ACCOMMODATIONS MANUAL

HOW TO SELECT, ADMINISTER, AND EVALUATE USE OF ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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Accommodations Manual: How To Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities and *Professional Development Guide* represent the best thinking of 2005. We are learning more about the effective education of students with disabilities every day, and we expect these materials to evolve and improve every year.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodation for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities* presents a five-step process for Individualized Educational Program (IEP) teams, 504 plan committees, general and special education teachers, administrators, and district level assessment staff to use in the selection, administration, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of instructional and assessment accommodations by students with disabilities. A companion *Professional Development Guide* has been developed to support the use of this manual.

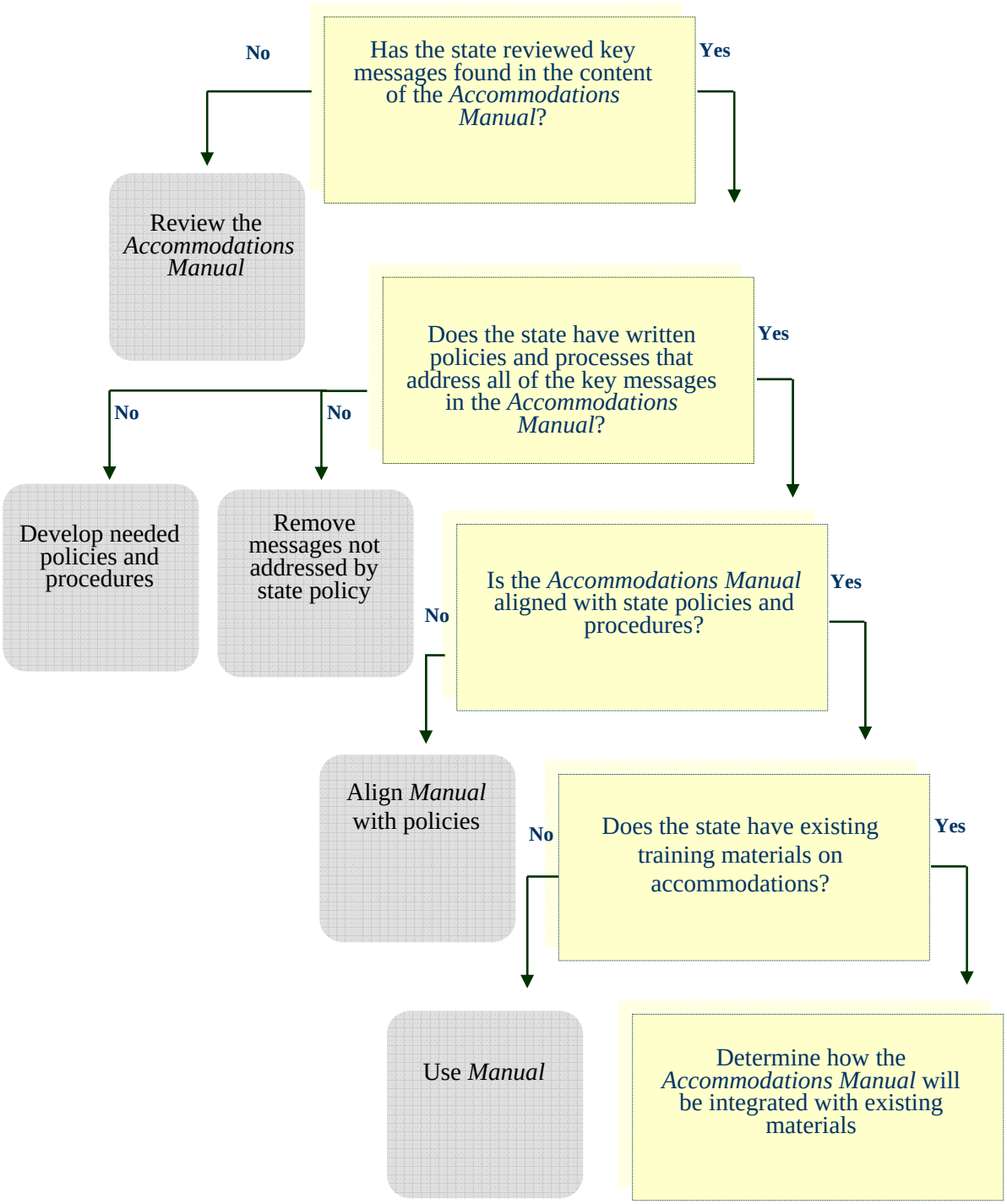
The guidance in the manual pertains to students with disabilities who participate in large-scale assessments and the instruction they receive.[1] The five steps include the following:

1. Expect students with disabilities to achieve grade-level academic content standards.
2. Learn about accommodations for instruction and assessment.
3. Select accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual students.
4. Administer accommodations during instruction and assessment.
5. Evaluate and improve accommodation use

[1] The information does not pertain to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are assessed according to alternate achievement standards.

FIGURE 1

POLICY FRAMEWORK FLOWCHART



IMPORTANT NOTE TO STATES

The *Accommodations Manual: How To Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities* was developed to establish guidelines for states to use for the selection, administration, and evaluation of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities. The *Professional Development Guide* and PowerPoint presentation are companion materials for facilitators to use to support the implementation of the information in this manual. This manual was designed so personnel could insert state-specific information and policies related to content standards, assessments, and accommodations. In this way states can assure the information in this manual is consistent with state policies. Although federal laws requiring the provision of accommodations have been codified through such legislative initiatives as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the No Child Left behind Act (NCLB), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), there is some variability among states with implementation practices.

Prior to disseminating this manual, state personnel must customize this manual to be consistent with state regulations and policies. A "Policy Framework Flowchart" has been included to assist with this process.

Please, review each element presented in the Policy Framework Flowchart (Figure 1) and determine how the information in the manual "fits" with your policies and procedures.

Places in the manual where state-specific information and policies can be inserted are indicated by boxed text stating, "Insert current state information or policy related to…" states should insert the following information:

- current policy about participation of students with disabilities in state assessments;
- website for alternate assessment information;
- requirements for students to meet grade-level academic content standards;
- website for all content standards; and
- policies on test security.

Check the following against your own state's guidelines:

- (Fact Sheets 1-4)—accommodations that are "standard (allowed); nonstandard (not allowed or have reporting implications); for "instructional use only"
- (Fact Sheet 7)—Rules for Administering Specific Accommodations
- (Teacher Tool 5)—Logistics Planning Checklist

The *Professional Development Guide* may be used by state and district-level staff to plan professional development related to this manual.

STEP 1

EXPECT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS REQUIRING PARTICIPATION BY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Several important laws require the participation of students with disabilities in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. These include federal laws such as No Child Left Behind 2001 (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Stronger accountability for results is one of the four basic education reform principles contained in NCLB. This law complements the provisions in providing public accountability at the school, district, and state levels for all students with disabilities. NCLB explicitly calls for

> …the participation in such assessments of all students [Sec. 1111 (3) (C) (i)]. (The term 'such assessments' refers to a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments.) The reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities—as defined under Section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—necessary to measure the academic achievement of such students relative to state academic content and state student academic achievement standards [Sec. 1111 (3) (C)(ii)].

