

2025-26 Alternative Assessment Justification

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Justification and Assurances for Exceeding the 1.0 Percent Cap

Purpose

In accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(c), local educational agencies (LEAs) contributing to the state exceeding the 1.0 percent cap must submit a justification and assurances.

1. Select LEA Name and ID#

400 - Henry County

2. Enter the Last Name, First Name of the individual submitting this form.

Kibbler, Denay

3. Identify your role within the LEA. Special Education Director

- a. Special Education Director
- b. Special Education Coordinator
- c. Other

ELA Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through 2025-26

4. **ELA Participation Rates 2020-21** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA. **

2.78

5. **ELA Participation Rates 2021-22** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA. **

2.33

6. **ELA Participation Rates 2022-23** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA. **

2.51

7. **ELA Participation Rates 2023-24** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA. **

2.41

8. **ELA Participation Rates 2024-25** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA. **

2.19

9. **ELA Participation Rates 2025-26** **2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data. **

1.89

Math Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through

10. **Math Participation Rates 2020-21** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

2.82

11. **Math Participation Rates 2021-22** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

2.38

12. **Math Participation Rates 2022-23** *Note: Prior to the 2023-24 SY, Tennessee participated in the Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

2.51

13. **Math Participation Rates 2023-24** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

2.54

14. **Math Participation Rates 2024-25** *Note: Beginning in the 2023-24 SY, the Dynamic Learning Maps (OLM) embedded alternate assessment replaced the MSAA.* *

1.85

15. **Math Participation Rates 2025-26** **2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data.* *

1.87

Science Participation Rates for School Years 2020-21 through 2025-26

16. Science Participation Rates 2020-21 *

2.68

17. Science Participation Rates 2021-22 *

2.08

18. Science Participation Rates 2022-23 *

2.94

19. Science Participation Rates 2023-24 *

1.81

20. Science Participation Rates 2024-25 *

2.58

21. Science Participation Rates 2025-26 *2025-26 is an estimated participation rate using LEA assessment provisioning data. *

2.18

Number of Students Scoring

To calculate: Log into KITE - Reports - Alternate Assessment Reports - Year 2025 - LEA Name and select the .PDF file. The first table in the report provides the number of students scoring Advanced by grade and subject. Calculate the total number of students scoring Advanced for each subject.

22. In school year 2024-25, list the total number of students scoring "Advanced" for **ELA**. *

3

23. In school year 2024-25, list the total number of students scoring "Advanced" for **Math**.

5

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion One

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

Criterion One: The student has a significant cognitive disability. Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should be considered for the alternate assessment.

You must also describe the process for reviewing alternate assessment eligibility for any student scoring Advanced in at least one subject. Advanced performance scores may indicate that the student's skills exceed the eligibility criteria and should prompt a review of the student's continued participation in the alternate assessment.

In the questions below, describe the process used to ensure the IEP team considers only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (approximately 1.0 percent of the student population).

24. How are IEP teams informed of the criterion and expectations for determining if the student meets expectations for participation? *

IEP teams are informed of the criteria and expectations of determining alt participation by the school psychologist and school administrators based on procedures and regulations outlined by the state department and guidance by its representatives.

25. What data are used to make the determination (e.g., cognitive and adaptive behavior data)? *

Cognitive assessments are completed with criterion being 2.5 standard deviations below the mean (standard score of less than or equal to 70). Adaptive assessments are completed with criterion being 2.5 standard deviations below the mean (standard score of less than or equal to 70).

26. How is adaptive behavior data incorporated into the decision-making process? *

Adaptive behavior data is collected using a standardized assessment tool such as the Vineland or ABAS.

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility: Criterion Two

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

Criterion Two: The student is learning content linked to (derived from) state content standards. All students, regardless of the assessment or the least restrictive environment (LRE) should receive standards-aligned instruction that is rigorous, meaningful, and sufficient in duration to increase student outcomes. Special education services are provided in addition to, not in place of, standards-based instruction.

In the questions below, describe the evidence used to ensure the student was provided access to grade-level, standards-aligned instruction. This should include an explanation of the process used to ensure the student received instruction aligned to grade-level standards at an appropriate level of rigor, intensity, and duration comparable to their peers.

27. How does the IEP team ensure the student's performance and skill level are due to a significant cognitive disability rather than an instructional disadvantage? *

The student's record is reviewed for attendance, as well as to ensure instruction has been provided by licensed educators with the appropriate endorsements. It is also reviewed to confirm that research-based interventions have been implemented to address any identified gaps.

28. What data are used to make an informed determination? *

Classroom performance, progress monitoring, cognitive assessment results, and adaptive skills are used to make the decision.

Process for Determining Alternate Assessment Eligibility:

Criterion Three

In this section, describe the processes in place to ensure the IEP team is making informed, data-based decisions aligned to the alternate assessment participation criteria. Please note that completion of the Alternate Assessment Worksheet in TN PULSE alone is not sufficient evidence.

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

In the questions below, describe the process used to determine that the student requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports.

29. What data are used to support this determination? *

The level of support that the student requires to be able to successfully access and engage in the content is used to make this determination.

