

## 2017-18 Alternate Assessment Justification

The following must be completed by districts contributing to the state exceeding the 1% cap for students participating in the alternate assessment. Please return the completed form to [Leslie.M.Hoffman@tn.gov](mailto:Leslie.M.Hoffman@tn.gov) by Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2019, by 5 p.m. CT.

### District Name: Loudon County Schools

	% of Alternative Assessments: 2016-2017 Administration	Current % of Alternate Assessments: 2017-2018 Administration	Projected % of Alternate Assessments: 2018-2019 Administration
MSAA ELA	1.69%	1.39%	1.06%
MSAA Math	1.68%	1.39%	1.06%

1. **Percentage Goal:** What is your goal in addressing decision making for identifying the right students for the alternate assessment?

Loudon County will continue to use present levels of performance, teacher observations, psychological evaluations and re-evaluations, adaptive assessments that are norm-referenced, grade level general education teachers and parent input to make decisions for appropriate designation of the TCAP-ALT and MSAA as compared to designation of TNReady assessment for each individual child during the annual review of the individualized education plan by the student's IEP team. Our district goal continues to be that we will use this process with integrity and fidelity.

2. **Process:** Describe the process, training, and steps the district will use to meet the percentage goal reduction proposed above.

Loudon County Schools has a clear protocol in place for examination of the data related to alternate assessment decision making. Our staff of certified and highly trained assessment personnel inclusive of psychologists and speech and language pathologists, teachers, administrators and behavior interventionists collect information based on data collection of each individual student. At least once a year in an annual review, this team meets to review the data collection and with the parent input, the team determines whether the TNReady or ALT assessments are better suited to evaluate the student's personal progress. The decision to use alternate assessment is not one taken lightly and the team, while aware of district goals of less than 1% taking the alternate assessment, does review the data with the individual needs of the

student in the forefront of every decision. The district has trained using the Alternate Assessment information from the 2019 PIE conference and the school assessment personnel staff meets in monthly PLCs to discuss upcoming evaluations and re-evaluations, using that information to assist with informing decisions.

3. **Disproportionality:** Explain how the school district is addressing any disproportionality identified in areas that include, but are not limited to: student's IEP disability, number of students with disability, grade bands (elementary, middle, high school).

Loudon County district assessment personnel are trained in the alternate assessment procedures and TDOE information related to the alternate assessment information. Our assessment personnel examined the data related to alternate assessment and could not find a pattern of disproportionality. We did note that our district is not making the decision "for alternate assessment" as early in a student's academic career as they might have done 6-10 years ago. The review committee also noted that our district is facing a new challenge with increased numbers of students presenting with substance abuse history that do not fit in the typical protocol of disability manifestations; our continued education on that subject will benefit the decision making for the next generation of students considered for alternate assessment.

Our district dropped about 15% of the total from testing in 2018, moving from 1.69% to 1.39%. The 2019 testing rate will be around 1.06%; the anticipated rate for 2020 alternate testing should be at 0.88%.

4. **Parent Participation:** How do parents participate in, or how are they notified of, the IEP decision for their student to participate in the alternate assessment(s)?

Loudon County parents are invited to the IEP meetings and they are presented with draft IEPs 48 hours before the meeting unless they request in writing otherwise. All of these actions are evidenced in EasyIEP EdPlan in the documents section and the contacts section. The parent and student invitations note the consideration of alternate assessment placement during the IEP meeting. Procedural safeguards protocol follows the demands of IDEA, state and the district. In Loudon County, the parent is a valued and important member of the decision-making team and our actions reveal that with integrity and fidelity. The parent participation is evidenced by parent signatures for receipt of the procedural safeguard, participation in the meeting and agreement for the decisions put forth in the IEP. This protocol follows the IDEA sections 34 C.F.R. 300.322 (a) (1) and (2) that discuss appropriate notification of meetings and provide opportunity for meaningful parent participation.

If the parent chooses not to attend and sends in writing that they do not wish to attend an annual IEP, our school psychologists contact the parent to ensure their understanding of the continuation of the alternate assessment decision.

Every time the decision is made to begin or continue alternate assessment, the parent is informed as to the impact of that decision on the diploma earned and discussion is had regarding the pros and cons of the decision.

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

As the director, I thoroughly benefit from the information shared at PIE 2019 by Alison Gauld and Allison Davey in their session on alternate assessment. While we do our best to recreate the training, it is always good to hear it straight from the experts on this at TDOE. Our district would be glad to host a training for neighboring districts on this topic if the opportunity presents itself.