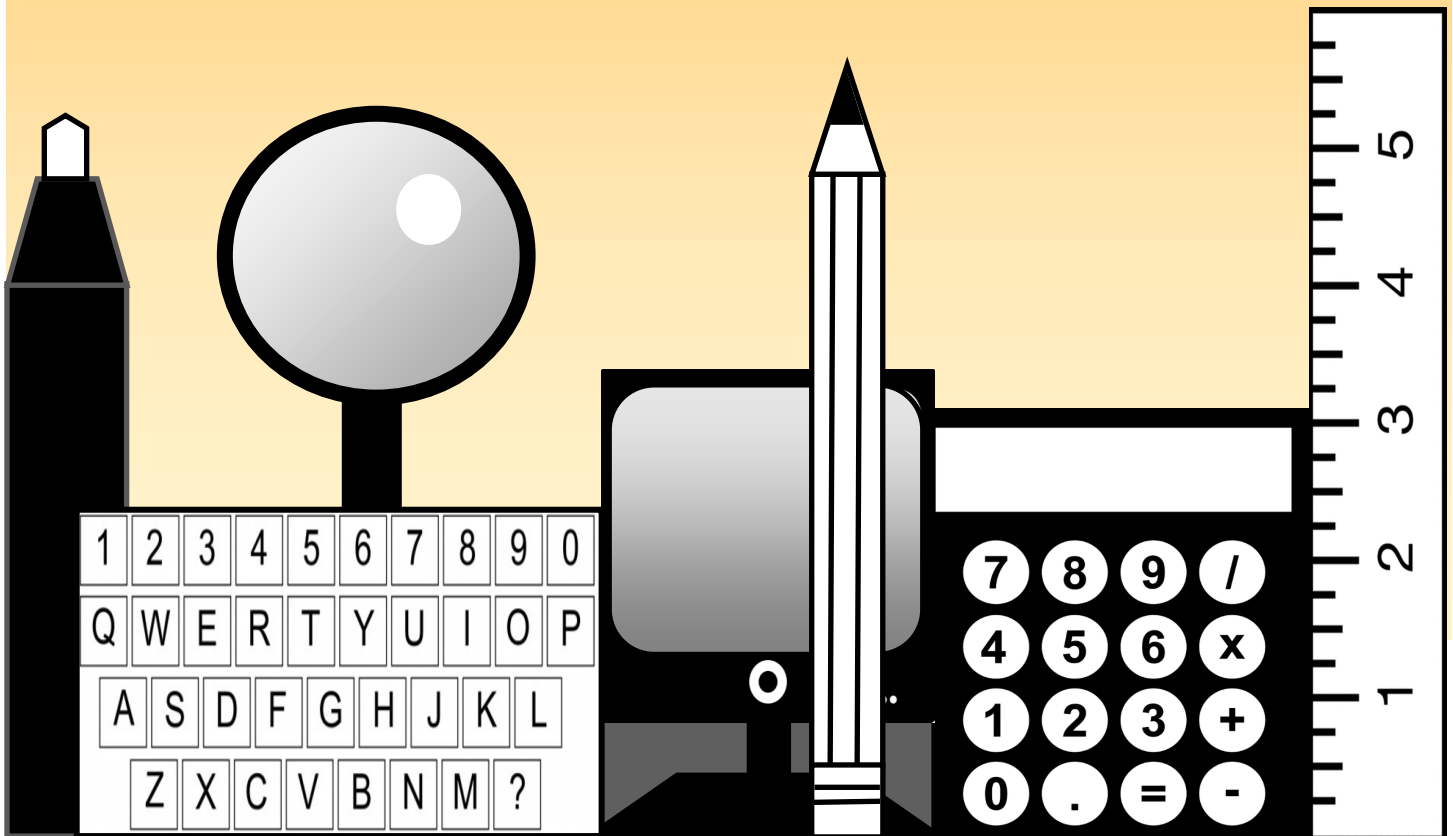


Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, & Accommodations Policy Manual



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Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, and Accommodations Policy Manual

**Selecting, Administering and Evaluating
the Use of Accommodations
for Instruction and Assessment**

Issue Date: October 1, 2017
Issue ID 201710 • Effective Until Superseded

marylandpublicschools.org



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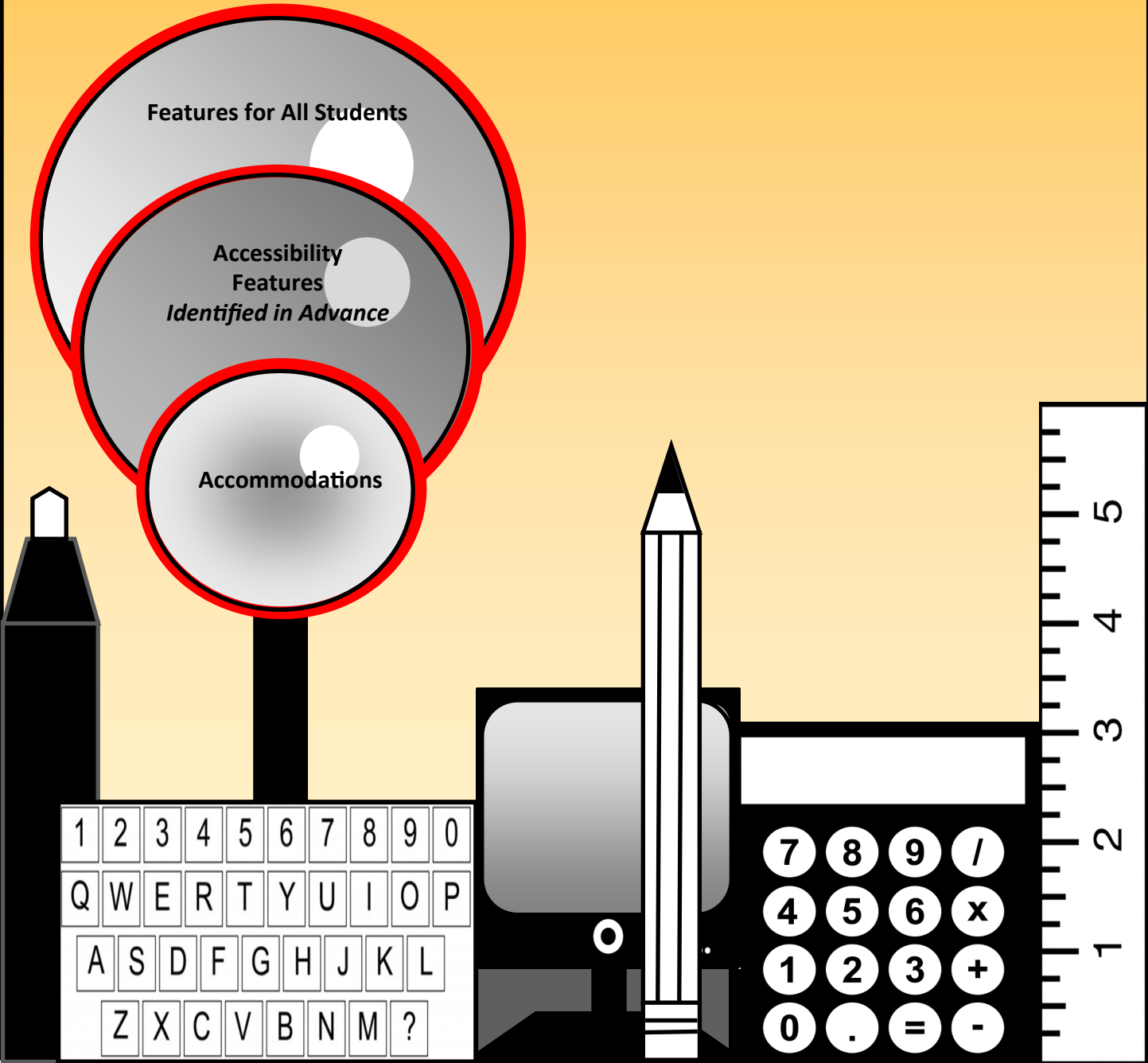
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Section 1: Introduction



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Section 1: Introduction

Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, and Accommodations Policy Manual: An Overview

This publication has been developed to ensure that:

- Participation in assessments is consistent in all Maryland programs, schools, and school systems;
- Accessibility features and accommodations are provided to all eligible students; and
- Accessibility features and accommodations used in assessments are also used in daily instruction.

The Maryland Assessment, Accessibility, and Accommodations Policy Manual (The Manual) presents a five-step process for use in the selection, administration, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of instructional and assessment accommodations, for students with disabilities and Section 504 Plans. The Manual also presents a five-step process for use in selection, administration, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of instructional and assessment accessibility features for all students. The Manual also presents a six-step process for English learners. The information in this manual is applicable to:

1. All students who benefit from Universal Design for Learning and accessibility features.
2. Students with disabilities (SWD) (that is, who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) [Refer to Sections 1 through 4 and Appendices A-F, H-K]
3. Students with a Section 504 Plan [Refer to Sections 1 through 4 and Appendices A-F, H-K]
4. Students who are English learners (ELs) [Refer to Sections 1 and 2, 5 and 6, and Appendices G, H, I, L]
5. Students who are ELs and who also have a disability resulting in them having both an EL Plan and an IEP. These students must follow the accommodations as outlined in their EL Plan and IEP.

This manual also summarizes the statewide assessment programs required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and supersedes all previous editions of this document. The information and requirements described in this manual apply to students in all public schools and to students in non-public settings whose education is supported by Maryland public education funding.

This manual addresses Maryland specific policy regarding assessments, accessibility features, and accommodations, and should not be confused with, or substituted for any specific assessment's accommodation/test administration manual (i.e., *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Accessibility Features and Accommodations* [PARCC AF&A] Manual).

The Structure of this Manual

The Manual consists of several sections as follows:

Section 1: Introduction: This brief section presents an introduction and overview of the Manual.

Section 2A: Maryland Accommodations Policy Overview: This section describes the general requirements for accommodating, excusing and exempting students in Maryland assessment programs.

Section 2B: Maryland Assessment Summary: This section summarizes the various Maryland State assessment programs.

Section 3: Accessibility Features for All Students: This section describes the accessibility features that are available to all students.

Section 4A: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD): This section outlines a five-step process for implementing accommodations for instruction and assessment for students with disabilities, as follows:

Setting Expectations: Guidance on the process of setting expectations for students with disabilities to achieve grade-level academic content standards.

Learning About Accommodations: Guidance on learning about accommodations for instruction and assessment.

Selecting Accommodations: Guidance on selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual students.

Administering Accommodations: Guidance on administering accommodations during instruction and assessment.

Evaluating and Updating Accommodations Use: Guidance on evaluating and updating accommodation use.

Section 4B: Accommodations Fact Sheets for Students with Disabilities (SWD): This section contains fact sheets describing the specific accommodations available in Maryland and related tools for use in instruction and assessment.

Section 4C: Accommodations Tools for Students with Disabilities (SWD): This section contains tools for specific accommodations available in Maryland and for use in instruction and assessment.

Section 5: The Six-Step Process for Accommodating English Learners (ELs): This section outlines the process for implementing accommodations for instruction and assessment for students who are English learners.

Setting Expectations: Guidance on the process of setting expectations to achieve grade-level academic content standards for an English learner.

Setting Expectations: Guidance on understanding the relationship between language and content in the schooling experience of an English learner.

Learning About Accommodations: Guidance on learning about accommodations for instruction and assessment.

Selecting Accommodations: Guidance on selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual English learners.

Administering Accommodations: Guidance on administering accommodations during instruction and assessment.

Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Use: Guidance on evaluating and improving accommodation use.

Section 6: Accommodations Fact Sheets for English Learners (ELs): This section also contains two fact sheets. The first fact sheet provides detailed descriptions of the specific accommodations available in Maryland for use in instruction and assessment of ELs. The second fact sheet provides a chart to demonstrate the parallel between differentiated instructional strategies and allowable testing accommodations for English learners.

Appendix A: Maryland Guidance to IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments: This appendix provides the decision-making process and form on which to record the results of the IEP Team Consideration of a student's participation in the Alternate Assessments.

Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation: This appendix provides the guidance and procedures that Test Administrators/Accommodators must follow when providing the Scribe Accommodation.

Appendix C: Guidance for Selecting, Training and Administering the Extended Time Accommodation: This appendix provides guidance that Test Administrators/Accommodators must follow when providing the Extended Time Accommodation.

Appendix D: Text-to Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for English Language Arts/Literacy Assessments: This appendix provides guidance to assist IEP Teams and 504 Plan Coordinators in identifying students who may be appropriate candidates to receive the accommodation.

Appendix E: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments: This appendix provides the guidance and procedures that Test Administrators/Accommodators must follow when providing the Text-to-Speech/Human Reader accommodation.

Appendix F: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan: This form is completed when a Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) requests the MSDE to consider, for approval, an accommodation beyond those listed in the Manual.

Appendix G: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an EL Plan: This form is completed when an LAC requests the MSDE to consider, for approval, an accommodation beyond those listed in the Manual.

Appendix H: Emergency Accommodation Form for State Assessments: This form is completed if prior to testing, the principal (or principal's designee) determines that a student requires an emergency accommodation.

This form must be submitted to the LAC for approval, a copy of this form must be filed in the student's assessment records, and a copy must be retained by the LAC.

Appendix I: Student Accommodation Refusal Form: If the student refuses to use an accommodation during testing that is listed in his or her IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Plan, the school should use this form to document in detail the reason(s) for the student refusal.

Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines: This appendix provides the guidance and procedures that Test Administrators/Accommodators must follow when using the Human Signer Accommodation.

Appendix K: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Crosswalk: This table provides a comparison list of accommodations allowed on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) vs. Maryland State Assessments, for students with disabilities.

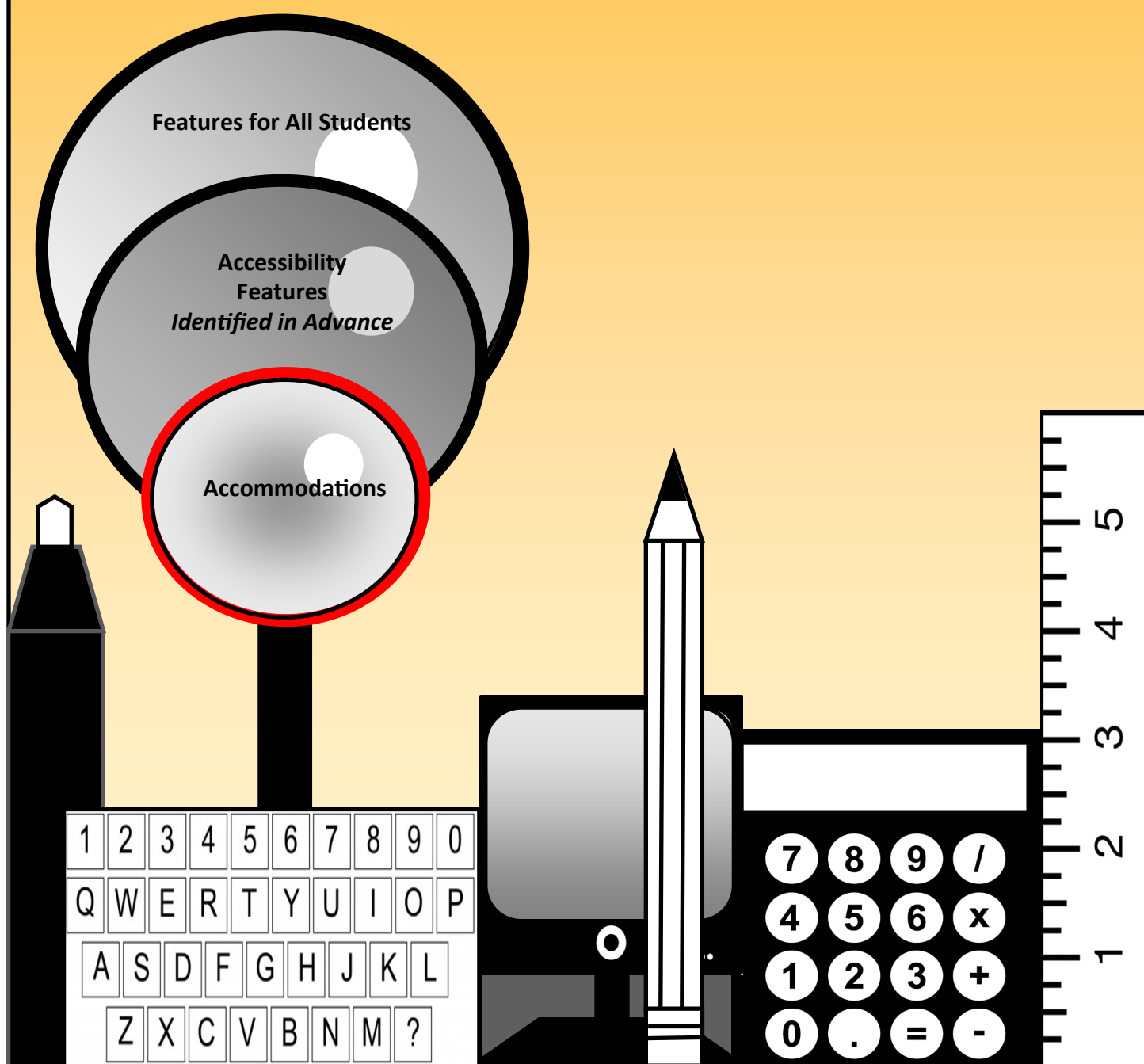
Appendix L: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners: This table provides a comparison list of accommodations allowed on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Assessment vs. Maryland State Assessments, for ELs.

Appendix M: Maryland State Department of Education Technical Assistance Bulletins and Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Assessments: This appendix provides a list of publications, produced by various Divisions at the Maryland State Department of Education, which provide local school systems with access to current information on assessment and accommodations.

Appendix N: References: This appendix contains references and citations to documents which support the information contained in the other sections of the manual.

Appendix O: Academic and Learning Aids/Instructional/Assessment Tool Kit: The purpose of this toolkit is to provide a listing of a variety of tools that may assist students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum.

