



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Honorable Michael Sentence
State Superintendent
Alabama State Department of Education
50 North Ripley Street
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36104

January 6, 2017

Dear Superintendent Sentence:

Thank you for your participation in the U.S. Department of Education's (Department) assessment peer review process under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) maintains the essential requirements from NCLB that each State annually administer high-quality assessments in at least reading/language arts, mathematics, and science that meet nationally recognized professional and technical standards. Therefore, as you know, the Department reinstated peer review of State assessment systems so that each State receives feedback from external experts on the assessments it is currently administering. We appreciate the efforts required to prepare for the peer review, which occurred in June 2016. State assessment systems provide essential information that States, districts, principals, and teachers can use to identify the academic needs of students, target resources and supports toward students who need them most, evaluate school and program effectiveness, and close achievement gaps among students. A high-quality assessment system also provides useful information to parents about their child's advancement against and achievement of grade-level standards. The Department's peer review of State assessment systems is designed to provide feedback to States to support the development and administration of high-quality assessments.

On October 6, 2016, the Department sent a letter to chief State school officers outlining the outcomes for States related to the assessment peer review. I am writing to provide you feedback on Alabama State Department of Education's (ALSDE) recent submission of evidence. External peer reviewers and Department staff evaluated Alabama's submission and found, based on the evidence received, that the components of your assessment system meet some, but not all of the statutory and regulatory requirements of section 1111(b)(1) and (3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. Based on the recommendations from this peer review and our own analysis of the State's submission, I have determined the following:

- Reading/language arts (R/LA) and mathematics general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire): **Partially meets requirements**
- Science assessments in grade bands 3-5 and 6-8 (ACT Aspire): **Partially meets requirements**

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

The components that **partially meet requirements** do not meet a number of the requirements of the statute and regulations and the State will need to provide substantial additional information to demonstrate it meets the requirements. The Department expects that Alabama may not be able to submit all of the required information within one year.

The specific list of items required for ALSDE to submit is enclosed with this letter. Because several of the State's components have partially met the requirements, the Department is placing a condition on the State's Title I grant award related to those components of the assessment system. To satisfy this condition, ALSDE must submit satisfactory evidence to address the items identified in the enclosed list. ALSDE must submit a plan and timeline within 30 days for when it will submit all required additional documentation for peer review. The Department will also host regular (e.g., quarterly) progress calls with the State to discuss the State's progress on its timeline. If, following the peer review of the additional evidence, adequate progress is not made, the Department may take additional action. Additionally, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) will monitor progress on matters pertaining to requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) related to the participation of students with disabilities in Title I assessments. Insufficient progress to address such matters may lead OSERS to place a condition on ALSDE's federal fiscal year 2017 IDEA Part B grant award.

The Department notes that ALSDE submitted a waiver request for assessing speaking and listening that was approved on June 24, 2016, for the 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years.

In addition, the full peer review notes from the review are enclosed. These recommendations to the Department formed the basis of our determination. Please note that the peers' recommendations may differ from the Department's feedback; we encourage you to read the full peer notes for additional suggestions and recommendations for improving your assessment system beyond what is noted in the Department's feedback. Department staff will reach out to your assessment director in the next few days to discuss the peer notes and the Department's determination and to answer any questions you have.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students. I look forward to our continued partnership as we move ahead with this critical work. I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students. If you have any questions, please contact Ashlee Schmidt or LaTisha Putney of my staff at: OSS.Alabama@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ann Whalen
Senior Advisor to the Secretary
Delegated the Duties of Assistant Secretary
for Elementary and Secondary Education

Enclosures

cc: Rebecca Mims, Coordinator of Student Assessment

Critical Elements Where Additional Evidence is Needed to Meet the Requirements for Alabama’s Assessment System

Critical Element	Additional Evidence Needed
1.5 – Participation Rate Data	For the reading/language arts (R/LA), mathematics and science general and alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS), Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of student counts (corresponding to participation rates) to show that each student is tested. • Evidence of overall participation rates (aggregating participation on the general and alternate assessments) at each grade level and for all subjects, by subgroup.
2.1 – Test Design and Development	For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test blueprints that describe the structure of each assessment in sufficient detail to support the development of assessments that are technically sound, measure the full range of the ALSDE grade-level academic content standards (Courses of Study). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For R/LA, evidence that the assessment design measures the full breadth and depth of the ALSDE Courses of Study, including speaking and listening. [NOTE: ALSDE has received a speaking and listening waiver; therefore, the Department does not expect ALSDE to submit additional evidence regarding speaking and listening during the period of the waiver] • Evidence of processes to ensure that each assessment is tailored to the knowledge and skills included in the ALSDE Courses of Study, reflects appropriate inclusion of challenging content, and requires complex demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills (<i>i.e.</i>, higher-order thinking skills).
2.2 – Item Development	For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of explicit consideration of ALSDE’s Course of Study in the development of the ACT Aspire, OR • Evidence that ACT Aspire tests are fully aligned with ALSDE Courses of Study in R/LA, mathematics, and science.
2.4 – Monitoring Test Administration	For the entire assessment system in the State, ALSDE must provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that specifies which assessments are to be monitored. • Evidence that clarifies which test monitoring procedures were utilized in 2014–2015. • Evidence of the State’s monitoring process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Selecting which districts and schools will be monitored by the State educational agency staff. ○ The cycle for monitoring schools and districts across the State; ○ Schedules for monitoring; ○ Monitors’ roles and responsibilities of key personnel; and ○ Summary of the results of the State’s monitoring for the 2014–2015 test administration.
2.6 – Systems for	For the entire assessment system in the State, ALSDE must provide:

Critical Element	Additional Evidence Needed
Protecting Data Integrity and Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of a policy for the minimum number of students necessary to allow group reporting of scores (minimum n size).
3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of an independent alignment study between each of the State’s assessments and the State Courses of Study that the assessments are designed to measure in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content (<i>i.e.</i>, knowledge and process); The full range of the State Courses of Study; Balance of content; and Cognitive complexity
3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of alignment between each of the State’s assessments and the State Courses of Study that the assessments are designed to measure in terms of the intended cognitive processes appropriate for each grade level.
3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure	<p>For the mathematics general assessments in grades 4 and 6 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional evidence that supports the validity of the internal structure of the tests, including a plan for monitoring and improving the validity based on internal structure (specifically the dimensionality) of the tests.
4.1 – Reliability	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of reliability estimates and conditional standard errors of measurement for the State’s student population overall and for each student sub-group in the State. Evidence it has addressed the reliability issues identified for the mathematics tests in grades 4 and 5.
4.3 – Full Performance Continuum	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence for conditional standard errors of measure as noted in element 4.1 above.
4.4 – Scoring	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of the observed inter-rater reliability for 2015 constructed-response scoring in R/LA, mathematics, and science. Evidence that includes a description of the procedures for scoring the writing assessment, including the observed inter-rater reliability for 2015, if these are different than scoring procedures for constructed-response items on the other subject matter tests; and Evidence of the criteria for scoring items that have different numbers of score points.
4.7 – Technical Analysis and Ongoing	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence which describes the processes and procedures to maintain and

Critical Element	Additional Evidence Needed
Maintenance	<p>monitor the assessment system (<i>e.g.</i>, a complete technical manual for a test administration).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) activity which provide examples of recommendations or advice on issues regarding the technical analysis and ongoing maintenance of AL’s assessment system (<i>e.g.</i>, TAC meeting agendas, TAC meeting minutes).
5.3 – Test Accommodations	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide evidence that the accommodations provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments. • Do not alter the construct being assessed. • Allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations.
5.4 – Monitoring Test Administration for Special Populations	<p>For the entire assessment system in the State, ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that test monitoring procedures and training address test accommodations and fidelity to test administration procedures.
6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students	<p>For the entire assessment system in the State, ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the State formally adopted academic achievement standards in the tested grades. • Evidence that The State applies its grade-level academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply.
6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State Courses of Study.
6.4 – Reporting	<p>For the R/LA, mathematics, and science general assessments in grades 3-8 (ACT Aspire), ALSDE must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of State-level reports that include the percentage of students not tested as required for this element. • Examples of actual student reports and interpretive guide documents provided to principals, teachers, parents, and districts. • Evidence that reports are available in alternate formats (<i>e.g.</i>, Braille or large print) upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a native language that parents can understand. • Evidence that individual student reports include performance-level descriptors. • Documentation of the process and timeline for delivering individual student reports to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as practicable after each test administration. • Evidence that if students in the State are tested with off-grade level content that scores reported are based only on grade level content items.

