charter School Foundation (79024)

Pathfinder is a small K-5 LEA with a total enrollment of approximately 499 students, of which 92.8% are economically disadvantaged. As a public charter school, we accept all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level.

Payson Unified District (4209)

Since 2021, Payson, Arizona has been undergoing a steady rise in population specifically with families of school-age children. Of the 16,690 residents, 2966 are age 18 or younger; making up 17% of the population. Student enrollment in Payson Unified School District was 2,290 in the 2022-2023 school year.

Historically, our special education population has been fluctuating. In July 2022, our special education population began at 413 students, yet across the Fall of 2022, it steadily declined to 390 students by October 2022 and rose again to 400 by January 2023. By May of 2023, the special education population was at 422 students. The fluctuation of special education students within PUSD has impacted our 1% threshold.

Considering the overall enrollment of 2,290 students with a special education population of 413 students to 422 students across the 2022-2023 school year, our special education population makes up about 18% of our student population. The steady increase in population has led to a higher rate of students who take the general state assessment. Comparatively, there are currently 354 special education students in the district. There are 42 students receiving services at Level C; 11.8% of our special education population. The Level C population has impacted our 1% threshold as MSAA consideration and possible qualification at annual IEP meetings affect the number of qualifying MSAA students.

Our special education population has been increasing due to family connections within the community, the need for more 1-1 and small group environments to support social-emotional needs due to the effects of COVID-19 school structures (i.e. distance learning online), and programming, especially the expansion of our preschool program.

Payson is a community rich in family history. Extended families stay close and connected, often promoting family unity within our district and community. Families want to be here and stay here for generations often influencing other family members to move here or move back here. Likewise, teachers and staff remain in our district long-term; through word of mouth, families share their successes with their experiences in the district, often choosing to enroll their students in our programs. Parents are drawn to our commitment to inclusive educational opportunities for all learners, community outings to local businesses, volunteer or giving back events to community members, buddies programs or peer mentors, and club opportunities such as Unified Partners/Special Olympics. Community programs for special education students are also highly sought after including Horizons, Lexington, Caring Connections, and PCK. Additionally, there has been an increase in students with special needs who need a stable living environment often moving here to be with grandparents, relatives, or a foster family.

In regards to specially-designed instruction, when students qualify for special education services, IEP teams have been consistently determining that students need extensive social-emotional support to access the general curriculum often proposing highly structured, higher adult-student ratios, and 1-1 and small group specially-designed instruction resulting in Level C being the student's Least Restrictive Environment. This need is prevalent in the elementary grades.

Lastly, our preschool program, Lil Longhorns, has significantly expanded within the past few years. Parents/Guardians are drawn to free screenings for children ages 2 years, 9 months to age 5, and possible additional support through DES. Families are eager to enroll their children in our inclusive preschool programs and usually choose to continue their education within our district.

Peach Springs Unified District (4369)

During the fiscal year 2023, Peach Springs had approximately 80+ students participate in the state testing for ELA and Math and 30+ students participate in the Science test. When a school has a small population, it only takes a couple students with significant cognitive impairments to exceed the participation rate. Peach Springs is a rural community and has been extremely impacted by drug and alcohol addiction. Most of the student population does not live with their biological parents. Many students have been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. Family members, neighbors, and foster families are raising a large population of our students. Resources are limited to families and the turnover rate for professionals in the education and medical fields are very high. This makes it challenging for families to receive adequate care that supports the development of students in need. Peach Springs Unified School District houses a "Life Skills" classroom that students with significant cognitive disabilities participate in if their IEP team has determined it to be an appropriate placement. This is one of the only programs in the community where students can receive the individualized instruction and therapies they need. The number of students in the Life Skills program is disproportionate to the general education population.

