Kentucky Alternate Assessment: Local District Justifications for Alternate Assessment Participation

2018-2019 School Year Assessment Data 2019-2020 Reporting Year



Office of Special Education and Early Learning (OSEEL)

April 2020

Overview

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires Kentucky to ensure that the total number of students assessed in each subject using the Kentucky alternate assessment does not exceed 1.0% of the total number of all students participating in the statewide assessment – the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP). States that anticipate exceeding 1.0% participation in the alternate assessment must submit a waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) 90 days before the beginning of the alternate assessment testing window. Kentucky has requested and received a one-year extended waiver from the U.S. Department of Education regarding the 1.0% cap on participation in the alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS).

Kentucky's AA-AAS participation rates for each subject area for the 2018-2019 school year are listed in *Table 1* below.

Table 1: 2018-2019 Alternate A.	ssessment Participa	ation by Subject
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SUBJECT	NUMBER PARTICIPATING IN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT	NUMBER PARTICIPATING IN STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT	PERCENT PARTICIPATING IN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT
Reading	3,950	349,913	1.13%
(elem/middle/high)			
Math	3,953	349,916	1.13%
(elem/middle/high)			
Writing	1,738	147,032	1.18%
(elem/middle/high)			
Social Studies	1,123	101,742	1.10%
(elementary/high)			
Science	1,683	147,128	1.14%
(elementary/middle)			

ESSA also requires each district or community school to submit an annual justification if the district anticipates alternate assessment participation rates will be greater than 1.0% in one or more subject areas.

The 2018-2019 assessment data was used to identify any district with an alternate assessment participation rate greater than 1.0% in one or more subject areas. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Division of IDEA Monitoring and Results (DIMR) identified 132 districts and requested written assurances that all Individual Education Program (IEP) Teams, known in Kentucky as an Admissions and Release Committee (ARC), are following the Kentucky Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Documentation Form 2018 when making assessment participation decisions. The KDE also required identified districts to submit information justifying the need to exceed the 1.0% threshold.

The following data includes justification responses for the 132 districts identified from the 2018-2019 assessment data as exceeding the 1.0% participation rate. A list of districts exceeding 1.0% participation in the alternate assessment is in *Appendix A*.

Questions about the 1.0% justification responses should be directed to the DIMR by phone at 502-564-4970 or by emailing the KDE Alternate Assessment Inbox. Individual district justification responses may be available upon request.

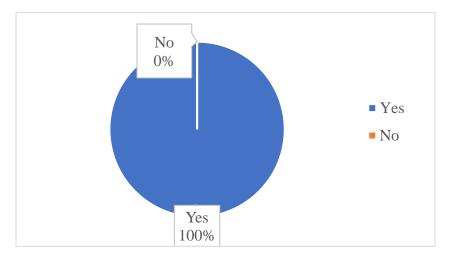
Additional information on the ESSA requirements for a state waiver request can be found in the "Requirements for the Cap on the Percentage of Students who may be Assessed with an Alternate Assessment Aligned with Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AA-AAAS)", dated May 16, 2017, provided by the U. S. Department of Education.

Questions and Responses

The Alternate Assessment and Diploma Advisory Group (AADAG) was formed by the KDE in 2017 to assist with developing a statewide process for ensuring appropriate oversight of districts and how the state will respond to district exceeding the 1.0% cap. The advisory group consists of renowned experts in the field of low incidence disabilities from the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky, consultants who specialize in low incidence disabilities from the state's special education divisions of the regional educational cooperatives, and Directors of Special Education (DoSE) from local education agencies (LEA). KDE staff from the OSEEL and the Office of Assessment and Accountability participate in advisory group meetings led by an external facilitator. As part of the process, the KDE and the AADAG annually revise the justification form based on feedback from districts and stakeholder input.