U. S. Department of Education Peer Review of State Assessment Systems

June, 2016 State Assessment Peer Review Notes



U. S. Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Note: Peer review notes provide the combined recommendations of the individual peers to the U.S. Department of Education (Department), based on the statute and regulations, the Department's peer review guidance, and the peers' professional judgement of the evidence submitted by the State. These assessment peer review notes, however, do not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for assessment peer review. Although the peer notes inform the Secretary's consideration of each State's assessment system, the Department makes the final decision regarding whether the assessment system meets the requirements in the statute and regulations. As a result, these peer notes may not completely align with the final determination made by the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Contents

SECTION 1: STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS .	3
1.1 – State Adoption of Academic Content Standards for All Students	3
1.2 – Coherent and Rigorous Academic Content Standards	5
1.3 – Required Assessments(reviewed by Department staff only).....	6
1.4 – Policies for Including All Students in Assessments(reviewed by Department staff only).....	7
1.5 – Participation Data(revieved by Department staff only).....	9
SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OPERATIONS	10
2.1 – Test Design and Development.....	10
2.2 – Item Development.....	13
2.3 – Test Administration	17
2.4 – Monitoring Test Administration(reviewed by Department staff only)	19
2.5 – Test Security	20
2.6 – Systems for Protecting Data Integrity and Privacy.....	24
SECTION 3: TECHNICAL QUALITY – VALIDITY.....	26
3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content.....	26
3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes.....	28
3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure	29
3.4 – Validity Based on Relationships with Other Variables	30
SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY - OTHER	31
4.1 – Reliability.....	31
4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility.....	32
4.3 – Full Performance Continuum.....	36
4.4 – Scoring	37
4.5 – Multiple Assessment Forms	38
4.6 – Multiple Versions of an Assessment	39
4.7 – Technical Analysis and Ongoing Maintenance.....	40
SECTION 5: INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS	41
5.1 – Procedures for Including Students with Disabilities	41
5.2 – Procedures for including ELs.....	44
5.3 – Accommodations.....	46
5.4 – Monitoring Test Administration for Special Populations	51
SECTION 6: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND REPORTING .	53
6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students	
6.2 – Achievement Standards-Setting.....	55
6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards	56
6.4 – Reporting.....	58

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 1: STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>1.1 – State Adoption of Academic Content Standards for All Students</p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic content standards for all students in reading/language arts, mathematics and science and applies its academic content standards to all public elementary and secondary schools and students in the State.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [102]: November 18, 2010 Minutes of the Alabama State Board of Education approving Resolution to Adopt the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics • Evidence # [104]: Proposal for Meetings of the Mathematics and English Language Arts Course of Study Review Task Force • Evidence #[105]: January 17, 2014, Minutes of the Alabama State Board of Education adopting Revised Courses of Study for Mathematics and English Language Arts • Evidence # [106] Historical Timeline of 2015 Alabama Course of Study: Science Draft • Evidence # [107]: September 10, 2015, Minutes of the Alabama State Board of Education approving Adoption of Science State Course of Study • Evidence # [108]: Communication of Public Review of Alabama College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards, October 6, 2014 <p>Evidence # [109]: Communication of Public Review of 2014 Alabama Science course of Study Draft</p>	<p>The 2010 English Language Arts State Standards Task Force, along with additional teachers, returned in 2013 and 2015 to review and update the document.</p> <p>The 2010 <i>Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics</i> was reviewed and updated in January 2013, October 2013, and January 2015.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[105]: January 17, 2014, Minutes of the Alabama State Board of Education adopting Revised Courses of Study for Mathematics and English Language Arts <p>However, the peers were unable to locate evidence that indicates the January 2015 revisions of ELA and mathematics state standards were approved.</p> <p>The <i>2015 Alabama Course of Study: Science</i> provides the framework for the K-12 science education program in Alabama’s public schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [107]: September 10, 2015, Minutes of the Alabama State Board of Education approving Adoption of Science State Course of Study <p>It is not clear what mathematics and ELA standards were adopted for the 2014-2015 assessments. Peers could not locate a specific document that indicated a statement of adoption</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
		of the Alabama Course of Study for ELA and mathematics in effect for the assessment being reviewed.
Section 1.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of adoption of the 2015 revised AL Course of Study for Mathematics and English Language Arts by the Alabama State Board of Education. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>1.2 – Coherent and Rigorous Academic Content Standards</p> <p>The State’s academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and science specify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school to succeed in college and the workforce; contain content that is coherent (e.g., within and across grades) and rigorous; encourage the teaching of advanced skills; and were developed with broad stakeholder involvement.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all three subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[110]: <i>Code of Alabama</i> 1975, Title 16, Section 35-1 “Composition, appointment, qualifications, and terms of members” • Evidence # [111]: <i>2015 Revised Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2010-2015 Alabama Mathematics State Standards Task Force (pp. v-vi) ○ General Introduction (pp.1) • Evidence # [112]: <i>2015 Revised Alabama Course of Study: Mathematics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2010-2015 Alabama Mathematics State Standards Task Force (pp. viii-ix) ○ General Introduction (pp.1) • Evidence # [113]: <i>2015 Alabama Course of Study: Science</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2012-2015 Alabama Science Course of Study Committee and Task Force (pp. v-vii) <p>General Introduction (pp.1)</p>	<p>Appears to be broad stakeholder involvement; although peers were not able to locate evidence that English learners were represented on any of the AL content standard task forces.</p> <p>Alabama did not submit evidence that the Alabama Course of Study (content standards), revised subsequent to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA and mathematics, are rigorous and encourage the teaching of advanced skills.</p>
<p>Section 1.2 Summary Statement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the AL Course of Study for ELA and mathematics meets the requirements of 1.2. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.3 – Required Assessments</p> <p>The State’s assessment system includes annual general and alternate assessments (based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate academic achievement standards-AAAS) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading/language arts and mathematics in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in high school (grades 10-12); • Science at least once in each of three grade spans (3-5, 6-9 and 10-12). 	<p>Evaluate for grade/subject combinations listed in left column</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #125 (page 1) indicates that the State Board voted to incorporate ACT Aspire into the State’s testing plan for reading and math in grades 3-8. • Evidence #126 (page 1) indicates that ACT Aspire will be the statewide assessment for grades 3-8. • Evidence #128 (page 1) indicates that ACT Aspire will be the science assessment for grades 5 and 7 in SY 2014-2015. • Evidence #129 (page 1) includes information about the assessments to be administered in SYs 13-14, 14-15, and 15-16 in grades 3-8 and high school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama administered the ACT Aspire Grade 10 for the first time in SY 15-16. As such, it will submit separate evidence for ACT Aspire Grade 10 in fall 2016. • Since this issue comes up in other elements of the review, Alabama may want to clarify or provide evidence regarding the extent to which the assessments it administers (general and alternate, in the required grades, as described in the element) are based on the State’s academic achievement standards.
<p>Section 1.3 Summary Statement—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY</p>		
<p><u>X</u> No Additional evidence is required.</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.4 – Policies for Including All Students in Assessments</p> <p>The State requires the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students in its assessment system and clearly and consistently communicates this requirement to districts and schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students with disabilities(SWD), policies state that all students with disabilities in the State, including students with disabilities publicly placed in private schools as a means of providing special education and related services, must be included in the assessment system; • For English learners (EL): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policies state that all English learners must be included in the assessment system, unless the State exempts a student who has attended schools in the U.S. for less than 12 months from one administration of its reading/ language arts assessment; ○ If the State administers native language assessments, the State requires English learners to be assessed in reading/language arts in English if they have been enrolled in U.S. schools for three or more consecutive years, except if a district determines, on a case-by-case basis, that native language assessments would yield more accurate and reliable information, the district may assess a student with native language assessments for a period not to exceed two additional consecutive years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #133 (page 2): “All students must be provided the opportunity to participate in the state testing program.” • Evidence #134 (page 21/505):”Public agencies must develop and implement procedures to ensure that every child with a disability is provided the opportunity to participate in the same state and districtwide assessments as his or her nondisabled peers. The IEP Team must also determine appropriate accommodations, if necessary, for the child’s participation.” • Evidence #135 (page 14): One of the System ESL Coordinator responsibilities is to ensure “that all students receiving ESL services participate in the student assessment program.” • Evidence #136 (page 1): “Alabama requires all students to participate in the Alabama Student Assessment Program. Specific information regarding participation for students of special populations can be found in this manual. All students must be included to the fullest extent possible in all assessments and have their results included in the state accountability system. This required participation is supported by federal legislation.” • Evidence #137 (page 2) indicates that English learners within their first 12 months in the U.S. may be exempted from participation in the reading/language arts assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clear from the documentation provided that the State requires all students to be included in the assessment system. This requirement is communicated to districts and schools through memos from the superintendent and the test administration handbook. • Alabama’s State Superintendent also released guidance to districts and schools about parents that do not want their children to take required assessments (the State does not have a policy that allows for parent opt-out and makes clear that non-participating students will still be counted in participation rates). • Evidence shows that the State has policies for including students with disabilities and ELs in the assessment system. Alabama does allow for newly arrived ELs to be exempted from one administration of the reading/language arts assessment. <p>Alabama states in the narrative accompanying this section that it does not provide assessments in any language other than English.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
Section 1.4 Summary Statement-REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY		
x No additional evidence is required		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>1.5 – Participation Data</p> <p>The State’s participation data show that all students, disaggregated by student group and assessment type, are included in the State’s assessment system. In addition, if the State administers end-of-course assessments for high school students, the State has procedures in place for ensuring that each student is tested and counted in the calculation of participation rates on each required assessment and provides the corresponding data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #140 shows how participation rates would be calculated, but doesn’t provide any actual data. • Evidence #141 shows overall ACT Aspire participation rate data by grade and subject for grades 3-8 in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science. However, it is not disaggregated by subgroup. • Evidence #142 only shows the percentage of the overall student population assessed on the alternate assessment, not what percentage of students with disabilities in each subgroup were tested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama provided data showing overall participation (by grade level and by subject) for both the general and alternate assessment (separated by assessment). The tables also include information about the percentage of students performing at each level of the assessment. • However, the following information was not included in Alabama’s evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participation rate data for student subgroups for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science for both general (ACT Aspire) and alternate assessments. ○ Student counts (corresponding to participation rates) to show that each student is tested and counted. ○ Overall participation rates (aggregating participation on the general and alternate assessments) at each grade level and for all subjects, by subgroup.
<p>Section 1.5 Summary Statement-REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY</p>		
<p>Participation data from SY 2015-2015 that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Participation rate data <i>disaggregated by student subgroup</i> for reading/language arts, mathematics, and science for both ACT Aspire and alternate assessments. Evidence #141 and #142 only show participation rates at the “all students” level for each grade and subject for ACT Aspire and alternate assessments. 2) <i>Student counts</i> that correspond to the participation rate data to show that each student is tested and counted. Evidence #141 and #142 provide percentages, but no information about the numbers of students tested. 3) <i>Overall participation rate data</i> – taking into account combined participation on the ACT Aspire and alternate assessments. Evidence #141 and #142 show participation rates separated out by type of assessment (general or alternate). 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OPERATIONS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.1 – Test Design and Development</p> <p>The State’s test design and test development process is well-suited for the content, is technically sound, aligns the assessments to the full range of the State’s academic content standards, and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement(s) of the purposes of the assessments and the intended interpretations and uses of results; • Test blueprints that describe the structure of each assessment in sufficient detail to support the development of assessments that are technically sound, measure the full range of the State’s grade-level academic content standards, and support the intended interpretations and uses of the results; • Processes to ensure that each assessment is tailored to the knowledge and skills included in the State’s academic content standards, reflects appropriate inclusion of challenging content, and requires complex demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills (i.e., higher-order thinking skills); • If the State administers computer-adaptive assessments, the item pool and item selection procedures adequately support the test design. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[1]: Fordham Institute, “Evaluating the Content and Quality of Next Generation Assessments.” The independent alignment study evaluated the alignment of English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments to the Common Core State Standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methodology (pp. 31-40). ○ English/language arts findings (pp. 41-53). ○ Mathematics findings (pp. 54-63). • Evidence #[2]: ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards (p. 4). ○ Alignment to college readiness standards (p. 5). • Evidence #[3]: Draft Alignment ACT Aspire Science to Next Generation Science Standards (Draft dated 3/29/2016). • Evidence #[4]: How ACT Assessments Align with State College and Career Readiness Standards (pp. 2-3 discuss alignment to the Common Core State Standards). <p>Statement of claims and intended interpretations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1 for the statement of the 	<p>A link cannot be made with full certainty that the ACT processes are tailored to the knowledge and skills included in AL Course of Study reflect appropriate inclusion of challenging content and require complex demonstrations or application of knowledge and skills (i.e., higher-order thinking skills).</p> <p>The Fordham Report is not a glowing recommendation of the alignment of the ACT Aspire assessment series to the CCSS. It was the lowest of the four assessments reviewed. It received a Limited/Uneven match in both mathematics content and ELA content.</p> <p>On pages 6 and 7 of the AL Submission Index there is mention of changes to the AL Course of Study in ELA and Mathematics that were either moved to different grade spans or the addition of new content standards. Were the changes from the CCSS sufficient to warrant the need for supplemental items to be added to the ACT Aspire Assessments?</p> <p>Page 17 of the AL Submission Index states that many of the procedures used in the development process for ACT Aspire are the same as those used for the ACT and that it’ll be like that “until more suitable materials are prepared explicitly for ACT Aspire.” That seems like an inadequate response.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the test blueprints</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>principal and secondary claims, interpretations and uses of the ACT Aspire battery (see pp. 6-7).</p> <p>Test blueprints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ English Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content description (pp. 17-18). ▪ Points and proportion of points by item type (Table 3, p. 18). ▪ Points and proportion of points by content category (Table 4, p. 18). ▪ Percentage of points by depth of knowledge (Table 5, p. 19). ○ Reading Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content description (pp. 19-20). ▪ Points and proportion of points by item type (Table 6, p. 20). ▪ Points and proportion of points by content category (Table 7, p. 21). ▪ Items by passage type (Table 8, p. 21). ▪ Percentage of points by depth of knowledge (Table 9, p. 21). ▪ Text complexity (p. 22). ○ Writing Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content description (pp. 23-24). ▪ Rubric (pp. 24-25). ▪ Points by content category (Table 11, p. 25). ○ Mathematics Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content description (pp. 25-26). ▪ Points and proportion of points by item type (Table 12, p. 27). 	<p>“measure the full range of Alabama’s grade-level academic content standards.”</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Points by content category (Table 13, p. 28). ▪ Percentage of points by depth of knowledge (Table 14, p. 29). ○ Science Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content description (pp. 29-30). ▪ Points and proportion of points by item type (Table 15, p. 30). ▪ Points and proportion of points by domain (Table 16, p. 31). ▪ Percentage of points by depth of knowledge (Table 17, p. 31). ▪ Stimulus formats ○ General design elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construct coherence (see pp. 8-9) and Appendix B. ▪ Item types (p. 9). ▪ Depth of knowledge and cognitive complexity (p. 9). <p>Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Test development process (pp. 8-15). ○ ACT Aspire and standards (pp. 4-5). • Evidence #[5]: National Curriculum Survey. Figure 1 illustrates different processes and sources of evidence used to inform ACT Aspire test blueprints (p. 2, Figure 1). 	
Section 2.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> X_ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the test design, test development process, and assessments are well suited for Alabama’s Course of Study in ELA, mathematics and science, and are technically sound and aligned to the full range of Alabama’s academic content standards. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.2 – Item Development</p> <p>The State uses reasonable and technically sound procedures to develop and select items to assess student achievement based on the State’s academic content standards in terms of content and cognitive process, including higher-order thinking skills.</p>	<p>General item development procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description of item writer qualifications (p. 13). ○ Information about item development (p. 14). • Evidence #[6]: ACT Item Quality Rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This rubric provides for a standard baseline of quality across content areas. • Evidence #[7]: ACT Stimulus Quality Rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This rubric provides for a standard baseline of quality for stimulus material across content areas. It is used in conjunction with other rubrics and guidelines for assessing stimulus complexity (e.g., ELA Text Complexity Rubrics). <p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[8]: Forms Construction Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statistical reviews (Sections 2.1, 2.2, p. 2-1). ○ Item reviews (Sections 3.2, 3.2.4a, 3.2.4b, pp. 2-2 to 2-3). ○ Form specifications (Section 4.0, p. 2-6). ○ Item/Passage mix on a form (Sections 5.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, pp. 2-8 to 2-9). ○ Reviews and review elements (sections 9.0, 9.1.1, 9.1.2, 9.1.3, 9.1.4, 9.3.2, 9.3.3, 9.4, 9.4.1, pp. 2-15 to 2-17). <p>Subject-specific item development and selection procedures:</p>	<p>AL provided evidence related to ACT item development process. However, it is not clear how AL’s Course of Study is reflected in the item development process.</p> <p>Peers noticed in Evidence #12 on page 4 the insertion under B: “please note that 0-2 cr tasks are no longer included in our test specifications.” However, in the next statement there is a reference to 0-2 point scale.</p> <p>Page 21 of AL’s Submission Index states: “that the forms (sic) Construction Guide for the ACT are (sic) currently used for ACT Aspire while a new ACT Aspire-specific version is being developed.” This guide is dated 2008.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p><i>ACT Stimulus and Item Development Guides.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[9]: English Test Item Writer’s Guide Grades 3-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General ACT processes for developing high-quality, passage-based ELA items (pp. 4-11). ○ Overview of item taxonomy and task models (pp. 12-23). Examples of individual item specifications/task models (see “ORG” item category: Organization, Unity, and Cohesion, pp. 35-50). • Evidence #[10]: ACT English Essay Writer’s Guide Grades 3-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidelines for essay writers (pp. 4-8) • Evidence #[11]: ACT Reading Test Item Writer’s Guide Grades 3-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General ACT processes for developing high-quality, passage-based ELA items (pp. 1-8). Overview of item task models (pp. 10-13). ○ Examples of individual item specifications (see “IDT” item category: Central Ideas, Themes, and Summaries, pp. 20-24). ○ Technology Enhanced Items (pp. 63-65) • Evidence #[12]: ACT Reading Constructed Response Guidelines Grades 3-10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of ACT Aspire Reading CR items (pp. 2-5) ○ Reading CR Task Types (pp. 5-9) ○ Task model templates (pp. 15-31) • Evidence #[13]: ACT Reading Passage Selection Guide 	

