

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: Fayette County Public 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	1.38%	1.92%	1.41%	1.68%	1.52
MSAA Math	1.39%	1.98%	1.43%	1.74%	1.54
TCAP-Alt Science	1.45%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.52%	1.64%	1.41

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.

FCPS selects the standard assessments with supports and accommodations as needed and does not select students solely on the basis of a disability category for participation in the alternate assessment. The students must meet eligibility criterion in one or more of the existing categories of disabilities under IDEA (e.g., intellectual disabilities, autism, multiple disabilities). The student must:

- a. Have cognitive and adaptive behavior functioning preventing them from attaining grade level achievement standards, even with program modifications and accommodations.
- b. Require extensive individual instruction across multiple settings to access and make progress in the Tennessee Academic Standards, and to maintain, generalize and demonstrate learning.
- c. Have a significant cognitive disability that is not primarily the result of:

excessive or extended absences, disability related to visual or auditory disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairment, native language, social, cultural, and economic differences, those identified as English Learners (EL), pre-determined poor performance on the grade-level assessment, disruptive behaviors or emotional duress during testing, administrator decision or due to educational environment or instructional setting.

The decision for alternate assessment must be made by the IEP team including but not limited to a general education teacher, special education teacher, administrator, parent, student, and any other person needed to make an informed decision. IEP Team decisions must be based upon: unique abilities and needs of each individual student, impact of the disability on educational performance, professional judgment, supported with a collected body of evidence to support the existence of a cognitive disability that falls within the significant cognitive disability range, either as the primary condition, or a secondary component. IEP teams must review multiple sources of information, including the student's IEP, Evaluation Team Report, and other data, such as results from formative assessments, evidence-based interventions, assistive technology assessment and the student's cumulative folder documenting supports and services.

FCPS provides annual training for all special education teachers on alternate assessment guidelines. The assessment specialist works with special education teachers to review the guidelines and provide information or answer any questions regarding the 1% cap for students participating in the alternate assessment.

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 is a relatively small district that offers the full continuum of services to students with disabilities and as a result, our district draws many families from the neighboring cities who are seeking this level of support. This increase of students with significant high risk disabilities has increased our student participation in the ALT assessment. The district has participated in discussions to determine the root cause resulting in a higher than 1.0 percent participation rate. As a committee, we found that the District has been underutilizing the multiple graduation pathways and specially designed instruction. We have a transition coordinator who is working with special educators to maximize the multiple graduation pathways and decrease the number of students participating in the alternate assessment. The transition coordinator will continue to work with our instructional specialists to ensure that all students are given access to the grade level curriculum and more students with complex needs are able to participate in the regular TN ready testing.

The majority of our students on alternate assessment have a disability of intellectual disability. We currently have a plan to review these students and look very closely at the cognitive abilities of these students as well as other factors to reduce the disproportionality.

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.

FCPS provides the parents with an information pamphlet about the alternate assessment as well as a Facts page that has questions and answers concerning the alternate assessment. Parents are also a part of the IEP team that will meet to discuss testing options, review data including formative assessments, cognitive and adaptive information. The parents will also provide input that will be a part of the decision making process on the type of Tn Ready testing for their student.

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

Additional training on ALT assessments for our teachers of students with complex needs would be helpful. Most of the teachers feel that students in a self-contained classroom should receive ALT testing and tend to recommend it at meetings. Also training for general education teachers to support TN Ready testing. Most teachers, even after district training feel like having a student on ALT helps with their show of growth and scores and if the student takes the regular ten ready, then their growth and scores are negatively affected by students with complex needs.

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: _____

Kathy Woods
2/15/23