Phoenix Elementary District (4256)

Our October 1 count in 2022 increased for students with IEPs, as well as in 2023. While our student count of students with IEPs has increased annually, our district total count of general education student enrollment has decreased annually. Reasons for this may include that we enroll students eligible for Alternate Assessment due to being the only public school in the downtown area that provides services to students with significant cognitive impairments. Many private and charter schools do not offer the specialized programs for students with these needs. The census for our district supports that the projection of student enrollment will continue to decline in the downtown Phoenix area based on less family homes, and an increase in multi-unit smaller dwellings, and temporary housing.

Prescott Unified District (4466)

Neighboring districts have fewer self-contained programs which causes parents to look to PUSD for specialized programming. The District's Open Enrollment policy was relaxed to allow all students whose home district is not PUSD to enroll in specialized programs (self-contained). In prior years students who lived outside of the district were placed on a waiting list when enrollment in the specialized programs was at 80% capacity allowing spaces to be available for students who move into the district boundaries during the school year. Relaxing the Open Enrollment policy increased the number of students placed in self-contained programs, increasing the number of students who qualify for Alternate Assessment.

Quartzsite Elementary District (4511)

Quartzsite School District #4 is a rural school district with a small school population. During this last school year, we have had an increase in student population from 130 to 167 students. Many of these students come from low socioeconomic backgrounds who move around frequently so there is not a lot of consistency with students' education. Likewise, the substance abuse and mental health issues in our community are very high without many resources available. Therefore, with the increase of students and students with disabilities more students now qualify for the Alternative Assessment that put us over the 1% threshold.

Ray Unified District (4438)

One circumstance that has caused our cap to be over the 1% is that we have a very small LEA. We are a one school district so all special education students with all levels of disabilities attend the same school in our community. Because of our small school size, our students who qualify with significant disabilities greatly increase our percentage. All the students in our program who qualified to take the Alternate Assessment experience a significant disability. Given the severe nature of the disabilities affecting our Alternate Assessment students at this time, it will be difficult to lower this number.

Red Rock Elementary District (4447)

Red Rock is a one school district with a low total student population. Our percentage of students eligible for special education is significantly higher than the state and national average (26%). Red Rock has a unique community that contributes to our high percentage of students with significant disabilities. We have a high number of non-traditional families that move to our area for the special supports it provides: affordable housing, large homes, a family friendly community, and a supportive educational system. These nontraditional families include many foster homes, group homes, grandparents raising grandchildren, single parents, families with only one working parent, and migrant families.

Roosevelt Preparatory Academy (92704)

Since we are a small school district any participation in alternate assessment causes us to be over the 1% threshold. The testing population is very low since we are a one district school therefore having any participation in alternative assessments puts us over the 1% threshold.

Rosefield Charter Elementary School, Inc. (87399)

As a public K-6 charter school, with an overall enrollment of approximately 463 students, Imagine Rosefield accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level, which can impact the 1% threshold for alternate assessment. Imagine Rosefield resides in an affluent neighborhood where families connect and share their experiences. Upon enrollment, parents are reporting that other local charters are referring them to Imagine Rosefield as not all surrounding charters accept all students with disabilities. Additionally, parents are also reporting that they choose to enroll with us after procedural or FAPE concerns arise when coming from surrounding, larger districts.

Saddle Mountain Unified School District (4254)

Our district experienced a growth of over four percent last year, welcoming an average of 100 new special education students last year. As a thriving community, we have a lot of construction of new homes throughout the school district, resulting in daily enrollments. Our district covers 500 square miles. Our district is rural but 50 miles west of Phoenix. There are no programs or notability services in the area that would drive more special education students to this area. We have heard rumors that there is a parent blog that recommends our school district, however, we have not seen the blog ourselves. There has been an increase in enrollment for both students who take the alternative assessments as well as general assessments.

Santa Cruz Valley Unified District (4458)

The district has had an increase of student enrollment including open enrolled students as well as students being evaluated and identified as needing special education services. This includes students that met the alternate assessment participation requirements during IEP meetings.

