Agenda

• Cohort Reassignment Overview
• Cohort Reassignment Appeals Process
• Documentation
• Follow-Up
• Notes about Graduating Students
• Questions
Questions that will be answered

- What is cohort reassignment?
  - What does cohort reassignment mean for the school?
  - What does cohort reassignment mean for the student?
  - Does cohort reassignment affect the student’s opportunity for FAPE?
- Which students get an automatic reassignment?
- When is an appeal necessary?
- What is the process for appeals?
- What documentation is needed for an appeal?
- How are appeals sent to GaDOE?
- How will I know if an appeal is approved?
- Who should I call with questions?
Overview

• Beginning with the 2020 four-year cohort, the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) allows students with the most significant cognitive disabilities instructed using alternate content standards and assessed via the GAA to be reassigned to a future cohort.

• Students can be reassigned to the cohort of the student’s final year of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

• In Georgia, that is until age 22.
Overview

• Based on SBOE Rule, in order to be reassigned to a future cohort, a student must
  ✓ be flagged GAA (or ACS) in Student Record in high school, AND
  ✓ have a GAA assessment in high school, AND
  ✓ have a GAA assessment in middle school.
• FAPE cohort reassignment will automatically occur when the student meets all three criteria.
Cohort Reassignment

**DOES**
- affect school accountability
- affect the school’s graduation rate, as the student counts towards a 4-year graduation rate, no matter if he takes 4, 5, 6, or even 7 years to graduate

**DOES NOT**
- affect the student’s opportunity to earn a diploma
- affect the student’s opportunity to continue FAPE (his 22nd year)
## Automatic Cohort Reassignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>MS Alternate Assessment Record</th>
<th>GAA/ACS Flag in HS SR</th>
<th>HS Alternate Assessment Record</th>
<th>Meets Requirements of Automatic FAPE Cohort Reassignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria entered 9th grade prior to 2020-2021 school year</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y-Student is automatically reassigned to FAPE cohort based on 22nd birthday. Student will count in the 4-year cohort graduation rate the year she graduates with a regular diploma or at the end of FAPE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darius entered 9th grade on or after the 2020-2021 school year</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y-Student is automatically reassigned to FAPE cohort based on 22nd birthday. Student will count in the 4-year cohort graduation rate the year he graduates with an alternate diploma or at the end of FAPE.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appeals Process

• There will be exceptions and special circumstances.
• The appeals process deals with those exceptions and special circumstances.
• The district accountability Point of Contact (POC) should work with the special education team and principals to identify students for the appeals process.
• The POC should contact the GaDOE accountability specialist assigned to assist their district if they have questions as soon as they arise.
Reasons for Appeals

1. High school alternate assessment in another state
2. Middle school alternate assessment in another state
3. Significant event required new GAA eligibility
4. Data entry error
5. Not yet enrolled in 11\textsuperscript{th} grade
6. Enrolled in 11\textsuperscript{th} grade or 12\textsuperscript{th} grade and did not take the GAA 2.0 due to extenuating circumstances

Note: If a student took the high school GAA 2.0 in 2023 (based on documentation received), no appeal is necessary unless other (additional) criteria have not been met.
Cohort Reassignment Appeals Process

1. Districts prepare appeals as early as possible
2. Committee reviews appeals in June
3. Approved cohort reassignments (Max FAPE Cohort Year) will display when CWU opens

Only those with CCRPI portal rights (principals and certain district staff, including the POC) can access the cohort files in Live Data Verification. As a special education director, you will need to collaborate with the district accountability POC to review the files.
Using Live Data Verification #1

Cohort file includes columns for each required element so you can see which Cohort Reassignment elements are missing.
Using Live Data Verification

- Download cohort file to review students with an automatic reassignment and identify missing elements for students the district believes should have a Max FAPE Cohort Year.
- Begin the appeals process by collecting documentation for missing elements.
Student-Level Data Notes

• Students who were 11th graders in 2020 when statewide assessments were canceled due to a federal waiver display an N in column AA (HS GAA Score). However, if the student meets all other requirements, a Max FAPE Cohort Year will populate in column AB.

• Students who took the GAA 2.0 in 2023 have an N in column AA and do not have a Max FAPE Cohort Year populated. However, as stated earlier, there is no need to submit appeals for those students IF they met all other requirements. They will receive a cohort reassignment and a Max FAPE Cohort Year when GAA scores are received by GaDOE.
  o This also applies to 2022 conditional approval of appeals.
Remember to search for all your GAA/ACS students in the file. There could be a data entry error where a student who should have a GAA flag = Y is not flagged! This can be corrected in Student Record before it closes.
Next Step in Appeals Process

• Once you have identified students who might need an appeal, collaborate to collect documentation.
• Include special education and data team members from the school and/or district to examine the situation.
• Identify the type of documentation needed.
Documentation for Appeals

• Documentation should answer the questions
  o *Why was this student not automatically reassigned?* and
  o *Why should this student be reassigned?*

• Guidelines and examples of documentation for each scenario are based on lessons learned over the last three years.