Section 2: Maryland Accommodations Policy Overview



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Section 2A: Maryland Accommodations Policy Overview

General Principals for All Maryland Assessment Programs

Participation

All students must be included to the fullest extent possible in all State assessment programs and have their assessment results be a part of Maryland's accountability system. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) requires all students to participate in State assessment programs unless documented as described in this manual. The Maryland participation requirement is supported by federal legislation requiring the participation of Students with Disabilities (SWD), Students with 504 Plans and English learners (ELs) in standards based instruction and assessment initiatives. Two key federal acts governing student participation in assessment include The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA). Some of the provisions of these laws are briefly summarized in Section 4 (for SWD) and Section 5 (for EL) of the Manual.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are not pursuing the regular Maryland College and Career Ready Standards leading to a Maryland high school diploma take an Alternate Assessment based on the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards. All students in tested grades in Maryland must participate in either the regular or the alternate assessment. Students who transfer from out-of-state or from private schools into the Maryland public school system at any time during the school year, through the date designated by MSDE, must be tested.

Definitions

In Maryland, there are three distinct groups of students that receive accommodations: SWD, 504 Plan Students, and ELs.

The following definitions will help users of the Manual in understanding and implementing accommodations:

Students with Disabilities (SWD): Students who are eligible for special education services and who have current IEPs.

Students Exited from Special Education Services: Students who are exited from receiving Special Education Services now have their performance tracked on the State Assessments. The purpose of this accounting is to include the exited students for two years for Maryland's Accountability Program reporting purposes with the Special Education student group.

Section 504 Students: Students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, have a record of such impairment, or are regarded as having such impairment, and have current 504 Plans.

English Learners (ELs): Students who have a primary or home language other than English and who may be working toward acquiring the ability to understand, speak, read, or write English. ELs are served in English Language Development (ELD) programs.

Refused English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Services ELs: ELs who have a primary or home language other than English and who may be working toward acquiring the ability to understand, speak, read or write English. These students are qualified to participate in ELD programs; however, their families have refused such services. Refused ELs still receive an EL Plan, still receive accommodations, and still participate in all assessments, including the English Language Proficiency Assessment.

Permitted Accommodation: An accommodation which has been:

Described in this document or approved by the MSDE as 'unique' after submission, in writing by the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) *and*

- Justified in the student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or EL Plan *and*
- Provided in the course of daily instruction.

Accommodated Students

It is important to ensure that student performance is not unduly influenced by student disabilities or linguistic/cultural characteristics that are unrelated to the content being assessed. Accommodations are adjustments to the testing situation, test format, or test administration that provide equitable access during assessments for students with disabilities who are eligible under IDEA, students on Section 504 Plans, and Students who are ELs.

Accommodations...

- Provide equitable access during instruction and assessment
- Mitigate the effects of a student's disability, 504 need, or level of English Language Proficiency
- Do not change the construct being assessed
- Do not compromise the integrity or validity of the test
- Result in valid, meaningful test results

Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability and/or English Language Proficiency level; **accommodations 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. The administration of an assessment should not be the first time the accommodation is introduced to the student. It is critical to note, however, 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 Maryland policies regarding accommodations during instruction and assessments.

Accommodations must adhere to the following principles:

- Accommodations enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessment and to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- Accommodations must be based upon individual student needs and not upon a category of disability, English language proficiency, level of instruction, amount of time spent in general classroom, program setting, or availability of staff.
- Accommodations for students with disabilities must be justified and documented in the student's appropriate education plan: the IEP or the Section 504 Plan.
- Accommodations for students who are ELs must be justified and documented in the EL Plan.
- Students who are both EL and SWD have the IEP as the controlling document for accommodations, but also must have a completed EL Plan. Students who are both EL and SWD may qualify for both IEP and EL accommodations. IEP Teams and EL Plan Teams should work together so that the chosen accommodations are complimentary and do not conflict.
- Accommodations must be implemented immediately after the completion of the appropriate education plan (IEP, Section 504 Plan or EL Plan for English Learners) and must be aligned with and be a part of daily instruction. Accommodations and accessibility features must be introduced in instruction or through tutorials/practice tools in the specific testing platform. Accommodations used in local district and State assessments must also be used in instruction. **Accommodations must not be introduced for the first time during the testing of a student.**
- Accommodations must be approved as specified in the Manual.
- Accommodations not explicitly mentioned in this document and/or multiple accommodations do not constitute reasons to exempt students from assessments. The School Test Coordinator (STC) must coordinate with the LAC prior to testing to address issues caused by the need to provide multiple accommodations. The LAC will consult with the MSDE as necessary to resolve accommodations issues.

Accommodations Not Specified in This Document

The LAC must submit to the MSDE, for approval, any accommodation beyond those listed in this document. These accommodations would be considered "unique" accommodations. The process involves local special education, Section 504, EL and school-based staff first identifying a potential need for an additional type of accommodation. These staff members would then contact the LAC who would work with them and the MSDE to obtain approval for the accommodation. **The unique accommodation request must be submitted to the MSDE by the LAC six weeks prior to testing to ensure that a final MSDE response is received before testing begins.** Responses from the MSDE for requests received by the LAC for unique accommodations will occur at least one week prior to the start of the test administration.

If a unique accommodation request is required, the LAC **must** complete and submit the “Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments” to the MSDE for approval. These forms can be found in Appendix F for students with IEPs or 504 Plans or Appendix G for students with EL plans. A copy of this form must be filed in the student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Plan and assessment record and a copy must be retained by the LAC. A decision made by MSDE to not allow a unique accommodation during testing does not necessarily imply that the accommodation (or modification, adaptation, or other strategy) cannot be used for instruction. As the MSDE determines whether to approve a new type of accommodation for assessment, the MSDE considers the impact of the unique accommodation on test validity. Addressing the issue of validity of an accommodation in an assessment situation involves an examination of the purpose of the test and the specific skills to be measured.

Accommodated, Excused, and Exempted Students

All accommodations are permissible for use on State or district assessments unless otherwise noted on Accommodations Fact Sheets for students with Disabilities (The Manual Section 4), or on Accommodations Fact Sheet EL-1 for English learners (The Manual Section 5).

The following guidance must be followed in determining and documenting accommodations:

1. **SWD:** The student’s IEP Team must decide on the appropriate accommodation(s) at the IEP development or annual review meeting for the year in which the student is scheduled to take the State or district assessments and document the decision on the student’s IEP. The student’s IEP Team will forward accommodations to the School Test Coordinator. Accommodations must be justified, used within the instructional setting, and documented in the student’s IEP.
2. **Students exited from Special Education Services:** Students who are exited from receiving Special Education Services will have their performance tracked on State assessments. The purpose of this accounting is to include the exited students for reporting purposes with the Special Education subgroup when calculating Maryland’s Accountability Program. Students who have exited Special Education services, however, are not automatically entitled to continue receiving accommodations for instruction and assessment. Once a student no longer has an IEP, his or her instruction team may consider whether the student now needs a 504 Plan in order to receive accommodations for instruction and assessment. Students classified as Exited from Special Education Services and who do not have a 504 Plan in place would not be entitled to accommodations.
3. **Students with Temporary or Long-Term Disabilities and Section 504 Students:** General education students or students with a 504 Plan who have a temporary or long-term disabling condition that interferes with test performance should be offered testing accommodations to compensate for their disabling condition. Accommodations must be justified and documented in each student’s 504 Plan.

4. **EL/Refused ESOL Services EL:** Appropriate accommodations identified by the EL committee are permitted for students who meet the criteria to participate in ELD programs. Accommodations must be justified and documented in each student's EL Plan.

NOTE: Only accommodations that students receive during regular ongoing daily instruction may be used in assessment.

Under ESSA and the IDEA, **all** students must participate in State and district assessments. All school teams must follow the guidelines as indicated in the Manual when considering if they choose to **excuse** or **exempt** a student from a Maryland assessment. The IEP Team, which includes parents/guardians, work collaboratively to determine the assessment in which a student with a disability will participate.

Summary of Accommodating Students

Program	Who May Be Accommodated?	Guidance
All Testing Programs	Students with disabilities who receive accommodations during instruction. General education students, and ELs with temporary or long-term disabilities with Section 504 Plans.	IEP Team decision documented in the student's IEP Principal/staff decision documented in student's cumulative record. Section 504 Team decision documented in the student's cumulative record.
All Testing Programs	English learners (ELs) including those who refused participation in ELD programs	EL committee decision documented in the student's EL Plan in student's cumulative record.
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	ELs with disabilities, ELs with significant cognitive disabilities	Not all accommodations in the IEP or 504 Plan are allowed for the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Refer to https://www.wida.us/membership/states/MD/Maryland.aspx and IDEA 34 CFR § 300.160 (b) (2)(i) and 34 CFR§ 300.160 (b)(2)(ii).

Excused Students

Prior to a test administration, if the principal or school administrator and at least one other qualified school staff member in conjunction with the LAC decide that testing would be severely harmful to a student, the student may be excused. The reason for the excusal must be documented in the student's record. Examples of acceptable reasons include:

- The student exhibits intense or extreme anxiety behaviors during testing.
- The student has had a recent traumatic experience, which has made him/her unable to cope with the testing situation.

During testing, if a student demonstrates extreme frustration, disrupts others, becomes ill, etc., the teacher/test administrator may excuse the student from the test. Depending on the particular situation, the student may be given an opportunity to attempt the test again, or to make it up at a later date. Procedures for excusing students from specific testing programs are described in the Test Administration Manual which accompanies each assessment. Local school staff should always consult their LAC if they have any questions about excusing a student from testing. During the nonparticipation reconciliation process, the student is to be coded with the appropriate nonparticipation reason code and still may be included as a non-participant.

Exempted Students

In general, no students are exempt from participation in the Maryland State Assessment Programs. The IEP, 504 and EL Teams **do not** determine exemptions. However, under two circumstances, (listed below) students can be exempted for accountability purposes.

Special Exemption Conditions for ELs on the ELA Assessment

ELs who have recently arrived in the United States may be exempted from one administration of the State ELA Assessment. A recently arrived EL is one who has attended school(s) in the United States for less than 12 cumulative months. Students must still participate in the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies State assessments.

Special Medical Exemption Conditions for Assessments

Students may be exempted from a State Assessment when a significant medical emergency has rendered the student incapable of participating in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment. This includes long-term hospitalization without access to academics, severe trauma, mental health crisis (student is in danger to self or others), or placement in hospice care. For accountability data purposes, the medical exemption is reviewed during the MSDE nonparticipation reconciliation process.

In order for the student to be considered for a medical exemption, the following protocol applies:

1. The Local Education Agency (LEA) will notify the Accountability Support Manager in the office of Accountability in the Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment and Accountability via email, that they have students to be considered for a medical exemption. No Personally Identifiable information is to be transmitted via email.
2. The LEA will provide the student names (First, Middle and Last Name) and the State Assigned Student ID (SASID) to the state secure server.
3. The LEA will provide medical documentation from a medically trained professional by uploading the documentation to the state secure server no later than June 30th of the current academic year.
4. The LEA will contact the Office of Accountability to notify that the documentation has been placed on the secure server. MSDE will acknowledge receipt of the documentation.
5. After MSDE has reviewed the documentation, the LEA will be contacted, via email, stating that the exemption has either been approved or denied.

MSDE will include the results from the medical exemption review for reporting student performance and accountability on the MD Report Card. If the exemption has been approved, the student will not be included in performance, accountability and participation reporting. If the exemption has been denied, the student will be counted as a non-participant for performance, accountability, and participation reporting which includes the MD Report Card. The student cannot be reviewed again after a denied exemption.

Summary of Excusing Students

Program	Who May Be Excused?	Guidance
State Assessments	Students who demonstrate, or who are expected to experience inordinate frustration, distress, or disruption of others, or for medical reasons may be excused prior to or during the tests. Excused students receive no score or proficiency level designation and are counted as non-participants for accountability.	Prior to a test administration, if the principal or school administrator and at least one other qualified school staff member in conjunction with the LAC decide that testing would be severely harmful to a student.
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0	Students who demonstrate, or who are expected to experience inordinate frustration, distress, or disruption of others, or for medical reasons may be excused prior to or during the test. Excused students receive no score or proficiency level designation and are counted as non-participants for accountability. For students who are Braille readers, refer to Section 2, English Language Proficiency Assessment.	Prior to a test administration, if the principal or school administrator and at least one other qualified school staff member in conjunction with the LAC decide that testing would be severely harmful to a student.

Summary of Exempting Students

Program	Who may be Exempted?	Guidance
ELA State Assessments	ELs who have recently arrived to the United States may be exempted from one administration of the State ELA Assessment. A recently arrived EL is one who has attended school(s) in the United States for less than 12 cumulative months. Students must still participate in the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies State assessments.	EL committee decision and documented in the student's EL plan in student's cumulative record.
State Assessments	Students with a significant medical emergency that has rendered the student incapable of participating in any academic activity and/or statewide assessment.	Medical emergency process must be completed and provided to the MSDE as part of the non-participation reconciliation process.
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	None	N/A

Accommodations listed in Section 4 are permitted for instruction and assessment (unless otherwise noted for students with disabilities, general education students with temporary or long-term disabilities, or students with a 504 Plan). Accommodations listed in Section 5 are permitted for instruction and assessment (unless otherwise noted) for ELs with an EL Plan. All accommodations must be justified, and documentation must be provided in the student's IEP, 504 Plan, EL Plan, or cumulative record.

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Section 2B: Maryland Assessment Summary

Overview

Maryland currently operates the following State testing programs:

- General Assessments
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)
 - Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA)
 - High School Assessment (HSA) in Integrated Science and Social Studies
- Alternate Assessments
 - Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)
 - Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (Alt-MISA)
- English Language Proficiency Assessment
 - The State-approved English Language Proficiency Assessment: ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

The following pages provide brief summaries of Maryland's State testing programs.

PARCC

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a group of states working together to develop a set of assessments that measure whether students are on track to be successful in college and their careers. Maryland students take the PARCC assessments in Grades 3 through 8 in both English/language arts and Mathematics. Additionally, Maryland high school students take varied End-of-Course Assessments in English, Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry. These computer-based assessments give schools, teachers, students, and parents better information on whether students are on track in their learning and for success after high school, and tools to help teachers customize learning to meet student needs. The PARCC assessments are typically administered in the Fall (only high school) and Spring (3-8, high school) of each year.

MISA

Maryland Integrated Science Assessment

The Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA) is administered to fifth and eighth grade students every spring. The assessment is made up of four units each taking up to 60 minutes to complete. In each of the units, students will take three (3) item sets. Each item set will contain a stimulus, which could be a combination of technical passages, videos, charts/diagrams, or a simulation. The stimulus for each unit will be presented in tabs and followed by six (6) questions. The questions will be a variety of selected response, constructed response, or technology enhanced items (TEIs). The assessment is constructed to be administered as an online assessment. However, limited paper is available for students with documented needs.

HSA

High School Assessment

The High School Assessments (HSAs) are designed to ensure that Maryland's high school graduates are prepared to pursue higher education and career paths. The HSAs are rigorous assessments of a student's knowledge of the skills outlined in the State standards for government and science. The assessments contain multiple choice questions (along with some technology-enhanced items) and questions that require a written response. The HSAs are transitioning to a fully online assessment with accommodated paper options. These assessments serve as the high school assessment graduation requirements for government and science. The Science HSA also serves as the high school measure for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The assessments are to be administered three times per year, January, May, and July/August (summer).

MSAA

Multi-State Alternate Assessment

The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) is designed to assess skills in English Language Arts and Mathematics for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The MSAA is based on alternate achievement standards which have been derived from and are aligned with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS). The overall goal of the MSAA is to make sure that all students achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-school options.

The MSAA is an online assessment (with paper and pencil option) of approximately 30 test items that assess ten prioritized content targets per grade level in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The assessment includes multiple choice items and constructed response items. Each content target is assessed by items that have been carefully and intentionally designed to assess a range of ability and performance.

The MSAA has four performance levels ranging from 1 to 4 with levels 3 and 4 designated as "Meets Expectations". The performance levels describe the knowledge and skills that children who perform at a level generally demonstrate.

The student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines how the student will participate in Maryland's assessment program, which includes the general and alternate assessments. The IEP team reviews a comprehensive set of criteria to determine whether a student should participate in the alternate assessment. All participation decisions for statewide assessments must be made on an annual basis by the student's IEP team.

Alt-MISA (DLM)

Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment, Dynamic Learning Maps

The Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (Alt-MISA), also known as Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM), is designed for students in grades 5, 8, and 11 with the most significant cognitive disabilities for whom the general education science assessment (MISA) is not appropriate, even with accommodations. The Alt-MISA is based on alternate achievement standards which have been derived from and are aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Students who take the Alt-MISA assessments are instructed and assessed on Essential Elements (EEs). EEs are grade-level-specific expectations about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. Each science EE has three linkage levels which specify where a student is in relationship to the grade level target. The target linkage level is the highest, while the other two linkage levels (initial and precursor) are lower in complexity, depth, and breadth.

The Alt-MISA is an online, stage adaptive, assessment comprised of 9 “testlets” for each grade level assessed. Each testlet is completed in one sitting, and consists of an engagement activity and three to five test items. Each testlets covers one EE. Each engagement activity is designed to motivate students, provide a context, and activate prior knowledge. All test items are in a multiple-choice format.

The Alt-MISA has four performance levels ranging from 1 to 4 (Emerging to Advanced) with levels 3 and 4 designated as “proficient.” The performance levels describe the knowledge and skills that students master based on the EEs.

Criteria for Identifying Students with Disabilities for Participation in MSAA and Alt-MISA

Maryland's Alternate Assessments Participation Criteria and Checklist is provided in Appendix A. IEP teams must use the guidelines to determine whether a student participates in Maryland's Alternate Assessments. As reflected in the guidelines, to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessment in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, a student must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and meet all three of the following criteria:

1. The student has a “significant cognitive disability.”

AND

2. The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics and the Maryland Standards State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals in Science.

AND

3. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized, and repeated instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in adapted and modified curriculum aligned with grade level content standards.

Refer to **Appendix A: Maryland's Alternate Assessments Participation Criteria and Checklist**. This is an IEP resource that must be used when identifying students with disabilities for participation in MSAA or Alt-MISA. This resource provides criteria descriptors that will assist IEP Teams in better understanding each of the criteria.