Self Development Charter School (79072)

We are a small district with one site. Due to having less than 100 students take the science test, having any students participate in the alternative assessment put us over the 1%cap.

Seligman Unified District (4472)

During the fiscal year 2023, Seligman Unified District had 92 students participate in state testing. When a school has a small population, it only takes a couple students with significant cognitive impairments to exceed the participation rate. Seligman is a rural community with limited access to early childhood and professional care. The number of students with extreme cognitive and medical challenges being referred has increased over the last 5 years. Seligman's unemployment rate is larger than the state's average. Many families are impacted by economic challenges and do not have the means or the support to access the level of care their students need outside of the school environment.

Show Low Unified District (4393)

The school district is relatively small and we have had a number of students move into our boundaries who qualify for alternate assessment. We have seen an increased number of new enrollments due to the economy and homelessness. Of the new enrollments, a high percentage are already identified as special education students. As students move in, the SPED director carefully reviews the data and IEP's that come with the students. When a student that is eligible for alternate assessment moves in, the team reviews the IEP as well as new data they have collected to ensure that the eligibility is accurate and necessary. We have also found that our specialized programs are attracting out of district applicants that want to attend our schools for these programs. Some of these students meet eligibility for alternate assessments, and that has impacted our percentage. For all new students, both move ins and open enrollment, all students will be thoroughly reviewed for accuracy and eligibility of alternate assessments before the required student identification time period.

Sierra Vista Unified District (4175)

SVUSD is in serious competition with local charter schools and continues to have declining enrollment while the Special Education population has not changed. Enrollment has declined 3.83% since last fiscal year. Our teachers and administrators might not have a clear understanding of the eligibility criteria and therefore qualify students without hard data to justify the cognitive delay. Current staff members might qualify a student with a low IQ, but not one with adaptive needs. Or they may qualify a student who does

not have a MET with a score in the cognitive area where the MET team instead used a preponderance of evidence to determine a cognitive delay.

Skull Valley Elementary District (4478)

Skull Valley Elementary School District is very small, with an ADM of approximately 30 students each year. In recent years, the district experienced an increase in enrollment which began during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike most other nearby LEAs, Skull Valley remained open for in-person learning during the majority of the pandemic. Open enrollment allowed for parents with special needs children to seek in-person learning opportunities so that they could receive the care that was needed. As a result, Skull Valley Elementary experienced a significant increase in student population with as much as 40% of the total population resulting in being students with special needs. When there is a substantial increase in students with special needs, there will be an increase in students eligible to take the alternative assessments. Skull Valley's historically low enrollment creates a scenario where even one student will equate to the district being over the allowed 1% threshold. Under the circumstances, only two students needing to take the alternative assessment, we do not find this alarming, but normal with the given population of students with an IEP.

Somerton Elementary District (4500)

Root plan analysis of district process and PEAs 1% threshold report was done. This determined that a strategic review of IEP plan decision making process and guidelines had not been conducted in many years. A review of district data participation and monitoring activities on files had also not been conducted as our ESS population increased 19% from 2019-2020 to 2022-2023 census. Furthermore, yearly data was not clearly reviewed regarding the 1% CAP.

Sonoita Elementary District (4461)

Sonoita Elementary School District #25 is a single site LEA with less than 130 students K-8. For state testing, we had 99 students test in Math, 98 in ELA, and 33 in Science. The students taking the MSAA have been enrolled in our district since kindergarten. Our MSAA participation is not increasing due to more students enrolling and is staying steady based on previous enrollment. SESD #25 MSAA participation percentage for Science was higher than ELA and Math because only grades 5 and 8 were tested (33 total students)

St David Unified District (4173)

St. David is a small district, although our special education population continues to grow. Many families with students with special needs are moving to our small and supportive community which is impacting the overall growth of the number of both general ed and special education populations. We have more and more students that are being referred and found eligible for special education, even with many interventions in place across all grade levels. In middle school we had 89 general education students participate in the science assessment. When you have any students that are severely challenged and that take the alternate assessment it makes it difficult to stay below the 1% CAP. With both a smaller general education population and even a few higher needs students our district will have a difficult time reducing that percentage.

