

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: **Murfreesboro City Schools 00751**

	% 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	0.97%	1.21%	1.07%	1.18%	61 students/4585 grades 3-6 Enrollment 1.3%
MSAA Math	0.97%	1.21%	1.07%	1.17%	61 students/4585 grades 3-6 Enrollment 1.3%
TCAP- Alt Science	0.95%	<i>*Field test year, no data available</i>	1.15%	1.15%	61 students/4585 grades 3-6 Enrollment 1.3%

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.

Training is provided at the beginning of each school year during in-service staff days including special education teachers, school psychologist, district-wide staff and special education coaches.

Training includes:

1. Using participation guidelines to make assessment participation decisions.
2. Differentiating instruction and providing access to academic content.
3. Selecting, implementing, and evaluating accessibility features and accommodations for instructions and assessment.
4. Setting high expectations and standards for all students

For training purposes, the district uses the *"Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines for Decision Making Tools for IEP Team Process*, Participation Flowchart, and Alternate Assessment Participation Checklist. On-going consultation is provided as needed with individual staff regarding ALT Participation.

Student data including parent input and evaluations (formal and informal) by school psychologists, special education teachers, and general education staff (as applicable) are collected and reviewed as a part of the determination for ALT participation. The decision for ALT participation is an IEP Team decision based upon specific data and conditions.

Students who have a significant cognitive disability (SCD) and who will be taking TCAP ALT/MSAA are receiving learning content that is linked to TN state standards. Life skills teachers use a variety of instructional resources provided by TDOE: Science and social studies modules as well as Unpacking the Alternate Instructional Framework. It is critical that each student has a functional and interactive communication system be in place. Assistive technology as well as other accommodations are used in determining level of access that each student needs in order to access state assessment. Murfreesboro City Schools has a dedicated related service (SLP) specialist who assists with assistive technology both low tech and high-tech recommendations.

Murfreesboro City Schools follows TDOE guidelines/criteria in determining if ALT is appropriate for any student. The decision for a student to participate in the Alternate Assessment is **NOT** based upon any of these statements/conditions:

1. Participation is **NOT** based on a specific disability or educational placement.
2. Participation is **NOT** the result of excessive or extended absences or social, cultural or economic differences.
3. Participation is **NOT** due to the fact that the student is an ELL learner.
4. Participation is **NOT** solely based upon the student's instructional reading level is below the grade level of the general assessment.
5. Participation is **NOT** based on the fact that the student is expected to perform poorly on the general assessment.

The Alternate Assessment IEP File review TDOE rubric is used as a guiding resource throughout the review/discussion process in determining ALT participation.

Murfreesboro City Schools sped staff annually reviews student data to assure that each student participating in ALT meet the three prong eligibility criteria and includes evidence to support such decision.

1. The student has a significant cognitive disability that is pervasive across all learning environments.
2. The student is learning content linked to Tennessee Academic Standards.
3. The student requires extensive individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in grade and age appropriate curriculum.
Curriculum used by the district: includes Connecting Math, Language for Learning, Edmark Reading, Wilson Reading Foundations and Basic Reading, STAR, and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program (all intensive reading and math programs). The ALT student uses substantially adapted materials or individualized methods of accessing information in

alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings, including school, community, and home.

Teacher Training:

Teachers who administer must participate in required online training on the MSAA platform (early March). The training consists of six modules for the teacher administrator (TA) at approximately three hours in length. A quiz is given at the end of the modules whereby each teacher should pass with 80% accuracy. The building level testing coordinator (TC) Assistant Principal is required to complete four training modules.

Documentation of his/her module completion is maintained by Special Education office.

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.

Murfreesboro City Schools' disability categories closely align with state-wide disability numbers/percentages. No significant disproportionately identified categories found at this time. However, there is a seven-student increase from 22-23 SY. One additional Life Skills classroom opened this current school year.

21-22 SY Number of students who participated in ALT by Disability:

Disability Category	Number of Students	
Autism	21	38.89%
Developmentally Delayed	2	3.70%
Intellectually Disabled	22	40.74%
Multiple Disabilities	6	11.11%
Other Health Impaired	3	5.56%
TOTAL	54 Students	

22-23 SY Projected Number of Students Participating in TCAP ALT/MSAA by Disability

Disability Categories	# Students
Autism	23
Developmentally Delayed	2
Multi-Disabilities	12
Intellectually Disabled	20
Other Health Impaired	4
TOTAL	61

3. **District Plans/Steps to continue eliminating potential disproportionality issues:**

1. Additional training for administrators, school psychologists, sped coaches, and special education teachers using TDOE resources in identifying potential ALT students.
2. Additional training on Universal Design for Learning to all staff. Can the student access regular TCAP Assessment with appropriate accommodations?
3. Better communication with parents at IEP Team meetings regarding graduation requirements/occupational diploma when students continue on ALT pathway.
4. Deeper conversation and training provided to all sped staff regarding curriculum, communication competence, instructional strategies, and alignment of state standards.

4. **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.

- Share with parents state guidelines/participation/criteria for ALT participation.
- Share with parents sample question so they may have a clearer understanding of the ALT assessment and design.

- Actively engage parents when ALT determination and participating criteria is discussed.
- Offer parent training and support regarding the implications of ALT state testing.

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

MCS is requesting state training on breaking down state standards and learning content. This is an area where we teachers sometime struggle.

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:  Date: 2/14/23