

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: **Humphreys 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	1.7%	1.98%	2.07%	2.64%	2.47%
MSAA Math	1.69%	1.93%	2.08%	2.53%	2.47%
TCAP- Alt Science	1.83%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	2.45%	2.84%	2.41%

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.

As described above, to participate in an Alternate Assessment, a student must demonstrate a significant cognitive disability which results in performance that is substantially below grade-level achievement expectations even with accommodations and modifications. The student must also possess current adaptive skills requiring extensive direct instruction and participate in multiple setting to accomplish the application and transfer of skills necessary for application in school, work, home, and community environments. The IEP team must rule out that the inability to achieve the state grade-level achievement expectations is not a result of excessive or extended absences or social, cultural, or economic differences.

A student with 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 should be based on the Alternate Assessment Standards, which provide access to the general education curriculum.

In Humphreys county we utilize the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision flowchart to determine participation in an Alternate Assessment. This flowchart, along with multiple points of data, will be reviewed annually by the IEP team. Possible sources of data that may be considered include: psychological evaluation reports, results of individual or group-administered achievement assessments, district-wide alternate assessments, individual reading assessments, findings of communication or language proficiency assessments, teacher-collected data from classroom observations, progress monitoring data, and IEP's.

The IEP team makes annual decisions regarding how students will participate in state and district-wide testing. The decision making tools will be kept in the student's binder for review and documentation purposes.

All Special Education teachers involved with students with significant cognitive disabilities are required to read the Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines and use the Participation Decision Flowchart at each annual meeting. TDOE trainings are required by all teachers giving the 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 reviewing the disproportionality data for Humphreys county there appear to be a few areas of significant disproportionality. The largest discrepancy is approximately 95% of the students taking the Alternate Assessment are white, while only about 4% are non-white. This is closely aligned to the percentage of racially diverse students in comparison with white students in the district.

The second largest disparity is between male and female students participating in the Alternate Assessment. The male participation is approximately 68% while female participation is only about 31%. The first step in decreasing this discrepancy is to engage with educators, parents, and school leaders, to gather their perspectives on the causes of this disproportionality. This could help identify any barriers to equal participation and opportunities for improvement.

The third significant disparity is between economically disadvantaged and non-economically disadvantaged. Participation in Alternate Assessment in our district is approximately 38% economically disadvantaged students and about 62% non-economically disadvantaged students. In order to help decrease this discrepancy, we need to develop targeted outreach efforts to engage economically disadvantaged families and raise awareness about the alternate assessment and ensure that economically disadvantaged students have access to the same resources and support as their non-economically disadvantaged peers.

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 participation in the IEP team discussion.

At each student's annual meeting, the parent is informed about the process and implications of participation in the Alternate Assessment. Parents are informed and are made aware that their student is participating in a curriculum that does not lead to a

high school diploma. After an explanation of the expectations, implications and process, the parent's will review with the teacher and IEP team, the Determination of Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Participation checklist will be completed. The parent will be asked to sign the form stating that they understand that participation in the Alternate Assessment means their child will not participate in a curriculum path to receive a high school diploma.

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

At this time some additional support regarding Alternate Academic diploma and Alternate assessment vs. Comprehensive Assessment would be beneficial. Training to help our teachers better understand what constitutes significant cognitive delays would also be beneficial.

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: 
Kimberly Reese
Supervisor of Special Education
Humphreys County Schools

Date: February 11, 2023