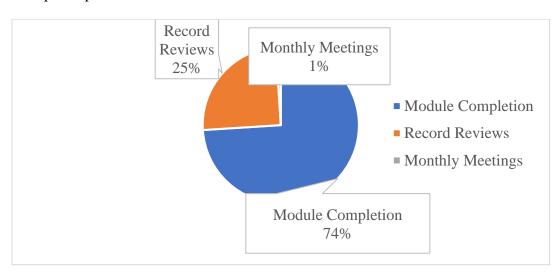
The justification form included 14 questions for districts to answer. Each question was developed to inform the KDE of current district processes around alternate assessment participation and to provide an opportunity for districts to identify any factors contributing to the district exceeding 1.0% participation.

Question 1: Did all ARCs use the alternate assessment participation guidelines to make assessment participation decisions, as required by 707 KAR 1:320, Section 5 (11)?



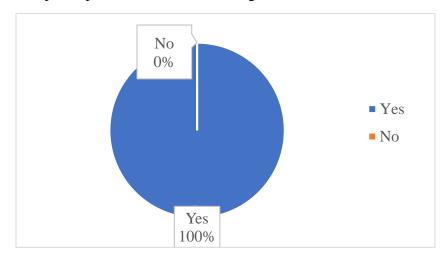
Of the 132 responses received, all 132 districts indicated they use the alternate assessment participation guidelines to make assessment decisions. Students must meet all eligibility criteria on the participation guidelines in order to participate in the alternate assessment.

Question 2: How has the district ensured all ARCs used the participation guidelines to make assessment participation decisions?



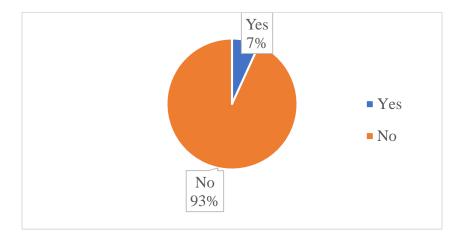
Of the 132 responses received, one district indicated they have monthly meetings with teachers to review alternate assessment student participation. Twenty-five districts indicated the district conducts record reviews for students participating in the alternate assessment and 75 districts indicated they verify teachers have been trained by completing the alternate assessment training modules.

Question 3: Is the district confident in the application of the alternate assessment participation guidelines to make participation decisions according to 707 KAR 1:320, Section 5 (11)?



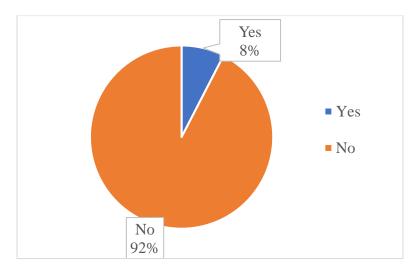
Of the 132 responses received, all districts indicated they are confident in the application of the alternate assessment participation guidelines.

Question 4: Would you like someone to contact you in regard to possible training?



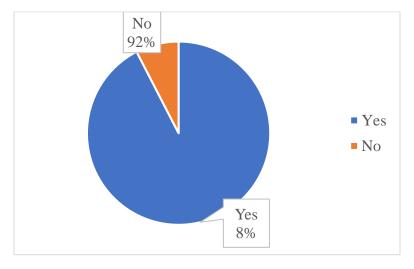
Of the 132 responses received, nine districts requested someone to contact them in regard to possible training. The KDE shared those requests with the district's respective regional special education cooperatives for further support.

<u>Question 5:</u> Does the district staff have questions about or require additional training on specific participation criteria, areas of the eligibility guidelines or components of the Guidance for ARC's on Participation Decisions for the KY Alternate Assessment document?



