

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: Dickson County

	% 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	1.00%	1.20%	.91%	1.03%	1.13%
MSAA Math	1.01%	1.22%	.92%	1.06%	1.16%
TCAP-Alt Science	1.0%	*Field test year, no data available	1.14%	1.18%	1.06%

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 support to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

IEP teams are trained on the application of the Response to Intervention process. As a student is progress monitored, teams meet collaboratively to review scores and deficit areas. Interventions are put in place based on the deficit areas. Progress monitoring continues. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are receiving the most intense interventions with small student to teacher ratios. Fidelity checks are completed to ensure research based strategies are being implemented by our interventionists. IEP teams refer to the results of progress monitoring in response to interventions to determine if students need to be referred to special education services. Once referred, a school psychologist completes a comprehensive evaluation which includes cognitive ability levels. Based on the school psychologist's evaluation, the IEP team meets to determine appropriate services to meet the student's needs along with appropriate assessments.

All students are instructed based on state content standards. Special education teachers are trained to break down state standards into appropriate IEP goals. IEP goals are created with grade level standards as well as AAD standards in mind as the end goal. Goals are specific to each student and individualized based on present levels of performance. The team determines appropriate accommodations or modifications based on current data and ability level. Staff provide support to the student in their least restrictive environment. Staff provides extensive direct

individualized instruction to students who do not have the skills to access the core content with their typically developing 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.

Our district currently serves 7,776 students. 22.69% are identified as economically disadvantaged and 2.88% qualify as homeless. A review of our data by primary eligibility helped us to note that we have a much higher rate of students (12.73%, n=7) who are considered functionally delayed taking the Alternate Assessment when compared to the state average of (0.82%, n=66) of students in the same eligibility category.

We reviewed data for these students specifically with our lead school psychologist to see if we noticed any trends across service providers, grade bands, and/or schools. The students in this particular eligibility category are being appropriately assessed.

Our plan for reducing and eliminating disproportionality is to continue to provide explicit, direct interventions based off of deficit areas that have been identified by our evaluation process. Using a holistic analysis of student data during the IEP team meeting, we will determine qualification for the alternate assessment. Data sources will include the following: A review psychological evaluation reports, results of cognitive ability tests, adaptive behavior skills checklists, student benchmark results, district-wide alternate assessments, individual reading assessments, classroom data from teachers, progress monitoring data, and IEPs. Data will continue to drive our decisions regarding placement, interventions, services, accommodations, and assessments.

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 parental participation in the IEP team discussion.

Parents are included in the evaluation process as well as the eligibility determination process. Parents attend meetings in order to get their input. Parents are included in the decision for eligibility as well as any other IEP decisions. The IEP team meets annually to discuss assessments. The options for assessments are explained by the school psychologist to the IEP team and the parents. If the team feels that alternate assessment needs to be discussed, the school psychologist leads the discussion regarding the assessment and how that decision will affect the child's education. If the team agrees that alternate assessment is appropriate, a decision document is reviewed and the team will sign in agreement. This process is addressed annually at the IEP meeting.

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

We are continuing with the implementation of AAD standards within our high schools in the district. The students who are on the AAD pathway are required to participate in the alternate assessment. Additional training and detailed implementation guidance on the AAD standards with examples would be helpful.

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: Malissa Johnson Date: 2.9.23