

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: Moore 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%	1.74%	1.53%
MSAA Math	1.68%	1.74%	1.53%

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

Moore County Schools will continue to use the guidance from the TN Department of Education when determining the right students for the alternate academic assessment. All decisions for identifying students for the alternate assessment are continually based on those students who demonstrate the most significant cognitive disabilities and participate in a school curriculum that includes a substantially modified content. These students possess current adaptive skills that require extensive direct instruction and practice in multiple settings to accomplish the application and transfer of skills. In order for a student to be placed on the alternate assessment, there has to be ample documentation that the student has a significant cognitive disability, learning content is linked to the TN Academic Standards, and the student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports. All decisions are based on a holistic approach with input from educators, administrators, related service providers, school psychologists, and "most importantly" parents. The goal for Moore County Schools is to continue to use the "Considerations for Participation in the Alternate Assessment" criteria and "Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines" when making decisions to place students on the alternate academic assessment. The goal of Moore County Schools is to be below the 1.53% for the alternate assessment; however the needs of the students will always be the number one priority.

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

In order to continue to meet the needs of our students with significant cognitive disabilities the following strategies will be used;

1. The director of special education will continue to gather school and district data on current participation rates for the alternate assessment. The eligibility for participation will be monitored by the director of special education. All documents pertinent to the decision will be reviewed for compliance.
2. The director of special education, school psychologist, and special education teachers will continue to gather data on the characteristics of the students participating in the alternate assessment. Only those students with significant cognitive disabilities and the need for substantial supports will be considered eligible to take the alternate assessment.
3. The LEA will continue to review the state's definition of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Determine if current IEP practices align with the guidance document for the alternate assessment. A "Determination of Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Participation" checklist will accompany the IEP when deciding to place a student on an alternate assessment. A copy of the checklist will be given to the parents, at the IEP meeting. The checklist will be reviewed and thoroughly explained to the parents at the IEP meeting.
4. The LEA will continue to provide professional development for teachers and administration on the alternate assessment and the population of students it was designed to assess.
5. The LEA will continue to provide information for parents on the alternate assessment. The LEA will continue to emphasize to parents that placing a child on the alternate assessment path could have an impact on the type of diploma he/she

receives as well as the readiness for career and postsecondary opportunities.

According to the Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines, "Students who meet eligibility for the alternate assessment may be classified in any disability categories listed in the IDEA, as long as there is documentation that the student has a significant cognitive disability and significant adaptive skill deficits." For some of our students, Intellectually Disadvantaged is not their primary disability. These other disabilities include; OHI, AUTISM, or OI; however these students possess significant cognitive disabilities, require substantial support, and intensive instruction to acquire general knowledge. Substantial documentation in multiple settings is required to support the decisions to place our students on the alternate assessment.

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 special education director frequently runs reports from EASY IEP to identify any areas of disproportionality. Any areas for concern are immediately addressed with building administration, teachers, related service providers, school psychologist, and support personnel. Additional areas of concern are discussed in data and PLC meetings.

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)?

For the students who have been placed on the alternate assessment, there has been 100% parental attendance and participation in the IEP meetings. The parents are given information on the alternate assessment as well as the possible impact on the type of diploma their child will receive as well as career/postsecondary readiness. In moving forward the parents will also sign the "Determination of Eligibility for Alternate Assessment Participation Checklist" in addition to the IEP when student is placed on the alternate assessment.

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

It is requested that the TNDOE continue to provide access to professional development on the alternate assessment.