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidelines for selecting passages (pp. 3-7) ○ Exemplar passages at different complexity levels (pp. 9-22) ○ ACT Qualitative Text Complexity Rubrics (Appendix, pp. 24-26) ● Evidence #[14]: ACT Text Complexity Evaluation Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describes process used by ELA TD to ensure reading passages have an appropriate balance of complexity characteristics for the grade and assessment targets. ● Evidence #[15]: Item Writer’s Guide–Mathematics–ACT and ACT Aspire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General ACT processes for developing high-quality items (pp. 2-8). ○ Content and cognitive categories (pp. 5-6). ○ Calculators (p. 8). ○ Sample items (p. 8). ○ Item Quality Descriptors (p. 9). ● Evidence #[16]: ACT Aspire Science Item Writer’s Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview of ACT Aspire Science Tests (pp. 2-3). ○ Passage formats (pp. 3-9). ○ Overview of item and depth of knowledge classification categories (pp. 10-11). ○ General guidelines (pp. 13-19). <p>Example of assignments provided to item writers re. item specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[17]: Item Writer Assignments. 	<p>Evidence #19 and Evidence #18: ELA and science test development content specialist appear to have appropriate credentials related to years of test development in the content area as well as teaching experience. Is there similar information for mathematics test development content specialists?</p> <p>However, there is no mention that the content specialist item developers have experience teaching students with disabilities and English learners.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>Example assignment given to ELA Item Writers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sample reading assignment ○ Sample English assignment <p>Qualifications of ACT Test Development Content Specialists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[18]: See “Science Content Experience and Degrees,” Excel file ● Evidence #[19]: “ELA Content Specialist Overview” 	
Section 2.2 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AL must provide evidence of consideration of AL’s Course of Study in the development of the ACT Aspire. No matter how high the quality of the writing development process, the requirements of section 2.2 cannot be met without considering AL’s Course of Study in the development of items. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.3 – Test Administration</p> <p>The State implements policies and procedures for standardized test administration, specifically the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has established and communicates to educators clear, thorough and consistent standardized procedures for the administration of its assessments, including administration with accommodations; • Has established procedures to ensure that all individuals responsible for administering the State’s general and alternate assessments receive training on the State’s established procedures for the administration of its assessments; • If the State administers technology-based assessments, the State has defined technology and other related requirements, included technology-based test administration in its standardized procedures for test administration, and established contingency plans to address possible technology challenges during test administration. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column —all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [135] <i>Alabama Student Assessment Program Handbook for Test Administration</i> (pp.2-49) • Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General policies (pp. 2-12). ○ Test guidelines for paper testing (pp. 13-17). ○ Test guidelines for online testing (pp. 23-25). • Evidence #[21]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Online Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General policies (pp. 2-3). ○ Guidelines administration (pp. 4-11). ○ Test administration procedures (pp. 12-13). ○ After testing (p. 32). • Evidence #[22]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Paper Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General policies (pp. 2-3). ○ Guidelines administration (pp. 4-110). ○ Test administration procedures (p. 11). ○ After testing (p. 32). <p>Technology Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[23]: ACT Aspire Technical Readiness Manual provides information to ensure technology is functioning appropriately prior to testing. 	<p>AL submitted sufficient evidence.</p> <p>AL did not submit a Test Administration Manual (TAM) for 2014-15. The submitted 2015-16 TAM defines roles and responsibilities, required tasks before, during, after testing; test security. AL provided written assurance to the Department that there were minimal changes in the TAM from 2014-15 to 2015-16 test years.</p> <p>A test irregularities form is included in the Supervisor Manual, p. 33, as well as evidence of seeking legal consequences.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction for computer-based testing provides background on allowable devices (p. 4). ○ List of the computer-based testing components and the manual provides more detail for each component (p. 5). ○ Contingency plan (pp. 85-86). ● Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information about technical requirements (pp. 23-24). Training: Evidence #[24]: Online Tutorials actaspire.tms.pearson.com <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Houses a collection of training videos including pre-test tech readiness, assessment preparation, assessment administration, post assessment steps, and reporting and data usage. 	
Section 2.3 Summary Statement		
__X_ No additional evidence is required.		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY	Evidence —REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY(Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence — REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY
<p>2.4 – Monitoring Test Administration</p> <p>The State adequately monitors the administration of its State assessments to ensure that standardized test administration procedures are implemented with fidelity across districts and schools.</p>	<p>_____ policies and procedures apply to all grade-level and AA-AAAS in all subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #20, #21, and #22 are ACT Aspire manuals that provide policies and test guidelines for assessment administration and outline the role of staff in the room during the assessment. • Evidence #135 (page 35) includes guidelines for monitoring and monitor responsibilities. • Evidence #146 (all pages) provides an overview of guidelines for monitoring State assessments and observation forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State provided mostly high-level information about how the State monitors assessment administration (more information was provided about expectations for LEA monitoring of assessment administration). • It isn't clear whether the monitoring processes are intended for administration of the general assessment only or also for administration of the alternate assessment. • Evidence #146 was a guide for spring 2016 test administration.
Section 2.4 Summary Statement—REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT STAFF ONLY		
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama should clarify whether the monitoring procedures outlined in evidence #135 and #146 also apply to the alternate assessments. • If available, test manuals (perhaps something equivalent to what the State provided as evidence for ACT Aspire) for the alternate assessment. • Alabama should clarify whether the monitoring guide provided for the SY 2015-2016 administration of assessments is the same as the monitoring guide used for SY 2014-2015. If there were significant differences between the processes and expectations outlined in the SY 2015-2016 manual and the processes and expectations applied in SY 2014-2015, Alabama should describe these difference. • Further description of how the State monitors test administration. Although evidence #135 and #146 provide some information, it would be helpful to understand, for example: the State's process for selecting which districts and schools will be monitored by SEA staff; cycle for reaching schools and districts across the State; schedules for monitoring; monitors' roles and responsibilities of key personnel; summary of the results of the State's monitoring for SY 2014-2015 test administration. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.5 – Test Security</p> <p>The State has implemented and documented an appropriate set of policies and procedures to prevent test irregularities and ensure the integrity of test results through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of any assessment irregularities, including maintaining the security of test materials, proper test preparation guidelines and administration procedures, incident-reporting procedures, consequences for confirmed violations of test security, and requirements for annual training at the district and school levels for all individuals involved in test administration; • Detection of test irregularities; • Remediation following any test security incidents involving any of the State’s assessments; • Investigation of alleged or factual test irregularities. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column for both grade-level and AA-AAAS</p> <p>Prevention: Information about <u>storage</u>, <u>administration</u>, and <u>return</u> of test materials can be found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Receipt and security of paper materials (p. 13). ○ Storage and return of paper materials (pp. 14-17). ○ Online testing guidelines (p. 25). ○ Desirable testing conditions (pp. 16 and 25). • Evidence #[21]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Online Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seating arrangements and examinee spacing (pp. 10-11). ○ Test administration procedures and student authorization tickets (pp. 12-13). ○ Unauthorized testing aids (p. 5). • Evidence #[22]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Paper Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Desirable testing conditions (pp. 9-10). ○ Instructions for after testing (p. 32). ○ Unauthorized testing aids (p. 4). • Evidence #[23]: ACT Aspire Technical Readiness Manual includes information about the secure platform used for computer-based testing. 	<p>Adequate evidence is provided.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ List of the computer-based testing components and the manual provides more detail for each component (p. 5). ● Evidence # [133]: State Board of Education State Department of Education Administrative Code Chapter 290-4-2 (pp. 8-11) ● Evidence # [147]: District Test Security Plan <p>Information about <u>prohibited behaviors</u> and how to <u>report irregularities</u> is included in multiple publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prohibited behaviors (p. 10). ○ Reporting irregularities (pp. 11). ● Evidence #[21]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Online Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prohibited behaviors (p. 7). ○ Reporting irregularities (p. 9). ● Evidence #[22]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Paper Summative Testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prohibited behaviors (p. 7). ○ Reporting irregularities (p. 8). <p>Information about the <u>security agreement</u> for district and school officials is included on the front cover in multiple publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual (front cover). ● Evidence #[21]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Online Summative Testing (front cover). 	