• Contact your GaDOE [accountability specialist](#) with specific questions.
Types of Documentation

• GAA 2.0 Eligibility Criteria Form
• GAA 2.0 Individual Score Report
• IEP from another state with page number reference to student qualification for alternate assessment
• Enrollment record showing grade level as appropriate reason
• Alternate assessment score report from another state
• IEP from Georgia public school with page number reference to student qualification for alternate assessment
• Narrative explanation
Documentation Notes

• Each appeal (student) should have a separate Word document with appropriate documentation.

• Documentation should be clearly labeled following the convention LastName_FirstName_GTID.
   Example: Kennedy_Tianna_1234567891

• Refer to the following scenarios that correspond to reasons listed on slide 10 for guidance regarding types of documentation accepted for each situation.
## Scenarios

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<th>Documentation/Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y No need to appeal</td>
<td>No appeal necessary. If student took GAA 2.0 in 2023, he will be reassigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student took GAA 2.0 in 2023 but scores not in yet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y No need to appeal</td>
<td>No appeal necessary. This student has been reassigned based on 2020 enrollment in 11th grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student enrolled in 11th grade in 2020 when assessments were canceled, and the requirement waived</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assessments were canceled due to pandemic, which led to this requirement in board rule being waived</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Juan Reason #2</td>
<td>N  Student took alternate assessment in another state</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y  Student completed GAA 2.0 in 11th grade</td>
<td>N  LEA can appeal and submit documentation from the other state</td>
<td>Documentation: alternate assessment score report from another state or IEP from another state with page number reference to student qualification for alternate assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rey Reason #2</td>
<td>N  Student was supposed to take alternate assessment in another state but did not test</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y  Student completed the GAA 2.0 in 11th grade</td>
<td>N  LEA can appeal and submit documentation from the other state</td>
<td>Documentation: IEP from another state with page number reference to student qualification for alternate assessment</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Reason #3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Student missing middle school assessment; LEA can appeal if there were EXTENUATING circumstances (a life change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation: completed GAA 2.0 Eligibility Criteria Form and IEP with page number reference to support assignment to GAA 2.0 and narrative explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qi Reason #3</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Student entered from private school, home school, out of country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation: completed GAA 2.0 Eligibility Criteria Form and IEP with page number reference to support assignment to GAA 2.0 and narrative explanation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Reason #6</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>No appeal necessary. If student took GAA 2.0 in 2023, she will be reassigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purush Reason #6</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Documentation: narrative explanation of reason for student not taking GAA 2.0 in 2023.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **Susan Reason #6**
  - Student enrolled in 11th grade and did not take assessment in 2022 when assessments were administered; student received conditional approval in 2022.
  - No need to appeal if student took GAA 2.0 in 2023.

- **Purush Reason #6**
  - Student enrolled in 11th or 12th grade in 2023 and did not take GAA 2.0.
  - LEA can appeal; possible conditional reassignment to 2024 with expectation of completing GAA 2.0 in 2024.
Sending Appeals to GaDOE

• Always follow your district protocol and processes and meet district deadlines!

• The district accountability Point of Contact (POC) should request an appeals template from the GaDOE accountability specialist.

• The GaDOE accountability specialist will email to the district POC the template with detailed instructions and the deadline for return of documents.

• Principals must work with the district POC to submit appeals information.

• The district superintendent should return documents via the MyGaDOE portal to the GaDOE accountability specialist by the deadline noted in the instructions.
  
  • Only one template can be accepted for each district. It must include information for all applicable schools (including district charters) within the district.
  
  • Documentation must be labeled correctly and submitted for every student on the template.
Appeals Follow-Up

• The district superintendent and accountability POC will be informed of the decisions.

• Students whose appeals were approved will display in the Cohort Withdrawal Update application with a *Max FAPE Cohort Year* populated.

• Students whose appeals were not approved will count in the 2023 four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for the school and district.
Notes about Graduating Students

• Ensure that your school/district only graduates in Student Record students who actually graduate and receive a diploma.

• Students pursuing an Alternate Diploma or remaining in school in accordance with FAPE should not be graduated with a diploma until they have earned the diploma.
Questions?

• Please consider reaching out to the following people if you have questions:
  o your district accountability Point of Contact
  o your district data team
  o your system testing coordinator
  o the GaDOE accountability specialist assigned to assist your district
  o the GaDOE special education team
Accountability Team

Paula Swartzberg, Director of Accountability
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Allison Timberlake, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability
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