ELPA

English Language Proficiency Assessment

The English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), ACCESS for ELLS 2.0, is administered to English learners in grades K through 12 annually during a testing window in the winter. The assessment measures a student's English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, comprehension, and literacy. ELPA results are reported in six proficiency levels: entering, emerging, developing, expanding, bridging, and reaching.

Assessment results are used by the local school systems to make decisions as to each student's participation in English Language Development (ELD) Programs. The state uses ELPA results to measure and report the English language proficiency indicator for accountability.

Some students with disabilities, such as those who participate in the alternate curriculum and assessments, may be unable to demonstrate their English Language proficiency on the ELPA, even with accommodations. In these cases, the IEP Team and the EL committee must collaborate to jointly determine the student's English language proficiency test participation.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is an English language proficiency test; as such, it is a tool used to assess the construct of EL's receptive and productive skills in English. Because it focuses on language rather than content area knowledge and skills, some accommodations that might be appropriate for the classroom or content area tests should not be used with ACCESS for ELLS 2.0, as they will invalidate the construct. In other words, students would be taking a test that is no longer measuring just their English language proficiency, making any interpretation or inferences from the scores invalid.

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ is designed for ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. In order to receive the most descriptive information from the test, it is very important that only students who meet all three criteria below and who cannot participate in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 – even with the provision of accommodations – be considered for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

Participation Criteria:

1. The student has been classified as an EL.
2. The student has a significant cognitive disability and is eligible for Special Education services under IDEA.
3. The student is in an alternate curriculum aligned with his or her state's academic standards, and is participating in the state's alternate accountability assessment.

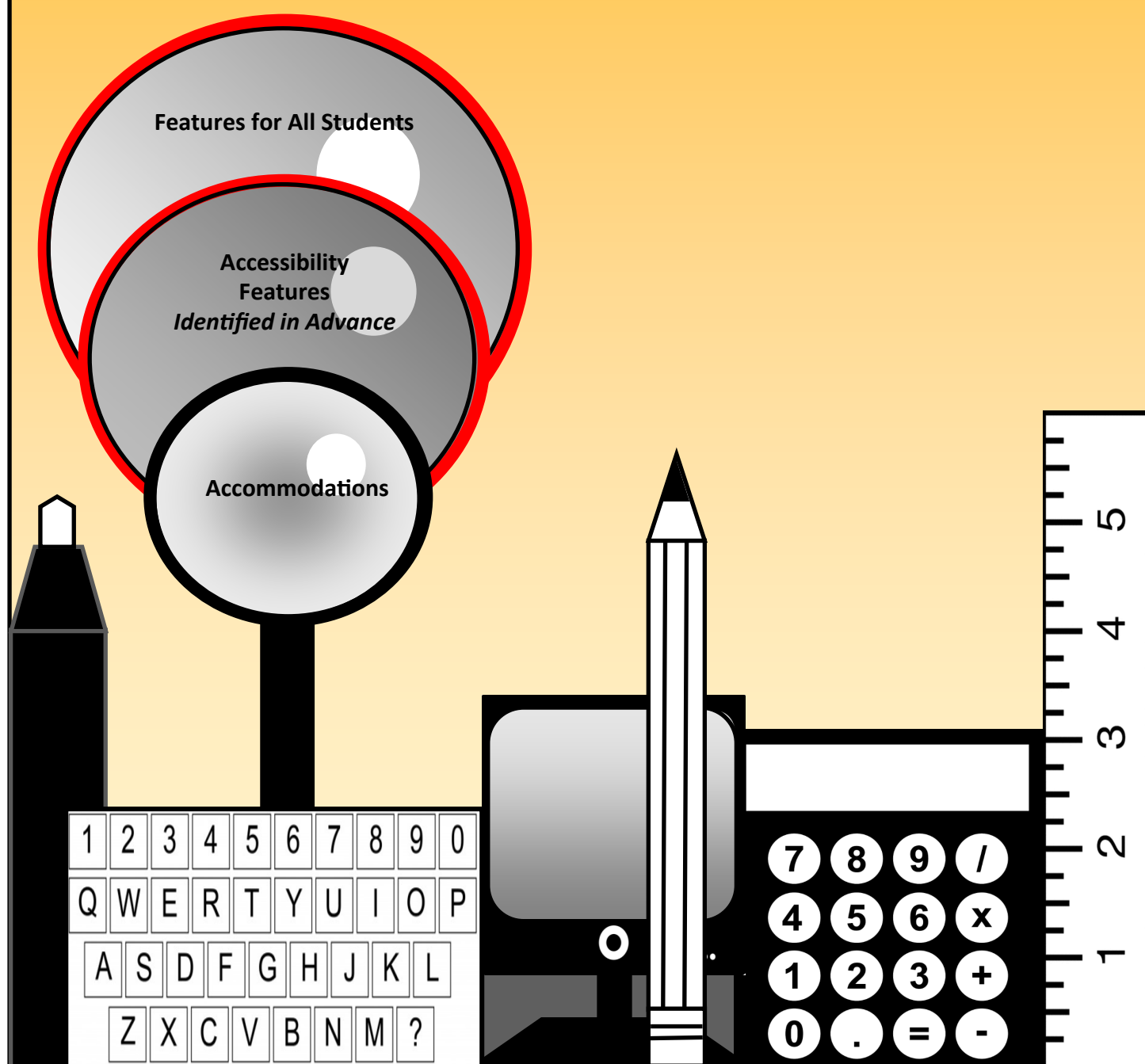
The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is available for the 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12 grade clusters.

English learners who are students with severe visual impairments may participate in taking the braille version of ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 that is available for grades 1-12. The IEP Team and the EL committee must collaborate to jointly determine if the student is proficient enough in Braille for a meaningful assessment to determine English language proficiency. LEAs must contact the MSDE's EL/Title III office for approval to order Braille materials.

Students who are deaf and hard of hearing, including those for whom American Sign Language is their first language, can generally participate in the reading and writing sections of the test with few or no accommodations necessary. Lip-reading with spoken responses for those students who possess these abilities may be possible for the listening and speaking parts of the test. IEP teams should make such determinations on a case-by-case basis. Translating the listening and speaking prompts into sign language is equivalent to translating into another spoken language, such as Spanish or Arabic, and therefore is prohibited as it changes the construct (i.e., assesses proficiency in a language other than English) and invalidates that test.

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Section 3: Accessibility Features for All Students



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Section 3: Accessibility Features for All Students

What are Accessibility Features?

Accessibility features are tools or preferences that are offered in classroom instruction, offered in classroom-based assessments and, in many cases, built into the assessment system. Accessibility features can be used by any student (i.e., students with or without disabilities, gifted students, ELs, and ELs with disabilities). Since the accessibility features are intended for all students, they are not classified as accommodations. Students should use these features during instruction and assessment, and should have opportunities to select and practice using them. Even though accessibility features are available to every student, that doesn't necessarily mean they are appropriate for every student. Consideration should be given to the supports a student consistently uses and finds helpful during instruction and when engaging in individual work.

Accessibility Features Identified in Advance

Some students will require additional accessibility features for their particular needs (e.g., changing the background or font color, using text-to-speech for the mathematics assessments). Research suggests that providing too many tools on-screen may lead to ineffective use of the tools provided and/or have an impact on a student's test performance. Furthermore, the on-off controls for these features might distract some students if they were shown on-screen, or interfere with other features or accommodations. As an example, if a student does not regularly receive text-to-speech or other audio representations on their math textbooks during instruction, text-to-speech for mathematics on an assessment may distract a student or slow their pacing, possibly interfering with their performance. Based on the needs and preferences of the individual student, some accessibility features will be selected ahead of time by students in collaboration with educators and based on the individual needs and preferences of the student. Students must practice using these features, either in a classroom or real-world application or setting. Students can decide whether or not to use a pre-selected support, without any consequence to the student, school, or district.

Decisions should be made on an individual student basis based on the specific needs of the child as opposed to group decisions for a class or grade. Individualizing access needs in instruction and on the assessment provides increased opportunities for students to accurately demonstrate knowledge and skills, and will reduce the likelihood of giving students incorrect accessibility features or accommodations.

Accessibility Features for All Students

The table below lists the accessibility features that are available to ***all students***. These features are available in classroom instruction and classroom-based assessments and, in many cases, through the online testing platform. Students should determine whether they wish to use the feature on an item-by-item basis based on the features they use during instruction and in daily life. Where applicable, the chart below will include the test administration activities for before, during, and after testing necessary for successful implementation of the accessibility features. There are a few accessibility features that may need to be pre-identified for the student in order to activate the feature on the test platform. When needed, this information is included in the "before testing" guidance.

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Accessibility Features for All Students

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines During Testing	Allowable Use
1b. Audio Amplification Some students may require the amplification of materials, and/or the use of personal amplification devices, to increase clarity. A teacher also may use a system when working with students in a situation that contains a great deal of ambient noise.	Before Testing: For some testing platforms, the volume level cannot be changed once the test begins. During Testing: Student must be tested in a separate setting if unable to wear headphones.	Instruction and Assessment*
1c. Bookmark (flag item for review) The student is able to flag items for future review.	During Testing: The student selects the "Bookmark" icon in the toolbar. The student electronically "bookmarks" items to review later. To remove the bookmark, select the "Bookmark" icon again. (Previously, "Bookmark" was called "Flag Items for Review").	Instruction and Assessment*
1e. Blank Scratch Paper	Before Testing: Test Administrators must supply at least one page of blank scratch paper (i.e., either unlined, lined, or graph) per student, per unit. If graph paper is used during mathematics instruction, it is recommended that schools provide graph paper as scratch paper for mathematics units. Students with visual impairments may also use braille paper, raised line paper, bold line paper, raised line graph paper, bold line graph paper, abacus, or Math Window. During Testing: The student uses blank scratch paper (i.e., lined, un-lined, or graph) to take notes and/or work through items during testing. Additional pages may be provided as needed. Students are not required to write their names on scratch paper. After Testing: Test Administrators are responsible for collecting ALL scratch paper after testing is completed to be securely destroyed. Scratch paper must be securely shredded if it has been used.	Instruction and Assessment*
1f. Eliminate Answer Choices The student can eliminate those answer choices that do not appear correct to the student.	During Testing: The student selects the "Answer Eliminator" icon in the toolbar. On multiple choice options, a student selects an answer and a red X appears and "crosses out" the answer choice. The student may disable this feature by selecting "Answer Eliminator" in the toolbar again.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines During Testing	Allowable Use
1g. General Directions Clarified	During Testing: The Test Administrator clarifies general administration directions only. No passages or test items may be clarified.	Instruction and Assessment*
1h. General Directions Read Aloud and Repeated as Needed	During Testing: The Test Administrator reads aloud the general administration directions only. A student may raise his or her hand and request the directions be repeated.	Instruction and Assessment*
1i. Highlight Tool A highlighter, like other visual organizers, is a way for a student to maintain his or her focus on specific sections of an assignment or on an assessment. Visual organizers may also be helpful to students who have difficulty with the acquisition, retrieval, or organization of learning. The use of such tools or strategies should be student initiated, rather than teacher initiated.	During Testing: The student electronically highlights text as needed to recall and/or emphasize. The student has the option to remove highlighting over text. The highlighter color option will change depending on the color contrast option selected.	Instruction and Assessment*
1j. Headphones or Noise Buffers A student uses a noise buffer to minimize distraction or to filter external noise in order to maintain focus.	Before Testing: Test Administrator prepares classroom with headphones for participating students. During Testing: The student uses headphones or noise buffers to minimize distraction, access embedded text-to-speech, or filter external noise during testing (in addition to when headphones are required for the ELA/literacy assessment). If headphones are used only as noise buffers, do not plug them into the testing device.	Instruction and Assessment*
1k. Line Reader Mask Tool A line reader, like other visual organizers, is a way for a student to maintain his or her focus on specific sections of an assignment or on an assessment. Visual organizers may also be helpful to students who have difficulty with the acquisition, retrieval, or organization of learning.	During Testing: The student selects "Show Line Reader Mask" in the user drop-down menu. The student uses an on-screen tool to assist in reading by raising and lowering the tool for each line of text on-screen. The Line Reader can be resized and the size of the reader window can be adjusted. The student may disable this feature by selecting, "Hide Line Reader Mask" in the user drop-down menu. The Line Reader includes additional functionality to close the Line Reader window and allow the feature to work as a general masking tool. In addition, the Line Reader window is moveable anywhere within the boundaries of the Line Reader tool. The Line Reader Mask box color will change depending on the color contrast option selected. The Line Reader Mask Tool can also assist students with visual tracking difficulties to maintain their place on a line.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines During Testing	Allowable Use
1l. Magnification/Enlargement Device Students who have a visual impairment must have an assessment of their learning and literacy medium to determine the most appropriate medium for them to use. This assessment will determine the optimal print size to provide access to print and electronic materials and maximize literacy learning. Some students will need access to print material for near and/or distance by enlarging the print through the use of a magnification device. These may include hand held magnifiers, desk top magnifiers, and electronic magnification devices. Text on a computer can be enlarged through computer system/browser access tools or tools built into a testing platform. For students for whom these tools do not provide enough magnification, they will need to use screen enlargement software. (See presentation accommodations: 3a – Assistive Technology)	Before Testing: <u>Browser/Device Magnification:</u> Magnification options can be set in accessibility/display settings for the computer. During Testing: <u>Magnifier:</u> The student selects “Enable Magnifier” in the user drop-down menu. The student enlarges text and graphics on-screen via a magnification square/circle (200%). The student may disable this feature by selecting, “Disable Magnifier” in the user drop-down menu. <u>Browser/Device Magnification:</u> Magnification options can be set in accessibility/display settings for the computer. The student can use keyboard shortcuts (e.g. Ctrl + for PCs, Command + for Macs) or pinch/zoom for tablets to magnify what’s displayed on the screen (while preserving clarity, contrast, and color). Note: Magnifying beyond 300% may affect heading formatting and may cause text-wrapping, and therefore it is not recommended.	Instruction and Assessment*
1m. Notepad The student can use actual or virtual scratch paper to make notes or record responses.	During Testing: The student selects the “Notepad” icon in the toolbar. The student writes notes using embedded Notepad tool on the ELA/literacy assessments. The student may disable this feature by selecting “Notepad” in the toolbar again.	Instruction and Assessment*
1n. Pop-up Glossary Grade- and content- appropriate definitions of specific construct irrelevant terms are shown.	During Testing: The student is able to view definitions of pre-selected, underlined words by hovering over them. The definition appears in a pop-up text box.	Instruction and Assessment*
1o. Redirect Student Students may need reminders to stay on task and remain focused during classroom instruction, activities, assignments and assessments. This redirection may be beneficial to students who have difficulty with attention or behavior.	During Testing: The test administrator redirects the student’s attention to the test without coaching or assisting the student in any way. There is no limit to the number of times a Test Administrator can redirect a student back to the test. Examples: Providing reminders to stay on task and focused during the assessments; Providing a visual cue to the student to remain on task.	Instruction and Assessment*
1p. Spell Check or External Spell Check Device Students who have difficulty producing written text as a result of a difficulty with language recall may benefit from the use of a dictionary or spell checker.	During Testing: The student uses the embedded spell check icon to review their written text for errors. If preferred, the student uses an external spell check device. Device may not have embedded grammar check, connect to the internet, or save information.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines During Testing	Allowable Use
1t. Writing Tools Writing tools may be used by students with fine motor difficulties. These tools may include adaptive paper, a slant board and features that may be built into the test platform or computer program such as cut and paste, copy, underline and bold.	During Testing: The student uses embedded writing process tools for written responses, including copy/paste, bold, italicize, underline, insert bullets, numbered list, undo, redo, and spell check. Writing tools are available in the constructed response items on the ELA/literacy assessment. Note: The copy/paste functionality does not include the ability to copy test content. Only text contained within a student response can be copy/pasted.	Instruction and Assessment*
1u. Graphic Organizer Students may benefit from pre-prepared or self-created graphic organizers in order to arrange information into patterns in order to organize their work and to stay focused on the content. Graphic organizers can be especially helpful for written reports and essays, sequencing information, and recalling or retrieving information.	Graphic organizers are visual representations of a text or a topic. Organizers provide steps or frames for students to identify pertinent facts, to organize information and to record relationship facts and ideas within a learning task. Organizers offer an entry point into complex material for visual learners to increase comprehension and retention.	Instruction Only
1v. Audio Materials	Audio materials provide speech output of textbooks, instructional materials, lectures, or tests. Audio materials are typically audio only and do not necessarily display the text. Students may want to also utilize other formats in conjunction with audio materials. Audio materials can be produced in various electronic formats and may require assistive technology to access material.	Instruction Only

*Consult each assessment's Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

Fact Sheet AFA-2

Accessibility Features for All Students Identified in Advance

The following accessibility features are available to all students but may need to be identified in advance of the assessment and set up for the student in the online testing platform in order for the student to access them.