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>In all investigations, Alabama cooperates with ACT Aspire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual (p. 3). • Evidence #[21]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Online Summative Testing (p. 3). • Evidence #[22]: ACT Aspire Room Supervisor Manual for Paper Summative Testing (p. 3). • Evidence # [135]: <i>Alabama Student Assessment Program Handbook for Test Administration</i> (p. 44) • Evidence #[149]: Sample settlement agreements regarding test security violations and public reports of certificate invalidations and probations (pp. 1,4, 10,12, 13, 16, and 23) 	
Section 2.5 Summary Statement		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required.		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>2.6 – Systems for Protecting Data Integrity and Privacy</p> <p>The State has policies and procedures in place to protect the integrity and confidentiality of its test materials, test-related data, and personally identifiable information, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect the integrity of its test materials and related data in test development, administration, and storage and use of results; • To secure student-level assessment data and protect student privacy and confidentiality, including guidelines for districts and schools; • To protect personally identifiable information about any individual student in reporting, including defining the minimum number of students necessary to allow reporting of scores for all students and student groups. 	<p>Testing Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[20]: ACT Aspire Test Coordinator Manual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information about securing test materials before, during, and after testing and secure distribution of paper test materials (pp. 13-17). • Evidence #[23]: ACT Aspire Technical Readiness Manual includes information about the secure platform used for computer-based testing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ List of the computer-based testing components and the manual provides more detail for each component (p. 5). • Evidence #[25]: ACT Aspire Portal Users Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information about the role of the test administration, which includes managing and monitoring testing (p. 6). <p>Test-related data and personally identifiable information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[26]: ACT Aspire LLC Customer Privacy Policy • Evidence #[27]: ACT Aspire LLC Data Usage Policy • Evidence #[28]: ACT Information Security Program Summary. The document is for internal ACT staff to protect test materials, test-related data, and personally identifiable information. • Evidence #[29]: Pearson Information Security Management Policy. 	<p>Peers were unable to locate evidence of a policy or procedure regarding the minimum number of students necessary to allow reporting of scores for all students and student groups. However, one of the prototype ACT Aspire reports indicates that no data are reported for 4 or fewer students. Is this the policy for AL?</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[150]: October 10, 2013, Minutes of Alabama State Board of Education Approving Data Use and Governance Policy (pp. 1-3) • Evidence #[151]: November 14, 2013, Minutes of Alabama State Board of Education Appointing Chief State Data Privacy Officer (p. 2) • Evidence #[152]: Policy: Data Use and Governance in Alabama • Evidence #[153]: Alabama Department of Education Third Party Routine Data Send Feeds (p.1) • Evidence #[154]: Memos Regarding Data Governance Meetings (February 6,2014, March 26, 2015, and August 4, 2015) <p>Evidence # [155]: Q & A for Alabama State-Level Student Data Collection</p>	
Section 2.6 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama’s policy for the minimum number of students necessary to allow reporting of scores for all students and student groups (N size). 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 3: TECHNICAL QUALITY – VALIDITY

