

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: Fentress 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	0.88%	0.88%	1.07%	1.36%	Between 0.99 and 1.26%**
MSAA Math	0.87%	0.88%	1.05%	1.38%	Between 0.99 and 1.26%**
TCAP- Alt Science	0.82%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.48%	1.48%	Between 1.1 and 1.33%**

**There are four IEPs that are being revisited that would change the students from the Alternate Assessment to the regular TCAP. If it is determined that the change should take place, then Fentress County will be below the 1%.

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.

Fentress County Schools IEP teams use the three eligibility criteria to determine a student's need to participate in an alternate assessment. These criteria are:

- The student has a significant cognitive disability.
- The student is learning content linked to (derived from) Tennessee Academic Standards.
- The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum.

The team considers each student's abilities and their impacts on their active participation in instruction in aligned state standards. Each decision is considered at least yearly by the team and based on each student's need to ensure all students participate in the appropriate assessment. Each student's historical testing data and current level of performance is considered in each decision. Training is conducted yearly with the case managers and general education team members including the decision process and the long-term effects and implications for the student.

Over the past year, the Director of Special Education Services and the District Elementary Testing Coordinator met with members of the TDOE Assessment team to better understand the 1% students who need to be taking the Alt and those that should take the regular TCAP. They also learned about the comprehensive testing code that should be assigned to these students. They then provided PD to help the teachers better guide the team in making these decisions. Currently, IEPs are being revisited which should allow the district to reach the 1% goal.

- 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.

The district will strive for all third grade students (except in extreme cases as determined by IEP teams) to take the regular TCAP assessment to establish a baseline. All necessary accommodations to get the best possible student performance will be listed in the IEP and fully provided. The test results, as well as the student's emotions/frustrations during the testing experience, will be used by the IEP team to determine if the student will continue taking the TCAP or if the move should be made to TCAP-Alt. Our teams strive to provide the best possible educational experience for all students. The hope is the students will be successful and continue to take the TCAP across their education which will keep the district below the 1%.

Through the evaluation and re-evaluation process, the team will ensure that state guidelines are strictly adhered to and followed. Teams will ensure that each student's needs are considered using testing data and current levels of performance.

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.

During IEP meetings, state testing requirements are discussed and parents are informed of the TCAP and TCAP-Alt options. Parents are informed of the benefits and long-term implications of both options to ensure that they have all necessary information to assist in making the best educational decisions for their child. As the teachers' and district administration's understanding increases, it lets them address the parents' questions and concern with a greater knowledge that will allow the best decision for the student to be made.

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

Training guidance for general education teachers and administrators would be helpful.

Fentress County's long-term Director of Special Education Services resigned in December. Any support for the new director will be greatly appreciated.

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: _____


Kristi Hall, Director of Schools

Date: _____

