

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: Hancock 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	1.53%	2.50%	2.49%	1.63%	1.45%
MSAA Math	1.52%	2.44%	2.49%	1.60%	1.29%
TCAP- Alt Science	1.89%	*Field test year, no data available	2.07%	1.41%	1.26%

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.

Hancock County Schools requires that each special education teacher assigned to teach students with the most significant disabilities and school psychologist are trained annually on the criterion required for alternative assessment considerations. Building level testing coordinators, enrollment counselors and IEP LEA's also receive annual training on the criterion requirements, post-secondary consideration and student's future implications for alternative assessment delegation. Students identified with the most significant cognitive disabilities and receiving significant individualized instruction and supports are reviewed annually by the IEP team (special education teacher, regular education teacher, related services providers, parents, LEA and school psychologist). Observations, adaptive and academic data, fine and gross motor, communication, progress and amount of support and individualize instruction each student requires are reviewed prior to a consideration for alternative 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.

In the school years of 2018-2020, the district's participation in alternative assessments increased by 1%. After a review of student records and staff training, the 2021-22 school shows a decrease of almost 1% participation and projections reveal a continued decline. To continue the momentum of decreasing the alternative participation rate, the district will continue to provide alternative assessment training to essential faculty members. With the continued training, student records will continue to be reviewed to ensure that students identified for alternative assessment continue to meet the criterion qualifications.

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.

Students identified with the most significant cognitive disabilities receiving significant individualized instruction and supports are reviewed prior to annual IEP meetings. This review is to collect as much data and relevant information possible. During the review process, parents are asked for input and a conversation concerning the possibility of the need for alternative assessment consideration. The parent is informed about what the alternative assessment is, how it may impact their child's education, diploma options, post-secondary outcomes, etc., to better prepare the parent for decision making and input in the alternative assessment consideration for their child.

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

Hancock County Schools would greatly appreciate any extra training and support in identifying the most appropriate students meeting the alternative assessment criterion.

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: Misty P. Rasnic Date: 2-16-2023