St Johns Unified District (4153)

St. Johns Unified School District is the poorest county in the state of Arizona. It is the easiest county in the state to obtain free medical care. Within the past two years we have had an increase in migration to our school district. As a result of this increased migration of people with low income, our cases of students with significant special education needs has increased. We have seen some families with siblings

all qualifying as individuals with a mild intellectual disability. This increase in students with more significant needs has increased our proportionality and exceeded the 1% cap for individuals taking the MSAA.

Stanfield Elementary District (4451)

Upon examining all profile data for students enrolled with Stanfield Elementary School District that participated in the Alternate Assessment, they all met the cognitive/adaptive criteria, received a modified curriculum, and intensive special education services. As a result, the students' skill levels were significantly discrepant from the grade-level standards for each student rendering participation in the general assessment inappropriate. The Stanfield Elementary School District is a small, rural farming/dairy community that is required to serve the population that enrolls within our system and makes every effort to meet their educational needs. There are also no other school options for parents (private or charter schools) in our school district boundaries. We also have one highneeds therapeutic foster home that takes in children that have significant disabilities via DCS that are eligible for the alternate assessment due to their cognitive and adaptive scores which adds to our population that wouldn't naturally be within our school boundaries. Each year, our percentage is dependent on the student enrollment for those that qualify for the Alternate Assessment. We are not able to reject students that enroll in our district in order to keep our alternate testing population at 1%. Our district is also seeing a decline in general student enrollment but a significant increase in students enrolling with severe disabilities.

Sunnyside Unified District (4407)

Social Economic status- Our district has a higher number of students experiencing homelessness and group homes being in our boundaries that may potentially increase the rates. Due to the increase in housing developments within our community boundary we have seen an increase in enrollment and registration within the district. In many cases looking at the cost for rent or houses within our boundary, it appears to be lower than many other district neighborhoods and this may also contribute to more students who have more extensive needs moving into our boundaries. With the growing population surrounding SUSD there has also been an influx in DDD group homes within the boundaries that require SUSD to enroll and support them that increase the rate of students with more significant disabilities who are now being enrolled within the district.

Tolleson Elementary District (4264)

The Tolleson Elementary School District serves a population that spans from preschool -8th grade. The District is a Title One District with approximately 86% of our families qualifying under this criteria. The Special Programs Department has done extensive training on the criteria to qualify for the alternate assessment. IEP teams are diligent to analyze the criteria at every IEP meeting to ensure the student qualifies. Even with this training and ongoing monitoring, the District remains slightly about the 1% cap. We attribute this to an increase of children enrolling in our district with moderate to severe disabilities and who meet the criteria for the alternate assessment.

Tolleson Union High School District (4288)

After reviewing our list of eligible students, we determined we appropriately tested all students and have evidence that supports that each student meets the eligibility criteria. We did not administer the alternative assessment to any students with a specific learning disability. Since the Covid pandemic we are seeing an increase in student mobility in and out of our district and our programming for students with disabilities, as well as an increase in high needs group homes in our district boundaries and students entering through the BID process in foster care. We are experiencing an increase in students with significant needs/disabilities which has resulted in an increase in our students attending private placement schools. Our district also allows for open enrollment at all of our schools which leads to greater variability with

students transferring into the district. This year our district enrollment decreased while our population of students with disabilities increased.

Tuba City Unified School District #15 (4197)

98% of our student enrollment is Native American with 35% of those who live in the outlying rural areas of Tuba City, Az. 18% of enrollment have IEPs. Percentage of low incidents disabilities are higher at Tuba City Unified School District because of open enrollment, and we are the only school that provides services to students with significant needs.