One of the basic reform principles of NCLB is stronger accountability for results for all students. Through this federal legislation, in addition to other state and local district initiatives, assessments aimed at increasing accountability provide important information with regard to

- how successful schools are including all students in standards-based education,
- how well students are achieving standards, and
- what needs to be improved upon for specific groups of students.

There are several critical elements in NCLB that hold schools accountable for educational results. Academic content standards (what students should learn) and academic achievement standards (how well they should learn) in reading/language arts and mathematics (with science added in 2007-08) form the basis of state accountability systems. State assessments are the mechanism for checking whether schools have been successful in students attaining the knowledge and skills defined by the content standards. By 2005-06, states must provide assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics for all students, including students with disabilities, in grades 3-8 and once in high school. By 2007-08, states must provide science assessments in at least one grade in each of three grade spans (3-5, 6-9, 10-12) each year. School, district, and state accountability is based on measuring success in educating all of its students and determining what needs to be improved for specific groups of students. The accountability system is defined in terms of adequate yearly progress (AYP), a way to measure the

improvement in achieving standards for all students and designated subgroups each year. Schools, districts, and states are held accountable for improvements on an annual basis by public reporting[2] and ultimately through consequences if AYP is not achieved.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

IDEA specifically governs services provided to students with disabilities. Accountability at the individual level is provided through IEPs developed on the basis of each child's unique needs. IDEA requires the participation of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include:

> Children with disabilities are included in general state and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary [Sec. 612 (a) (16) (A)]. The term 'individualized education program' or 'IEP' means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes…a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP team determines that the child will not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and how the child will be assessed [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (V) and VI)].

Based on current trends, the use of assessments for accountability purposes will likely increase in the future, supported by other legislative initiatives passed by states in their efforts to implement educational reform.

INCLUDING ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE ACCOUNTABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Both federal and state laws require that all students with disabilities be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of students. Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members must actively engage in a planning process that addresses:

- assurance of the provision of accommodations to facilitate student access to grade-level instruction and state assessments, and
- use of alternate assessments to assess the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

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2 Each parent/guardian receives a report of their child's reading and mathematics assessment results. Also included in this report are district and state results.

INSERT CURRENT STATE-SPECIFIC POLICIES ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE ASSESSTMENT.

INSERT CURRENT STATE WEBSITE FOR ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT INFORMATION.

EQUAL ACCESS TO GRADE-LEVEL CONTENT

With the focus of legislation aimed at accountability and the inclusion of all students comes the drive to ensure equal access to grade-level content standards. Academic content standards are educational targets for students to learn at each grade level. Teachers ensure that students work toward grade-level content standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. Providing accommodations during instruction and assessments may also promote equal access to grade-level content. To accomplish this goal of equal access,

- every IEP team member must be familiar with content standards and accountability systems at the state and district level;
- every IEP team member must know where to locate standards and updates; and
- collaboration between general and special educators must occur for successful student access.

All students with disabilities can work toward grade-level academic content standards and most of these students will be able to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met:

1. Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
2. IEPs for students with disabilities are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for "learning how to learn").
3. Appropriate accommodations are provided to help students access grade-level content.

The selection, administration, and evaluation of accommodations for instruction and assessment are the focus of the *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities.* Since assessment

and instructional accommodations must be the same for individual students, guidelines for selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment are the same. However, the *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities* will provide complete guidelines only for administering and evaluating the effectiveness of assessment accommodations.

INSERT CURRENT STATE WEBSITE FOR ALL CONTENT STANDARDS.

INSERT CURRENT STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS TO MEET GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS.

STEP 2

LEARN ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.

Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. The accommodations provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., lowering or not counting a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

Accommodations are commonly categorized in four ways: presentation, response, setting, and timing and scheduling:

- **Presentation Accommodations**—Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual.
- **Response Accommodations**—Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.
- **Setting Accommodations**—Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.
- **Timing and Scheduling Accommodations**—Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized.

Refer to Fact Sheets 1-4 for specific examples of accommodations in these categories.

MODIFICATIONS OR ALTERATIONS VS. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations. They provide access. However, modifications or alterations refer to practices that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Using modifications may result in implications that could adversely affect students throughout their educational career. Examples of modifications include:

- requiring a student to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems),
- reducing assignments and assessments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items,
- revising assignments or assessments to make them easier (e.g., crossing out half of the response choices on a multiple-choice test so that a student only has to pick from two options instead of four), or
- giving a student hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests.

Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and/or classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content. If students have not had access to critical, assessed content, they may be at risk for not meeting graduation requirements. Providing a student with a modification during a state accountability assessment may constitute a test irregularity and may result in an investigation into the school's or district's testing practices.

STEP 3

SELECT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

To assure students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every IEP team member must be knowledgeable about the state and district academic content standards and assessments. Effective decision-making about the provision of appropriate accommodations begins with making good instructional decisions. In turn, making appropriate instructional decisions is facilitated by gathering and reviewing good information about the student's disability and present level of performance in relation to local and state academic standards. In essence, the process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the IEP team attempt to "level the playing field" so that students with disabilities can participate in the general education curriculum. IEP team meetings that simply engage people in checking boxes on a state or local "compliance" document are neither conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor do they advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum.

DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT'S IEP

For students with disabilities served under IDEA, determining appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations should not pose any particular problems for IEP teams that follow good IEP practices. With information obtained from the required summary of the student's present level of educational performance (PLEP), the process of identifying and documenting accommodations should be a fairly straightforward event. The PLEP is a federal requirement in which IEP team members must state "how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum—the same curriculum as non-disabled children" [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)].

Depending on the design and overall format of a typical IEP, there are potentially three areas in which accommodations can be addressed:

1. "Consideration of Special Factors" [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered

2. "Supplementary Aids and Services" [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes "aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate

3. "Participation in Assessments" [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT'S 504 PLAN

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide accommodations to students with disabilities even if they do not qualify for special education services under IDEA. The definition of a disability under Section 504 is much broader than the definition under IDEA. All IDEA students are also covered by Section 504, but not all Section 504 students are eligible for services under IDEA. Section 504 states:

> No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. [29 U.S.C. Sec. 794]

Examples of students who may receive assessment accommodations based on their 504 accommodations plan include students with

- communicable diseases (e.g., hepatitis);
- temporary disabilities from accidents who may need short term hospitalization or homebound recovery;
- allergies or asthma;
- drug or alcoholic addictions, as long as they are not currently using illegal drugs;
- environmental illnesses; or
- attention difficulties.

INVOLVING STUDENTS IN SELECTING, USING, AND EVALUATING ACCOMMODATIONS

It is critical for students with disabilities to understand their disabilities and learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Some students have had limited experience expressing personal preferences and advocating for themselves. Speaking out about preferences, particularly in the presence of "authority figures," may be a new role for students, one for which they need guidance and feedback. Teachers and other IEP team members can play a key role in working with students to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations.

