

2021-22 Alternate Assessment Justification

The following must be completed by districts that contribute to the state exceeding the 1% cap for students participating in the alternate assessment and will be posted on the department website upon receipt.

District Name: Athens City Schools

	% of Alternative Assessments 2017-18	% of Alternate Assessments 2018-19	% of Alternate Assessments 2020-21	% of Alternate Assessments 2021-22	Projected % of Alternate Assessments 2022-23
MSAA ELA	1.42%	1.45%	1.35%	1.47%	1.51%
MSAA Math	1.43%	1.47%	1.36%	1.47%	1.51%
TCAP- Alt Science	1.36%	*Field test year, no data available	1.33%	1.47%	1.51%

1. **Eligibility Determination Process:** Describe the policies, training and supports in place to ensure IEP teams appropriately identify students for participation on the alternate assessments related to each of the three criteria. *Completing the form in EasyIEP is not sufficient justification. The description should include training or processes to ensure the IEP team is carefully considering both the student's data and the implication of participation in the alternate assessment.*
 - a. Criterion One: The student has a significant cognitive disability. Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should be considered for the alternate assessment.
 - b. Criterion Two: The student is learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards.

- c. Criterion Three: The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

When determining if a student meets the criteria for the alternative assessment, updated cognitive testing and adaptive measures are completed from home and school. The IEP team discusses what current accommodations/modifications the student is currently receiving in the classroom along with his/her level of success on other standardized measurements.

The majority of the students score below 60 on their cognitive evaluation.

The level of daily support the student receives in the general education and special education setting is also considered along with if the student can properly document their answers on a standardized instrument.

All students participate in grade level standards daily. Some special educational students only receive minimal support through inclusion during their general education instruction. However, some students have the maximum amount of support available including a 1:1 assistant.

The IEP team always considers the student's least restrictive environment. This includes a comprehensive assessment to determine their current level of academic performance. Athens City Schools strives for an all-inclusive district allowing all students regardless of ability level the opportunity to develop alongside same age peers.

- 2. **Disproportionality:** Using your data by primary eligibility, describe your district data, including disproportionate participation on the alternate assessment and a plan for reducing/eliminating disproportionality.

With a small student population (1,651 students), 24 students taking the alternative assessment has made our district exceed the 1%. However, these students would not be able to access a standardized instrument the same as their typical peers.

The majority of our students taking the alternative assessment are either students with Autism or an Intellectual Disability.

The IEP team always strives to identify strategies/modifications to assist all students in being able to access standardized testing.

Our alternative assessment population consists of nonverbal or extremely limited verbal abilities, students with a 1:1, as well as students that are unable to sit independently.

3. **Informed Parent Participation:** Describe the process and practices used to adequately inform parents of the eligibility requirements and implications of participation to ensure active parent participate in the IEP team discussion.

Parents play an integral role in their child's IEP. Parents are encouraged to attend in person but are offered virtual options if that is their preference. The evaluation is discussed with parents as well as that participation in the alternate assessment means that the student is participating in curriculum that will not lead to a high school diploma is presented.

The three eligibility criteria to take the alternative assessment are reviewed.

4. **Support Requested:** Please detail any support needed from the department. (All reasonable requests for supports will be considered.)

I would like to hear ideas on how to reduce the number of students taking the alternative assessment with the amount of student needs and severity of disabilities increasing in our district.

Assurance: The district is committed to ensuring all students are participating in the most appropriate assessments. Students determined eligible for the alternate assessment will meet the three criteria.

Signed: _____



Date: _____

2/15/23