

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: Cannon County 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	1.67%	1.54%	.93%	1.12%	1.00%
MSAA Math	1.66%	1.49%	.90%	1.18%	.90%
TCAP-Alt Science	1.34%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.18%	1.03%	1.00%

- 1. Eligibility Determination Process:** Describe the policies, training and support 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.
- In Cannon County, to participate in an Alternate assessment, a student must demonstrate a significant cognitive disability which results in performance that is substantially below grade-level achievement expectations even with the use of accommodations and modifications. The student must also possess current adaptive skills requiring extensive direct instruction and practice in multiple settings to accomplish the application and transfer of skills necessary for application in school, work, home, and community environments. The IEP team then must rule out that the inability to achieve the state grade-level achievement expectations is not the result of excessive or extended absences or social, cultural, or economic differences.
 - Teachers are provided the Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines, Tennessee Alternate Assessments Participation Decision Flowchart and Considerations for Participation in the Alternate Assessment . They are provided training on completing the Determination of Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Participation Checklist and how to guide an IEP team through the checklist to make sound appropriate decisions on placing students on the alternate assessment. Students who meet the eligibility criteria for alternate assessment may be classified in any of the disability categories listed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as long as there is documentation that the student has a significant cognitive disability or severe intellectual disability and significant adaptive skills deficits.
 - The IEP team must make an annual decision regarding how students will participate in state and district-wide testing.
 - The decision for participation in the alternate assessment is based on a holistic analysis. Possible sources of data the IEP team may review include: psychological evaluation reports, results of individual cognitive ability tests, adaptive behavior skills data, results of individual or group-administered achievement assessments, district-wide alternate assessments, individual reading assessments, findings of communication or language proficiency assessments, teacher-collected data from classroom observations, progress monitoring data, and IEPs.

- Teachers are provided district and state level department contact information for support.

b. **Criterion Two:** The student is learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards.

- The student's instruction should be based on the Alternate Assessment standards, which provide access to the general education curriculum.

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

- Students with a significant cognitive disability requires substantial modifications, adaptations, or supports to meaningfully access the subject area content and requires intensive individualized instruction in order to acquire and generalize knowledge. The student's instruction is based on the Alternate Assessment standards, which provide access to the general education curriculum.

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.

- Cannon County is a very rural community with a total student population of 1,870 students including our Pre-K through twelfth grade. We had 6 students with Autism participate in the alternate assessment which put us at 50.00% distribution. We had 6 students identified with Intellectual Disabilities take the Alternate assessment which put us at 50.00% Distribution. We had 0 students identified with Multiple Disabilities that participated in the Alternate assessment. These numbers are not significantly disproportionate from the states.

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 parents participate in the IEP team discussion.

- Parent participation is very important for our students. Cannon County makes every possible attempt to schedule meetings when parents can attend. Parents are provided a written invitation to meetings at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Parents are provided an IEP Draft at least 48 hours prior to an IEP meeting. At IEP team meetings, parents are provided a copy of the Procedural Safeguards with a brief description of its contents. Parents are encouraged to bring any concerns, changes or any other information that may need to be shared or addressed. Parent concerns and provided information are included in the student's IEP and viewed as relevant data in all decision making. The parent is a full participating member of the student's IEP team. The team reviews present data to determine the student's Present levels of performance. The team then sets appropriate goals based on student data. The team determines needed accommodations and/or modifications to help the student access the curriculum. The team determines the Least Restrictive Environment appropriate for the student. They determine Special Education Services and the duration of. The team discusses the student's participation in state testing. All prior discussed data is taken into consideration. If the team is considering the Alternate Assessment, they then use the Tennessee Alternate Assessment participation decision documentation guidelines to determine eligibility for the assessment. Parents are informed of the implications of the decision to participate including:

- Their child's academic achievement will be measured based on alternate achievement standards.

- Participation in the alternate assessment may delay or otherwise affect completing requirements for a regular high school diploma. The alternate achievement standards are not the requirements for the regular high school diploma but are aligned to the alternate academic diploma.

There are many other things covered in an IEP meeting such as transition, ESY, etc. After all decisions have been made to write an appropriate Individualized Education Plan for the student, all members sign if they agree or not. Parents are provided a final copy of the IEP with all decisions made. If the Alternate Assessment is determined necessary and most appropriate, a copy of the Tennessee Alternate Assessment participation Decision

documentation is also provided. Parents are provided a prior written notice of any changes made in the IEP.

If parents choose not to attend IEP meetings, their input is solicited by case managers and included in the IEP for all consideration with all decisions. Parents are provided a copy of finished IEPs for signatures to agree or wishes to make changes. Parents are also provided prior written notice of any changes. If Alternate Assessment is determined necessary, parents are provided a copy of the Alternate Assessment participation decision documentation with explanation of implementations.

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

- Cannon County is open to any support the department can offer to help maintain a 1% or less participation in Alternate Assessment. We are very serious about following the guidelines and set criteria set forth by the state on Alternate Assessment participation. If a student meets all criteria, and the IEP team agree that the Alternate Assessment is the most appropriate decision for the student, then students are allowed to participate in the Alternate Assessment.

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: Julie Vincent

Date: 2/17/23