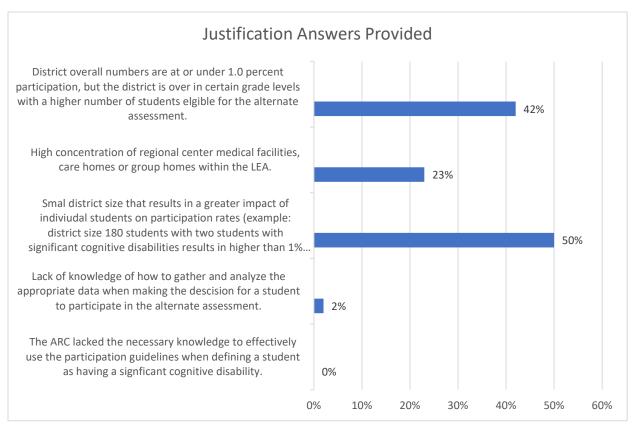
Of the 132 responses received, 10 districts indicated a need for additional information and training specific to each participation criteria indicated on the *Kentucky Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines* form. The KDE shared those requests with the district's respective regional special education cooperatives to determine additional training and support needs to improve alternate assessment participation decision making.

Question 6: Does the district have documented evidence that all ARC Chairpersons in the district completed the *Participation Guidelines Online Training Modules*?



Of the 132 responses received, 10 districts reported they do not have documented evidence that all ARC Chairpersons in the district have completed the required modules. All 10 districts described plans currently being implemented or developed to monitor module completion. Plans to monitor included certificate tracking, completion during professional learning community meetings and documentation from administrators.

<u>Questions 7-11:</u> For the following questions, please identify any factors justifying your district exceeding 1.0% of your student population, who are students with significant cognitive disabilities, participating in the KY Alternate Assessment: (select at least one and all that apply) Districts were provided five pre-determined factors and the opportunity to write in further explanation of each factor chosen.



Justification Answers Provided	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents
The ARC lacked the necessary knowledge to effectively use the participation guidelines when defining a student as having		
a significant cognitive disability.	0%	0
Lack of knowledge of how to gather and analyze the		
appropriate data when making the decision for a student to		
participate in the alternate assessment.	2%	3
Small district size that results in a greater impact of individual		
students on participation rates (example: district size 180		
students with two students with significant cognitive		
disabilities results in higher than 1.0% participation rate)	50%	66
High concentration of regional center medical facilities, care		
homes or group homes within the LEA.	23%	30

	Percentage of	
Justification Answers Provided	Respondents	Respondents
District overall numbers are at or under 1.0% participation, but		
the district is over in certain grade levels with a higher number		
of students eligible for the alternate assessment.	42%	56

Question 7: The ARC lacked the necessary knowledge to effectively use the participation guidelines when defining a student as having a significant cognitive disability.

Of the 132 district responses received, zero districts indicated a lack of knowledge of the participation guidelines as being a reason the district exceeded 1.0% alternate assessment participation.

Question 8: Lack of knowledge of how to gather and analyze the appropriate data when making the decision for a student to participate in the alternate assessment.

Of the 132 district responses received, three districts acknowledged some uncertainty around analyzing data when making the decision for a student to participate in the alternate assessment. All three districts described professional development efforts and training completed this school year to improve data analysis.

Question 9: Small district size that resulted in a greater impact of individual students on participation rates (example: district size of 180 students with two students with significant cognitive disabilities which resulted in higher than 1.0% participation rate).

Of the 132 district responses, 66 districts indicated the small size of the student population in their district causes them to exceed 1.0% alternate assessment participation easily. All 66 districts provided the total district population, total number of students participating in alternate assessment and the percentage of students participating in alternate assessment. These percentages depict the districts overall percentage of students participating in the alternate assessment, not by subject area.

Question 10: The district included school, community or health programs that drew large numbers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Of the 132 district responses, 30 districts described a variety of school, community and health programs that have drawn a higher number of students with significant disabilities. Some examples provided by the district included: early intervention services, partnerships with the Kentucky Autism Center and Applied Behavior Analysis Therapy services, small school and class sizes for students, after school education programs for students with significant disabilities, full day kindergarten programs, close proximity to hospitals, residential facilities and high level of support for students with disabilities from local colleges and community organizations.

Question 11: District overall numbers are at or under 1.0% participation, but the district was over in certain grade levels with a higher number of students eligible for the alternate assessment.