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content</p> <p>The State has documented adequate overall validity evidence for its assessments, and the State’s validity evidence includes evidence that the State’s assessments measure the knowledge and skills specified in the State’s academic content standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of adequate alignment between the State’s assessments and the academic content standards the assessments are designed to measure in terms of content (i.e., knowledge and process), the full range of the State’s academic content standards, balance of content, and cognitive complexity; • If the State administers alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, the assessments show adequate linkage to the State’s academic content standards in terms of content match (i.e., no unrelated content) and the breadth of content and cognitive complexity determined in test design to be appropriate for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[1]: Fordham Institute, “Evaluating the Content and Quality of Next Generation Assessments.” The independent alignment study evaluated the alignment of English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments in grades 5 and 8 to the Common Core State Standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Methodology (pp. 31-40). ○ English/language arts findings (pp. 41-53). ○ Mathematics findings (pp. 54-63). • Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alignment to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards (p. 4). ○ Alignment to the Next Generation Science Standards (p. 5) ○ Alignment to college readiness standards (p. 5) • Evidence #[4]: <i>How ACT Assessments Align with State College and Career Readiness Standards</i> (pp. 2-3 discuss alignment to the Common Core State Standards). <p>Validity</p>	<p>Evidence #1, The Fordham report, included only 2 grades (5 and 8); the rating was “limited/uneven match” for ELA and mathematics content. Additionally, the Fordham report did not address the revised AL Course of Study. Therefore, the submitted evidence for alignment is insufficient.</p> <p>No evidence was submitted that there was a review of listening and speaking content standards. The peers understand that the Department approved AL’s request for a waiver to assess speaking and listening.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[30]: <i>Validity Argument</i>. Summarizes validity evidence. • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i>. The technical bulletin for the ACT Aspire Summative Assessment includes a chapter on Validity Evidence, which provides descriptions of studies providing validity evidence for the use and interpretation of ACT Aspire Summative Assessment test scores (Chapter 9, pp. 103-135). <p>ACT Aspire ELA Content Review Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[32]: Reading English Content Review Invitation • Evidence #[33]: Reading Content Review Panel Guidelines • Evidence #[34]: Grade 5 Reading Unit Review Sample • Evidence #[35]: Grade 8 English Discrete Set 1 Review Sample • Evidence #[36]: Reading Item Review General Observations Sample 	
Section 3.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL’s plan to conduct an alignment study of content and cognitive process for all tested levels of the ACT Aspire and the AL Course of Study. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that its assessments tap the intended cognitive processes appropriate for each grade level as represented in the State’s academic content standards.</p>	<p>Expert judgment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information about item reviews (pp. 13-14). • Evidence #[8]: <i>Forms Construction Guide</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidelines and qualifications for review panels (pp. 2.15-2.19 and Appendix A). ○ Review of field test items (Section 3.2, pp. 2.2-2.5). <p>Cognitive rigor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[37]: ACT Aspire Summative Overview-IRC <p>Accessibility of computer-based platform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[38]: <i>Aspire/TestNav 8 Tablet Usability Study</i> (May 2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall findings (p. 1-2). • Evidence #[39]: <i>Aspire/TestNav 8 Tablet Usability Study</i> (July 2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall findings (pp. 1-2). • Evidence #[40]: <i>Designing a Test Delivery System for the Non-Sighted</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive summary (pp. 3-4). • Evidence #[41]: <i>Low Vision Cog Labs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendations for computer-based platform from cognitive labs (pp. 3-4). • Evidence #[42]: <i>Mobile Device Accessibility Features</i> 	<p>There is no evidence of adequate validity because there is not an analysis of the AL Course of Study. For the two grades studied, the Fordham report noted “good” depth rating. It is unknown what the depth rating is for the other five tested grades.</p>
<p>Section 3.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As stated in 3.1 above, AL’s plan to conduct an alignment study of content and cognitive process for all tested levels of the ACT Aspire and the AL Course of Study. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of its assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s academic content standards on which the intended interpretations and uses of results are based.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Subscore structures: Evidence #[43]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Manual</i> (draft)</p> <p>Chapter 19: ACT Aspire Validity, Section of Evidence Regarding Internal Structure.</p>	<p>#43, p. 151: ACT noted some possible multi dimensionality issues at grades 4 and 6 in mathematics. What is Alabama’s plan to address these issues?</p>
<p>Section 3.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama’s plan to address the multidimensionality issues at grades 4 and 6 in mathematics. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>3.4 – Validity Based on Relationships with Other Variables</p> <p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the State’s assessment scores are related as expected with other variables.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> (2014), Chapter 9: ACT Aspire Validity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section of <i>Evidence Regarding Relationships with Conceptually Related Constructs</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study 1: Comparison of grade 8 ACT Aspire scale scores to ACT Explore scores and early high school ACT Aspire scores to ACT Plan scores (pp. 104-118). ▪ Study 2: Comparison of grades 3-8 ACT Aspire scores to scores on a state assessment. (pp. 119-134). • Evidence #[44]: ACT Aspire Scores Associate with AP Exam Success: A Preliminary Linkage. • Evidence #[45]: How Do Grade 10 ACT Aspire Scores Relate to Grade 11 ACT Scores? 	<p>Evidence #31, p. 119: The evidence provided shows some anomalies. What is Alabama’s plan to study additional external variables to document validity?</p>
<p>Section 3.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alabama’s plan to study additional external variables to document validity. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY - OTHER

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.1 – Reliability</p> <p>The State has documented adequate reliability evidence for its assessments for the following measures of reliability for the State’s student population overall and each student group and, if the State’s assessments are implemented in multiple States, for the assessment overall and each student group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test reliability of the State’s assessments estimated for its student population; • Overall and conditional standard error of measurement of the State’s assessments; • Consistency and accuracy of estimates in categorical classification decisions for the cut scores and achievement levels based on the assessment results; • For computer-adaptive tests, evidence that the assessments produce test forms with adequately precise estimates of a student’s achievement. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Overall reliability, including standard error of measurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #2</i>. The technical bulletin includes a chapter on reliability evidence, (Chapter 8, pp. 97-64). Reliability evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal consistency reliabilities (Tables 8.1 and 8.2, pp. 98-99). ○ Standard errors of measurement and the conditional standard errors of measurement (pp. 26-29). <p>Classification consistency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[46]: Classification consistency analysis for Alabama. <p>Rater consistency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Writing test correlations by trait (p. 100). • Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> <p>Scoring constructed-response tasks (pp. 33-36).</p>	<p>AL did provide reliability, CSEM, and decision consistency for the total test (ACT national sample).</p> <p>AL did not provide evidence of measures of reliability and CSEMs for AL student population overall and for each AL student group.</p> <p>AL also provided results of decision consistency for AL total student population, but not for subgroups.</p> <p>It is understood that AL will submit data for high school ELA, mathematics and science from the spring 2016 administration.</p> <p>Peers request more information about the reliability issues with the mathematics grades 4 and 5 and get more details about “adjusting the expected difficulty level of the form, increasing test length, and increasing test time limits.” [page 46 of AL Submission Index]</p>
<p>Section 4.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> </u>X_ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of reliability and CSEMs for AL student population overall and for each AL student group. • The plan to adjust the expected difficulty level of the forms, increase test length, and increase test time limits to address the reliability issues cited by ACT in mathematics, grades 4 and 5. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility</p> <p>The State has taken reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in the design, development and analysis of its assessments.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Accessibility: General information about accessibility features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[47]: <i>ACT Aspire Accessibility User’s Guide:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACT Aspire Accessibility System: Levels of Support (pp. 1-8). ○ Accessibility Supports Tables (pp. 9-15). ○ Choosing Accessibility Supports & Worksheet (pp. 20-25 and Appendix A). ○ Administration Procedures for Accessibility Supports (pp. 28-38). ○ General Response Dictation and Scribing Procedures (Appendix B.) ○ Guidelines for Sign Language Interpretation (Appendix C). ○ Approved Bilingual Dictionaries (Appendix D). ○ Procedures for Local Delivery of Read Aloud Support (Appendix E). <p>Accessibility as part of item and test development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[48]: Sample Aspire Item Accessibility-Construct Review Feature Mapping. Provides a sample feature mapping process chart that is created for every item and every form for all audio scripted ACT Aspire items. Includes targeted learner population and content metadata targets for each item. (See Grade 3 	<p>The evidence provided is sufficient and comprehensive.</p> <p>Evidence #47, p. 49 - 50: states that, “Student responses may not be interpreted from ASL or SEE or from any other form of sign for the purpose of recording the student answer. Dictation and scribing are permitted only if the English language is used and if response dictation is also recorded in the student’s PNP.” However, if the student can’t speak or write, how does a student who uses ASL or SEE communicate a response? Is this an example of an accommodation that could be requested, as stated in Evidence #172, which states the process to individually review and allow exceptional requests for a small number of students who require accommodations beyond those routinely allowed?</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>for an example.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[49]: ACT Item Accessibility Evaluation Rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Item Features (p. 1). ○ Passage or item stimulus (p. 2). ○ Item stem (p. 3). ○ Answer choice (p. 4). ○ Visuals (p. 5). ○ Page layout (p. 7). <p>Information about <u>translation</u> can be found in the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[50]: Framework for Translation Accessibility. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General decision matrix for frequently requested ELL supports (p. 2). ○ Process for translating tests (p. 4). • Evidence #[51]: <i>ACT Aspire Translation Procedure</i>. Describes Spanish translation procedures a form of the ACT Aspire computer-based version. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key experts (pp. 1-2). ○ Process (pp. 2-6). ○ Recommendations for improvement (pp. 6-7). <p>Information about <u>audio scripting</u> can be found in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[52]: ACT Audio Scripting Guidelines for STEM Content • Evidence #[53]: ACT Audio Scripting Guidelines for Writing Content. <p><u>Usability studies</u> informed by examinees both with and without disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[38]: <i>Aspire/TestNav 8 Tablet</i> 	<p>The peers noted AL’s statement that only English test administration is permitted, Evidence #136. Therefore, why are Evidence # 50 and 51 submitted for peer review?</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

