

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: Hamblen Co.

	% 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	1.36	1.25	1.72	1.22	1.61
MSAA Math	1.39	1.27	1.74	1.24	1.61
TCAP-Alt Science	1.24	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.47	1.30	1.76

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.

Hamblen County provides professional development to school psychologists and special education teachers on the guidelines for the Alternate Assessment Eligibility. Special Services personnel are provided copies of the "Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Decision Making Tools for IEP Teams" as well as the "Determination of Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Participation" tool. Special Services staff review all Alternate Assessment Eligible files to ensure the IEP Team adheres to proper guidelines. The Supervisor of Special Services reviews with administrators the guidelines and implications of the Alternate Assessment participation. Grades K-5 focus professional developments on inclusion practices, differentiation, and scaffolding by Instructional Coaches.

Each student's eligibility for the Alternate Assessment is reviewed annually by the School Psychologist. The School Psychologist reviews the student's special education file and enters the information into the EdPlan tab and determines "yes" or "no" to the question: *"Does the student demonstrate cognitive ability and adaptive skills, which prevent full involvement and completion of the state approved content standards even with program modifications?"* If the School Psychologist answers "yes", the IEP Team, including the parent(s), discusses the student's present level of performances over multiple settings and school years, goals, various assessments and accommodations available for the student, as well as the long-range implications, and determines which is the most appropriate assessment for the student. The 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 school, work, home, and community environments. The IEP Team must agree that the student has 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. The IEP Team uses a holistic analysis with possible sources of data considered: psychological evaluation reports, results of individual cognitive ability tests, adaptive behavior skills data, results of individual or group-administered assessments, district-wide alternate assessments, individual reading assessments, findings of communication or language proficiency assessments, teacher-collected data from classroom observations, work samples, progress monitoring, and IEP & goals. The IEP Team must consider the appropriateness of the student participating in the general education assessments with accommodations.

All special service personnel and school psychologists are given a copy of the Alt Assessment File Review Rubric. They are provided professional development on how to review all files that are being considered for the Alternate Assessment at the beginning of each school year. School Psychologists work with the school personnel to guide the conversation about Alternate Assessment eligibility and implications during IEP meetings.

School Psychologists and special education teachers are provided professional development on how to facilitate conversations with parents regarding the implications of a student's instructional path that may include an alternate assessment, which may result in the student potentially not meeting requirements for a regular high school diploma.

Provide informational sessions for special service personnel and school psychologist:

o Conduct training on Tennessee's alternate content expectations:

§ Characteristics of students who typically take this assessment

§ Understanding all state assessment options and how these fit into local assessment practices

§ Understanding the Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessment.

Resources used in the trainings:

- Criterion 1 Considerations
- Criterion 2 Considerations
- Criterion 3 Considerations
- Alternate Assessment IEP File Review Rubric
- ESSA and the One Percent Cap Guidance
- Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessment
- Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines- Decision Making Tools for IEP Teams
- Alternate Assessment Overview (online learning training)
- Criterion 1 Webinar, May 26, 2020
- Criterion 2 Live Webinar, May 22, 2020
- Criterion 3 Live Webinar, May 29, 2020
- TDOE COP

- ☐ Professional Development on Universal designs for learning (UDL) strategies, supports, or tools to proactively address the needs of the individuals.
- ☐ Professional Development for staff on Graduation options. Special Education staff are provided with the "Tennessee Diploma Options Parent Guide" to provide and review with all parents.

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.

Hamblen County's annual determination by TDOE for Hamblen County exceeds the 1% cap for students participating in the Alternate Assessment by .72% for ELA, .74% for Math and .47% for Science. Hamblen County schools will continue to annually train and retrain our special education teachers, school psychologists and special education supervisory staff. We will use the materials provided by the TDOE that includes: The Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines Decision Making Tools for IEP Teams and the three documents that go into detail explaining Criterion 1, Criterion 2, and Criterion 3 on the Participation Guidelines. Schools will review all the TCAP data including the Alternate Assessment scores to identify which students are advanced to consider the appropriate assessment for the next school year. The Hamblen County's goal for projected percentage of students participating in the Alternate Assessment for **2022-2023** is 1.0% for the MSAA ELA and 1.0% for the MSAA Math.