Of the 132 district responses received, 59 districts provided root causes for the higher number of students participating in the alternate assessment in specific grade levels. The KDE data analysis found three common themes within the root cause responses provided; which include: enrollment, eligibility and a need for training

Root Cause Answers Provided - Common Themes	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Enrollment	51	39%
Eligibility	3	3%
Need for Training	6	5%

Enrollment

- Non-resident students are open enrolled into the district.
- High population of students who have been enrolled in multiple schools per school year.
- Higher enrollment of students with moderate to severe disabilities population because more specialized programs and resources are available in the district.
- 1.0% cap calculation based on each subject area as opposed to an overall population participation affected the numbers.

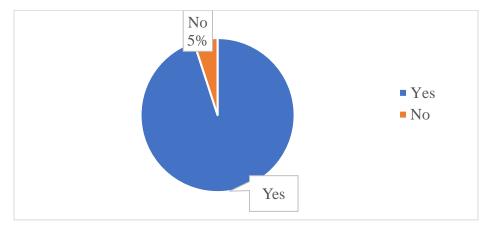
Eligibility

• High number of eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities (due to appropriate eligibility and small population size).

Need for Training

• District has completed record reviews and other trainings that have led to a decrease in participation, however, still exceeding 1.0% participation in at least one subject area.

Question 12: Does the district have a process in place to monitor alternate assessment participation?



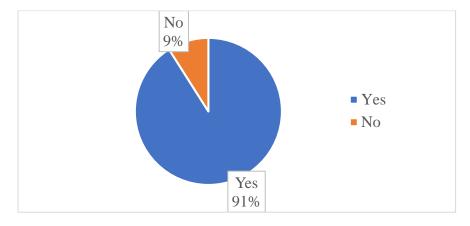
Of the 132 district responses, 125 districts indicated they have a process(es) in place to monitor alternate assessment participation. Six districts do not currently have a process in place, however, four districts indicated future plans to develop a systematic process to monitor including: record reviews, monitoring by DoSE and a committee currently being formed to develop a district wide process. Due to the small population size, two districts explained they review participation of every student individually, so a district wide plan was not necessary.

Current processes in place for monitoring alternate assessment participation included:

Process to Monitor Alternate Assessment Participation	Number of Respondents
Folder review process – review of folders for	39
all students participating in alternate	
assessment (quarterly and annually)	
DoSE meets/consults on all alternate	53
assessment participation determinations	
Monthly special education meetings to review	36
student progress data to determine continued	
alternate assessment participation eligibility.	
School administrators monitor alternate	14
assessment participation determinations	
through Infinite Campus reports	
Ensure all staff are trained on the alternate	6
assessment participation guidelines	

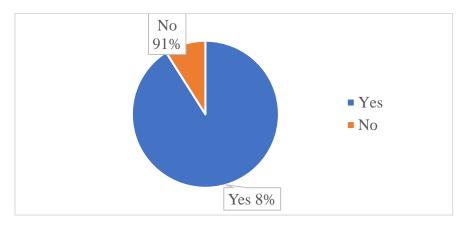
The KDE strongly recommends districts establish a process to review and monitor the identification of students taking the alternate assessment. The KDE has recommended a list of some steps a district can take to develop a process to monitor the identification of students for the alternate assessment. Those recommendations are included in the *Participation Guidelines for the Kentucky Alternate Assessment Review Document*.

Question 13: Has the district reviewed and analyzed data on students eligible for alternate assessment based on disability?



Of the 132 district responses, 12 districts indicated they have not reviewed or analyzed the data based on disability. Ten districts indicated they do not have a formal process in place, however all data is reviewed and analyzed during ARC meetings. Two districts are in the process of developing a district level process for reviewing and analyzing data.

Question 14: Does the district want to be contacted by someone to discuss additional supports needed.



Of the 132 district responses, 11 districts requested someone to contact them to discuss additional supports and training needed. The KDE shared those requests with the district's respective regional special education cooperatives.

Appendix A

Alternate Assessment Participation – Districts assessing more than 1.0% of its assessed students in any subject with an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS).

