

Public Notice on ESSA Waiver to Exclude GAA 2.0 Assessment Results from Accountability Calculations in 2018-2019

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Assessment and Accountability Office is seeking comments on the following waiver request for the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (US ED). Comments and questions should be submitted to Allison Timberlake, Deputy Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability, at atimberlake@doe.k12.ga.us **no later than Monday, May 14, 2018.**

Under ESSA Section 1111(c)(4)(B)(i)(I), States are required to annually measure in their accountability system, for all students, academic achievement as measured by proficiency on the annual assessments required under subsection (b)(2)(B)(v)(I). The GaDOE is seeking a waiver to this provision for 2018-2019 to exclude assessment results for the Georgia Alternate Assessment 2.0 (GAA 2.0) from accountability calculations.

ESSA Section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i) allows for states to provide for alternate assessments aligned with challenging State academic standards and alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The GaDOE is working closely with Georgia educators, partners, and test development experts to develop a new alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities aligned with alternate academic achievement standards. The assessment structure of the GAA 2.0 is being redesigned, when compared with the GAA 1.0, to include standardized tasks with appropriate scaffolding based on student need. In doing so, the increased structure should decrease the amount of work required by teachers in collecting evidence to submit, provide information regarding a student's current level of achievement, and support skills that are likely to transfer to life and beyond the classroom.

The GaDOE is planning a statewide field test for the GAA 2.0 in spring 2019. As such, the GAA 1.0 will not be administered in 2018-2019. This statewide field test of the GAA 2.0 includes ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11 and science and social studies in grades 5, 8, and 11. A census field test will 1) produce the data necessary to review the technical properties of the new assessment, 2) allow for academic achievement standards to be set, and 3) prepare students and educators for both the technical and academic expectations of this assessment for 2019-2020 and beyond. Given the unfamiliarity that students and teachers have with the redesigned assessment format, administration procedures, scoring, and reporting, it is necessary to seek the waiver as a precautionary measure to ensure technical quality and fair results.

While approval of this waiver would allow for the exclusion of proficiency designations for GAA 2.0 participants from accountability calculations in 2018-2019, schools and districts will be held accountable for participation in the 2018-2019 statewide field test. Additionally, scores from the field test will be provided to students, schools, and districts. This ensures students, schools, and districts can review performance information from the statewide field test to assist with preparation for future assessments.

Prior to submitting this ESSA waiver request, public notice is being provided to education stakeholders across Georgia. The State is providing notification by posting an intent to request a waiver on the GaDOE website. In addition, the State has emailed information pertaining to the waiver to all district superintendents, assessment directors, curriculum directors, special education directors, and Title I

directors. Copies of all comments the State may receive from stakeholders in response to this notice will be attached to the waiver request sent to US ED.