

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: Cleveland 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	1.76%	2.35%	1.90%	1.69%	1.5%
MSAA Math	1.78%	2.40%	1.91%	1.71%	1.5%
TCAP- Alt Science	2.01%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	2.18%	1.97%	1.5%

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.

Response:

Policies associated with alt. exam decisions are now imbedded in the district's 5-year strategic plan which can be found in ePlan. The district has generated special education goals within the strategic plan aligned with APR indicators that fall below targets, such as Alt. assessment participation targets of less than 1%. Professional development training in the area of Alt. Assessment decision making has been imbedded in district level training for all certified special education personnel at least twice a year for the past 3 years. This past fall, training for all certified regular education personnel included the topic of Alt. Assessment decision making and the three criteria. While we are now beginning to see the district's participation rate beginning to fall, there is still a wide range of opinions or interpretations concerning Criterion one, two, and three. One opinion is that Cleveland City has unique demographics that contribute to a disproportionate number of qualifying students compared to other districts across the state. Another opinion is that it is unfair to suddenly deny older students that have been on Alt Assessment for many years the opportunity to finish out. This opinion suggests the district will continue to reduce participation rates through attrition, while focusing on efforts to minimize the % of elementary age students on Alt. Assessment. Helping IEP teams reduce participation rate requires a significant mindset shift among IEP team members. This mindset shift will continue to take time combined with sustained PD for all staff (principals, regular ed teacher, sped teacher, and parents). While we are making progress toward this goal, it continues to be an IEP decision based upon the perceptions of the IEP team members.

- 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.

Response:

The majority of students participating in Alt. Assessment fall into the categories of Autism, Intellectual Disability, and Multiple Disability. This is congruent with categories across the state. The general consensus within the district is that these categories are more likely to meet criterion one, two, and three. The plan to reduce these numbers is

based upon sustained PD for all staff members as well as aligning supporting goals such as increasing access to tier 1 instruction in the regular education setting.

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.

Response:

The district now offers a PD course title "How to facilitate an IEP meeting". A key component of this training includes decision making criteria for LRE and assessments.

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

Response:

The department has provided the district PD training which allowed the district to develop a framework and PD plan. Needed support would include patience and understanding that this is a process that will take time for our district to meet a very ambitious target.

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: David Stone Date: 2-14-23