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
1a. Answer Masking The student is able to block or cover answer choices.	Before Testing: Certain platforms may require that an accessibility feature be identified in advance in order for the feature to be activated within the platform. During Testing: When answer masking is enabled, multiple choice and multiple select answers will be masked. The student will uncover answer options when ready. The student may disable this feature by selecting, "Disable Answer Masking" in the user drop-down menu.	Instruction and Assessment*
1d. Color Contrast (Background/Font Color) The student is able to adjust the text color and background color. Color Contrast, like other visual organizers, is a way for a student to maintain his or her focus on specific section of an assignment or on an assessment. Visual organizers may also be helpful to students who have difficulty with the acquisition, retrieval, or organization of learning. The use of such tools or strategies should be student initiated, rather than teacher initiated.	Before Testing: Certain platforms may require that an accessibility feature be identified in advance in order for the feature to be activated within the platform. During Testing: Alternate on-screen background and/or font color is enabled based on need or preference.	Instruction and Assessment*
1q. Student Reads Content Aloud to Him or Herself	During Instruction and Testing: The student reads aloud the materials to him or herself. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting.	Instruction and Assessment*
1r. Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics and Science and Government Assessments*	Before Testing: Certain platforms may require that an accessibility feature be identified in advance in order for the feature to be activated within the platform. The volume level may need to be determined prior to testing; once the test session begins, the volume level may not be able to be changed. <u>Differences Between Text Only and Text Plus Graphics:</u> - o Text Plus Graphics - Reads all printed text and the hidden alternate text descriptions for images. - o Text Only - Reads printed text but does not read any alternate text descriptions for images.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
1s. Human Reader or Human Signer for the Mathematics, Science and Government Assessments* Available for whole text and selected sections.	Before Testing: This feature will need to be identified in advance in order to assign a human reader or signer to the student. During Testing: A Test Administrator (Human Reader or Human Signer) reads aloud to a student using the provided Human Reader Script. The student must be tested in an individual or small group setting. Small groups should only be used if all students are able to work at approximately the same pace. The number of students in a small group is determined to be 5 in Maryland. After Testing: Human Reader Scripts contain secure item content and should be handled as secure test materials. Test Administrators should return materials to Test Coordinators. Test Coordinators must return the Human Reader Scripts with the nonscorable materials.	Instruction and Assessment*

*Consult each assessment's Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

Administrative Considerations for All Students

Although students are generally instructed and assessed in their regular classroom and follow the standard schedule for the grade and content area, a building administrator has the authority to schedule instructional and testing sessions in spaces other than regular classrooms, and at different scheduled times. Decisions may be considered, for example, that benefit students who are easily distracted in large group settings by instructing or assessing them in a small group or individual setting. In general, changes to the timing, setting, or conditions of are left to the discretion of the principal or school testing coordinator.

In accordance with principles of universal design for learning, the following administrative guidance is provided regarding the timing and scheduling of instructions and assessments, and setting/locations. These administrative considerations are available to all students.

A building administrator may determine that any student can receive one or more of the following administrative considerations, regardless of the student's status as a student with an IEP, 504 or EL Plan.

Fact Sheet AC-1

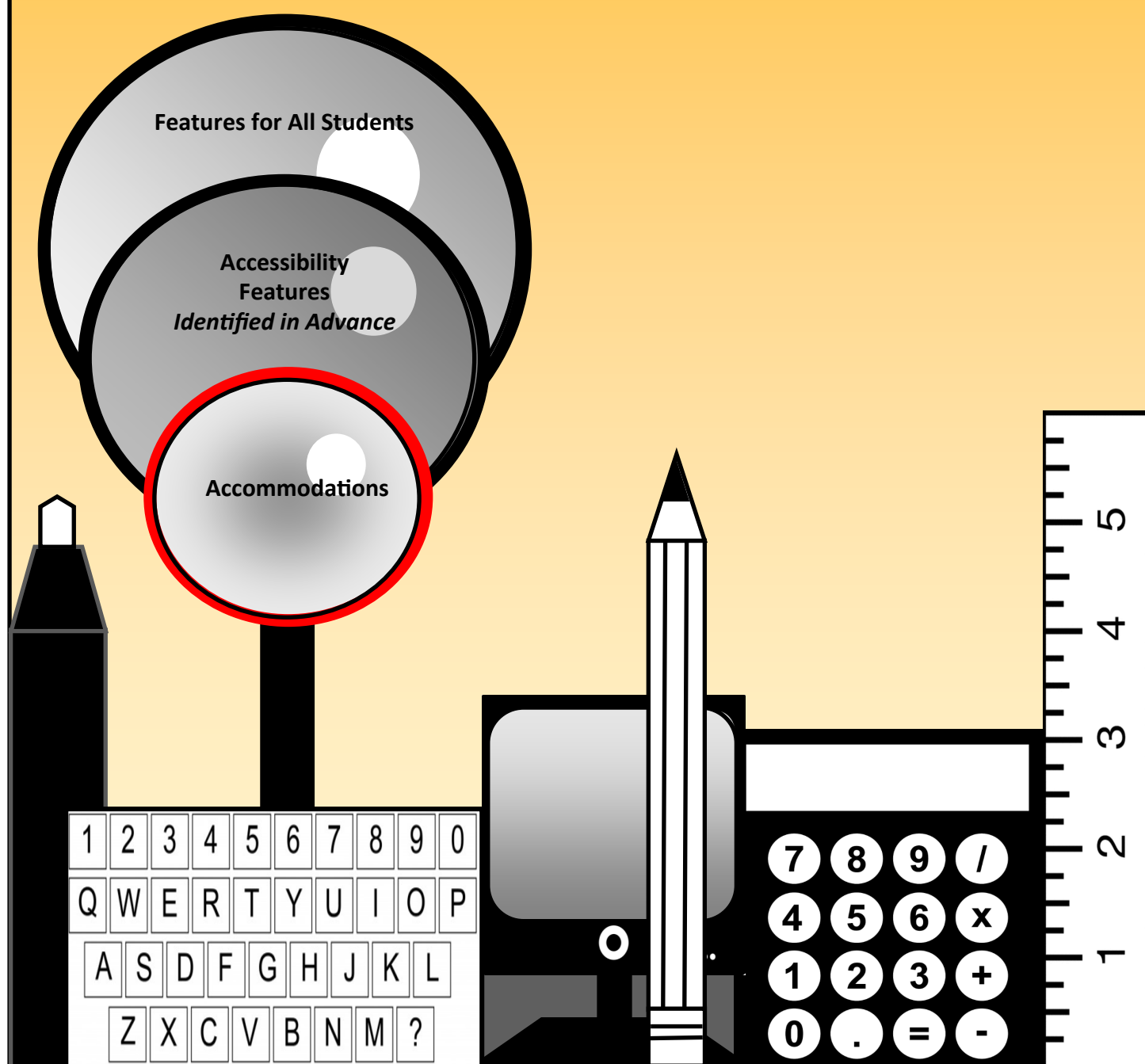
Administrative Considerations for All Students

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
2a. Small Group	Student is instructed or assessed in a separate location with a small group of students with matching accessibility features, accommodations, or needs as appropriate.	Instruction and Assessment*
2b. Time of Day	Student is instructed or assessed during a specific time of day based on their individual needs (e.g., ELA/literacy in the morning; no math after lunch).	Instruction and Assessment*
2c. Separate or Alternate Location	Student is instructed or assessed in a specifically designated location.	Instruction and Assessment*
2d. Specified Area or Setting	Student is instructed or assessed in a specified area or setting (e.g., front of the classroom, seat near the door, library, etc.).	Instruction and Assessment*
2e. Adaptive or Specialized Equipment or Furniture	Student is provided specialized equipment or furniture needed for a successful testing environment (e.g., slant board, low lighting, adaptive seat).	Instruction and Assessment*
2f. Frequent Breaks A student may require breaks during assignments, activities or tests for various reasons. Breaks are allowed and may be given at predetermined intervals or on request.	During testing: There are a number of reasons why a student may need to take a break: <i>Medical Breaks:</i> Student takes a break due to pre-existing or sudden onset of a temporary or long-term medical condition. Student's testing time stops. <i>Individual Bathroom Breaks:</i> Student requests a bathroom break within their overall allotted testing time. Student's testing time does not stop. <i>In-Chair Stretch Break:</i> Student pauses and stretches. Please consult each individual assessment's Text Administration Manual for information on whether or not the testing time stops for In-Chair Stretch Breaks. Other Frequent Breaks, according to state policy.	Instruction and Assessment*
2g. Reduce Distraction to Self	A student may need to complete assignments, activities or assessments in a location other than their classroom in order to reduce distractions to the student. Changes may also be made to student's location within the classroom. The unique needs of the child will help to determine what location may be best.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accessibility Features	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
2h. Reduce Distraction to Others	Students who receive a human reader or human scribe accommodation in instruction or on assessments should work in a location that does not allow for other students to be distracted by the use of those accommodations.	Instruction and Assessment*
2i. Change Location within School	Occasionally a setting change may be necessary to increase physical access for a student. For example, a student who uses large print materials may need to work at a table rather than at a desk with a smaller work surface or a student who uses a wheel chair with a specially designed desk top may not have adequate space in an auditorium with theater seating. He or she may be required to sit at another location in the auditorium in order to use his or her equipment.	Instruction and Assessment*
2j. Change Location outside School	Some students may need to receive their educational services and participate in assessments in home, hospital or other settings approved by the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC). Contact your LAC for additional guidance regarding provision of instruction or the administering an assessment outside of the school building.	Instruction and Assessment*
2k. Unique Accommodation		Consult assessment-specific guidelines for detailed information on unique accommodations

*Consult each assessment's Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

Section 4: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD)



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Section 4A: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

The Five Step Process for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Step 1: Setting Expectations – Expect Students with Disabilities to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards

Federal and State Laws Requiring Participation by Students with Disabilities

As previously noted, several important laws require the participation of students with disabilities in standards-aligned instruction and assessment initiatives. These include federal laws such as ESSA and IDEA.

Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [Now the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)]

Stronger accountability for education achievement results is one of the four basic education reform principles contained in ESSA. This law complements the provisions in providing public accountability at the school, district, and State levels for all students with disabilities. ESSA explicitly calls for participation in such assessments of all students [Section 1177 (1) (B) (vii) (I)]. (The term “such assessments” refers to a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments). It also requires that these assessments provide for the reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities – as defined under Section 602(3) of IDEA – necessary to measure the academic achievement of such students relative to State academic content and State student academic achievement standards [Section 1177 (1) (B) (vii) (III)].

The April 2007 regulation on alternate assessments on modified achievement standards included the following statements about accommodations:

“... a State's (or in the case of district-wide assessments), an LEA's guidelines must require each child to be validly assessed and must identify, for each assessment any accommodations that would result in an invalid score. Consistent with Title I . . . a student with an accommodation that invalidates the score would not be reported as a participant under the IDEA.” (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 17750)

One of the basic reform principles of ESSA is stronger accountability for educational achievement 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-aligned 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 ESSA that hold schools accountable for educational results:

- Academic content standards (what students should learn) and academic achievement standards (how well students should learn the content) 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.
- 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.
- States must also 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 are based on measuring success in educating all students and determining what needs to be improved for specific groups of students.
- The accountability system is defined in terms of Maryland's Accountability Program, 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 and ultimately through consequences if Maryland's Accountability Program is not achieved.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA)

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 assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include:

"Children with disabilities are included in general State- and districtwide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary [Section 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 assessments; 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 [Section 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 State-level legislative initiatives related to implementation of educational reform.

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.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

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 disabling conditions 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.

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 instructions 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 focus of this manual is on the selection, administration, and evaluation of accommodations for both instruction and assessment. Since assessment and instructional accommodations must be the same for individual students, guidelines for selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment are the same.

Step 2: Learning About Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities

What are accommodations?

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

Accommodations mitigate the effects of a student's disability, but do not reduce learning or performance expectations. Accommodations do not change the construct being assessed and do not compromise the integrity or validity of the assessment. No accommodation can be provided to a student during State or district testing unless the student had that accommodation available during instruction and classroom assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodation 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 standardized assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with Maryland 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 post-secondary education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined.

Description of Accommodation Categories

Accommodations are commonly categorized in four ways: presentation, response, setting (also known as administrative considerations), and timing/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.
- **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.

Accommodations and Universal Design

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and guidelines provide a framework for curriculum design, instructional processes, and assessment that gives **all** students equitable opportunities to learn and to demonstrate what they have learned. The use of UDL principles and guidelines are essential in the development and review of existing assessments in order to remove barriers that impede students with disabilities from demonstrating what they know and can do. With the application of universal design principles to assessments, educators have greater opportunities to gain a more accurate understanding of what students know and can do. UDL guidelines and principles should be used in the planning and delivery of instruction and applied from the beginning of test development through the implementation of assessments.

Universal design in relation to assessment is described by Thompson, et al:

“Universally designed assessments are designed and developed from the beginning to allow participation of the widest possible range of students, and to result in valid inferences about performance for all students who participate in the assessment. Universally designed assessments are based on the premise that each child in school is a part of the population to be tested, and that testing results must not be affected by disability, gender, race, or English language ability. Universally designed assessments are not intended to eliminate individualization, but they may reduce the need for accommodations and various alternative assessments by eliminating access barriers associated with the tests themselves.

Universal design for assessments does not simply mean that tests are administered on computers. As assessments have moved toward becoming more consistently administered on computers, accommodations and universal design considerations have changed. Traditionally, universal design has been thought of as coming first, and accommodations have been applied during testing. With current technology, accommodations can be built into the design of the test itself. Some of these embedded features may also be accommodations that will benefit students with disabilities and English learners. Some students with disabilities and English learners require accommodations beyond the features that are built into the testing platform. For those students, IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Plan Teams must recommend the appropriate accommodation(s) based on individual student's need(s).

Accommodations vs. Modifications

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 careers. Providing modifications 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 critically 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.**

Comparison of Accommodations and Modifications*

Information	Instructional Accommodations	Modifications
Explanation	Indicates changes to how the content is: Taught, Made accessible, and/or Assessed Accommodations do not change what the student is expected to master. The objectives of the course remain intact.	Indicates the content is modified. The student is expected to learn something different from the general education standard. The instructional level or general education benchmarks or number of key concepts to be mastered are changed.
Examples	One-on-one instruction, small group instruction, multi-sensory approaches, extended time on projects, study guides highlighted texts, programmed materials, preferential seating, immediate feedback, etc. Braille, audio materials, screen readers, interpreter, word processor, etc. Extended time to complete assignments, shortened tests, draw a diagram, develop a model, perform the answer, etc.	A locally developed course will be substituted for a general education course (e.g., Life Skills courses, Functional Mathematics). Selected standards will be assessed instead of all of the standards for the grade level course. Off-level instruction and performance expectations in a general education setting are below grade level and instructional standards.

*Adopted from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and Division of IDEA coordination.

Step 3: Selecting Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment for Individual Students with Disabilities

To ensure that students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every IEP Team member must be knowledgeable about the Maryland College and Career Ready 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 academic achievement and functional performance in relation to local and State academic standards. 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 require checking boxes on a State or local "compliance" document are not conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor does that practice advance equitable opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in the general education curriculum.

Each member of the IEP Team must be informed of responsibilities related to implementing the student's IEP. Those responsibilities include selecting, administering and evaluating accommodations during instruction **and** assessment. Accommodations must be selected on the basis of the individual student need(s) and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment.

The role of IEP or 504 Plan key players and suggestions for carrying out their respective responsibilities are described below. As part of the IEP or 504 Plan decision making process any team member listed below may provide information to be considered during an IEP or 504 Team meeting regarding the selection, implementation, and/or evaluation of accommodations appropriate for a student.

School Principal

The principal promotes the expectation at the school building level that students with disabilities are capable learners who will participate and succeed in all local and State testing programs. The principal in each school is responsible for:

- Implementing the school district's policies that provide equal access to instructional and assessment programs for all students.
- Ensuring that accommodations are fully, consistently and appropriately implemented during the administration of local and State assessments and classroom quizzes and tests, as specified in each student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Exercising professional discretion on an emergency basis. For example, allowing certain testing accommodations for a student who incurs a temporary disabling condition that interferes with test performance shortly before or within the testing window of a State assessment (such as the student breaks his/her arm and will need a scribe). *Refer to Appendix H: Emergency Accommodation Form for State Assessments.*

Building Principals should also be familiar with the policies and procedures included in the various Test Administrators/Coordinators Manuals for the various Maryland Assessments.

General Education Teacher

As a member of the IEP or 504 Plan Team, the general education teacher has an active and significant role in the determination and use of instructional and testing accommodations for students with disabilities or disabling conditions. General education teachers are familiar with curriculum content and the purpose of State and district assessments. Ensuring that students with disabilities and disabling conditions have full access to the programs and services that are available to their nondisabled peers often requires that general education teachers, in collaboration with special education teachers, provide appropriate instructional and testing accommodations. The results of assessments inform teachers of information that will support the individual student in achieving State standards. The testing accommodations listed in the student's IEP or 504 Plan must be consistently provided in the classroom. General education teachers are critical team members who must also be familiar and knowledgeable of each student's accommodations and how to appropriately administer them.

Special Education Teacher

The special education teacher plays an important role in providing information on how to match learning characteristics of the student with a disability to appropriate instructional and testing accommodations, ensuring that the student is able to demonstrate his/her knowledge and skills without being limited or unfairly restricted by his/her disability. In collaboration with general education teachers and related service providers, special education teachers assist in recommending and implementing appropriate instructional accommodations used in the classroom. These recommendations will serve as a link to the types of testing accommodations a student may need for classroom, State and district assessments. Special educators may directly provide the testing accommodations or may assist school staff in the administration of testing accommodations that are included in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.

Related Service Providers

Related service providers such as speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists serve vital roles in supporting the education of many students with disabilities in school environments. Related services personnel, as part of school teams, can use their education and facilitate students' pursuit of important learning outcomes. This is accomplished through the provision of related service providers to the student and with application of the specific skills associated with their respective disciplines. The collaborative skills required to work effectively with others in the context of a team-centered approach in a variety of educational environments is critical.

Student

A student may be invited to participate in his or her IEP Team or 504 Plan meetings. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student turns 14 years old, and younger, if appropriate, and updated annually, the student must be invited to the IEP meeting and consistent with the Education Article, §21-305. Students themselves can provide valuable information to the IEP or 504 Plan Team on accommodations needed. They can provide information on their strengths and how the accommodations they use for instruction are working. This information from the student can inform decisions regarding the appropriateness of recommended accommodations during tests. At times, students may be reluctant to use certain testing accommodations because they do not want to appear to be different from their peers. Including students in decision-making will help them to understand the purpose of the accommodation and may likely result in their willingness to consistently use the accommodation. The testing accommodations that a student needs must be reviewed at least annually by the IEP or 504 Plan Teams. Accommodations recommended for students early in their school careers may not be as needed as they develop skills, knowledge and experience to increase their ability to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Parents/Guardians

As members of the IEP or 504 Plan Team, parents participate in the development, review, and revision of their child's IEP or 504 Plan. Parents are familiar with the strengths and needs of their child and can provide valuable information to enhance discussions about the need for instructional and testing accommodations. Parents have information about strategies their child uses to complete homework assignments and other tasks around the home. To enable parents to participate in meaningful discussions it is important that they have information about the following:

- The need and rationale for testing accommodations, when and where appropriate;
- The types of testing accommodations and how they are administered; and
- The purpose of tests, what they measure and how the results are used.