The more that students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases. Self-advocacy skills become critical here. Students need opportunities to learn which accommodations are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make certain those accommodations are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school.

DETERMINING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS USE

When selecting accommodations for state assessments with a student, it is important to look at state policies and procedures to determine whether use of an accommodation results in consequences on a state test (e.g., lowering or not counting a student's score). Assessment accommodations that result in adverse consequences are commonly referred to as modifications, adaptations, alterations, and nonstandard or nonapproved accommodations (Thurlow & Wiener, 2000). The terminology can be confusing and terms may have different meanings in various contexts.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE ACCOMMODATION SELECTION

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's IEP team or 504 plan committee. Use the questions provided below to guide the selection of appropriate accommodations for students receiving special education services or a 504 plan for the first time and for students who are currently using accommodations:

- What are the student's learning strengths and areas of further improvement?
- How do the student's learning needs affect the achievement of grade-level content standards?
- What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade-level content standards?
- What accommodations will increase the student's access to instruction and assessment by addressing the student's learning needs and reducing the effect of the student's disability? These may be new accommodations or accommodations the student is currently using.
- What accommodations are regularly used by the student during instruction and assessments?
- What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used?
- What is the student's perception of how well an accommodation "worked?"
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations?
- What difficulties did the student experience when using accommodations?
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about how the accommodation worked?
- Should the student continue to use an accommodation, are changes needed, or should the use of the accommodation be discontinued?

Of the accommodations that match the student's needs, consider

- the student's willingness to learn to use the accommodation,
- opportunities to learn how to use the accommodation in classroom settings, and
- conditions for use on state assessments.

Plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accommodation. Be certain there is ample time to learn to use instructional and assessment accommodations before an assessment takes place. Finally, plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the student's use of accommodations.

Refer to Fact Sheets 5 and 6 and Teacher Tools 1 and 2 for additional information in completing this step.

STEP 4

ADMINISTER ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments.

ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

Planning for Test Day

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accommodations during state and district assessments must be mapped out. It is not uncommon for members of the IEP team, most often special education teachers, to be given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating, and providing assessment accommodations for all students who may need them. Thus, it is essential for all IEP team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accommodations. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel to plan the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on test day.

Refer to Teacher Tools 3, 4, and 5.

Prior to the day of a test, be certain test administrators and proctors know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test administrators and proctors need to know whether a student will be allowed extra time to complete the test and when the testing time is ended, what plan exists for the student to continue working. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a student or writing student responses, must adhere to specific guidelines so that student scores are valid.

Administering Assessments and Accommodations

State and local laws and policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. Test administrators, proctors, and all staff involved in test administration must adhere to these policies. The Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (NCME, 1995) states that test administrators and others involved in assessments must

- take appropriate security precautions before, during, and after the administration of the assessment;
- understand the procedures needed to administer the assessment prior to administration;

- administer standardized assessments according to prescribed procedures and conditions and notify appropriate persons if any nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;
- avoid any conditions in the conduct of the assessment that might invalidate the results;
- provide for and document all reasonable and allowable accommodations for the administration of the assessment to persons with disabilities or special needs; and
- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment. [3]

Failure to adhere to these practices may constitute a test irregularity or a breach of test security and must be reported and investigated according to state and local testing policies.

ETHICAL TESTING PRACTICES

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices relate to inappropriate interactions between test administrators and students taking the test. Unethical practices include allowing a student to answer fewer questions, changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses, or giving clues in any way.

STANDARDIZATION

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure test results reflect actual student learning.

TEST SECURITY

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. Test security can become an issue when accessible test formats are used (e.g., Braille, large print) or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader, scribe). In order to ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to (1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone, and (3) return all materials as instructed.

Refer to Fact Sheet 7 for detailed rules for the administration of specific accommodations.

[3] National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement.* Washington, DC: Author.

INSERT CURRENT STATE POLICY ON TEST SECURITY AND TEST IRREGULARITIES.

STEP 5

EVALUATE AND IMPROVE ACCOMMODATIONS USE

Accommodations must be selected on the basis of the individual student's needs and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment. Collecting and analyzing data on the use and effectiveness of accommodations are necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments. Data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may reveal questionable patterns of accommodations use, as well as support the continued use of some accommodations or the rethinking of others. Examination of the data may also indicate areas in which the IEP team, 504 plan committee, and test administrators need additional training and support.

In addition to collecting information about the use of accommodations within the classroom, information also needs to be gathered on the implementation of accommodations during assessment. Observations conducted during test administration, interviews with test administrators, and talking with students after testing sessions will likely yield data that can be used to guide the formative evaluation process at the school or district level and at the student level. Information on the use of accommodations can be feasible to collect when it is coded on the test form with other student information. Accommodation information can be analyzed in different ways. Here are some questions to guide data analysis at the school and district level and the student level.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION OF ACCOMMODATION USE AT THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LEVEL

1. Are there policies to ensure ethical testing practices, the standardized administration of assessments, and that test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. Are there procedures in place to ensure test administration procedures are not compromised with the provision of accommodations?
3. Are students receiving accommodations as documented in their IEP and 504 plans?
4. Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to directions for the implementation of accommodations?
5. How many students with IEPs or 504 plans are receiving accommodations?
6. What types of accommodations are provided and are some used more than others?

7. How well do students who receive accommodations perform on state and local assessments? If students are not meeting the expected level of performance, is it due to the students not having had access to the necessary instruction, not receiving the accommodation, or using the accommodations that were not effective?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

1. What accommodations are used by the student during instruction and assessments?
2. What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations are used verses when accommodations are not used? If a student did not meet the expected level of performance, is it due to not having access to the necessary instruction, not receiving the accommodations, or using accommodations was ineffective?
3. What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation worked?
4. What combinations of accommodations seem to be effective?
5. What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations?
6. What are the perceptions of teachers and others about how the accommodation appears to be working?

Refer to Teacher Tool 6.

These questions can be used to formatively evaluate the accommodations used at the student level, as well as the school or district levels. School- and district-level questions can be addressed by a committee responsible for continuous improvement efforts, while the student-level questions need to be considered by the IEP team. It is critical to stress that formative evaluation is not the responsibility of just one individual. The entire IEP team should contribute to the information gathering and decision-making processes.

FACT SHEET 1
PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS

WHAT ARE PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS?

Presentation accommodations allow students to access instruction and assessments in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access include auditory, tactile, visual, and a combination of auditory and visual accommodations.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS?

Students who benefit most from presentation accommodations are those with print disabilities, defined as difficulty or inability to visually read standard print because of a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability.

INDICATE STATE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN CHARTS.

Review the following tables of accommodations and using check marks in the appropriate columns, indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided. These conditions are defined as: (1) Standard—the accommodation described is allowed for assessment and instruction; (2) Nonstandard—use of the accommodation on state assessments will result in a nonscorable assessment; and (3) Instruction Only—the accommodation is allowed for instructional purposes only and cannot be used on state assessments. Use an asterisk (*) to indicate state restrictions on the use of the accommodation for particular assessments.