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
State Target	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Adair County	Yes	Yes	No
Allen County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anchorage Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anderson County	Yes	No	No
Ashland Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Augusta Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Ballard County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Barbourville Independent	Yes	No	No
Bardstown Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Barren County	Yes	No	No
Bath County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Beechwood Independent	Yes	No	No
Bell County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bellevue Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Berea Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Boone County	Yes	Yes	No
Bourbon County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bowling Green Independent	Yes	No	No
Boyd County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Boyle County	Yes	Yes	Yes

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Bracken County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Breathitt County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Breckinridge County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bullitt County	Yes	No	No
Burgin Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Butler County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Caldwell County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calloway County	Yes	No	Yes
Campbell County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Campbellsville Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Carlisle County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carroll County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carter County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Casey County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Caverna Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Christian County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clark County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clay County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clinton County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cloverport Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Corbin Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Covington Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crittenden County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cumberland County	Yes	Yes	Yes

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Danville Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Daviess County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dawson Springs Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dayton Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
East Bernstadt Independent	No	No	No
Edmonson County	Yes	No	Yes
Elizabethtown Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elliott County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eminence Independent	Yes	No	Yes
Erlanger-Elsmere Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estill County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fairview Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fayette County	Yes	No	No
Fleming County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Floyd County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fort Thomas Independent	Yes	No	No
Frankfort Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Franklin County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fulton County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fulton Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gallatin County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Garrard County	Yes	No	Yes
Glasgow Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Grant County	Yes	Yes	Yes

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Graves County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grayson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Green County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greenup County	Yes	No	No
Hancock County	Yes	No	Yes
Hardin County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harlan County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harlan Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harrison County	Yes	No	Yes
Hart County	Yes	No	No
Hazard Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Henderson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Henry County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hickman County	Yes	Yes	No
Hopkins County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jackson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jackson Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Jefferson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jenkins Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jessamine County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Johnson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kenton County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knott County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knox County	Yes	Yes	Yes

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Larue County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laurel County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lawrence County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lee County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Leslie County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Letcher County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lewis County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lincoln County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Livingston County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Logan County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ludlow Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lyon County	Yes	No	Yes
Madison County	Yes	Yes	No
Magoffin County	Yes	Yes	No
Marion County	Yes	Yes	No
Marshall County	Yes	No	No
Martin County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mason County	Yes	No	Yes
Mayfield Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
McCracken County	Yes	Yes	No
McCreary County	Yes	Yes	Yes
McLean County	Yes	Yes	No
Meade County	Yes	No	No
Menifee County	Yes	Yes	Yes

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Mercer County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Metcalfe County	Yes	No	Yes
Middlesboro Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monroe County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montgomery County	Yes	No	No
Morgan County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Muhlenberg County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Murray Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nelson County	Yes	No	No
Newport Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nicholas County	Yes	Yes	No
Ohio County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oldham County	Yes	No	No
Owen County	Yes	Yes	No
Owensboro Independent	Yes	Yes	No
Owsley County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paducah Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paintsville Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paris Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pendleton County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Perry County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pike County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pikeville Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pineville Independent	Yes	No	No

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Powell County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pulaski County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Raceland-Worthington Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Robertson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rockcastle County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rowan County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russell County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russell Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Russellville Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Science Hill Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scott County	Yes	No	Yes
Shelby County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Silver Grove Independent ¹	Yes	Yes	No
Simpson County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Somerset Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Southgate Independent	No	No	No
Spencer County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Taylor County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Todd County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trigg County	Yes	Yes	No
Trimble County	Yes	No	Yes
Union County	Yes	Yes	Yes

 $^{^{1}}$ Silver Grove Independent Schools has merged with the Campbell County School District effective for the 2019-2020 school year.

Districts	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2016-17	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2017-2018	Districts Exceeding 1.0% Participation in at least one subject for SY 2018-19
Walton-Verona Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Warren County	No	No	No
Washington County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wayne County	Yes	Yes	No
Webster County	Yes	Yes	Yes
West Point Independent	No	Yes	Yes
Whitley County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williamsburg Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williamstown Independent	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wolfe County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Woodford County	No	No	No