Refer to Tool SWD-11 (Section 4), which is a resource that can be used with parents/guardians.

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 academic achievement and functional performance," the decision of identifying and documenting accommodations should be a fairly straightforward process. The term "present levels of achievement and functional performance" refers to 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" [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)].

There are potentially three areas in which accommodations can be addressed in the IEP:

1. "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 assessments."
2. "Consideration of Special Factors [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered."
3. "Supplementary Aids and Services [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 613 (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 students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate."

Documenting Accommodations on a Student's 504 Plan

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 specifies that no one with a disability can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary or postsecondary schooling. "Disability" in this context refers to a "physical, or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities." [20 U.S.C. 1405; 29 U.S.C. 794] This can include physical impairments, illnesses or injuries; communicable diseases; chronic conditions like asthma, allergies and diabetes; and learning problems. A 504 Plan spells out the accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity to perform at the same level as their peers, and might include such things as wheelchair ramps, blood sugar monitoring, interpreting/transliteration services, preferential seating, an extra set of textbooks, a peanut-free lunch environment, home instruction, or a tape recorder or keyboard for taking notes. Each student who meets the eligibility guidelines for accommodations under Section 504 will have a Section 504 Plan developed for him/her to use in school. The Plan specifies the nature of the impairment, the major life activity affected by the impairment, accommodations necessary to meet the student's needs, and the person(s) responsible for implementing the accommodations.

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.

Refer to Tools SWD-2, SWD-4, SWD-5, SWD-6, and SWD-10 (Section 4C), which can be used with students.

The Decision Making Process

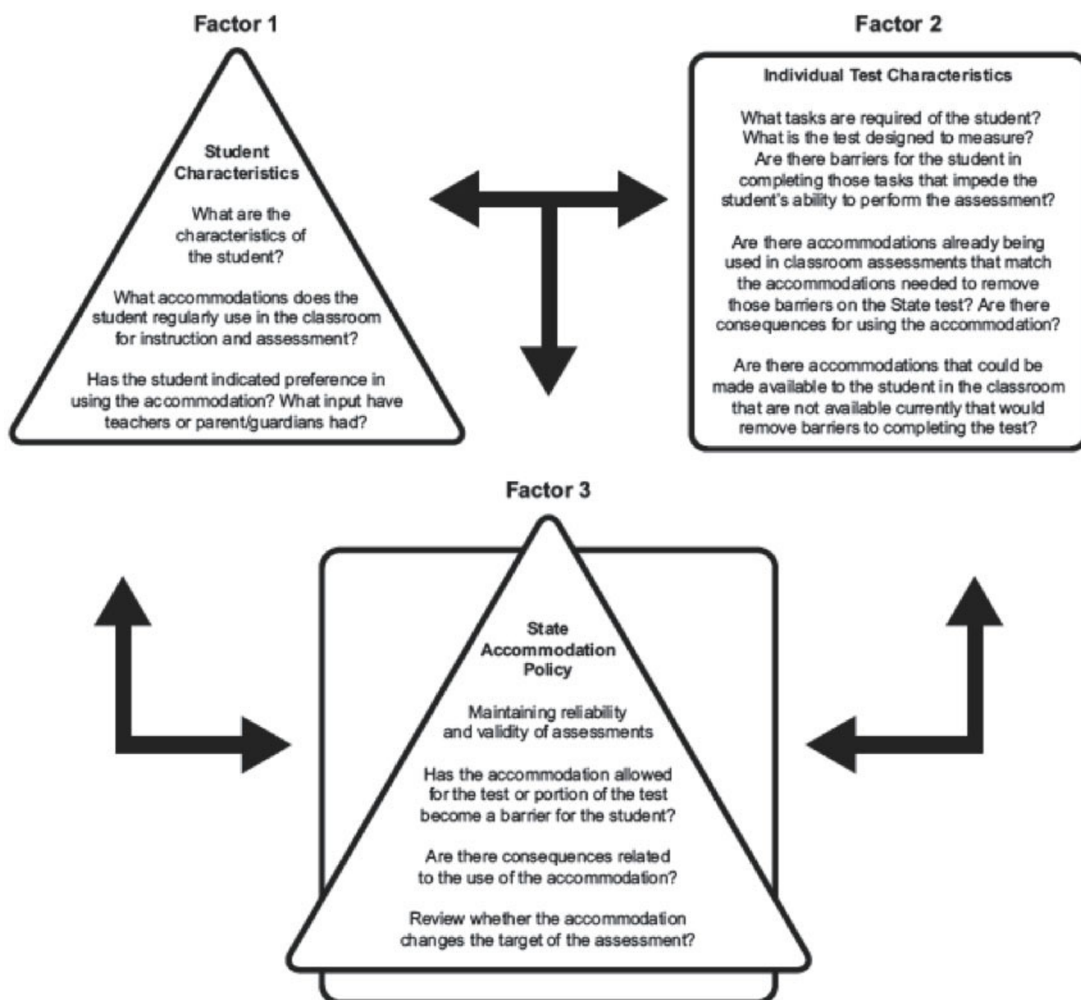
The Decision Making Process for accommodations should include consideration of at least these three factors (See Figure 2 below):

Factor 1: Student characteristics and learning needs (e.g., disabilities, language proficiency, accommodation used in classroom instruction/assessments to access and perform in academic standards and assessments).

Factor 2: Individual assessment characteristics (i.e., knowledge about what tasks are required on assessments and ways to remove physical and other barriers to students' ability to perform those tasks).

Factor 3: State accommodation policies for the assessment or for part of an assessment that maintain the validity of the assessment results.

Figure 1. Considerations When Making Decisions for Assessment Accommodations



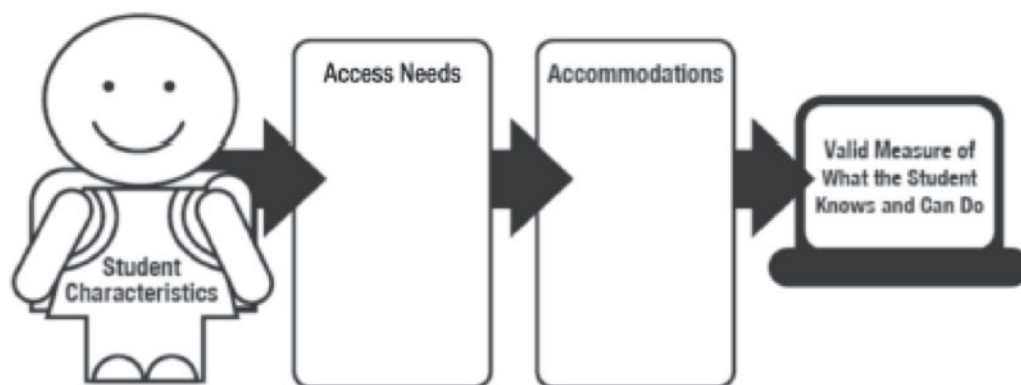
Decision Making Process Factor #1: Student Characteristics

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's IEP or 504 Team. Accommodations should be recommended based on the individual student's characteristics, access needs, and the student's needs for the accommodation (see Figure #3). The IEP or 504 Plan Team should first identify the student's individual characteristics (i.e., difficulty reading grade level text).

Then the IEP or 504 Team Plan Team should consider the student's access needs. Access needs specify strategies to support learning and remove the barriers (i.e., providing auditory support to access grade level text).

When these accommodations are used according to the IEP or 504 Plan, the student should be able to validly demonstrate what he or she knows and can do for both instruction and assessments.

Figure 2. Student Characteristics and Needs



Decision Making Process Factor #2: Individual Test Characteristics: Questions to Guide Accommodations Selection

After considering student characteristics, it is important to look at the task(s) students are being asked to do on the various assessments. Below are more questions to ask:

- What are the characteristics of the test the student needs to take? Are the test tasks similar to classroom assessment task and does the student have the opportunity to practice similar tasks prior to testing?
- Does the student use an accommodation for a classroom task that is allowed for similar tasks on assessments?
- Are there other barriers that could be removed by using an accommodation that is not already offered or used by the student?

Decision Making Process Factor #3: State Accommodations Policies: Maintaining Validity of Assessments

When selecting accommodations for State assessments with a student, it is important to keep in mind both the accommodation policies set to maintain the validity of an assessment, and to know the consequences of the decisions.

If the IEP Team determines that a student should use a certain accommodations during an assessment but the student refuses to use the accommodation, the validity of the assessment is compromised.

IEP or 504 Teams must consider the long-term consequences related to a student's use of accommodations as an important topic for discussion for IEP teams or Section 504 Plan Teams. For example, as students with disabilities begin to make postsecondary choices, the consequences may factor into the nature of accommodation choices and availabilities that may be open to them. As the student transitions from school to adult activities, the allowable education training and employment accommodations will change. The accommodations will be those mandated by the Federal Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. The IEP Team may want to discuss whether or how the decision about accommodations for assessments affects post-secondary education, training, and/or employment.

Plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accommodations. 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.

Determining the Consequences of Assessment Accommodations Use

When selecting accommodations for assessments with a student, it is important to consider Maryland policies and procedures to determine whether use of an accommodation results in consequences on an assessment (e.g., consequences of a human reader accommodation on a reading test), and to communicate any ramifications of State policy to parents.

Prior Accommodations Use

Accommodations should not be used for the first time on a State assessment. Instead, it is important to address these instructional concerns before taking a State assessment:

- Plan time for the student to learn new accommodations.
- When a student is taking assessments in a technology-based setting, be sure that the student knows how to use the accommodation when it is provided as part of the online testing platform.
- Plan for evaluation and improvement of accommodations (see step 5).

Accommodations for Instruction vs. Assessment

Sometimes accommodations used in instruction may not be used on an assessment:

- Plan time for students to practice NOT using certain accommodations before the State assessment.
- Some instructional accommodations may alter what a test is designed to measure.

In some cases, the accommodations used in instruction may not be allowed on a test because they would invalidate the results of the test (i.e., when the performance no longer reflects what the test was designed to measure).

In these instances, teachers should be sure to allow the student ample opportunities to perform on classroom tasks and assessments without the use of the accommodation.

If the accommodation is considered a necessary step in scaffolding grade-level content instruction, having some practice without the accommodation during classroom work would be an expected practice to gauge student progress independent of the accommodation and would also provide the student opportunities to practice not using an accommodation before the State assessment. If the instructional accommodation is more permanent in nature and is not permitted on a State assessment, decision-makers should consider whether the accommodation alters what the test measures. If after considering these steps, the appropriateness of using an accommodation is not clear, contact district or State personnel about its use.

Questions to Guide Accommodation Selection

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's IEP or 504 Plan Team. 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 challenges, and are these based on language needs, a disability, or both?
- How do the student's learning and/or language needs affect the achievement of grade-level or course 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?
- Should an existing accessibility feature and/or accommodation be implemented differently?
- What accommodations are regularly used by the student during instruction and assessments?
- What were the outcomes when accommodations were used and when they were not used during classroom assignments and on assessments?
- What is the student's perception of how well an accommodation works?
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations?
- What difficulties does the student experience when using accommodations?
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about the effectiveness of the accommodations?
- Should the student continue to use an accommodation as is, are there changes needed, or should the use of the accommodation be discontinued?

Of the accommodations that match the student’s needs, consider:

- Whether the accommodation is respectful of a student’s age and grade (e.g., older students may prefer to receive a verbatim reading accommodation provided through the use of technology, rather than those administered by an adult);
- The student’s willingness to learn to use the accommodation;
- Providing explicit instruction in how to use the accommodation in the classroom and assessment settings;
- Conditions for use of the accommodation 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 Accommodations Fact Sheets SWD-1 and SWD-2 (Section 4B) for additional information on completing this step.

Step 4: Administering Accommodations during Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities

Accommodations during Instruction

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

As Maryland moves forward with providing all State assessments online, IEP or 504 Plan Teams must ensure that students have opportunities to become familiar with the technological aspects of the assessment process. In addition to taking practice tests using the same testing platform, it is also important for educators to provide opportunities for all students to use technology for learning.

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 coordinated well ahead of administration. 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. It is essential that special educators, who are most familiar with the accommodations being administered, give assistance to general educators in how to properly provide particular accommodations

Refer to Accommodations Fact Sheet SWD-3 (Section 4B) and Tools SWD-4, SWD-5 and SWD-8 (Section 4C) for additional information when planning for accommodations during assessment.

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 accommodators need to know whether a student will be allowed extra time to complete the test and when the testing time is ended, and 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.

Current designs of technology-based testing platforms may allow for accommodations to be provided on the testing platform itself. Through a process of creating a student profile, an IEP or 504 Plan Team may be able to individualize the test to provide certain accommodations, like colored backgrounds, templates, and sign interpretation. Providing such accommodations through the testing platform can guarantee that the provision of accommodations is standardized from student to student and district to district. However, it is important to monitor the provision of accommodations on test day to ensure that accommodations are delivered as recommended, and the technology is operating appropriately.

State policy requires that an archive of testing accommodations be maintained at the school for each test administered for six years per COMAR 13.A.03.04. In addition, please note that consistent with Federal Requirements [20USC §1416(a)(16)(D) and 34CFR §300.160(f)(1)], Maryland must report on students using accommodations. To ensure the accuracy of the reported information, changes to the Instructional and Testing Accommodations pages of the IEP were made to align with the revised 2017 Maryland Accommodations Manual.

Administering Assessments and Accommodations

State laws, regulations and policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. In Maryland, testing regulations and policies are contained within the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) as well as this manual; the Test Administration Manual (TAM) and Test Coordinator's Manual (TCM) are other materials provided by the State for each testing program. Test Administrators, proctors, and all staff involved in test administration in any way are required to 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 personnel if nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;
- Avoid any conditions in the administration 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;
- Avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment. [National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995) Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement. Washington DC: Author.]

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. All Maryland educators must be familiar with COMAR and receive training regarding test administration, accommodations, and security procedures. Staff should check with their Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) for more detailed information regarding test security procedures.

If a student refuses an accommodation listed in his or her IEP or 504 Plan, the school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation.

However, the accommodation must be offered and remain available to the student during the test administration. Refer to Appendix I for the Student Accommodation Refusal Form. This form must be completed and placed in the student's assessment file. Also, on the day of the student's refusal of an accommodation, a copy of the completed form must be sent home to the parent. The School Test Coordinators (STCs) should work with Test Administrators to determine who else should be informed of the student's refusal of the accommodation. In addition, the IEP Team may want to consider discussing this issue at the student's next IEP meeting.

Eligible Accommodators

Test Administrators and the following individuals may provide accommodations to students during testing:

- Non-certified instructional assistants and aides; and
- Substitutes or other staff members who are regular employees of the schools system.

Note: The above individuals must be under the supervision of a Maryland State-certified Test Administrator and must sign the Test Administration and Certification of Training Form and Non-Disclosure Agreement, which is kept on file.

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 given 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

As mentioned in Step 3, 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 a particular concern 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, human reader, scribe). In order to ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrations must (1) provide proper training in both specific test administration procedures for each testing program as well as training in specific test security procedures for each test, (2) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (3) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone, and (4) return and account for all materials as instructed.

Some of the same considerations for test security apply when students are taking a technology based assessment. For example, ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the test and that test materials are kept confidential are critical in technology based assessments. In addition, it is important to guarantee that students are seated in such a manner that they cannot see each other's work station, are not able to access any additional programs or the Internet when completing the assessment, and that students are not able to access any saved data or computer shortcuts.

In the event that a student was provided a test accommodation that was not listed in his or her IEP or 504 Plan, or if a student was **not** provided a test accommodation listed in his or her IEP or 504 Plan, the school must notify the LAC who in turn will complete the necessary documents. All or part of the student's score may be invalidated for Maryland's Accountability Program purposes.

As noted previously, all staff involved in any way with State testing are required to become familiar with and comply with the State regulation governing Test Administration and Data Reporting Policies and Procedures (COMAR 13.A303.04). In addition, all staff are required to comply with procedures for each testing program as outlined in the Test Administration Manual (TAM) and Test Coordinator's Manual (TCM) and any other ancillary materials produced by the State for each assessment. In addition, local district assessments require compliance with general State procedures as well as any district-specific procedures. Check with your LAC for more information.

The following code of ethics conforms to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing developed by the American Education Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education:

IT IS A BREACH OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE VERBAL OR NONVERBAL CLUES OR ANSWERS, TEACH ITEMS ON THE TEST, SHARE WRITING PROMPTS, COACH, HINT, OR IN ANY WAY INFLUENCE A STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE TESTING SITUATION. A BREACH OF ETHICS MAY RESULT IN INVALIDATION OF TEST RESULTS AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) OR MSDE DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

VIOLATION OF TEST SECURITY CAN RESULT IN PROSECUTION AND/OR PENALTIES AS IMPOSED BY THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND/OR THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMAR 13.A.03.04 AND 13A.12.05.

Accommodation Monitoring by MSDE

MSDE will send representatives to schools throughout the State to monitor and observe the use of accommodations during instruction and assessment. During testing, the monitor will ensure that standardized testing procedures are being followed. Schools will be notified in advance of a monitor's visit. All monitors will follow local procedures for reporting to the school's main office and signing the school's visitor log. Monitors will also sign Non-Disclosure forms as requested by the school and provide a copy of a memorandum from the Assistant Superintendent for Accountability and Assessment and Data Systems giving authorization to monitor instruction and testing relating to the use of accommodations during testing.

LEAs who do permit central office personnel to make observations during Maryland State testing must train personnel on how to administer accommodations during instruction and assessment.

Step 5: Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Use in Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities

Accommodation must be selected on the basis of the individual student's needs and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment – accommodations **cannot** be used for assessment only. The MSDE will conduct periodic audits of accommodations to ensure that accommodations are being properly selected, documented, and administered. 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 assessments. Data on the use and impact of accommodations instruction drives evidence based decision making for selection of appropriate accommodations. Data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may also reveal questionable patterns of accommodation 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 Team, 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, district, and student level.

Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodations Use at the School and 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 IEP 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 district assessments? If students are not meeting the expected level of performance, is it due to students not having had access to the necessary instruction, not receiving the accommodation, or using 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 versus 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 that were 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, parents, and others about how the accommodation appears to be working?