ACCOMMODATIONS CONDITIONS

VISUAL PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Nonstandard	Instruction only
Large Print Large print editions of tests and instructional materials are required for some students with visual impairments. It is recommended that regular print materials be manipulated to reformat test items and enlarge or change the font as needed. All text and graphic materials—including labels and captions on pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, exponential numbers, notes, and footnotes—must be presented in at least 18-point type for students who need large print. Students, working with their teachers, need to find an optimal print size and determine the smallest print that can still be read. (Copyright issues may need to be addressed). It is important for the print to be clear, with high contrast between the color of the print and the color of the background. When using large-print classroom material, consider the weight, size, and awkwardness of books. Large-print books are now available that look very similar to the same books in standard print.			
Magnification Devices Some students with visual impairments read regular print materials and enlarge the print by using magnification devices. These include eyeglass-mounted magnifiers, free standing or handheld magnifiers, enlarged computer monitors, or computers with screen enlargement programs. Some students also use Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to enlarge print and display printed material with various image enhancements on a screen.			
Sign Language Sign language interpreters may be required for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Sometimes an interpreter is only needed or allowed to sign instructions and to assist in communication. Some students may need all print materials interpreted while learning to read print. Interpreters need to be able to translate in the same method of sign language typically used by the student (e.g., American Sign Language, Cued Speech). Interpreters must not paraphrase, clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance with the meaning of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items. Graphic materials may be described but should also be available in print or tactile formats. A standard video presentation of a test in sign language may be used to increase quality, consistency, pacing, and accuracy.			

FACT SHEET 1 *continued* **TACTILE PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**	**Standard**	**Nonstandard**	**Instruction only**
Braille Braille is a method of reading a raised-dot code with the fingertips. Not all students who are blind read Braille fluently or choose Braille as their primary mode of reading. Even if they use it as their primary mode of reading, Braille users should also build skills in using audiotape, compact discs, and speech synthesis. Decisions also need to be made about whether a student will use contracted or uncontracted Braille. Check to see if practice tests are available in Braille. Although still uncommon, "refreshable Braille displays" are electronic devices used to read and write text. The device is connected to a computer and produces Braille output on the Braille display. The Nemeth Braille Code is a system of Braille that makes it possible to convey technical expressions in a written medium to students who are blind or visually impaired. The Nemeth Braille Code contains numerous technical symbols that occur in mathematics and science.			
Tactile Graphics Tactile graphic images provide graphic information through fingers instead of eyes. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations) is presented in a raised format (paper or thermoform). Tactile sensitivity (recognizing graphic images through touch) is less discriminating than visual reading, making many diagrams too complicated to understand without significant additional information. Additional information can be created through word descriptions.			

FACT SHEET 1 *continued* **AUDITORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**	**Standard**	**Nonstandard**	**Instruction only**
Human Reader A qualified person may be provided to read orally to students who are unable to decode text visually. Readers should use even inflection so that the student does not receive any cues by the way the information is read. It is important for readers to read test items/questions and text word for word exactly as written. Readers may not clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance to students. Readers need to be familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the content. This is especially important for high school mathematics and science. Graphic materials may be described but should also be made available in print or tactile formats. Readers must be provided to students on an individual basis—not to a group of students. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. This cannot occur when a person is reading to an entire group of students.			
Audiotape or Compact Disk Written tests and instructional materials are prerecorded on an audio cassette or compact disk (CD) that a student accesses by listening. Classroom directions, assignments, and lectures could also be recorded. When taping lectures, students should sit near the front of the classroom, use a small microphone, and tape only parts of the class that can clearly be replayed (e.g., turn the tape recorder off during small group discussions). Advantages include ease of operation and low costs. The greatest difficulty with an audio cassette is rewinding if a student wants to repeat material. This is not as difficult with a CD that can be programmed. Audio versions of tests and other written materials need to be supplemented with a print or Braille version of the text so a student can have access to complicated graphic material. When using a two-sided cassette tape, students may need to be reminded to play the other side. Spot check audio formats before use to make certain everything is working properly. Copyright issues may need to be addressed. Audiotapes and CDs must be signed out, collected, and kept in a secure location.			
Books on Tape Books on Tape is a service provided by Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic for which students and schools can apply. Students call a toll-free number to borrow textbooks for a specified period of time. A special tape player may also be needed.			
Recorded Books Recorded Books are produced on tape or CD and can be borrowed from libraries or purchased from bookstores. Many online bookstores also carry recorded books, making access even easier. Some of the tapes contain the full book and some are abridged (e.g., Reader's Digest version). These tapes play on standard cassette or CD players. Tapes or CDs for children often include a book for following along. Students who can see print may want to obtain a print copy of a taped book to follow along.			
Audio Amplification Devices Some students may require audio amplification devices in addition to hearing aids to increase clarity. A teacher may use an amplification system when working with students in classroom situations that contain a great deal of ambient noise.			

FACT SHEET 1 *continued* **MULTI-SENSORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**	**Standard**	**Nonstandard**	**Instruction only**
Videotape and Descriptive Video Many books have been made into movies, giving students a visual and auditory way to access literature. Videotapes are now often closed-captioned. Captions are visible when activated by a decoder. Built-in decoders are required on all 13-inch or larger television sets. Descriptive video is a descriptive narration of key visual elements, making television programs, feature films, home videos, and other visual media accessible to people who are visually impaired. Key visual elements include actions, gestures, facial expressions, and scene changes. Inserted within the natural pauses in dialogue, audio descriptions of important visual details help to engage viewers with the story.			
Screen Reader A screen reader is a computer application that converts text to synthesized speech or to Braille (read with an auxiliary Braille display). Computer literacy is essential for screen reader use. Screen reading software allows students to listen to text as it is displayed on a computer screen. Students can choose to listen to any text multiple times. Some products work by having a student lay a page on a scanner. When a student activates the machine, it reads the text aloud using an optical character recognition (OCR) system. Mathematics formulas are normally displayed on screen as graphics that cannot be read by a screen reader.			
Visual Cues Students who are deaf or hard of hearing need visual cues in the classroom. Teachers should keep their faces visible to the class when speaking, pass out printed material before class, repeat questions asked by other students, and summarize classroom discussion.			
Notes, Outlines, and Instructions Written notes may be taken by another student and copied. A teacher could provide a print copy of instructions and assignments. Students could also be given a detailed outline of the material to be covered during the class period and an outline of material to be covered (syllabus) at the beginning of each grading period.			
Talking Materials Many classroom materials are now available with auditory components. These include calculators, “talking” clocks, thermometers, timers, and voltmeters.			

FACT SHEET 2
RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS

WHAT ARE RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Response accommodations allow students to complete assignments, tests, and activities in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Response accommodations can benefit students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities (including difficulties with memory, sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization).

INDICATE STATE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN CHARTS.

