

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: __Lauderdale 490__

	% 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	1.77	2.25	1.65	1.65	1.77
MSAA Math	1.75	2.29	1.61	1.68	1.83
TCAP- Alt Science	2.49	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.74	1.93	1.38

- 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.

Students receiving special education services must first be evaluated by a school psychologist. Through this process, data is gathered in regards to the student's cognitive ability as well as their adaptive behaviors and academic performance. Assessment data that falls within the very low average range on all scales is also considered. A review of the student's participation in instruction that has been modified extensively is another area that is considered. All of this data, along with the state guidelines, is used as part of the alternate assessment review process.

- b. Criterion Two: The student is learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards.

Lauderdale County students are instructed across all grade levels on Tennessee state standards through high quality instructional materials. Supports through their IEPs provide them with modifications and accommodations to help them access this information.

- c. Criterion Three: The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

Students who take the alternate assessment have IEPs that document the kinds and types of services they receive. Supports are in place through personnel, services, accommodations and modifications in each IEP based on the team's decision as to what is needed for each individual student to have access to the grade- and-age-appropriate curriculum.

All special education teachers receive training each year in regards to writing instructionally appropriate IEPs, updates on rules and regulations and the criteria used for making decisions on which students qualify for the alternate assessment. Teams gather the necessary data and give the needed time and attention in reviewing that data in order to make an informed appropriate decision for each student.

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. **A review of the current primary disability data indicates Lauderdale County has decreased the number of students taking**

the alternate assessment in the category of Autism from 21.05% in SY 20-21 to 18.42% for SY 21-22. This is below the state rate of 29.29%. Lauderdale County continues to experience significantly higher disproportionalities in the areas of Functional Delay (7.89% compared to the state rate of 0.82%) and Intellectual Disability (65.79% compared to the state rate of 52.59%). While there was no significant increase in the Functional Delay disability category compared to the previous year, there was a significant increase (+ 13.16%) in the Intellectual Disability category from the previous year. Teams continue to review data in addition to the state's guidelines when making determinations on alternate assessments. Documented changes are made in a student's IEP when this determination is made.

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. **All parents are invited to all IEP meetings. Parents are contacted about upcoming meetings by our building special education clerks. Meetings are scheduled at times that work with the parents' schedules. Invitations are sent home to the parents for their signature. Follow-up phone calls are made in two days if the invitation does not come back signed the following day. A phone call is made to the parent the day before the meeting is to take place. In situations where parents can't physically attend the meeting a phone conference is scheduled at the parent's convenience. For those parents who can't be reached or do not attend the meeting, copies of all documents are mailed to them.**
4. **Support Requested:** Please detail any support needed from the department. (All reasonable requests for supports will be considered.) **Lauderdale County Schools is always open to training from through the Tennessee Department of Education.**

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: Melinda Hutcherson Date: 2/10/2023
Melinda Hutcherson, Director of Special Education Services