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 considered by a committee responsible for continuous improvement efforts, while the student-level needs 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.

Refer to Tools SWD-6, SWD-9 and SWD-10 (Section 4C) for further information regarding the evaluation on the use of accommodations.

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Section 4B: Accommodations Fact Sheets for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Fact Sheet SWD-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 tactile 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.

Accommodations Conditions

Notations in the columns on the following pages indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided.

Accommodations Codes

Each accommodation is assigned a code for use in data capture and analysis. Each accommodation code will be listed with a number followed by a letter and then the title of the accommodation. For example, the listing for Assistive Technology (Non-Screen Reader) would be 3a: Assistive Technology (Non-Screen Reader).

Presentation Accommodations

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3a Assistive Technology (Non-Screen Reader) (also a response accommodation) This accommodation includes all assistive technology devices that aid in the auditory and visual presentation of the test material. This accommodation includes all assistive technology devices that aid in the auditory and/or visual presentation of the test material. By definition, Assistive Technology (AT) “is used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” (29 U.S.C. 3002) AT devices can be as Low-Tech as a pencil grip, or as High-Tech as an interface which allows someone to control a computer with the movement of their eyes. AT which would fall under the 3a accommodation includes, but is not limited to: specialized mounts or arms which hold the computer monitor (or printed copy) in a unique viewing position, screen enlargement software, specialized headphones, or induction loop systems. This accommodation is also appropriate for students for whom computer system or platform enlargement tools do not magnify enough to meet their visual needs and will need to use screen enlargement software.	Assessment Students may use a range of assistive technologies in assessment, including devices that are compatible with the online testing platform and those that are used externally on a separate computer. Before Testing: Please consult the specific assessment’s Test Administrator Manual for more information on the compatibility for specific assessments. Prior to testing, STCs should administer an Infrastructure Trial with the assessment platform to confirm compatibility. Speller/grammar checker, word prediction with topic specific dictionary functions, Internet and stored files functionalities must be turned off during State assessments. Please refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation for students who require responses to be transcribed into a regular test book/answer sheet or online. Those students will also require the scribe accommodation indicated on his/her IEP or 504.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3b Screen Reader Version Screen readers are primarily used by blind students. A screen reader provides audio output for all information shown on a monitor. The software will provide audio output for desktop icons, keystrokes, menus and text.	Assessment: Some online assessments are compatible with Screen Reading Software. It is recommended to check the accessibility and accommodations manual/information for each online assessment to assess compatibility. A student who uses a screen reader may also need a tactile graphics booklet, if available, which contains only the graphics portion of test questions and visual descriptions of pictures and multimedia. Before Testing: Screen Reader software should be tested during an Infrastructure Trial with the testing platform. During Testing: Due to technical limitations, some online tools may not be available for use with the Screen Reader Version. After Testing: If a Tactile Graphics booklet is provided, these booklets contain secure information and test administrators should return the booklets to the School Testing Coordinator.	Instruction and Assessment*
3c Refreshable Braille Display Refreshable Braille displays are primarily used by blind students. Refreshable Braille displays provide access to information on a computer screen by electronically raising and lowering different combination of pins in Braille cells. A student who is blind or visually impaired generally uses a Refreshable Braille display in conjunction with his or her preferred Screen Reader software.	Assessment: Some online assessments are compatible with a Refreshable Braille display. It is recommended to check the accessibility and accommodations manual/information for each online assessment to assess compatibility. A student who uses a Refreshable Braille display may also need a tactile graphics booklet, if available, which contains only the graphics portion of test questions and visual descriptions of pictures and multimedia. Before Testing: A Refreshable Braille display should be tested during an Infrastructure Trial with the testing platform. The student must also be registered for Screen Reader Version (Accommodation 3b). During Testing: Due to technical limitations, some online tools may not be available for use with the Screen Reader Version and Refreshable Braille Display. After Testing: If a Tactile Graphics booklet is provided, these booklets contain secure information and test administrators should return the booklets to the School Testing Coordinator.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3d Hard Copy Braille Edition Braille is a system of raised dots that are read with the fingers. Unified English Braille (UEB) consists of literary braille (the alphabet, contractions, signs unique to braille, and formatting), computer notation, math and science, music and linguistics. The United States also utilizes the Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science. Braille is written with a manual or electric braillewriter, slate and stylus, or electronic braille note taker. Braille embossers are braille printers that emboss braille after it has been correctly translated and formatted on a computer with braille translation software. For this accommodation, braille is typically produced in a hardcopy, paper format. For electronic formats, please see 3c – Refreshable Braille Display).	Assessment Before Testing: For some assessments, Braille Kits (including a Braille script and embedded tactile graphics) are required. Consult the specific assessment’s Test Administrator Manual for information on ordering Braille materials. During Testing: If needed by the student, braille test booklets or answer documents may be disassembled for testing (but must be reassembled for return). It is critical that Test Administrators count the number of pages in the test booklet or answer document prior to disassembling the test booklets or answer documents to help ensure that all pages are returned. After Testing: If the student is recording their answers directly in the Braille Testing Booklet, then responses must be transcribed verbatim by a Test Administrator into a standard size answer document. Test Administrators should refer to the scribe protocol for the individual assessment.	Instruction and Assessment*
3e Tactile Graphics Tactile graphics are raised images to convey non-textual information such as maps, graphs, and diagrams. Tactile graphics have labels in braille. Tactile graphics guidelines are followed to determine if an image should be created and if so, how. Some images are not necessary and can be omitted. Some images are substituted with letters, abbreviations, or words in braille.	Assessment Before Testing: Students who require a tactile graphics booklet may either be registered for Screen Reader Version or Refreshable Braille display. Refer to those accommodations for before testing guidance. Tactile graphics will be embedded in the hard copy braille edition assessments, when needed. During Testing: Refer to Screen Reader Version and Refreshable Braille display for more information. After Testing: Tactile graphics booklets contain secure item content and should be handled as secure test materials. Test Administrators should return tactile graphics to School Test Coordinators.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3f Large Print Edition Large print materials are produced larger than the print used in regular print materials. While regular print materials range from 8-12 points font in size, large print materials are produced in 18-point font or larger. Most large print materials are enlarged in size from the regular print on a copier machine. Large print can also be produced digitally by reformatting the font size, font style, spacing, and page layout. Care must be taken when enlarging mathematics and science materials. Pages that have graphics that are to scale for measuring tasks must be enlarged so the print on the page (questions, answer choices, measurement labels) is large, but the graphic must not be enlarged, remaining to scale so the student using large print has the same measurements as students using regular print. Students who are visually impaired must have an assessment of their learning/literacy medium to determine if large print is the most appropriate medium. This assessment will determine the optimal print size to provide access to materials and maximize literacy. Students who are not visually impaired can also use large print materials if data show that the use of large print improved their performance in reading skills (i.e., comprehension, fluency). The use of large print does not necessarily help students with visual tracking or reading difficulties. When selecting large print materials, consider the weight and size of the books, access to the selected medium, and student performance. Large print in electronic formats can be provided by enlarging foot size or percent of view.	Assessment Current online assessments may have the capability to enlarge font size. Before Testing: Some online assessments may require a “Large Print Test Kit,” with supplementary large print materials (large print, ruler). During Testing: See the specific assessment’s in the Test Administrator Manual for instructions on recording student responses, for both selected and constructed response items. After Testing: If the student is recording their answers directly in the Large Print Test Booklet, then responses must be transcribed verbatim by a Testing Coordinator with another person not the Test Administrator. This should include two certified Test Administrators under the direction and supervision of the STC. The STC should refer to the scribe protocol for the individual assessment.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3g Paper Based Edition (Alternative Representation – Paper Test) Some students are unable to use a computer due to the impact of his or her disability, or other conditions. Students who use a paper based edition can include: • A student with a disability who cannot participate in the online assessment due to a health-related disability, neurological disorder, or other complex disability, and/or cannot meet the demands of a computer-based test administration; • A student with an emotional, behavioral, or other disability who is unable to maintain sufficient concentration to participate in computer-based test administration, even with test accommodations; • A student with a disability who requires assistive technology that is not compatible with the testing platform; • A student who recently entered the school and has had very little or no prior experience or familiarity with technology; • The student is unable to access an online assessment due to religious beliefs.	Assessment Before Testing: For most online assessments, the use of a paper based edition requires ordering or printing (if allowed) the paper based edition. ***Please see the individual accessibility feature/accommodation for more information on specific instructions regarding paper based editions and those features.	Instruction and Assessment*
3h Closed Captioning of Multi-Media Passages Students who are deaf/hard of hearing or hearing-impaired view captioned text embedded in multimedia. Captioned videos are those that display the text of the audio portion of the video. Closed Captioning is used in instruction for any video (streaming or otherwise).	Assessment Before Testing: NA During Testing: Generally captioning can be turned on and off within the video player as usual. Transcripts may also be available on specific online assessments.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3i Text-to-Speech for ELA/Literacy including items, response options and passages The purpose of the embedded text-to-speech accommodation is to provide access to printed or written texts in ELA/L for a very small number of students with print disabilities who would otherwise be unable to participate in instruction or assessment because their disability <i>severely</i> limits their ability to access print. This accommodation is not intended for students reading somewhat (i.e., only moderately) below grade level. In making decisions on whether to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators are instructed to consider whether the student has: • Blindness or a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille; - OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents them from accessing printed text, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (e.g., student is unable to decode printed text); - OR • Deafness or a hearing impairment and is severely limited or prevented from decoding text due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation. When determining the need for this accommodation, it is important to consider the purpose of the tests the student will be taking and the skills the test is intending to measure so that it can be determined how the accommodation might affect the results. Most often a human signer is used in instruction.	Instruction: Any text-to-speech (TTS) software may be used for instruction, but students should be familiar with each testing platform's version of text-to-speech and its utilities. Assessment Before Testing: Prior to providing the TTS accommodation for ELA/L, students must have met the qualifications outlined in: • Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for ELA/L Assessments, and consult • Appendix E: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments. For TTS, proctor caching, if available, is strongly recommended. During Testing: If headphones are <i>not</i> used for text-to-speech, the student must be tested in a separate setting. A consideration may be to use the "reduce distraction to others" administrative consideration (2h). After Testing: If all guidelines are NOT met, and the student is given the Text-to-Speech accommodation on an ELA/L assessment, the student's assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results (i.e., the student would be considered a "non-participant" for the ELA/L assessment).	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3j ASL Video for ELA/L, including items, response options and passages The purpose of the ASL Video accommodation is to provide access to printed or written texts in ELA/L for a very small number of students with print-related disabilities and who are deaf or hearing impaired who would otherwise be unable to participate in instruction or assessment because their disability <i>severely</i> limits their ability to access print. This accommodation is not intended for students reading somewhat (i.e., only moderately) below grade level. In making decisions on whether to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators are instructed to consider whether the student has: • Blindness or a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille; OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents them from accessing printed text, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (e.g., student is unable to decode printed text); OR • Deafness or a hearing impairment and is severely limited or prevented from decoding text due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation. When determining the need for this accommodation, it is important to consider the purpose of the tests the student will be taking and the skills the test is intending to measure so that it can be determined how the accommodation might affect the results.	Assessment Before Testing: Prior to providing the ASL video accommodation for ELA/L, students must have met the qualifications outlined in Appendix D. For ASL video, proctor caching, if available, is strongly recommended. During Testing: NA After Testing: If all guidelines are NOT met, and the student is given the ASL Video accommodation on an ELA/L assessment, the student's assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results (i.e., the student would be considered a "non-participant" for the ELA/L assessment).	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3k Human Reader/Human Signer for ELA/L, including items, response options and passages The purpose of the Human Reader/Human Signer accommodation is to provide accesses to printed or written texts in ELA/L for a very small number of students with print-related disabilities and/or who are deaf or hearing impaired who would otherwise be unable to participate in instruction or assessment because their disability <i>severely</i> limits their ability to access print. This accommodation is not intended for students reading somewhat (i.e., only moderately.) below grade level. In making decisions on whether to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators are instructed to consider whether the student has: • Blindness or a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille; OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents them from accessing printed text, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (e.g., student is unable to decode printed text); OR • Deafness or a hearing impairment <i>and</i> is severely limited or prevented from decoding text due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation. When determining the need for this accommodation, it is important to consider the purpose of the tests the student will be taking and the skills the test is intending to measure so that it can be determined how the accommodation might affect the results.	Assessment Before Testing: Prior to providing the human reader/human signer accommodation for ELA/L, students must have met the qualifications outlined in Appendix D. During Testing: A qualified person (as defined by the School Testing Coordinator's Manual) may be provided to read orally to students who require the Human Reader/Human Signer accommodation. Human Readers/Human Signers must follow the protocols and guidelines listed in the following appendices: • Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for ELA/L Assessments • Appendix E: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments • Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines A student should have the option of asking a human reader to slow down or repeat text. This is difficult when a person is reading to an entire group of students. However, verbatim reading to a group of students is permitted in testing if the accommodation is provided on that basis during regular ongoing instruction. No more than five (5) students may be grouped together for reading tests aloud by a human reader, since students typically proceed through the test at different rates. Students grouped together must be assigned the same test form.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3l American Sign Language (ASL) Video for Mathematics Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing may need assistance accessing text-based instructional or test content. Access for those students is typically provided through sign language. The purpose of the ASL Video for mathematics is to provide students who are deaf or hard of hearing with an embedded video of a human interpreter for mathematics instruction and assessments. When selecting this accommodation for students for assessment, it is important to consider whether or not the student has been provided this accommodation in instruction. Students not using this accommodation in instruction should not be provided this accommodation for assessment.	Assessment Test administrators should refer to the specific assessment's TAM to determine whether ASL video for Mathematics is available. Before Testing: For ASL video, proctor caching, if available, is strongly recommended. During Testing: The student may pause and resume the video, but cannot adjust the pace. After Testing: NA	Instruction and Assessment*
3m Human Signer for Test Directions Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing may need assistance accessing text-based instructional or test content. Access for those students is typically provided through sign language.	Assessment Before Testing: NA During Testing: A Human Signer will sign the test directions to a student. The student may either be tested in a small group or separate setting based on the student's experiences during classroom assessments. After Testing: NA	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3n Human Reader/Text-to-speech including manual control of audio and repeat item audio Accommodation 3n is the same as 3k with the exception that the student (or accommodator) identifies particular words or sections of the test that the student wishes to have read to him or her.	<i>Available in instruction and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 only</i> Human Readers must follow the protocols and guidelines listed in the following appendices: • Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for ELA/L Assessments • Appendix E: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments If a student is completing a classroom activity online, and requires the text-to-speech accommodation, they will hear the full assessment read aloud. Therefore, the 3i accommodation is not available for online testing. Students needed only specific sections read aloud would need to use the 3n accommodation.	Instruction and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0
3o Notes and Outlines Written notes may be taken by another student or adult and copied. A teacher could provide a print copy of instructions and assignments. Students may also be given a detailed outline of the materials to be covered during the class period and an outline of materials to be covered (syllabus) at the beginning of each grading period.	Instruction Only	Instruction

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
3p Partner Assisted Scanning Some students with significant physical disabilities are unable to directly access communication. For some of these students, the use of a communication partner allows them to express themselves. Partner Assisted Scanning is a methodical process in which the partner ‘scans’ through a set of items* and the communicator makes an indication when their desired response is presented. (This ‘indication’ is very individualized and may only be properly perceived by a partner who is familiar with the student.) The length of each presented item varies based on the student or the activity. An entire paragraph could be expressed one sentence, one word, or one letter at a time. A student using Partner Assisted Scanning in conjunction with a pre-developed communication book or system has the same access to language as a student who can directly access the book or system. *It is important to note that altering or developing the set of items presented based on the desired response to an assessment item, may invalidate the student’s response to that item.	Instruction and Assessment	Instruction and Assessment*
3q Unique Presentation Accommodations Unique accommodations not specifically mentioned above may be used for instruction. A unique accommodation may be proposed by the LAC, Section 504 staff, or Special Education staff.	Assessment Unique accommodations used for State Assessments must be approved by the MSDE Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment and Accountability, and the MSDE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services or other appropriate State staff. The unique accommodation must be submitted to the MSDE by the LAC at least six weeks prior to testing to ensure a final MSDE response is received before testing begins. Refer to Appendix F for the unique accommodation form.	Determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the MSDE

*Consult each assessment’s Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

Fact Sheet SWD-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).

Accommodation Codes

Each accommodation is assigned a code for use in data capture and analysis. Each accommodation code will be listed with a number followed by a letter and then the title of the accommodation. For example, the listing for Braille Note-taker is 4b: Braille Note-taker.