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Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Usability Study</i> (May 2013)</p> <p>The peers noted Clarify which evidence submitted is consistent with Alabama’s assessment administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall findings (p. 1-2). ● Evidence #[39]: <i>Aspire/TestNav 8 Tablet Usability Study</i> (July 2013) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overall findings (pp. 1-2). ● Evidence #[40]: Designing a Test Delivery System for the Non-Sighted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive summary (pp. 3-4). ● Evidence #[41]: Low Vision Cog Labs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendations for computer-based platform from cognitive labs (pp. 3-4). <p>Surveys of assessment accommodations regarding blind examinees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[54]: Results for Assessment Accommodations Survey: Elementary and Middle School Version. ● Evidence #[55]: Results for Assessment Accommodations Survey: High School Version. ● Evidence #[42]: Mobile Device Accessibility Features <p><u>English Language Learners (ELL)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[56]: National consultants for English Language Learners ● Evidence #[57]: ELL Fairness Presentation—Part 1 for item developers ● Evidence #[58]: ELL Fairness Presentation—Part 2 for item developers ● Evidence #[47]: <i>ACT Aspire Accessibility</i> 	

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Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p><i>User's Guide</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appendix D: Approved Bilingual Dictionaries. <p>Code of Fair Testing Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> (inside cover). <p>Item writers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[9]: <i>English Test Item Writer's Guide Grades 3-10</i> (p. 8). ● Evidence #[10]: <i>ACT English Essay Writer's Guide Grades 3-10</i> (pp. 7-8). ● Evidence #[11]: <i>ACT Reading Test Item Writer's Guide Grades 3-10</i>(p. 5). ● Evidence #[12]: <i>ACT Reading Constructed Response Guidelines Grades 3-10</i> (p. 4). ● Evidence #[13]: <i>ACT Reading Passage Selection Guide</i> (p. 6). ● Evidence #[15]: <i>Item Writer's Guide– Mathematics–ACT and ACT Aspire</i> (pp. 3-4). ● Evidence #[16]: <i>ACT Aspire Science Item Writer's Guide</i> (p. 13). <p>Fairness Reviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal and external item reviews for content and fairness (p. 14). ● Evidence #[59]: <i>ACT Fairness Review Consultant's Guide</i> 	
Section 4.2 Summary Statement		
__X__ No additional evidence is required .		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.3 – Full Performance Continuum</p> <p>The State has ensured that each assessment provides an adequately precise estimate of student performance across the full performance continuum, including for high- and low-achieving students.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Conditional Standard Error of Measurement plots:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 1: ACT Aspire Score Scale, section of Results – Evaluating the Constant CSEM Property (pp.26-29) 	<p>AL only provided evidence at the national level and not for AL student population.</p>
<p>Section 4.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSEM for the AL student population as stated in section 4.1. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.4 – Scoring</p> <p>The State has established and documented standardized scoring procedures and protocols for its assessments that are designed to produce reliable results, facilitate valid score interpretations, and report assessment results in terms of the State’s academic achievement standards.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[2]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACT Aspire Scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English Language Arts (p. 2). ▪ Mathematics (p.2). ▪ Science (p.3). ▪ Additional ACT Aspire Scores (p.3). ○ Chapter 33: Scoring Constructed-Response Tasks (p. 34) • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 1: ACT Aspire Score Scale (pp. 45-74) ○ Chapter 11: ACT Aspire Equating (pp. 174-175) 	<p>Peers were unable to locate evidence for the observed inter-rater reliability for 2015 for constructed response scoring. It is not clear if procedures for scoring the writing assessment are the same as for other constructed response items.</p> <p>AL’s description of the procedures and protocols for scoring constructed response items do not provide either the criteria for adequacy, e.g., inter-rater reliability, or the observed quality. Are there different criteria for items with different numbers of score points?</p> <p>There is no evidence linking the ACT Aspire score scale to the AL Course of Study. How does this scale support the interpretation of student results in relation to the AL Course of Study?</p>
<p>Section 4.4 Summary Statement</p> <p><u> </u>X_ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence linking the ACT Aspire score scale to the AL Course of Study and how this scale supports the interpretation of student results in relation to the AL Course of Study. • The observed inter-rater reliability for 2015 constructed-response scoring and a description of the procedures for scoring the writing assessment, including the observed inter-rater reliability for 2015, if these are different than scoring procedures for constructed-response items. • Evidence of the criteria for scoring items that have different numbers of score points. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.5 – Multiple Assessment Forms</p> <p>If the State administers multiple forms within a content area and grade level, within or across school years, the State ensures that all forms adequately represent the State’s academic content standards and yield consistent score interpretations such that the forms are comparable within and across school years.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Construction of multiple forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[8]: <i>Forms Construction Guide</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidelines and qualifications for review panels (pp. 2.15-2.19 and Appendix A). ○ Review of field test items (Section 3.2, pp. 2.2-2.5). ○ Selection of items for forms (Section 4, p. 2.6-2.7). ○ Guidance about item quality (Section 5, pp. 2.7-2.12). ○ Subject-specific specifications (e.g., for English, Appendix B, section 5-7). <p>Psychometric analyses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 11: ACT Aspire Equating (pp. 174-175). 	<p>The procedures described in evidence #8, written in 2008, do not reference AL Course of Study, Aspire, or CCSS. Alabama has not provided evidence that “all forms adequately represent the State’s academic content standards and yield consistent score interpretations such that the forms are comparable within and across school years.”</p>
<p>Section 4.5 Summary Statement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the ACT Aspire assessment forms adequately represent AL’s Course of Study and yield consistent score interpretations such that the forms are comparable within and across school years. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.6 – Multiple Versions of an Assessment</p> <p>If the State administers assessments in multiple versions within a content area, grade level, or school year, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Followed a design and development process to support comparable interpretations of results for students tested across the versions of the assessments; • Documented adequate evidence of comparability of the meaning and interpretations of the assessment results. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Mode comparability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 10: ACT Aspire Mode Comparability Study (pp. 136-173). <p>Accommodations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[43]: Draft <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Manual</i> Chapter 5, Section 5.3: Accommodations, Open Access, and Embedded Tools. 	<p>AL provided sufficient evidence.</p>
<p>Section 4.6 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required.</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>4.7 – Technical Analysis and Ongoing Maintenance</p> <p>The State has a system for monitoring and maintaining, and improving as needed, the quality of its assessment system, including clear and technically sound criteria for the analyses of all of the assessments in its assessment system (i.e., general assessments and alternate assessments).</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Summative Assessment Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scaling, Chapter 1. ○ Norms, Chapter 3. ○ Reliability, Chapter 8. ○ Validity, Chapter 9. ○ Comparability, Chapter 10. ○ Equating, Chapter 11. <p>Monitoring and Improving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[60]: ACT Technical Advisory Committee description 	<p>Peers were unable to locate evidence. Peers note that further evidence will be included in the ACT Aspire technical manual that describes the processes and procedures to maintain and monitor the testing program, which is due to be published mid-2016. (AL Submission Index, p. 57)</p> <p>AL Submission Index, p. 57 states that ACT Aspire procedures are vetted by the ACT Technical Advisory Committee. Evidence #60 provides a list of TAC members, but no sample agendas, meeting schedules, minutes, presentations, or recommendations made by TAC.</p> <p>The state has not provided evidence of a system for monitoring and maintaining, and improving, as needed, the quality of its assessment system, including clear and technically sound criteria for the analyses of all of the assessments in its assessment system.</p>
<p>Section 4.7 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Aspire technical manual, to be published mid-2016, which describes the processes and procedures to maintain and monitor the assessment system. • Examples of TAC’s recommendations or advice on issues regarding AL’s assessment system. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 5: INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.1 – Procedures for Including Students with Disabilities</p> <p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students with disabilities in the State’s assessment system, including, at a minimum, guidance for individual educational plan (IEP) Teams to inform decisions about student assessments that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clear explanations of the differences between assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards and assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, including any effects of State and local policies on a student’s education resulting from taking an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards; • States that decisions about how to assess students with disabilities must be made by a student’s IEP Team based on each student’s individual needs; • Provides guidelines for determining whether to assess a student on the general assessment without accommodation(s), the general assessment with accommodation(s), or an alternate assessment; • Provides information on accessibility tools and features available to students in general and assessment accommodations available for students with disabilities; • Provides guidance regarding selection of appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities; • Includes instructions that students eligible to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[47]: ACT Aspire Accessibility User’s Guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACT Aspire Accessibility System: Levels of Support (pp. 1-8). ○ Accessibility Supports Tables (pp. 9-15). ○ Choosing Accessibility Supports & Worksheet (pp. 20-25 and Appendix A). ○ Administration Procedures for Accessibility Supports (pp. 28-38). ○ Personal Needs Profile Worksheet (Appendix A). ○ General Response Dictation and Scribing Procedures (Appendix B). ○ Guidelines for Sign Language Interpretation (Appendix C). ○ Approved Bilingual Dictionaries (Appendix D). ○ Procedures for Local Delivery of Read Aloud Support (Appendix E). • Evidence # [136]: <i>Alabama State Department of Education Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures of Students of Special Populations</i>, Updated November 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Policies Guiding the Alabama Student Assessment Program (p.1) ○ Participation of Students of Special Populations (p.1) ○ Content and Instruction (p.1) ○ Students Eligible for Accommodations on State Assessments (p.2) ○ Requirements for Use of Accommodations on State Assessments 	<p>The evidence provides detailed information about accessibility features and accommodations, how to select accommodations, make a personal needs profile, and includes policy statements that all students must participate in state assessments and access general curriculum.</p> <p>Peers were unable to find evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes instructions that students eligible to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA; • Ensures that parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are informed that their student’s achievement will be based on alternate academic achievement standards and of any possible consequences of taking the alternate assessments resulting from district or State policy (e.g., ineligibility for a regular high school diploma if the student does not demonstrate proficiency in the content area on the State’s general assessments)