Review the following tables of accommodations and using check marks in the appropriate columns, indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided. These conditions are defined as: (1) Standard—the accommodation described is allowed for assessment and instruction; (2) Nonstandard—use of the accommodation on state assessments will result in a nonscorable assessment; and (3) Instruction Only—the accommodation is allowed for instructional purposes only and cannot be used on state assessments. Use an asterisk (*) to indicate state restrictions on the use of the accommodation for particular assessments.

ACCOMMODATIONS CONDITIONS

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Nonstandard	Instruction only
Scribe A scribe is someone who writes down what a student dictates by an assistive communication device, pointing, sign language, or speech. Much skill is involved in being a scribe, skill that requires extensive practice. A scribe may not edit or alter student work in any way and must record word for word exactly what the student has dictated. Scribes should request clarification from the student about the use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling key words, and must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. Individuals who serve as a scribe need to carefully prepare to assure they know the vocabulary involved and understand the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The role of the scribe is to write only what is dictated, no more and no less.			
Word Processor A student types on a word processor. This option may increase a student's independence and reduce the need for a trained scribe. Research has found that students who complete better work on computers than by handwriting are students who are very familiar with computers and have good keyboarding skills. Assistive technology that can be used for typing includes customized keyboards, mouth or headstick or other pointing devices, sticky keys, touch screen, and trackball.			
Speech to Text Speech-to-text conversion or voice recognition allows students to use their voices as input devices. Voice recognition may be used to dictate text into the computer or to give commands to the computer (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, or saving work). Older voice recognition applications require each word to be separated by a distinct space. This allows the machine to determine where one word begins and the next stops. This style of dictation is called discrete speech. Continuous speech voice recognition allows students to dictate text fluently into the computer. These new applications can recognize speech at up to 160 words per minute. While these systems do give students system control, they are not yet hands-free.			
Brailler A Brailler is a Braille keyboard used for typing Braille that can then be printed in standard print or Braille (embosser). The Brailler is similar to a typewriter or computer keyboard. Paper is inserted into the Brailler and multiple keys are pressed at once, creating Braille dots with each press. Through an alternative computer port, newer Braillers can simultaneously act as a speech synthesizer that reads the text displayed on the screen when paired with a screen reading program.			

FACT SHEET 2 *continued* **DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**	**Standard**	**Nonstandard**	**Instruction only**
Note Takers Students may have another student take notes or use an electronic note-taking device. Portable note-taking devices are small, lightweight devices equipped with a Braille or typewriter-style keyboard for input and synthetic voice. Some note takers also contain a Braille display (between 18 and 40 characters) for output. Note takers are excellent tools for recording notes in school, at home, or at work. They often have additional features such as a calculator and a calendar function. Newer models have a built-in modem, which allows the user to access e-mail as well as surf the Web. When these models are connected to a PC, files can be exchanged or information can be sent from the note taker to a Braille embosser or to an ink printer. When linked to a computer using a screen reader, note takers equipped with a Braille display can act as a Braille output device.			
Tape Recorder A student uses a tape recorder to record class work or test responses rather than writing on paper.			
Responding in Test Booklet This accommodation allows a student to write directly in a test booklet rather than on an answer sheet (e.g., scannable "bubble" sheet).			
Monitor Test Response Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet. Students who are able to use bubbled answer sheets may benefit from having an adult simply monitor the placement of their responses to ensure they are actually responding to the intended question.			

FACT SHEET 2 *continued* **MATERIALS OR DEVICES USED TO SOLVE OR ORGANIZE RESPONSES**	**Standard**	**Nonstandard**	**Instruction only**
Calculation Devices If a student's disability affects mathematics calculation but not reasoning, a calculator or other assistive device (e.g., abacus, arithmetic table, manipulatives, or number chart) may be used. It is important to determine whether the use of a calculation device is a matter of convenience or a necessary accommodation. It is important to know the goal of instruction and assessment before making decisions about the use of calculation devices. For example, if students are learning subtraction with regrouping, using a calculator would not give a student an opportunity to show regrouping. On the other hand, if students are learning problem solving skills that include subtraction (e.g., bargain shopping for items with a better value), the use of a calculation device may be a valid accommodation. Calculators may be adapted with large keys or voice output (talking calculators). In some cases, an abacus may be useful for students when mathematics problems are to be calculated without a calculator. The abacus functions as paper and pencil for students with visual impairments.			
Spelling and Grammar Devices The use of a dictionary may be allowed on assignments that require an extended response or essay. Spelling and grammar can also be checked with pocket spell checkers. Students enter an approximate spelling and then see or hear the correct spelling or correct use of a word. Students who use a word processor may be allowed to use a spell-check or other electronic spelling device. Some states require spell-check and grammar-checking devices to be turned off for writing tests.			
Visual Organizers Visual organizers include graph paper, highlighters, place markers, scratch paper, and templates. Students may not be allowed to write in books owned by the school. Photocopying parts of written text allows a student to use a highlighter and write in the margins.			
Graphic Organizers Graphic organizers help students arrange information into patterns in order to organize their work and stay focused on the content. Graphic organizers are especially helpful for writing reports and essays. Semantic mapping software is now available to enable students to understand a narrative story or writing elements through graphics.			

FACT SHEET 3
SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS

WHAT ARE SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS?

Setting accommodations change the location in which a student receives instruction or participates in an assessment, or the conditions of an instructional or assessment setting. Students may be allowed to sit in a different location than the majority of students in order to reduce distractions to themselves or others, or to increase physical access or access to special equipment. Some students may need changes in the conditions of an instructional setting. Every instructional and assessment setting should have good lighting and ventilation, with a comfortable room temperature, and be as free as possible from noise, traffic, and other interruptions. Chairs should be comfortable and tables set at an appropriate height with sufficient room for materials. Staff should check that all needed materials and equipment are available and in good condition.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS?

Setting accommodations, which are changes in instructional and assessment locations, can benefit students who are easily distracted in large group settings and who concentrate best in a small group or individual setting. Changes in location also benefit students who receive accommodations (e.g. reader, scribe, frequent breaks) that might distract other students. Students with physical disabilities might need a more accessible location, specific room conditions, or special equipment.

INDICATE STATE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN CHARTS.

Review the following tables of accommodations and using check marks in the appropriate columns, indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided. These conditions are defined as: (1) Standard—the accommodation described is allowed for assessment and instruction; (2) Nonstandard—use of the accommodation on state assessments will result in a nonscorable assessment; and (3) Instruction Only—the accommodation is allowed for instructional purposes only and cannot be used on state assessments. Use an asterisk (*) to indicate state restrictions on the use of the accommodation for particular assessments.