Response Accommodations

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4a Assistive Technology By definition, Assistive Technology (AT) “is used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” (29 U.S.C. 3002) AT devices can be as Low-Tech as a pencil grip, or as High-Tech as an interface which allows someone to operate a computer with the movement of their eyes. AT which would fall under the 4a accommodation includes, but is not limited to: switches, specialized keyboards, eye-gaze interfaces, or communication devices.	Assessment Students may use a range of assistive technologies in assessment, including devices that interface with the online testing platform and those that are used externally on a separate computer. Before Testing: Please consult the specific assessment’s Test Administrator Manual for more information on the compatibility for specific assessments. Before testing, School Test Coordinators should administer an Infrastructure trial with the assessment platform to confirm compatibility. Speller/grammar checker, word prediction with topic specific dictionary functions, Internet and stored files functionalities must be turned off during State assessments. Please refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation for students who require responses to be transcribed into a regular test book/answer sheet or online. Those students will also require the 4g: ELA/L Selected Response Human Scribe and/or 4o: ELA/L Science, Government, Constructed Response Human Scribe Accommodation indicated on his/her IEP or 504.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4b Braille Notetaker Electronic braille notetakers can be used as a portable word processor. They usually have a braille keyboard for input and speech output. Many also have the option of output via a refreshable braille display. In addition to word processing, they may have options for spreadsheets, calendar functions, email, and Internet access. Files can be printed in regular print by connecting to a regular printer or in braille via a braille embosser. The accommodation is written with a specific focus on students with visual impairments or blindness.	Assessments Before Testing: For assessments, spell/grammar checker, Internet and stored files functionalities must be turned off. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses an electronic braille notetaker during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were entered in the electronic braille notetaker. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the student's responses must be permanently deleted from the electronic braille notetaker. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*
4c Braille Writer A braillewriter is a device for writing braille. It can include a manual or electronic braillewriter or a slate and stylus. The device prints in braille and does not have the option of editing or saving files.	Assessments Before Testing: NA During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses a braillewriter during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the student entered his or her responses on the braillewriter. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4d Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools (on Calculator sections of the Mathematics Assessments) If a student’s disability affects mathematics calculation, reasoning or access, a calculator or other mathematical tool may be needed. Some students may need to use mathematical tools such as a large print ruler, braille ruler, tactile compass, braille protractor. Sometimes other mathematical tools are needed by students with disabilities such as arithmetic tables, two-color chips, counters and counting chips, square tiles, base ten blocks, or 100s charts.	Assessments Before Testing: Refer to the specific assessment’s TAM or Accommodations Manual for a list of allowable calculation devices and mathematical tools. During Testing: A student uses a specific calculation device (e.g., large key, talking, or other adapted calculator) other than the embedded grade-level calculator on the calculator section of the mathematics assessment. If a talking calculator is used, the student must use headphones or be tested in a separate setting. The calculator cannot include functionality beyond the embedded grade-level calculator. After Testing: NA	Instruction and Assessment*
4e Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools (on non-Calculator sections of the mathematics assessments) The purpose of a calculation device on the non-calculator sections of the Mathematics Assessment is to provide access for students with a disability that <i>severely limits</i> or <i>prevents</i> their ability to perform basic calculations (i.e., student is unable to perform single-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division). For these students, a calculation device may be used on the non-calculator <i>and</i> calculator sections of the mathematics assessments. The IEP or 504 plan must specify which device(s) or manipulatives. Calculation devices assist with computation. 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 students an opportunity to show regrouping. On the other hand, if students are learning problem solving skills that include subtractions (e.g., bargain shopping for items with a better value), the use of a calculation device may be a valid accommodation.	Assessment Before Testing: Refer to the specific assessment’s TAM or Accommodations Manual for a list of allowable calculation devices and mathematical tools. During Testing: A student uses a specific calculation device (e.g., large key, talking, or other adapted calculator) or mathematical tool on the non-calculator section of the mathematics assessment. If a talking calculator is used, the student must use headphones or be tested in a separate setting. After Testing: If all guidelines are NOT met, and the student is given a Calculation device and Mathematics Tools without proper documentation, the student’s assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results (i.e., the student would be considered a “non-participant” for the mathematics assessment.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4f ELA/Literacy Selected Response Speech-to-Text The student dictates responses either verbally, using an external speech-to-text device, or by dictating, gesturing, pointing, or eye-gazing. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech-to-text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document.	Assessment Before Testing: All speech-to-text devices and software must be tested in an Infrastructure Trial to test whether or not the speech-to-text device or software will interact directly with the testing platform. If the device or software will not interact directly with the platform, a second testing device may be needed. Currently, no online testing platform has embedded speech-to-text functionality. During Testing: After Testing: A student who uses a speech-to-text device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After Testing: After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4g ELA/Literacy Selected Response Human Scribe A student may need a scribe if he or she has poor fine motor skills or is unable to use a writing instrument. In addition, students with disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression of a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing may need a scribe. A scribe is someone who writes down what a student dictates by an assistive communication device, pointing, communication by the student via interpretation/transliteration (examples include American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, and Cued Speech), or speech. The scribe for a student should be someone who is familiar with the student's accent or means of expressive language and will recognize the words a student is saying without writing down unusual phonetic spellings.	Assessment Much skill is involved in being a scribe, a 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 must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. Individuals who serve as scribes must assure that he or she knows the vocabulary involved and understands the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The role of the scribe is to write what is dictated, no more and no less. During assessments, a scribe accommodator may only administer the scribe accommodation to one student at a time during a test session. The accommodation must be administered so that other students are not able to hear the accommodated student's response. Before Testing: Test administrators providing the scribe accommodation must review: • Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student material if necessary.	Instruction and Assessment*
4h ELA/Literacy Selected Response Human Signer The student dictates responses using American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, or Cued Speech.	Assessment A student who uses a human signer during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Before Testing: Refer to Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device, if used with sign language, must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student work, if needed.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4i ELA/Literacy Selected Response Assistive Technology Device The student uses an external augmentative/alternative communication device (e.g., picture/word board) Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech to text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document.	Assessment Before Testing: All assistive technology speech-to-text devices and software must be tested in an Infrastructure Trial to test whether or not the speech-to-text device or software will interact directly with the testing platform. If the device or software will not interact directly with the platform, a second testing device may be needed. Currently, no online testing platform has embedded speech-to-text functionality. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses an AAC device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4j Mathematics, Science, Government Response Speech-to-text The student dictates responses either verbally, using an external speech-to-text device, or by dictating, gesturing, pointing, or eye-gazing. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech to text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document.	Assessment Before Testing: All speech-to-text devices and software must be tested in an Infrastructure Trial to test whether or not the speech-to-text device or software will interact directly with the testing platform. If the device or software will not interact directly with the platform, a second testing device may be needed. Currently, no online testing platform has embedded speech-to-text functionality. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses a speech-to-text device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student’s responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment’s TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4k Mathematics, Science, Government Response Human Scribe A student may need a scribe if he or she has poor fine motor skills or is unable to use a writing instrument. In addition, students with disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression of a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing may need a scribe. A scribe is someone who writes down what a student dictates by an assistive communication device, pointing, communication by the student via interpretation/transliteration (examples include American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, and Cued Speech), or speech. The scribe for a student should be someone who is familiar with the student's accent or means of expressive language and will recognize the words a student is saying without writing down unusual phonetic spellings.	Assessment Much skill is involved in being a scribe, a 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 must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. Individuals who serve as scribes must assure that he or she knows the vocabulary involved and understands the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The role of the scribe is to write what is dictated, no more and no less. During assessments, a scribe accommodator may only administer the scribe accommodation to one student at a time during a test session. The accommodation must be administered so that other students are not able to hear the accommodated student's response. Before Testing: Test administrators providing the scribe accommodation must review: • Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student material if necessary.	Instruction and Assessment*
4l Mathematics, Science, Government Response Human Signer The student dictates responses using American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, or Cued Speech.	Assessment A student who uses a human signer during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Before Testing: Refer to Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device, if used with sign language, must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student work, if needed.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4m Mathematics, Science, Government Response Assistive Technology Device The student uses an external augmentative/alternative communication device (e.g., picture/word board). Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech-to-text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document.	Assessment Before Testing: All assistive technology speech-to-text devices and software must be tested in an Infrastructure Trial to test whether or not the speech-to-text device or software will interact directly with the testing platform. If the device or software will not interact directly with the platform, a second testing device may be needed. Currently, no online testing platform has embedded speech-to-text functionality. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses an AAC device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4n ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Speech-to-Text The student dictates responses either verbally, using an external speech-to-text device, or by dictating, gesturing, pointing, or eye-gazing. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech to text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document. In making decisions whether or not to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators should consider whether the student has: A physical disability that severely limits or prevents the student's motor process of writing through keyboarding; OR A disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.	Assessment Before Testing: Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 Plan, teams/coordinators should also consider whether: • The student's ability to express in writing is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; • The student routinely uses a scribe for written assignments; and • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses a speech-to-text device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*
4o ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Human Scribe A student may need a scribe if he or she has poor fine motor skills or is unable to use a writing instrument. In addition, students with disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression of a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing may need a scribe. A scribe is someone who writes down what a student dictates by an assistive communication device, pointing, communication by the student via interpretation/transliteration (examples include American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, and Cued Speech), or	Assessment Much skill is involved in being a scribe, a 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 must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. Individuals who serve as scribes must assure that he or she knows the vocabulary involved and understands the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The role of the scribe is to write what is dictated, no more and no less. During assessments, a scribe accommodator may only administer the scribe accommodation to one student at a time during a test session.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
speech. The scribe for a student should be someone who is familiar with the student’s accent or means of expressive language and will recognize the words a student is saying without writing down unusual phonetic spellings. In making decisions whether or not to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators should consider whether the student has: • A physical disability that severely limits or prevents the student’s motor process of writing through keyboarding; - OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.	The accommodation must be administered so that others students are not able to hear the accommodated student’s response. Before listing the accommodation in the student’s IEP or 504 Plan, teams/coordinators should also consider whether: • The student’s ability to express in writing is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; • The student routinely uses a scribe for written assignments; and • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator. Before Testing: Test administrators providing the scribe accommodation must review: • Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to the specific assessment’s TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student material if necessary. If all guidelines are NOT met, and the student is given the Human Scribe accommodation on an ELA/L assessment, the student’s assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results (i.e., the student would be considered a “non-participant” for the ELA/L assessment).	

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4p ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Human Signer The student dictates responses using American Sign Language (ASL), Signed English, or Cued Speech. In making decisions whether or not to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators should consider whether the student has: • A physical disability that severely limits or prevents the student's motor process of writing through keyboarding; OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.	Assessment A student who uses a human signer during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 Plan, teams/coordinators should also consider whether: • The student's ability to express in writing is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments. • The student routinely uses a scribe for written assignments; and • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator. Before Testing: Refer to Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines. During Testing: NA After Testing: Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device, if used with sign language, must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original student work, if needed.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4q ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Assistive Technology Device The student uses an external augmentative/alternative communication device (e.g., picture/word board). Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a method of communication. It can consist of gestures, pictures, symbols, words, or a combination of all of these. It can range from simple picture communication symbols to a sophisticated computer system with voice output. Input can be done by pointing or using switches, voice recognition systems or eye gaze systems. The methods of AAC will vary and be personalized to meet the needs of the individual. Students with motor and/or writing difficulties may use speech-to-text software to produce written documents. This type of software translates oral speech into a typed document. In making decisions whether or not to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators should consider whether the student has: • A physical disability that severely limits or prevents the student's motor process of writing through keyboarding; - OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.	Assessment Before Testing: All assistive technology devices and software must be tested in an Infrastructure Trial to test whether or not the device or software will interact directly with the testing platform. If the device or software will not interact directly with the platform, a second testing device may be needed. Currently, no online testing platform has embedded speech-to-text functionality. Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 Plan, teams/coordinators should also consider whether: • The student's ability to express in writing is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; • The student routinely uses a scribe for written assignments; and • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses an AAC device during assessments must have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the communication device must be cleared. Refer to the specific assessment's TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4r Monitor Test Response This accommodation is to ensure that the student is marking the answer for the problem the student intends to answer. For example, a student may accidentally put two answers for one problem on the same line or accidentally skip a question. Students who use bubbled answer sheets may benefit from having an adult simply monitor the placement of their responses to ensure that they are actually responding to the intended question.	Assessment For assessments, the Test Administrator or assigned accommodator monitors the placement of student responses on a test book/answer sheet. The Test Administrator or assigned accommodator cannot assist the student with changing a response to the correct answer.	Instruction and Assessment*
4s Word Prediction – External Device on the ELA/Literacy Assessment The student uses an external word prediction device that provides a bank of frequently or recently used words on-screen after the student enters the first few letters of a word. The student must be familiar with the use of the external device prior to assessment administration. The device may not connect to the internet or save information. In making decisions whether or not to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 Plan Coordinators should consider whether the student has: • A physical disability that severely limits or prevents the student's motor process of writing through keyboarding; OR • A disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so.	Assessment Before Testing: Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 Plan, teams/coordinators should also consider whether: • The student's ability to express in writing is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; • The student routinely uses a scribe for written assignments; and • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions to learn written expression, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team or 504 Plan Coordinator. During Testing: NA After Testing: A student who uses an external word prediction device during assessments <i>must</i> have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. After the student's responses are transcribed, the memory of the device must be cleared.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
4t Answers Recorded in Test Book This accommodation allows a student to write directly in a test book rather than on an answer sheet, or online. Students who do not have much experience with test-taking (and filling in circles) or who have fine motor difficulties may need the option of writing in their responses in another format.	Assessment After Testing: A student who responds in a test book during assessments <i>may need to</i> have his/her responses transcribed by a certified Test Administrator, or by a staff member working under the direct supervision of a certified Test Administrator exactly as the responses were voiced. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation. Refer to the specific assessment’s TAM for directions on returning or securely shredding the original word-processed print-out.	Instruction and Assessment*
4u Recording Devices A student uses a recording device to record classwork or test responses rather than writing on paper.		Instruction
4v ACCESS for ELLS Scribe	All students’ responses must be transcribed verbatim. Students need to spell the words and indicate where to provide punctuation and paragraph breaks. Once a word has been spelled, it does not have to be spelled again.	Instruction and ACCESS for ELLs
4w Unique Response Accommodations	Unique accommodations used for State Assessments must be approved by the MSDE Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment and Accountability, and the MSDE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services or other appropriate State staff. The unique accommodation must be submitted to the MSDE by the LAC at least six weeks prior to testing to ensure a final MSDE response is received before testing begins. Refer to Appendix F for the unique accommodation form.	Determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the MSDE

*Consult each assessment’s Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

Fact Sheet SWD-3

Timing and Scheduling Accommodations

What are Timing and Scheduling Accommodations?

Timing and scheduling accommodations change the allowable length of time to complete assignments, tests, 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 tests. Other changes may include the particular time of day, day of the week, or number of days over which a particular activity, assignment, or test takes place.

Who can benefit from Timing and Scheduling Accommodations?

Timing accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and tests. 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, audio tape, or 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 classes and tests that require the greatest concentration in the morning 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 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.

Accommodations Codes

Each accommodation is assigned a code for use in data capture and analysis. Each accommodation code will be listed with a number followed by a letter and the title of the accommodation. For example, the listing for extended time would be 5a: Extended Time.

Timing and Scheduling Accommodations

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
5a Extended Time Timing accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and tests. Extra time may be needed by a student 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, audio recorder, scribe). Extended time may require a student's IEP or 504 team to determine a fairly specific amount of extra time to complete assignments, projects, and tests. For example, a particular student may customarily receive time and one half. This means that a student is allowed 90 minutes to take a test that normally has a 60-minute limit. Decisions regarding extended time must 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, tests, 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 just knowing that plenty of time is available. Students who have too much time may lose interest and motivation to do their best work. Teachers and Test Administrators must make certain that the extended time accommodation is selected when other accommodations such as human reader, text-to-speech software, or scribe which may increase the time needed for the student to respond are chosen.	Assessment Extended time is used for each session/part of an administered test. The extended time accommodation must be given in one continuous block of time. The student with extended time cannot be told to close the book at the end of the standard session testing time and then be brought back to that session at a later time to complete the extended time accommodation. Special attention must be considered when arranging testing groups to ensure that students without the extended time accommodation do not receive more than the specified testing time stated in the Test Administrator Manual for each assessment. Test Administrators may not extend a single session/part of a test over multiple days. If a student is unable to complete multiple test sessions/parts in one day due to the amount of extended time required, then the multiple day accommodation may be appropriate for the student. (Multiple Days are now covered under Unique Accommodation) Each student's IEP or 504 Plan must document the amount of extended time typically required for assessments. IEP or 504 Teams should determine the routine for providing extended time to students. If a student's IEP or 504 Plan does not specify the amount of extended time given to a student during an assessment, then the Test Administrator should work with the school test coordinator to ensure that parameters are established ahead of testing. For example, once the student closes the test book, this is the Test Administrator's cue that the student has completed the session. When administering the extended time during assessments, it is imperative for the school test coordinator to carefully plan ahead of time in order to be prepared to administer the assessment. Refer to Appendix C: Guidance for Selecting, Training and Administering the Extended Time Accommodation.	Instruction and Assessment*

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Conditions for Use
5b Unique Timing and Scheduling Accommodations	Unique accommodations used for State Assessments must be approved by the MSDE Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment and Accountability, and the MSDE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services or other appropriate State staff. The unique accommodation must be submitted to the MSDE by the LAC at least six weeks prior to testing to ensure a final MSDE response is received before testing begins. Refer to Appendix F for the unique accommodation form.	Determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the MSDE

*Consult each assessment's Test Administrator Manual for allowable accessibility features.

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Section 4C: Accommodations Tools for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Tool SWD-1

Access Needs That May Require Accommodations

Directions: Use these questions to identify various types of Presentation, Response, Timing/Scheduling, and/or administrative considerations for students with disabilities. The list is not exhaustive—its purpose is to prompt members of IEP Teams 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).

