

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 by Monday, Feb. 11, 2019 by 5 p.m. CT.

District Name: Stewart County Schools

	% of Alternative Assessments: 2016-2017 Administration	Current % of Alternate Assessments: 2017-2018 Administration	Projected % of Alternate Assessments: 2018-2019 Administration
MSAA ELA	1.41%	2.02%	.8%
MSAA Math	1.30%	2.02%	.8%

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

Starting in August of 2017, Stewart County School System adopted need procedures to better make Alternate Assessment decisions. Based on current data, Stewart County is expected to only test 0.8% of students with Alternate assessment, which is below the 1% cap. The current procedures have resulted in a significant but appropriate reduction in Alternate Assessment participation. Our goal for decision making is to continue current identification and placement procedures with no more than a 10-15% variance in Alternate Assessment identification, which would keep Stewart County below the 1% cap.

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

The process for goal reduction began with initial implementation starting in August of 2017 and full implementation beginning in August of 2018. The process is outlined below:

A). A data and program analysis indicated that many students were taking alternate assessment because their standardized scores qualified them, and they were placed in a Comprehensive Developmental Classroom. Additionally, a significant number of students

counting toward exceeding the cap had moved from out of state with alternate assessment indicated on the IEP.

B). In order to reduce the number of students tested on Alternate Assessment, based on the above analysis, special education services were restructured. Instead of essentially two levels of special education (Resource and CDC), a third tier of intervention was added in the middle to provide students with more significant needs increased access to support while still accessing the general classroom and standard TNReady testing.

C). Data is monitored at a minimum of every two months (and often on a monthly basis) to ensure appropriate identification for Alternate Assessment.

These steps have already reduced our Alternate Assessment identification to a level under the 1% cap, and these steps will continue in the future. If data monitoring indicates an increase beyond the allowable variance of 10-15%, procedures will be reassessed from the beginning to identify the source and adjust the current system.

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).

No particular disproportionalities were discovered during the data analysis phase. There is no disproportionality with regards to disability, age, race, or sex as the demographics are consistent with the school and community populations. The numbers of students across schools is also consistent. While there is no need to address disproportionality, data concerning disproportionality is continually monitoring as part of the ongoing process. If an issue is ever identified, it can be quickly addressed.

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)?

With the current process, which has been very successful, all parents are notified at the initial eligibility meeting about Alternate Assessment. This includes notification for students who are not participating in alternate assessment. This information is repeated at all reevaluations for all students with an IEP. For students who are participating in Alternate Assessment, they are informed of Alternate Assessment at each IEP meeting. The decision to continue Alternate Assessment or switch to TNReady is considered at an eligible student's reevaluation meeting or an IEP meeting if the teacher feels the discussion is needed. Parents have the opportunity to voice their support or concern, and they sign the IEP either agreeing with Alternate Assessment or disagreeing.

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

Currently, we do not feel any support from the department is needed. Our process to reorganize special education has reduced the participation in Alternate Assessment significantly. This decrease has brought us to an appropriate level under the 1% cap. It's important to note that all students who have participated in Alternate Assessment have met the cognitive and adaptive requirements as well needed extensive CDC support. However, with changes in the organization of the special education department, students are now able to take TNReady even if they meet the requirements for Alternate Assessment. As long as the current process continues to be as effective and successful as it has been, we predict no further issues or need for assistance.