Union Elementary District (4277)

Union Elementary School District exceeded the 1% cap for alternative state testing participation with a final percentage of 1.42% for FY 2022. Union Elementary School District had a higher percentage of students in a class that provided an alternative curriculum. The exceeding of the 1% cap occurred for the Union Elementary School District, as the district saw an increase in the number of students with more significant disabilities enrolling. As a small district within a metropolitan county, the district is experiencing a reduction in overall enrollment for the third year. This has had a greater impact on the enrollment of nondisabled peers. This growth continues to affect our 1% cap as well as our overall special education percentage.

Vail Unified District (4413)

Vail Unified School District continues to grow, absorbing the growth of new community developments, including a new master community, which, in its first out of three phases, has added 671 homesites, all within the Vail Unified School District. Additionally, Vail Unified School District is known for our inclusive practices, which are advertised to incoming military families with children with low-incidence disabilities at Davis-Monthan School District before families have even moved into Arizona. The growth of Vail has increased the number of families with students with disabilities we serve, with our number of students growing exponentially. In June of 2019, our total number of students who received special education was 1686. In June of 2021, our total number of students who received special education services was 1723. In June of 2022, our total number of students was 1859, and we currently have 2120 active students. The population growth in our community and the advertisement of our inclusive practices have lead to an increase in the number of students we serve with special education needs, which additionally contributes to our growing number of students participating in the alternate assessment.

Valley Union High School District (4190)

Small School Population: Valley Union High School is a small high school with a limited student population. This inherently reduces the total number of students participating in assessments. Limited MSAA Participants: The number of students taking the MSAA exam is particularly low, further impacting our overall participation statistics. Minimal State Assessment Participation: On average, we have fewer than 30 students participating in the regular state assessments each year. This small number significantly influences our participation rate, making any variations more impactful than they would be in a larger school setting.

Special Education Staffing: We will not have a full-time special education teacher on campus this upcoming year. Instead, we are part of a special education consortium that provides all of our special education services to our students. This arrangement impacts our ability to maintain consistent participation and may influence the administration of special education assessments. These factors contribute to our unique challenges in meeting the participation cap and must be considered when evaluating our performance and the necessary corrective actions.

Vernon Elementary District (4162)

We are a small rural school with 133 students. The 2022-2023 school year, 5th grade class had 11 students. Any participation in the alternate assessment would be more than 1%.

West Gilbert Charter Elementary School, Inc. (79497)

As a public charter school, with a healthy enrollment in a fringe rural setting, Imagine West Gilbert Elementary School accepts all students with disabilities when there are openings at a specified grade level. Imagine West Gilbert Elementary School is surrounded by large, neighboring districts from which we have seen an increase in overall enrollment since it's grand opening in August of 2021. Due to its location in a newly developing neighborhood including new builds directly across the street, Imagine West Gilbert Elementary School has become a highly sought after school of choice for families who reside in Buckeye. Each year, Imagine West Gilbert Elementary School's total enrollment has increased and upon enrollment, parents are reporting that other families from local charters and/or surrounding districts are referring them to Imagine West Gilbert Elementary (dba Imagine Buckeye). Additionally, parents are also reporting that they choose to enroll with us after procedural or FAPE concerns arise when coming from surrounding districts.

West Gilbert Charter Middle School, Inc. (79990)

West Gilbert Charter Middle School (dba Imagine Online Academy of Arizona) serves students K-8, is a very small LEA, and has a very low overall enrollment with a total of 162 students, which impacts the 1% threshold. This tends to be a transient population as families explore online learning. Imagine accepts all students regardless of disability or need, and upon review of the transfer-in documents for those students enrolling with an IEP, some have been found eligible for the alternate assessment based on the criterion as outlined in the IEP.

