

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

December 27, 2016

Penn*Link

TO: School District Superintendents
School District Special Education Directors
Charter School Chief Executive Officers
Charter School Special Education Directors
Intermediate Unit Executive Directors
Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors

FROM: Patricia Hozella, Director
Bureau of Special Education

SUBJECT: Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment Eligibility Mandated Waiver
Application

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education (BSE) issued a Penn*Link dated September 29, 2016 that provided information pertaining to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) one percent cap requirements for local educational agencies (LEAs) administering the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

To assist the LEA with the one percent cap determination, BSE has developed the Mandated Participation Waiver Application in accordance with the regulatory requirement under the ESSA. The LEA must complete and submit the waiver application when it anticipates higher enrollments of students identified with severe cognitive disabilities that would result in a PASA participation rate in excess of one percent of the total tested grades. Application information provided by the LEA will be considered by BSE when determining approval status. Any LEA submitting the waiver application may be subject to an on-site review by a BSE Adviser to obtain additional clarification on the submitted information.

The 2016-17 PASA testing window for Reading and Math will be February 13 to March 24, 2017. The PASA testing window for Science will be May 2-27, 2017.

It is imperative waiver applications are received at BSE 30 days before the initial testing date. To access the waiver application, please visit www.pattan.net: Educational Initiatives, Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, PA Alternate Assessment.