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are informed that their student’s achievement will be based on alternate academic achievement standards and of any possible consequences of taking the alternate assessments resulting from district or State policy (e.g., ineligibility for a regular high school diploma if the student does not demonstrate proficiency in the content area on the State’s general assessments); The State has procedures in place to ensure that its implementation of alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities promotes student access to the general curriculum. 	<p>(p.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal Access to Grade-level Content (p.4) Learn About Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment (p.5) Description of Accommodations Categories (p.5) Modification vs. Accommodations (p.5) Questions to Guide Accommodation Selection (p.11-12) Accommodations During Instruction (p.13) Accommodations on State Assessments (p.13) Administering State Assessments and Accommodations (p.13) Evaluate and Improve Accommodations Use (p.15) Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodation Use on State Assessments at the School Level (p.15) Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodation Use on State Assessments at the Student Level (p.16) Guidance for Administering Specific Accommodations (p.17) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence # [156]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Decision Chart for 2014-2015 Evidence # [157]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Decision Chart for 2015-2016 Evidence # [158]: Alabama Student Assessment Program IEP Participation 	<p>In Evidence #156: Alabama Student Assessment Program Decision Chart for 2014-2015, the columns for the assessment of grade 8 and 10 students indicate that grade 8 students take ACT Aspire <u>and</u> ACT Explore, and grade 10 students take ACT Plan or alternate assessments for grades 8 and 10. Do the ACT Explore and ACT Plan relate to the ESEA AL assessment system</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	Documentation Form • Evidence # [159]: Alabama Student Assessment Program 504 Participation Documentation Form	or was 2014-15 the last year for ACT Explore and ACT Plan? AL did not submit evidence related to the AA-AAS.
Section 5.1 Summary Statement		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence for 5.1 be reviewed in its entirety when evidence is submitted for AA-AAAS 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.2 – Procedures for including ELs</p> <p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all English learners in public elementary and secondary schools in the State’s assessment system and clearly communicates this information to districts, schools, teachers, and parents, including, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for determining whether an English learner should be assessed with accommodation(s); • Information on accessibility tools and features available to all students and assessment accommodations available for English learners; • Guidance regarding selection of appropriate accommodations for English learners. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column — Addresses general assessments w or w/o accommodations and AA-AAAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[47]: <i>ACT Aspire Accessibility User’s Guide</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview (pp. 1-2). ○ Levels of Support (pp. 3-8). ○ Accessibility Supports (pp. 9-19). ○ Choosing Appropriate Supports for Testing (pp. 20-27). ○ Personal Needs Profile Worksheet (pp. 40-44, Appendix A). ○ Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionaries (pp. 54-65, Appendix D). • Evidence # [136]: <i>Alabama State Department of Education Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures of Students of Special Populations</i>, Updated November 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s Individual English Learner Plan (p.10) ○ Questions to Guide Accommodation Selection (p.11-12) ○ Accommodations During Instruction (p.13) ○ Accommodations on State Assessments (p.13) ○ Administering State Assessments and Accommodations (p.13) ○ Evaluate and Improve Accommodations Use (p.15) 	<p>Sufficient evidence was submitted for this critical element.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="margin-left: 40px;">○ Native Language Interpreter (p.19) • Evidence # [160]: Alabama Student Assessment Program EL Participation Documentation Form • Evidence # [137]: Memo to Superintendents—Update on English Learner Students in Their First 12 Months of Enrollment in U.S. Schools, August 25, 2014 • Evidence # [138]: Memo to Superintendents—Update on English Learner Students in Their First 12 Months of Enrollment in U.S. Schools, August 24, 2015 	
Section 5.2 Summary Statement		
__x_ No additional evidence is required.		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.3 – Accommodations</p> <p>The State makes available appropriate accommodations and ensures that its assessments are accessible to students with disabilities and English learners. Specifically, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that appropriate accommodations are available for students with disabilities (SWD) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and students covered by Section 504; • Ensures that appropriate accommodations are available for English learners (EL); • Has determined that the accommodations it provides (i) are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments, (ii) do not alter the construct being assessed, and (iii) allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations; • Has a process to individually review and allow exceptional requests for a small number of students who require accommodations beyond those routinely allowed. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column — Addresses general assessments w or w/o accommodations and AA-AAAS;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[47]: <i>ACT Aspire Accessibility User’s Guide</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overview (pp. 1-2). ○ Levels of Support (pp. 3-8). ○ Accessibility Supports (pp. 9-19). ○ Choosing Appropriate Supports for Testing (pp. 20-27). ○ Personal Needs Profile Worksheet (pp. 40-44, Appendix A). • Evidence #[48]: <i>Aspire Item Accessibility – Construct Review Feature Mapping.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See Grade 3 for an example. • Evidence #[50]: <i>Framework for Translation Accessibility</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General decision matrix for frequently requested ELL supports (p. 2). ○ Process for translating tests (p. 4). • Evidence # [136]: <i>Alabama State Department of Education Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures of Students of Special Populations, Updated November 2015:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description of Accommodations Categories (p.5) ○ Modification vs. Accommodations (p.5) ○ Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s Individualized Educational Program (p.8) 	<p>Peer reviewers were unable to find evidence of the following component of the critical element:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has determined that the accommodations it provides (i) are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments, (ii) do not alter the construct being assessed, and (iii) allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations.

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s 504 Plan (p.9) ○ Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s Individualized English Learner Plan (p.10) ○ Questions to Guide Accommodation Selection (p.11-12) ○ Accommodations During Instruction (p.13) ○ Accommodations on State Assessments (p.13) ○ Administering State Assessments and Accommodations (p.13) ○ Planning for Test Day (p.13) ○ Evaluate and Improve Accommodations Use (p.15) ○ Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodation Use on State Assessments at the School Level (p.15) ○ Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodation Use on State Assessments at the Student Level (p.16) ○ Guidance for Administering Specific Accommodations (p.17) ○ Remember: Some Supports Should Be Selected Together (p.21) ○ With Other Accommodations Needed Due to the Nature of the Disability or the Level of Language Proficiency (p.21) ○ A List of DOs and DO NOTs for Selecting Accommodations (p.22) 	

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [161]: IEP Accommodations Checklist ACT Aspire • Evidence # [162]: 504 Accommodations Checklist ACT Aspire • Evidence # [163]: EL Accommodations Checklist ACT Aspire • Evidence # [164]: Temporary Medical Emergency Form • Evidence # [165]: Accessibility and Accommodations Quick Guide Chart • Evidence # [166]: Alabama Requirements for the Use of Accessibility Supports for ACT Aspire <p>Evidence # [167]: Power point—Accessibility and Accommodations in Alabama Student Assessment Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [168]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Native Language Interpreter Agreement • Evidence # [169]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Sign Language Interpreter Agreement • Evidence # [170]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Reader Agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [171]: Alabama Student Assessment Program Scribe Agreement • Evidence # [172]: Form Requesting Testing Accommodations Needing ALSDE Approval • Evidence # [135]: <i>Alabama Student Assessment Program Handbook for Test Administration</i> 	

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Superintendent Responsibilities (p.5) ○ System Test Coordinator Responsibilities (p.6) ○ System Special Education Coordinator Responsibilities (p.9) ○ Guidelines for Assessing Students Receiving Special Education Services (p.10) ○ System 504 Coordinator Responsibilities (p. 11) ○ Guidelines for Assessing Students Receiving 504 Services (p.12) ○ System ESL Coordinator Responsibilities (p.13) ○ Guidelines for Assessing the English Learner (p.13) ○ Principal Responsibilities (p.14-15) ○ Building Test Coordinator/Test Supervisor Responsibilities (p.16) ○ Building Test Coordinator/Test Supervisor Checklist (p.17-18) ○ Test Accommodations Coordinator Responsibilities (p.19) ○ Test Administrator/Room Supervisor Responsibilities (p.20) ○ Proctor Responsibilities (p.23) ○ Scribe Responsibilities (p.25) ○ Scribe Checklist (p.26) ○ Reader Responsibilities (p.27) ○ Reader Checklist (p.28) ○ Sign Language Interpreter Responsibilities (p.29) ○ Sign Language Interpreter Checklist (p.30) 	

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Native Language Interpreter Responsibilities (p.31) ○ Native Language Interpreter Checklist (p.31) 	

<p>Section 5.3 Summary Statement</p>
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the accommodations provided (i) are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments, (ii) do not alter the construct being assessed, and (iii) allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations.

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>5.4 – Monitoring Test Administration for Special Populations</p> <p>The State monitors test administration in its districts and schools to ensure that appropriate assessments, with or without appropriate accommodations, are selected for students with disabilities under IDEA, students covered by Section 504, and English learners so that they are appropriately included in assessments and receive accommodations that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with the State’s policies for accommodations; • Appropriate for addressing a student’s disability or language needs for each assessment administered; • Consistent with accommodations provided to the students during instruction and/or practice; • Consistent with the assessment accommodations identified by a student’s IEP Team or 504 team for students with disabilities, or another process for an English learner; • Administered with fidelity to test administration procedures. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column — Addresses general assessments w or w/o accommodations and AA-AAAS;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [135]: <i>Alabama Student Assessment Program Handbook for Test Administration</i> (pp. 4, 32) • Evidence # [136]: <i>Alabama State Department of Education Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures for Students of Special Populations</i> (pp.1-2 and 4-15) • Evidence # [134]: <i>State Board of Education State Department of Education Administrative Code Chapter 290-8-9</i> (pp. 1, 2, 9) • Evidence # [133]: <i>State Board of Education State Department of Education Administrative Code Chapter 290-4-2</i> (p. 2) • Evidence #[173]: Memo to Superintendents—Annual Performance Report Data Reminders, April 9, 2015 • Evidence #[174]: Memo to Superintendents—2013-2014 Local Education Agency Special Education Performance Profile, May 20, 2015 • Evidence #[175]: Memo to Superintendents—Annual Performance Report Data Reminders, March 31, 2016 • Evidence #[146]: Monitoring a State Assessment • Evidence #[176]: <i>Alabama State Department of Education Compliance Monitoring Manual On-Site</i> (pp. 7, 9, 12, 13, and 36) 	<p>Peer reviewers were unable to find evidence that monitoring specifically includes observing if accommodations are administered with fidelity to test administration procedures. Are monitors trained to observe for this and note inappropriate administration of test accommodations as a test irregularity?</p> <p>Evidence #146: Document is dated 2016. Were there significant changes from the 2014-15 test administration?</p> <p>Not clear how many students/schools are monitored, who are the monitors, what findings are and what changes were made based on findings.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
Section 5.4 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that accommodations are administered with fidelity to test administration procedures. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