ACCOMMODATIONS CONDITIONS

DESCRIPTION OF SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Nonstandard	Instruction only
Reduce Distractions to the Student A setting accommodation to reduce distractions would allow a student to do individual work or take tests in a different location, usually in a place with few or no other students. Changes may also be made to a student's location within a room. For example, a student who is easily distracted may not want to sit near windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners. Sitting near the teacher's desk or in the front of a classroom may be helpful for some students. Physically enclosed classrooms (classrooms with four walls) may be more appropriate than open classrooms, and study carrels might also be helpful for students who are easily distracted. Students with low vision may prefer to sit in the part of a room that has the best light. Some students concentrate best while wearing noise buffers such as earphones, earplugs, or headphones.			
Reduce Distractions to Other Students Some students use accommodations that may distract other students, such as having a reader or scribe. In addition, some students might perform better when they can read and think out loud or make noises that distract other students. Distractions to other students are reduced by using these accommodations in individual settings.			
Change Location to Increase Physical Access or to Use Special Equipment Occasionally a setting might be changed to increase physical access for a student. For example, a student who uses a wheelchair with a specially designed tabletop and assistive technology may not have adequate space in an auditorium with theater seating. Other students may need equipment that requires specific locations for learning and assessment. For example, a student who uses a computer for word processing might need to complete assignments and take tests in a computer lab. A student who uses large-print materials may need to sit at a table rather than at a desk with a small surface area. Another student might benefit from a standing work station. Keep aisles clear, and do not leave doors or cupboards half open to increase access for students with visual or physical disabilities. Provide space for a guide dog, and explain to other students that the dog is working and should be ignored. Make certain the school is accessible for students with mobility impairments. Students should have access to the building, cafeteria, classrooms, media center, restrooms, and playground. In essence, they should be able to access any room or space on the school grounds used by students in general. Some students may need to receive educational services and participate in assessments in home or hospital settings.			

FACT SHEET 4

TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS

WHAT ARE TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS?

Timing and scheduling accommodations change the allowable length of time to complete assignments, assessments, and activities, and may also change the way the time is organized. Timing accommodations give students the time and the breaks they need to complete activities, assignments, and assessments. Other changes may include the particular time of day, day of the week, or number of days over which a particular activity, assignment, or assessment takes place.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS?

Timing and scheduling accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and assessments. Extra time may be needed to process written text (e.g., a student with a learning disability who processes information slowly), to write (e.g., a student with limited dexterity as a result of arthritis), or to use other accommodations or equipment (e.g., assistive technology, audiotape, scribe).

Students who cannot concentrate continuously for an extended period or who become frustrated, or stressed easily may need frequent or extended relaxation breaks. It may also help to schedule in the morning those classes and tests that require the greatest concentration for students who have difficulty concentrating and staying on task as the day progresses. Scheduling changes might also be helpful for students on medications that affect their ability to stay alert or who have more productive times of the day.

Some students with health-related disabilities may have functioning levels that vary during the day because of the effects of medications or diminishing energy levels. For example, blood sugar levels may need to be maintained by eating several times a day at prescribed times. These students could be accommodated by scheduling tests and activities around the eating schedule, or by allowing food to be taken to the classroom or testing site. Students who fatigue easily may need to take some academic classes and tests before rather than after a physical education class or recess, or may need to reduce physical activity.

INDICATE STATE-SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN CHARTS.

Review the following tables of accommodations and using check marks in the appropriate columns, indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided. These conditions are defined as: (1) Standard—the accommodation described is allowed for assessment and instruction; (2) Nonstandard—use of the accommodation on state assessments will result in a nonscorable assessment; and (3) Instruction Only—the accommodation is allowed for instructional purposes only and cannot be used on state assessments. Use an asterisk (*) to indicate state restrictions on the use of the accommodation for particular assessments.

ACCOMMODATIONS CONDITIONS

DESCRIPTION OF TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Nonstandard	Instruction only
Extended Time Extended time may require a student's IEP team to determine a fairly specific amount of extra time to complete assignments, projects, and assessments. For timed tests, a standard extension may be time and one half. This means that a student is allowed 90 minutes to take a test that normally has a 60-minute limit. Double time may also be allowed. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the type of accommodations being provided, the disability involved, and the type of assignments, assessments, and activities. Usually "unlimited" time is not appropriate or feasible. Sometimes students who request extended time end up not needing it because of the reduction in anxiety of simply knowing that plenty of time is available. Students who have too much time may lose interest and motivation to do their best work.			
Multiple or Frequent Breaks Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals or after completion of assignments, tests, or activities. Sometimes a student is allowed to take breaks when individually needed. Sometimes test booklets are divided into shorter sections so students can take a break between sections of a test (sometimes referred to as "short segment test booklets"). If the length of a break is predetermined, a timer might be used to signal the end of the break.			
Change Schedule or Order of Activities If possible, schedule assessments and activities that require focused attention at the time of day when a student is most likely to demonstrate peak performance. Sometimes students are allowed to complete activities and take tests over multiple days—completing a portion each day. This is usually done to reduce fatigue.			

FACT SHEET 5

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS BASED ON STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND, LOW VISION, PARTIAL SIGHT		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Large print • Magnification devices • Braille • Nemeth Braille code • Tactile graphics • Human reader • Audiotape or compact disk (CD) • Screen reader • Large print or Braille notes, outlines, and instructions • Descriptive video • Talking materials	• Large print • Magnification devices • Braille • Nemeth Braille code • Tactile graphics • Human reader • Audiotape or CD • Screen reader
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on or speak to word processor • Type on Brailler • Speak into tape recorder • Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus) • Use personal note taker	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on or speak to word processor • Type on Brailler • Speak into tape recorder • Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus)
Setting	• Change location so student does not distract others • Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment	• Change location so student does not distract others • Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment
Timing and Scheduling	• Extended Time	• Extended Time

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF; HARD OF HEARING		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Screen reader • Visual cues • Written notes, outlines, and instructions • Videotape and descriptive video • Provide advanced organizers and outlines of lectures for student to follow • Use gestures (e.g., point to materials) • Repeat questions and responses from classmates • Allow student to copy notes from classmate • Use captioned versions of instructional films and include script when possible • Give interpreter instructional materials in advance • Learn manual signs and teach them to hearing classmates • Allow student to use telecommunication device	• Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Screen reader
Response	• Express response to scribe or interpreter • Type on or speak to word processor • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers	• Express response to scribe or interpreter • Type on or speak to word processor • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers
Setting	• Change location to reduce distractions • Change location so student does not distract others • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)	• Change location to reduce distractions • Change location so student does not distract others • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WEAK MANUAL DEXTERITY; DIFFICULTY WITH PENCIL; DIFFICULTY TYPING ON STANDARD KEYBOARD		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use thick pencil or pencil grip • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use thick pencil or pencil grip
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: COMMUNICATION DISORDER		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Screen reader	• Screen reader
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY DECODING		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Human reader • Audiotape or CD • Screen reader • Videotape	• Human reader • Audiotape or CD • Screen reader
Setting	• Change location so student does not distract others • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Change location so student does not distract others
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY WITH SPELLING		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g., electronic spelling device, spell check on computer) • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g., electronic spelling device, spell check on computer)

