

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 Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2019, by 5 p.m. CT.

District Name: Blount County Schools

	% of Alternative Assessments: 2016-2017 Administration	Current % of Alternate Assessments: 2017-2018 Administration	Projected % of Alternate Assessments: 2018-2019 Administration
MSAA ELA	1.71%	1.81%	1.50%
MSAA Math	1.66%	1.77%	1.50%

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

For each individual student who is eligible to receive special education services outlined by the Tennessee State Department of Education, Blount County Schools will consistently utilize psychological evaluations, norm-referenced adaptive assessments, present levels of academic performance, and teacher observations to make thoughtful, data-driven decisions regarding the appropriateness of the TCAP-ALT and MSAA compared to the TNReady on an annual basis as measured by all members of the student's IEP team agreeing to the testing platform modification.

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

The department of special education for Blount County Schools employs educated, highly-trained professionals in the areas of school psychology, administration, teaching, speech and language, and behavior. These vastly trained professionals spend countless hours in their areas of expertise obtaining norm-referenced data specific to each individual student they serve. At least once an IEP calendar year, these professionals will collaborate and review individual student data along with other members of the student's IEP team to determine the appropriateness of the TNReady compared to the TCAP-ALT and MSAA. The Department of Special Education for Blount County Schools recognizes the Tennessee Department of Education's goal of 1% or less student population taking the TCAP-ALT and MSAA; however, we are committed to meeting the individual needs of each student we serve.

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).

The Department of Special Education for Blount County Schools is unaware of any disproportionality concerns at this time. Our district has recently completed an appeal related to in-school suspensions of multiracial students. The appeal was approved and BCS is not disproportionate in any areas at this time. We strictly enforce and follow the guidelines set forth by the Tennessee Department of Education regarding special education eligibility and services.

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)?

Pursuant to sections 34 C.F.R. § 300.322(a)(1) and (2) of IDEA, Blount County Schools appropriately notifies and allows parents or guardians the opportunity to participate in their child's IEP meetings. In addition, pursuant to Subpart E of IDEA, parents or guardians are given a copy of Parental Safeguards as evidenced by their signature of receipt on each student IEP document. Given the above provisions, it is reasonable to assume that the parent or guardian of a student receiving special education services was included, participated and agreed with the decision to allow or deny access to the modified State assessment for the child's particular grade level and content area as evidenced by IEP signature pages, EdPlan contact logs and meeting notice entries.

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