Whiteriver Unified District (4394)

Teacher Turn-over: WUSD experienced teacher turn over in our Structured teaching classes (STC) Additional training and mentoring is needed in the identification and determination of students eligible for MSAA. **Students Identified Incorrectly:** Some students have transitioned some of their time from STC to general education classrooms and were still identified to take the MSAA test. **Inconsistent numbers:** Between total enrollment and who actually takes the state assessment there is a fluctuation (dropped students, transfers in and out,) skewing the ratio. **Learning Curb:** Several of our teachers are from out of the country and do not use the same systems and paperwork to determine who should take the MSAA exam.

Wickenburg Unified District (4236)

Students were inappropriately marked to take the alternate assessment. At the time of testing, there was a previous misunderstanding regarding what students should and should not qualify to take the alternate assessment. At the time of testing, there were several students who were taking the alternate assessment, who did not qualify to take the assessment and should have been taking the standard assessment. Teams were not able to adequately explain to parents the criteria for the alternate assessment and as a result, the IEP teams found students to be eligible who did not meet the criteria.

Willcox Unified District (4170)

Our participation rate is higher than the 1% goal due to the specific needs of our students. We have a small rural school district and low enrollment numbers, which affects the percentage. Due to the student needs, and student population, we have exceeded the 1% goal for MSAA.

Wilson Elementary District (4261)

Our LEA has had a significant decrease in student enrollment. Despite this decrease, our special education population has remained the same. This has caused our percentage of students being alternately assessed to increase.

Window Rock Unified District (4154)

WRUSD alternative assessment participation rate is over 1% due to lack of understanding by our ESS team. Each IEP team within WRUSD reviewed the state and district assessment page in e-IEPPRO, but the team did not fully consider the student work samples, IEP data, and standardized scores when completing the alternative assessment paperwork.

Winslow Unified District (4387)

We have seen an increase in students in our district who meet the criteria for alternate assessments. Our community is a rural community with a relatively high transient population which may cause an increased percentage. We are also one of the bigger school districts in northeast Arizona and we are also Title 1.

Yarnell Elementary District (4485)

Yarnell SD is a very small rural school district in Yavapai County. Teachers typically teach dual grade levels in one classroom. So, this means PS/K, 1st/2nd, 3/4, 5/6 and 7/8 etc.... (each pair of grades) is taught by ONE teacher in one classroom. Any students that enroll in Yarnell District are not turned away. As with any public school, large or small, we provide FAPE to all children who qualify for special education regardless of disability and/or needs. In addition, our general population fluctuates, and numbers vary each year. The IEP team considered all pertinent criteria for determining student eligibility including required components:

- Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Tests
- Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
- Results of individual and group administered achievement tests
- Results of informal assessments
- Results of district-wide alternate assessments
- Results of language assessments (EL)
- Examples of curriculum
- IEP goal progress
- Extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade appropriate curriculum
- Examples of curriculum and instructional objectives/work samples
- Teacher collected data and documentation
- PLAAFP

If you have further questions on this incident or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact Katie Neate at Yarnell SD (Model Creek School).

Yuma Elementary District (4499)

Yuma Elementary School District has exceeded the 1% Threshold of students taking the alternative assessment. For next year we set our goal for participation in the alternative assessments at 1.75%. In March of last school year, we had 1,352 students receiving special education services. Out of these 1,352 students 26% of students receive a high-Level B, Level C or Level D support as determined by their IEP

teams. These students all qualified for special education services and had low cognitive, academic, communication and adaptive scores when evaluated. YESD has seen a trend of increased enrollment in private schools since the implementation of new ESA rules. YESD's overall enrollment has plateaued while the population of students with disabilities has continued to grow. This is in large part due to private schools being unable to provide the same level of services and support as YESD. YESD, as a public school district, proudly accepts all students regardless of their needs. YESD has the specialized programs, therapists and other supports needed to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

Yuma Union High School District (4507)

After careful consideration, the number of students participating in the alternate assessment has dropped from the previous school year. IEP teams review eligibility of all students and make informed decisions based on performance, classroom data and observation. Each student who participated in the alternate assessment for the 2023 school year is purely IEP driven.