30. How do IEP teams determine the type and level of supports needed, including for students whose least restrictive environment (LRE) is a highly modified special education setting for all or part of the day? *

The teams use the student's present levels of performance based on assessment, classroom performance, and teacher observation to determine the level of support needed as well as the setting that instruction needs to take place in order for the student to be able to access and be engaged in the content.

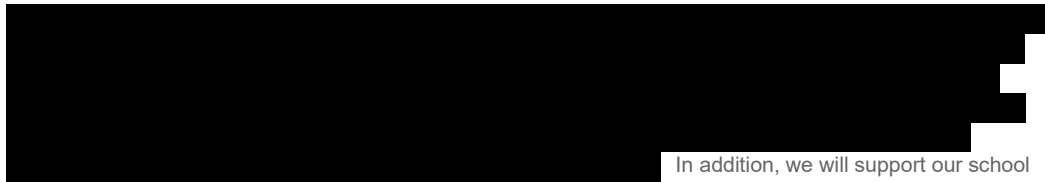
31. How does the IEP team distinguish between supports required due to the student's disability and supports that are available as part of the instructional environment? *

If a student requires more intensive or individualized support to access and be actively engaged in the content and make progress, then it is determined that supports are needed due to the disability.

Disproportionality

Using data by primary eligibility (disability) category and demographic groups, describe LEA patterns of participation in the alternate assessment, including any disproportionate participation and a plan for reducing or eliminating disproportionality. Include a description of the LEA population demographics as compared to statewide demographics.

32. Describe any identified disproportionality in alternate assessment participation and the LEA's plan to address and reduce disproportionate participation, as applicable.



In addition, we will support our school psychologists' ongoing professional growth by covering memberships in the Tennessee Association of School Psychologists (TASP) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). They will also participate in state-led school psychology calls and engage in training opportunities offered through these professional organizations. These steps are meant to strengthen our evaluation processes, build staff capacity, and help make sure identification decisions are fair and based on solid information.

*(For example, if the LEA student population is evenly distributed among White, Black, and Hispanic students, the alternate assessment participation data should reflect a similar distribution across those groups.) **

Informed Parent Participation

Students who participate in alternate assessments are significantly less likely to earn a traditional diploma due to the highly modified content and potential for lower expectations.

In the questions below, describe the processes and practices used to ensure parents are fully informed of the eligibility requirements and implications of alternate assessment participation.

33. How are parents informed of the eligibility criteria and implications of participation? * Parents are informed of the eligibility criteria and the implications of participation through discussion during the IEP meeting. The criteria and supporting data are clearly explained in relation to how the student meets eligibility. The team also discusses that this determination means the student would be working toward an alternate academic diploma and what that involves.
34. How are parents included in the IEP team decision-making process? * Parents are included in the IEP team decision-making process by completing a parent input form, which allows them to share concerns in writing prior to the meeting. They are also given the opportunity during the meeting to ask questions, express concerns, and provide insight to support the team's decision-making. The team makes it clear that parent input is valued and an important part of the process.
35. Participation in the alternate assessment must be reviewed at least annually. Students may transition to the general assessments at any time, as determined by the IEP team.

What processes are in place to ensure these decisions are fully discussed and reviewed at least annually? * During our annual special education institute day, alternate assessment is reviewed with staff, including expectations for determining and documenting participation. This includes a focus on the importance of reviewing each student's eligibility and supporting data on a yearly basis. Staff are reminded that any changes to a student's participation in alternate assessment should be discussed as a team during the IEP meeting, with clear communication to parents about the decision and its impact. Time is also provided for questions and clarification to ensure everyone understands the process and their role in it.

Ensuring Students Are Making Academic Progress

In *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*, the U.S. Supreme Court clarified that an IEP must be "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances." Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education denied the state's 2024-25 waiver request, noting that it did "not find that approving the waiver will advance student academic achievement, as required in section 8401(b)(1)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)."

Thus, LEAs that contribute to the state exceeding the 1.0 percent cap must provide assurances that students participating in alternate assessments are provided access to and engagement in standards-based instruction and are making appropriate academic progress.

36. Describe the policies, procedures, and practices used in your LEA to ensure students are provided instruction that meets the requirements set forth by ESEA and *Endrew F.*, and that students make appropriate academic progress.*

Students have access to grade-level standards and high-quality instruction aligned to state expectations. IEPs include measurable goals with the expectation that students will make meaningful progress. Evidence-based interventions and instruction by appropriately licensed and endorsed staff are also provided. IEPs are developed and reviewed using multiple sources of data, with current present levels of performance clearly stated, and with goals and services aligned. Progress monitoring procedures are also in place. Data-informed decisions are made to direct instruction and support. Staff are trained on writing strong IEPs where coaching, feedback, and ongoing support are provided to ensure that practices are consistent.

Support Requested

37. Please describe any support needed from the department to assist in meeting the requirements outlined in this form. All reasonable requests will be considered. * Any resources, including scenarios that could be used for training purposes and shared with not only special education staff but also building-level administrators.