	STATE %	2021-2022	HC %	2021-2022	#Students	2021-2022	2022-2023
AUT	27.94%	29.29%	19.64%	31.58%	22	24	34
DD	1.94%	1.01%	10.71%	2.63%	12	2	4
ID	52.49%	52.59%	47.32%	40.79%	53	31	49
MD	9.07%	9.60%	10.71%	14.47%	12	11	15
OHI	3.91%	3.88%	8.93%	6.58%	10	5	9
OI	.31%	.31%	1.79%	0	2	0	2
TBI	.75%	.67%	.89%	1.32%	1	1	1

Data is a part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement in Hamblen County. Teachers routinely use data to guide instructional decisions and meet student's individual educational needs. Hamblen County will disaggregate the data concerning the schools, the primary eligibility, and the type of assessments and dates of the assessments used by the School Psychologists. At all annual IEP Team meetings, the team reviews all data including formal and informal assessments to decide if the student meets the participation and eligibility criteria for the alternate assessment.

Special Education teachers, PowerSchool personnel, and Administrators have been instructed on the use of Alternate Academic Diploma (AAD) course codes for students participating in the Alternate Assessment. Hamblen County added 1 new self-contained classroom this year.

Hamblen County Plan for reducing/eliminating disproportionality:

- Additional training for administrators, school psychologists, and special education teachers using the TDOE guidelines for making assessment participation decisions.
- Additional training on Universal Design for Learning by the Instructional Coaches
- Additional training on how to communicate the implications of participating in the Alternate Assessment to parents
- On-going training with special services and general education teachers on modifications and accommodations and inclusion practices.
- Based on the disability aggregation provided by TDOE, specifically the students with the primary eligibility of Developmentally Delayed, Intellectually Disabled and Autism will be reviewed in order to determine if they meet the Alternate Assessment criteria for eligibility.
- Compare participation rates across schools and correspond such rates to programs operated in each building.
- Compare participation rates across grade levels.
- Professional Learning Communities for School Psychologist and CDC teachers
- Mid October- Spreadsheet from each school with Cognitive and Adaptive scores to be reviewed by Special Services Central Office staff
- School Psychologist review of files
- Some students have a higher Adaptive score than their cognitive score. Professional Development for the school psychologists will address this concern. Some scores are very old.
- Provide trainings for Special Education Preschool teachers regarding Alternate Assessment and the impact of Alternate Assessment toward Graduation Diploma options
- Participation in a Professional Development on Alternate Assessment by Alison Gauld, TDOE, in Hawkins County March 2023. for 1 High School CDC, 1 Middle School CDC and 1 Elementary CDC and the Alternate Assessment Coordinator.

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.

Parents are an integral part of the IEP Team and included in the decision-making process for students being considered for the Alternate Assessment. Parents receive a draft copy of the IEP 48 hours before the meeting. The parent(s) is part of the review of information, discussion of accommodations, and decision-making process. Parents are informed of the implications of participation in the Alternate Assessment for graduation from the first time it is considered and annually thereafter. The IEP Team has a copy of the Diploma Decision Guide to discuss with parents. Parents participate in the discussion on

the Alternate Assessment as the IEPs Participation Guidelines are reviewed/discussed. The Parent Guide for Tennessee Diploma and Post-Secondary Options is distributed to parents. It is documented in the Minutes and in the Prior Written Notice that parents have been informed of the implications for a student taking the Alternate Assessment.

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

Hamblen County's population is growing at a rapid rate due to the increase in industries, businesses and services in the area. Regional trainings for school psychologists and special education teachers on the Alternate Assessment criteria and Alternate Academic Diploma would be wonderful.

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: Mandy Floyd Date: 2/24/23