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: MATHEMATICS DISABILITY		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Response	Use: • Calculation devices • Visual organizers • Graphic organizers • Math tables and formula sheets	Use: • Calculation devices • Visual organizers • Graphic organizers
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: PHYSICAL DISABILITY		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIG Mack, Jelly Bean switch, or Dynovox) • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device • Type on or speak to word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIG Mack, Jelly Bean switch, or Dynovox)
Setting	• Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment	• Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment
Timing and Scheduling	• Extended time • Multiple or frequent breaks	• Extended time • Multiple or frequent breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: EASILY DISTRACTED; SHORT ATTENTION SPAN		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Use books on tape or recorded books to help focus on text • Give short and simple directions with examples	
Response	• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Highlight key words in directions • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns	• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Highlight key words in directions • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns
Setting	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions
Timing and Scheduling	• Use short segment test booklets (when available) • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Schedule tests in the morning • Cue student to begin working and stay on task • Change testing schedule or order of subtests • Limit reading periods • Schedule activities requiring more seat time in the morning and more hands-on and physical activities in the afternoon • Divide long-term assignments	• Use short segment test booklets (when available) • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Schedule tests in the morning • Cue student to begin working and stay on task • Change testing schedule or order of subtests

FACT SHEET 6

DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN SELECTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Do…make accommodation decisions based on individualized needs.	**Don't**…make accommodations decisions based on whatever is easiest to do (e.g., preferential seating).
Do…select accommodations that reduce the effect of the disability to access instruction and demonstrate learning.	**Don't**…select accommodations unrelated to documented student learning needs or are intended to give students an unfair advantage.
Do…be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP or 504 plans.	**Don't**…use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP or 504 plans.
Do…be familiar with the types of accommodations that can be used as both instructional and assessment accommodations.	**Don't**…assume that all instructional accommodations are appropriate for use on assessments.
Do…be specific about the "Where, When, Who, and How" of providing accommodations.	**Don't**…simply indicate an accommodation will be provided "as appropriate" or "as necessary."
Do…refer to state accommodations policies and understand implications of selections.	**Don't**…check every accommodation possible on a checklist simply to be "safe."
Do…evaluate accommodations used by the student.	**Don't**…assume the same accommodations remain appropriate year after year.
Do…get input about accommodations from teachers, parents, and students, and use it to make decisions at IEP team or 504 planning committee meetings.	**Don't**…make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations alone.
Do…provide accommodations for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction.	**Don't**…provide an assessment accommodation for the first time on the day of a test.
Do…select accommodations based on specific individual needs in each content area.	**Don't**…assume certain accommodations, such as extra time, are appropriate for every student in every content area.

FACT SHEET 7

GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATIONS

This Fact Sheet includes guidelines for administering assessment accommodations. It is important to remember that guidelines concerning the administration of test accommodations may vary from state to state and thus the guidelines listed below may not always be consistent with existing guidelines in your state.

INSERT STATE RULES HERE.

PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS

Read Aloud Test Directions and Items

Test readers must ensure that all students understand what is expected of them when reading test directions aloud. Students must have an opportunity to ask questions and understand how to mark their answers before they begin taking the test. Test readers should be prepared to answer questions about item format, scoring rules, and timing. However, test readers should not answer questions about specific test items. When reading test items aloud, test readers must be careful not to inadvertently give clues that indicate the correct answer or help eliminate some answer choices. Readers should use even inflection so that the student does not receive any cues by the way the information is read. It is important for readers to read test items/questions and text word-for-word, exactly as written. Readers may not clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance to students.

Large Print

If a student needs a large-print test edition, be certain it is ordered in a timely manner that allows it to be available for the test. Check to see if large-print practice tests are available. After a student finishes a large-print edition of a test, someone needs to transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet.

Braille

If a student needs a Braille test edition, be certain it is ordered in a timely manner that allows it to be available for the test. Also, check to see if practice tests are available in Braille. The test administrator for a Braille test needs to be provided with a print version of the test during test administration. After a student finishes a Braille edition of a test, someone needs to transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet or response form.

Sign Language Interpreter

A student's teacher should not be the interpreter in a testing situation unless a second person is present to monitor for quality and fairness. If allowed to sign test items and prompts, interpreters must not clarify, elaborate, paraphrase, or provide assistance with the meaning of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items. Graphic materials may be described but should also be available in print or tactile formats. A standard video presentation of a test in sign language may be used to increase accuracy, consistency, pacing, and quality. Interpreter services need to be arranged prior to test day.

Audiotape or Compact Disk

Test administrators need to monitor student movement through audio versions to make certain the student maintains the appropriate place in the test and the audio version is playing properly. When using a two-sided cassette tape, students may need to be reminded to play the other side. Test administrators should spot check audio formats before use to be certain everything is working properly.

RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS

Writing in Test Booklet

Allow the student to write in the test booklet instead of on an answer sheet. This accommodation allows the test taker to indicate responses directly in the test booklet and have someone else transfer the answers to the answer sheet after the student has completed the test.

Dictation to Scribe

Scribes may be provided for students with verified disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression or a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing. Scribes must be impartial and should be experienced in transcription. They must write exactly what the student dictates. Scribes should not affect the outcome of a test in any way. Scribes are not allowed to elaborate on what is being written. They cannot answer or explain anything to the student during testing and must be careful not to give hints of any type. Scribes should request clarification from the student about the use of capitalization, punctuation, and the spelling of key words, and must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written.

SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Supervised Test Locations

It may be difficult to find testing locations that are private and free of distractions, especially when many students in a building are tested at the same time. Each student tested in a private location needs adult supervision and each adult supervisor needs clear instructions about test administration procedures. This includes students tested in the home, hospital, and residential or other alternative settings.

TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS

Providing Extended Time

Timed tests usually require students to request a fairly specific amount of extra time. A common extension is time and one half. This means that for a test normally taking 60 minutes, a student may be allowed 90 minutes. Double time may also be allowed. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the type of accommodations being provided, the disability involved, and the type of test. For example, if a reader or scribe is used, double time may be appropriate. Usually “unlimited” time is not appropriate or feasible.

TEACHER TOOL 1

ACCESS NEEDS THAT MAY REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS

Directions: Use these questions to identify various types of presentation, response, setting, and timing and scheduling accommodations for students with disabilities. The list is not exhaustive—its purpose is to prompt members of IEP teams and 504 planning committees to consider a wide range of accommodation needs. Use the list in planning by indicating Y (YES), N (NO), or DK/NA (Don't Know or Not Applicable).

		Y	N	DK/ NA
PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS				
1.	Does the student have a visual impairment that requires large-type or Braille materials?			
2.	Is the student able to read and understand directions?			
3.	Can the student follow oral directions from an adult or audiotape?			
4.	Does the student need directions repeated frequently?			
5.	Are assistive technology devices indicated on the student's IEP?			
6.	Has the student been identified as having a reading disability?			
7.	Does the student have low or poor reading skills that may require the reading of tests or sections of tests that do not measure reading comprehension in order to demonstrate knowledge of subject areas?			
8.	Does the student have a hearing impairment that requires an interpreter to sign directions?			
9.	Does the student have a hearing impairment and need a listening device?			
RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS				
	Does the student have difficulty tracking from one page to another and maintaining that student's place?			
11.	Does the student have a disability that affects the ability to record that student's responses in the standard manner?			
12.				
13.	Does the student use a word processor to complete homework assignments or tests?			
14.				
15.	Does the student need the services of a scribe?			
16.				
17.	Does the student have a visual or motor disability that affects that student's ability to perform math computations?			

SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS		Y	N	DK/ NA
18	Do others easily distract the student or does that student have difficulty remaining on task?			
19	Does the student require any specialized equipment or other accommodations that may be distracting to others?			
20.	Does the student have visual or auditory impairments that require special lighting or acoustics?			
21.	Can the student focus on the student's own work in a setting with large groups of other students?			
22.	Does the student exhibit behaviors that may disrupt the attention of other students?			
23.	Do any physical accommodations need to be made for the student in the classroom?			
TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS				
24.	Can the student work continuously for the length of time allocated for standard test administration?			
25.	Does the student use other accommodations or adaptive equipment that require more time to complete test items (e.g., Braille, scribe, use of head pointer to type)?			
26.	Does the student tire easily due to health impairments?			
27.	Does the student have a visual impairment that causes eyestrain and requires frequent breaks?			
28.	Does the student have a learning disability that affects the rate at which that student processes written information?			
29.	Does the student have a motor disability that affects the rate at which that student writes responses?			
30.	Does the student take any type of medication to facilitate optimal performance?			
31.	Does the student's attention span or distractibility require shorter working periods and frequent breaks?			

TEACHER TOOL 2

ACCOMMODATIONS FROM THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Use this questionnaire to collect information about needed accommodations from the student's perspective. The questions can be completed independently or as part of an interview process. Whatever method is used however, be certain that the student understands the concept of an "accommodation," providing examples as necessary. Also, provide a list of possible accommodations to give the student a good understanding of the range of accommodations that may be available.

1. Think about all the classes you are taking now. Which is your best class?

_____

2. Explain what you do well in this class.

_____

The things you said you can do well above are your strengths. For example, you may have mentioned reading, writing, listening, working in groups, working alone, drawing, or doing your homework as some things you can do well. If you said you really like the subject, have a good memory, and work hard in class, these are also examples of your strengths.

3. Now ask yourself, "What class is hardest?"

_____

4. What's the hardest part of this class for you?

_____

The things you said were hardest are areas you need to work on during the school year. For example, you might have listed paying attention in class, reading the book, taking tests, listening, staying in the seat, remembering new information, doing homework, or doing work in groups. These are all things in which an accommodation may be helpful for you.

5. In the list that follows, write down all of the classes you are taking now. Then look at a list of accommodations. Next to each class, write down what accommodation(s) you think might be helpful for you.

Class List

Classes	Accommodations
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

This questionnaire was adapted from *A Student's Guide to the IEP* by the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (http://nichcy.org/pubs/stuguide/st1book.htm). Retrieved July 28, 2005.

TEACHER TOOL 3

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS PLAN

Student Information	**Case Information**
Name: _____ Date of Assessment: _____ Name of Assessment: _____	Special Education Teacher: _____ School Year: _____ Building/School: _____ General Education Teacher: _____

Assessment accommodations that student needs for this assessment and date arranged:

Accommodations	Date Arranged:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Comments:

_____

Person responsible for arranging accommodations and due date:

Person Responsible	Due Date:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Comments:

_____

Room assignment for assessment: _____

Planners for this process (signatures): _____

Scheiber, B., & Talpers, J. (1985). *Campus Access for Learning Disabled Students: A Comprehensive Guide*. Pittsburgh: Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities.

TEACHER TOOL 4

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS AGREEMENT

Here is an example of a form a student could carry on test day. This type of format puts the student in charge (building self-advocacy skills) and sets the expectation that, with these accommodations, students can show what they know on the test. Some accommodations (e.g., special test editions) need to be arranged long before test day but should still be included on this list to make certain the student receives the correct test booklet. A similar form could be carried to class to remind teachers about daily accommodations. Different schools, teachers, and students might format these statements differently. Note that it is the responsibility of the student to list the necessary accommodations and to present this list to the test administrator or teacher. This experience is particularly important for students with disabilities who intend to pursue a postsecondary education.

I, _____,
(Student's name)

need the following accommodations to take part in this assessment:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If I need more information about these accommodations, I can talk to:

_____
(Name of special education teacher, parent, principal, and/or related service provider)

Thank you for helping me to do my best on this test!

_____ _____
(Student signature) (Date)

TEACHER TOOL 5

LOGISTICS PLANNING CHECKLIST

Directions: This Logistics Planning Checklist can be used in the planning and implementation of assessment accommodations for an individual student. Use the checklist by indicating Y (Yes), N (No), or NA (Not Applicable).

ACCOMMODATIONS THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR	Y	N	NA
1. Accommodations are documented on student's IEP or 504 plan.			
2. Student uses accommodations regularly and evaluates use.			
3. A master accommodations plan/data base listing assessment accommodation needs for all students tested is updated regularly.			
PREPARATION FOR TEST DAY			
Special test editions are ordered for individual students based on information contained in master accommodations plan (e.g., audio tape, Braille, large print).			
5. Test administrators/proctors receive a list of accommodation needs for students they will supervise (list comes from master accommodations plan/data base).			
Adult supervision is arranged and test administrators receive training for each student receiving accommodations in small group or individual settings, including extended time (with substitutes available).			
7. Trained readers, scribes, and sign language interpreters are arranged for individual students (with substitutes available).			
Special equipment is arranged and checked for correct operation (e.g., calculator, tape recorder, word processor).			
ACCOMMODATIONS ON THE DAY OF THE TEST			
10. Provision of accommodations is recorded by test administrator.			
Substitute providers of accommodations are available as needed (e.g., interpreters, readers, scribes)			
12. Plans are made to replace defective equipment.			

CONSIDERATION AFTER THE DAY OF THE TEST	Y	N	NA
13. Responses are transferred to scannable answer sheets for students using special equipment and adapted test forms and response documents			
14. All equipment is returned to appropriate locations.			
15. Students who take make-up tests receive needed accommodations			
16. Effectiveness of accommodations use is evaluated by test administrators and students, and plans are made for improvement.			

TEACHER TOOL 6

ACCOMMODATIONS JOURNAL

One way to keep track of what accommodations work for a student is to support the student in keeping an "accommodations journal." The journal lets the student be "in charge" and could be kept up to date through regular consultation with a special education teacher or other staff member. Just think how much easier it would be for an IEP team to decide which accommodations to document on a student's IEP if the student came to the IEP meeting with a journal documenting all of these things:

- accommodations used by the student in the classroom and on tests;
- test and assignment results when accommodations are used and not used;
- student's perception of how well an accommodation "works";
- effective combinations of accommodations;
- difficulties of accommodations use; and
- perceptions of teachers and others about how the accommodation appears to be working.

In the spaces provided below, design and organize the use of an accommodations journal for one of your students. Answer these questions:

1. What would you include as headings for the journal?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. When would the student make entries in the journal, and what types of support would the student need to make these entries?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. With whom would the student share journal entries, and when would it be done?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. How could the journal be used in the development of a student's IEP?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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