

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: Memphis Shelby 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	1.80%	2.04%	1.93%	1.84%	2.17%
MSAA Math	1.80%	2.04%	1.91%	1.84%	2.14%
TCAP- Alt Science	1.75%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.90%	1.94%	2.12%

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.**

On an ongoing basis MSCS reviews current levels of functioning, progress of goals, appropriateness of services and placement. Eligibility for Special Education services is determined after a comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation by a School Psychologist and determination by an IEP team that the student meets Tennessee criteria for a student with an educational disability. In terms of consideration for alternate assessment, the school psychologist and IEP team determines if the student's current level of cognitive and adaptive functioning prevents full involvement and completion of the State approved content standards even with program modifications.

MSCS special education population has a significantly higher number of students with severe and multiple disabilities that qualify for alternate assessment. In order to minimize the percentage of students that qualify for alternate assessment, MSCS has guidelines based upon IQ and adaptive scores. MSCS will continue training teachers and Building Testing Coordinators on the state criteria and qualifications as well as the guidelines established in MSCS for consideration of alternate assessment. All district special education teachers are trained yearly on the Alternate 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.

As a district we are constantly monitoring students that are placed on the alternate assessment. MSCS makes sure only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are participating in the alternate assessment. We review data, classwork, progress towards IEP goals, communicate with the teacher, and observe the students in the classroom. Teachers also use data notebooks to monitor IEP goal progress. The district is considering the development of an Alternate Assessment decision tree/guidance document. We are working with TDOE on technical assistance on indicator 3.

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 the decisions for a student to participate in the alternate assessment are made at an IEP meeting. The parent is always part of that IEP meeting. The team determines participation based on both parent and teacher input.

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

None at this time.

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: Deborah G. Harris Date: 2/13/23