SECTION 6: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND REPORTING

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students</p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics and in science for all students, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State formally adopted academic achievement standards in the required tested grades and, at its option, also alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; • The State applies its grade-level academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply, with the exception of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to whom alternate academic achievement standards may apply; The State’s academic achievement standards and, as applicable, alternate academic achievement standards, include: (a) At least three levels of achievement, with two for high achievement and a third of lower achievement; (b) descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level; and (c) achievement scores that differentiate among the achievement levels. 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence # [130]: Memo—Assessments, October 28, 2014 • Evidence # [177]: Recommendation of Assessment and Accountability Task Force • Evidence # [178]: Press Release—<i>ACT Assessments Establish New Baseline for Student Achievement</i> (pp. 1-5) • Evidence #[179]: Alabama Benchmark Scores—Achievement Proficiency for Public Reporting • Evidence # [180]: Power Point—ALSDE Assessment Task Force, November 7, 2014 • Evidence # [181]: Power Point—ACT Readiness Benchmarks, November 7, 2014 	<p>Peer reviewers were unable to find evidence of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the task force recommendation regarding achievement standards was formally adopted by the AL BOE. • that Alabama applies its grade-level academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply, with the exception of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to whom alternate academic achievement standards may apply. • the descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level <p>Evidence #179 includes the note “Data for assessments printed in red font are not publicly reported by the office of student assessment.” Evidence #180, slide #5, indicates that English and writing are optional in 2014-2015, writing is an optional assessment and 2015-2016 writing is not included in grades 3-7. Per USED regulation, if writing is included in a state’s standards then it must be assessed in the ESEA/NCLB assessment system. AL needs to resolve this inconsistency with the Department.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
Section 6.1 Summary Statement		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that AL State BOE approved the achievement standards. • Evidence that AL applies its grade-level academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply, with the exception of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to whom alternate academic achievement standards may apply. • Descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.2 – Achievement Standards-Setting</p> <p>The State used a technically sound method and process that involved panelists with appropriate experience and expertise for setting its academic achievement standards and alternate academic achievement standards to ensure they are valid and reliable.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[31]: <i>ACT Aspire Technical Bulletin #2</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACT Readiness Benchmarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grades 8-10 (pp. 77-78). ▪ Grades 3-7 (p. 77). ▪ Writing (p. 79). ○ ACT Readiness Levels (pp. 80-81). • Evidence #[61]: <i>Technical Report for the Aspire Performance Level Descriptors.</i> 	<p>The statistical method used meets technical standards. Peers were unable to locate evidence that AL was involved in ACT standard setting. There were no state panelists involved. Does the USED consider this process consistent with the guidance?</p>
<p>Section 6.2 Summary Statement</p> <p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale</p> <p>TBD by USED</p>		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards</p> <p>The State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards such that a high school student who scores at the proficient or above level has mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school in order to succeed in college and the workforce.</p> <p>If the State has defined alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the alternate academic achievement standards are linked to the State’s grade-level academic content standards or extended academic content standards, show linkage to different content across grades, and reflect professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</p>	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column—all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[61]: Technical Report for the Aspire Performance Level Descriptors. • Evidence #[62]: Allen, J. (2013). “Updating the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks.” 	<p>Peers were unable to locate evidence to indicate that the achievement standards align with Alabama’s Course of Study.</p> <p>Evidence #61, p. 3: “To better meet the requirements and expected evidence of Critical Element 6.3, ACT engaged in the multi-step process described above and create content-based PLDs that align to grade-level KSAs derived from ACT’s College and Career Readiness standards. By the end of the workshop, ACT had PLDs that described the knowledge and skills demonstrated by students in each achievement level for each grade (grades 3-10) in English, math, reading, science, and writing.” ACT college and career ready standards are NOT Alabama’s Course of Study.</p> <p>Also note that the content of the appendices in this document was not included.</p> <p>Peers note that Evidence #62, p. 17 documents “Future research will develop readiness benchmarks for earlier grade levels, including those covered by ACT Aspire.” Therefore no evidence was provided to indicate what content standards were used to develop performance level descriptors in grades 3 – 7.</p> <p>Peers were unable to locate evidence submitted to meet this critical element.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
Section 6.3 Summary Statement		
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evidence to meet this critical element, 6.3, must be provided. 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>6.4 – Reporting</p> <p>The State reports its assessment results, and the reporting facilitates timely, appropriate, credible, and defensible interpretations and uses of results for students tested by parents, educators, State officials, policymakers and other stakeholders, and the public, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State reports to the public its assessment results on student achievement at each proficiency level and the percentage of students not tested for all students and each student group after each test administration; • The State reports assessment results, including itemized score analyses, to districts and schools so that parents, teachers, principals, and administrators can interpret the results and address the specific academic needs of students, and the State also provides interpretive guides to support appropriate uses of the assessment results; • The State provides for the production and delivery of individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports after each administration of its assessments that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide valid and reliable information regarding a student’s achievement; ○ Report the student’s achievement in terms of the State’s grade-level academic achievement standards (including performance-level descriptors); ○ Provide information to help parents, teachers, and principals interpret the test results and address the specific academic needs of students; ○ Are available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request and, to 	<p>Evaluate for all factors in left hand column —all tests and grades documented on cover sheet</p> <p>Reporting results <i>Access</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[25]: ACT Aspire Portal Users Guide (pp. 108-120). <p>Student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Aspire Individual Student Report (ISR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evidence #[63]: Grade 3 ISR Example ○ Evidence #[64]: Grade 9 ISR Example <p>Classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[65]: The ACT Aspire Classroom-Level Current Progress Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summarizes aggregate performance in a given class and compares that class’s performance to ACT Readiness Levels (p. 1). ○ Supplemental score information, including the classroom’s national percentile rank (p. 2). ○ Proficiency summary for a given subject and itemized score analysis for each skill within that subject (p. 3). ○ Each student’s overall proficiency in a given subject, as well as his or her itemized score analysis for particular skills (p. 4). <p>School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[66]: ACT Aspire School-Level 	<p>Alabama’s state level reports do not include the percentage of students not tested as required by this element.</p> <p>Peers were unable to find individual student reports that include performance-level descriptors.</p> <p>Peers were not able to locate evidence that reports are available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a native language that parents can understand</p> <p>Peers were unable to find the process and timeline for delivering individual student reports to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as practicable after each test administration.</p> <p>It is confusing that in some reports, e.g., Evidence #s 72, 73, and 74, three levels of performance are reported. However there are 4 levels of performance.</p> <p>Evidence #76: Interpretative Guide for ACT Aspire Summative Reports, the cover page indicates 2015 Fall Testing. Does this document pertain to 2015 Fall Testing or to 2014-15 test results?</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides districts and states with a complete listing of student scale scores for each subject. <p>State</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[72]: ACT Aspire State-Level Subject Proficiency by Grade Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shows how students in each grade in the state performed in every subject area and includes an overall state average. • Evidence #[73]: ACT Aspire State-Level Subject Proficiency by District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shows how each district within the state performed in every subject area according to ACT Readiness Levels. • Evidence #[74]: ACT Aspire State-Level Subject Proficiency by Demographic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breaks down student performance according to ACT Readiness Levels in each subject area according to demographic group. • Evidence #[71]: ACT Aspire Student Performance File <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides districts and states with a complete listing of student scale score for each subject. • Evidence # [141]: 2014-2015 ACT Aspire Assessment Reporting (Copy of State assessment report disaggregated and printed by grade and subject area) • Evidence # [142]: 2014-2015 Alabama Alternate Assessment Reporting (Copy of State assessment report disaggregated and 	

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
	<p>printed by grade and subject area)</p> <p>Interpretations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence #[75]: Understanding Your ACT Aspire Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annotated sample Individual Score report with accompanying explanatory text (p. 5). ○ Figure including predicted ACT score range and ACT Composite score (p. 6). • Evidence #[76]: Interpretative Guide for ACT Aspire Summative Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides information on how to understand results from ACT Aspire summative tests. • Evidence # [182]: Memo to System Test Coordinators—Student ACT Aspire Talking Points for Score Reports, August 17, 2015 • Evidence #[183]: Understanding Your Child’s ACT Aspire Results • Evidence # [184]: Memo to Superintendents—ACT’s Summative Data Interpretation Workshops, February 5, 2015 • Evidence # [185]: Memo to Superintendents—Summative Assessment Official Data Import, April 1, 2015 Evidence # [186]: Memo to Superintendents—Summative Assessment Official Data Import, March 28, 2016 	

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR ALABAMA

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence

Section 6.4 Summary Statement
<p><u> </u>X_ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL's state level reports include the percentage of students not tested as required for this element. • Evidence of actual vs. prototype student reports, interpretive guide documents provided to principals, teachers, parents, districts. • Evidence that reports are available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a native language that parents can understand. • Individual student reports include performance-level descriptors • The process and timeline for delivering individual student reports to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as practicable after each test administration. • Documentation for Off-Grade Testing in Alabama.

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