Presentation Accommodations	Y	N	DK/NA
1. Does the student have a visual impairment that requires magnification devices, large print, or braille materials?	☐	☐	☐
2. Does the student have difficulty reading or understanding directions?	☐	☐	☐
3. Does the student have difficulty following oral directions from an adult or audio materials?	☐	☐	☐
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 issues with decoding, comprehension or fluency that may require the reading of tests or sections of tests in order to demonstrate knowledge of subject areas?	☐	☐	☐
8. Does the student have a hearing impairment that requires an interpreter/transliterater to sign interpret/transliterate directions and/or entire test?	☐	☐	☐
9. Does the student have a hearing impairment and require an audio amplification device?	☐	☐	☐
Response Accommodations			
10. Does the student have a disability that affects the ability to record his or her responses in the standard manner such as using a pencil or keyboard and need a scribe?	☐	☐	☐
11. Does the student have difficulty communicating and require an augmentative communication system?	☐	☐	☐
12. Does the student read braille and use braille for writing?	☐	☐	☐
13. Does the student have difficulty tracking from one page to another and maintaining his or her place?	☐	☐	☐
14. Does the student use a word processor to complete school work/homework assignments?	☐	☐	☐
15. Does the student have a disability which affects their ability to perform mathematical calculation or reasoning and need access to mathematical tools?	☐	☐	☐
16. Does the student use a recording device to complete assignments or tests?	☐	☐	☐
17. Does the student have a disability that affects his/her ability to spell?	☐	☐	☐

Tool SWD-1 (continued)

Access Needs That May Require Accommodations

Response Accommodations (cont'd)	Y	N	DK/NA
18. Does the student have a visual or motor disability that affects his/her ability to perform mathematics computations?	☐	☐	☐
Timing and Scheduling Accommodations	☐	☐	☐
19. Does the student have difficulty working continuously for the length of time allocated for standard test administrations?	☐	☐	☐
20. Does the student use other accommodations or adaptive equipment which require more time to complete test items (e.g., braille, scribe, use of head pointer type)?	☐	☐	☐
21. Does the student tire easily due to health impairments?	☐	☐	☐
22. Does the student have a visual impairment that causes eyestrain and requires frequent breaks?	☐	☐	☐
23. Does the student have a learning disability that affects the rate at which he/she processes written information?	☐	☐	☐
24. Does the student have a motor disability that affects the rate at which he/she writes responses?	☐	☐	☐
25. Does the student take any medication that affects performance?	☐	☐	☐
26. Does the student's attention span and/or distractibility require shorter working periods and frequent breaks?	☐	☐	☐
Administrative Considerations	☐	☐	☐
27. Do others easily distract the student and/or does he/she have difficulty remaining on task?	☐	☐	☐
28. Does the student require any specialized equipment or other accommodations that may be distracting to others?	☐	☐	☐
29. Does the student have visual or auditory impairments that require special lighting or acoustics?	☐	☐	☐
30. Does the student have difficulty completing his/her own work in large groups of other students?	☐	☐	☐
31. Does the student exhibit behaviors that may disrupt the attention of other students?	☐	☐	☐
32. Have physical accommodations been made in the classroom which would need to be duplicated if the testing environment is not the student's classroom?	☐	☐	☐

Accommodations from the Student’s Perspective

Use this form 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, make sure 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, doing work in groups, working alone, drawing, or doing your homework as some things you can do well. Also, if you said, for example, you really like the subject, have a good memory, and you 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. In addition to continuing to work on these things in class, these are all things in which an accommodation may be helpful for you.

- 5. In the “Classes” box below, 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.

Classes	Accommodations

Tool SWD-3

Assessment Accommodations Plan

Case Manager _____

Name _____ Special Education Teacher _____

Date of Assessment _____ Year _____ Building/School _____

Name of Assessment _____ General Education Teacher _____

Is the student a SWD and also an English learner? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ |

Comments: _____

Person responsible for arranging accommodations and due date: Date

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ |

Comments: _____

Room Assignment for Assessment: _____

Planners for this process (signatures): _____

Tool SWD-4

Assessment Accommodations Agreement

Here is an example of a form a student could carry on test day. This type of form puts the student in charge (building self-advocacy skills) and sets the expectation that, with these accommodations, the student can demonstrate his or her knowledge 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 sure the student receives the correct test book. A similar form could be carried to class to remind teachers about daily accommodations. Different schools, teachers, and students might format these statements differently. The student should present the list of necessary accommodations 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)

require the following accommodations to take this test:

The following individuals have more information, if needed, about my accommodations:

(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)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

Tool SWD-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 in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.	☐	☐	☐
2. Student uses accommodations regularly.	☐	☐	☐
3. Student, if able, evaluates use of accommodations.			
4. A master accommodations plan/database listing assessment accommodation needs for all students tested is updated regularly.	☐	☐	☐
Preparation for Test Day			
5. Special test editions are ordered for individual students based on information contained in the master accommodations plan (e.g., audio tape, Braille, large print).	☐	☐	☐
6. Test administrators and accommodators receive a list of accommodation needs for students they will supervise (list comes from master accommodations plan/database).	☐	☐	☐
7. Test administrators and accommodators receive training for each student receiving accommodations in small group or individual settings, including extended time (with substitutes available).	☐	☐	☐
8. Trained human readers, scribes, and interpreters/translitterators for the deaf or hard of hearing are arranged for individual students (with substitutes available).	☐	☐	☐
9. Special equipment is arranged and checked for correct operation (e.g., calculator, recording devices, word processor).	☐	☐	☐
Accommodations on the Day of the Test			
10. All eligible students receive accommodations as determined by their IEP or Section 504 Plan.	☐	☐	☐
11. Provision of accommodations is recorded by test administrator.	☐	☐	☐
12. Substitute providers of accommodations are available as needed (e.g., interpreters/translitterators, human readers, scribes).	☐	☐	☐
13. Plans are made to replace defective equipment.	☐	☐	☐
Considerations After the Day of the Test			
14. Responses are transferred to scannable answer sheets for students using special equipment and adapted test forms and response documents as necessary.	☐	☐	☐
15. All equipment is returned to appropriate locations.	☐	☐	☐
16. Students who take make up tests receive required accommodations.	☐	☐	☐
17. Effectiveness of accommodations use is evaluated by the IEP Team, which may include the student and the Test Administrator, and plans are made for improvement.	☐	☐	☐

Tool SWD-6

Accommodations Journal

Tips For Teachers When Using An Accommodations Journal With A Student

An accommodation journal encourages students to engage in educational programming. In addition, the IEP Team would benefit from the responses provided by the student related to the following probes.

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

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

1. What would you include as headings for the journal?
2. When would the student make entries in the journal, and what type(s) of support would the student need to make these entries?
3. With whom and when would the student share journal entries?
4. How could the journal be used in the development of a student's IEP?

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Tool SWD-7

Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days (5b: Unique Timing and Scheduling Accommodations)

In certain limited situations, permission may be granted by the MSDE for a student to have one or more of the assessments administered over one or more days. This type of administration is not typically allowed because of test security issues related to extending the test period beyond the scope of one single day. However, if a student has identified in his or her IEP or 504 Plan the accommodation 5b (Unique Timing and Scheduling Accommodations), the MSDE will consider allowing that accommodation to take precedence over test security considerations. Please follow the process below:

- School Test Coordinators (1) complete the Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days (a separate form for each content area test is required), (2) attach a copy of the student's IEP as supporting documentation for the request, and (3) submit the package to the LAC in the local school system. (Special Placement Schools submit the package to the LAC of the student's Home LEA.)
- The LAC and the local Director of Special Education review the application and IEP. If both the LAC and the Local Director of Special Education approve the request, the LAC submits the request form and attached IEP with appropriate approval signatures to the Accommodations Program Manager at the MSDE.
- Staff at the MSDE in the Division of Accountability, Assessment and Data Systems and in the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services review the documentation and then forward notice of their approval or denial to the LAC, who in turn forwards notice to the local school or Special Placement School, as appropriate.

Please note that the Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days must be completed for a student whom the school deems eligible for this accommodation as soon as possible after the student's enrollment in an HSA-related course. Waiting to submit the request until close to the approaching test date will result in possible delays in the review process. **In no case will the MSDE accept for review an application for Assessment Multiple-Day Administration delivered to the MSDE less than 6 weeks prior to the start of an HSA administration.** The TACM for the assessment provide a due date for each test administration. Therefore, IEP Teams and other staff must take this timeline into consideration and plan accordingly. For additional guidance, IEP Teams should refer to this tool in its entirety.

NOTE: Special permission for Multiple Days Accommodations for students who are deaf and hard of hearing who require interpretation/transliteration from an interpreter/ transliterator do not require approval to administer the assessment over multiple days. However, schools must notify their LAC of such situations who in turn will notify the MSDE. The interpretation/transliteration accommodation for the deaf and hard of hearing is described in detail in Tool SWD-8 in section 6.

Tool SWD-7 (continued)

Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days

Student Name/ Unique State ID	/		
LEA Name/Number	/		
School Name/Number	/		
HSA Content Area	☐ Algebra	☐ High School MISA	☐ English ☐ Government
Type of Test	☐ Regular HSA		
Test Administration Date for which this accommodation is first being requested and proposed administration schedule			
STC Name			
STC Phone Number/ Fax Number			
STC E-mail Address			
Justification as to why student requires administration of the HSA over multiple days			
Preparer's Name and Signature/ Date	----- Print Name ----- Signature ----- Date ----- Phone Number		

Tool SWD-7 (continued)

Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days

LAC Recommendation and Signature/Date	☐ Approve ☐ Deny	----- Print Name ----- ----- Date -----	----- Signature ----- ----- Phone number -----
Local Director of Special Education Recommendation and Signature/Date	☐ Approve ☐ Deny	----- Print Name ----- ----- Date -----	----- Signature ----- ----- Phone number -----
Local Explanation of Approval or Denial			

[This section for the MSDE only]

MSDE Action and Signature/Date	☐ Approve ☐ Deny	----- Print Name ----- ----- Date -----	----- Signature ----- ----- Phone number -----
MSDE Explanation of Approval or Denial			

The Use of Multiple Days as an Accommodation

The Maryland Accommodations Manual clearly states, “Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s disability; accommodations 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, however, 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 Maryland’s policies regarding accommodations during assessments.”

1. What are the principles of accommodations?

Accommodations must adhere to the following principles:

- a. Accommodations enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessments and to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- b. Accommodations must be based upon individual student needs and not upon a category of disability, amount of time spent in general classroom, or program setting.
- c. Accommodations for students with disabilities must be justified and documented in the student’s appropriate education plan: the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or the Section 504 Plan.
- d. Accommodations for students who are English Learners (ELs), must be justified and documented in the EL Plan (formerly known as Limited English Proficient or “LEP” Plan). Students who are both English Learners and students with disabilities have the IEP as the controlling document for accommodations. Please note that these students are also eligible for EL accommodations that may not be included in the IEP.
- e. Accommodations must be implemented as soon as possible after completion of the appropriate education plan (IEP or Section 504 Plan for students with disabilities, or EL Plan for English Learners) and must be aligned with and be a part of daily instruction. Accommodations must not be introduced for the first time during the testing of a student.
- f. Accommodations must be approved as specified in this manual (Refer to Sections 5 and 8).
- g. Accommodations not explicitly mentioned in this document and/or multiple accommodations do not constitute reasons to exempt students from assessments. STCs must coordinate with the LAC prior to testing to address issues caused by the need to provide multiple accommodations. The LAC will consult with the MSDE as necessary to resolve accommodations issues.

Tool SWD-7 (continued)

2. How is the determination for accommodations made?

Each student's IEP must contain a statement of the student's present level of "academic achievement and functional performance." In doing so, the IEP must contain a statement of individual appropriate accommodations necessary "to measure the academic achievement and functional performance" of the student on State and district assessments.

Each IEP Team needs to ensure that needed accommodations are based on the individual needs of each child and based on the State's guidelines for appropriate accommodations. Section 612(a)(16)(B)

3. What does the Timing and Scheduling accommodation "Extend Over Multiple Days" mean?

Students are allowed to complete activities and take tests over multiple days – completing a portion each day. This is usually done to reduce fatigue. When implementing this accommodation for testing, Test Administrators, STCs, and LACs must take appropriate precautions to ensure that the security of test items is not compromised and that students are not permitted to return to previously completed sections of a test.

This accommodation is not permitted for the any assessments unless the request is made in writing by the school principal and specifically approved by the LAC and the MSDE. The security concerns relative to the HSAs are especially critical, considering the high-stakes consequences of the tests for students as a high school graduation requirement.

4. In what circumstances is the use of multiple days to complete an assessment an allowable timing and scheduling accommodation?

Determining whether a student requires the administration of an assessment over multiple days is an individualized decision that must be supported with sufficient documentation to demonstrate its appropriateness. These decisions are made on an individualized case-by-case basis, not by a category of students as a group. In limited situations the MSDE may grant permission for a student to have an assessment administered over more than one day. The MSDE will consider allowing that accommodation to take precedence over test security considerations.

5. What should be considered in determining whether or not a student requires a timing and scheduling accommodation of multiple days?

The determination of needed accommodations begins with an analysis and review of the student's instructional needs and how these needs impact student participation and performance in the general curriculum. In section 4, there are a series of tools available for school personnel to use in order to assess a student's need for multiple days to complete instructional assignments and Statewide assessments.

Tool SWD-7 (continued)

6. In addition to the “Application of Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days,” what documentation should be submitted to the LAC and MSDE to support the justification?

This type of accommodation is not typically allowed because of test security considerations. A separate form for each content area assessment is required. The student’s IEP must sufficiently document:

- The student’s present level of academic achievement and functional performance that identifies the student’s instructional needs and how the student’s disability impacts his or her participation and performance in general curricular instructional activities, classroom/curricular assessments, and State assessments;
- Annual Goals in the content area(s) to be assessed that include the specialized instruction required to enable the student to demonstrate the content;
- Special Considerations, as appropriate;
- Consideration of Assistive Technology and Assistive Technology Services;
- Use of supplementary aids, services, supports, and program modifications; and
- Instructional and assessment accommodations.

Additional documentation may include, but is not limited to:

- Assessment reports;
- Student progress reports;
- Provider service logs; and
- Accommodation journal.

Tool SWD-6 Accommodations Journal could be useful to a student’s IEP Team in determining needed instructional and assessment accommodations.

7. When should the LAC submit the “Application of Approval to Administer the Assessments over Multiple Days” to ensure it will be reviewed in a timely manner prior to a test window?

In certain limited situations, the MSDE may grant permission for a student to have one or more of the assessments administered over one or more days. This accommodation is not typically allowed because of test security issues. However, if this accommodation is identified on an IEP, the MSDE will consider allowing that accommodation to take precedence over test security.

As soon as an IEP Team identifies multiple days as an appropriate accommodation, the IEP team must immediately provide the documentation to the STC, school principal, and LAC.

Tool SWD-7 (continued)

The Application and supporting documentation should be submitted to the MSDE with the signature of the local LAC and the Director of Special Education, no later than 4 weeks prior to the opening of the test window for the content area assessment. The test administration coordinator manual (TACM) for the assessment provides a due date for each test administration.

8. Which student situations merit taking the assessment over multiple days?

There must be sufficient individualized documentation that supports the accommodation and this documentation is reviewed by the MSDE on a case-by-case basis, as all situations are unique. This accommodation must also be required for instruction, classroom-based assessments, as well as Statewide assessment.

Within the Accommodations Manual in Section 4, there are various tools that will be helpful for the IEP Team to use in determining which accommodations are needed for classroom instruction, State and district assessments, and classroom assessments.

Tools SWD-6, SWD-9, and SWD-10 are ways to keep track of the accommodations that work for students. These tools allow students to identify which accommodations were useful in the classrooms and on tests and allows teachers and others to help determine how accommodations appear to be working.

Again, the approval of multiple-day accommodations for assessments is an individualized decision that must be sufficiently documented on a case-by-case basis for each student and each content assessment.

Tool SWD-8

Guidance for Provision of the Interpretation/Transliteration Accommodation for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Who receives the Interpretation/Transliteration accommodation?

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing would have the Interpretation/Transliteration accommodation checked on their IEPs/504s. Some of these students access instructional materials and tests at various levels through American Sign Language, signed English, Cued Speech, or oral transliteration. In a testing situation, some students may receive interpretation/transliteration for the testing instructions only, and other students (those who are still learning to read text) may need all print materials transliterated. Best practice would be to include in the IEP/504 which level of the interpreter/transliterator accommodation the IEP/504 Team recommends.

How are timing and scheduling issues handled?

It is not necessary to note an "Extended Time" accommodation for students with an interpretation/transliteration accommodation, as the extended time required for instruction or assessment is a function not of the student's disability but of the time required to deliver instruction and assessment through an interpretation/ transliteration.

Because of the extended time (and because of the fatigue factor for interpreters/translitrators which require multiple individuals to provide this accommodation require the interpretation or transliteration of each passage, each response question, and each of the four choices in American Sign Language, signed English, Cued Speech, or oral transliteration), students who require this accommodation may need tests to be administered over multiple days. Again, this is not a function of the student's disability, but a function of accommodation administration issues. For this reason, a student requiring the interpretation/transliteration accommodation does not need any special LEA or the MSDE approval to use the Multiple day (unique) accommodation for the assessment.

How are the physical set-up needs handled?

The following scenario will help practitioners understand the magnitude of the task of providing the interpretation/transliteration accommodation:

The students sit facing front and the interpreter/transliterator stands facing the class. Students have their test books opened to the passage to be interpreted/transliterated. They must be able to see the interpreter/transliterator and a printed version of the text simultaneously. (If they look down at the test book, they cannot see the interpreter/transliterator. Obviously, they would not all happen to look down at the same time, so there would always be a head or two not watching the interpreter/transliterator.) The interpreter/transliterator needs to be able to read the passage he or she is interpreting/transliterating without having to look down at the test book. (American Sign Language, signed English, Cued Speech, or oral transliteration is not only a function of what is on the hands, but facial expression and body language as well.)

Tool SWD-8 (continued)

Schools administering this accommodation would typically set up a screen in the front of the room next to the interpreter/transliterators for the students to read while watching the translation. An additional screen may be needed in the back of the room for the interpreter/transliterators to read from. There are different ways the test may be displayed for student viewing such as the use of Kurzweil™ on a computer with a LCD projector.

Tool SWD-9

Use of Accommodations in the Classroom

Use the chart below to track different aspects of how a student uses an accommodation in the classroom. Information provided in the chart will inform decision making in the IEP Team's determination of appropriate instructional and assessment accommodation(s) for a student. In the highlighted area of the chart, specify the accommodation(s) used by the student, in the classroom. Then respond to each question as it relates to each column.

Student _____ Date _____

What accommodation(s) does the student use in the classroom? List them under "accommodation" in the chart. Then follow the questions in the chart.

Questions	List Accommodation(s)				
Is the accommodation documented in the student's IEP/504?					
For what task(s) is the accommodation used (e.g., task type or content/standard)?					
Does the student use the accommodation for that task every time? Note how often.					
Is the need for the accommodation changing?					
Does the student use the accommodation independently or with assistance (e.g., paraeducator, peers)? Identify the person(s) providing the assistance.					
Notes (e.g., does one accommodation seem more effective when used with another on a task?)					

Adapted from *Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment*.

Tool SWD-10

Assessment Accommodations Questionnaire

Complete the chart below, after the student completes an assessment, to obtain information from a student regarding the use of accommodation(s) during the administration of the assessment. Note any adjustments or difficulties experienced by the student in either how the accommodation(s) was administered or used during testing.

Student _____ Date _____

Questions	List Accommodation(s)				
Did you use your accommodation(s) during the assessment? If no, why not?					
Was the accommodation useful to you during the assessment?					
Did you have any difficulties using the accommodation? Or, did you have any difficulties with the accommodation provided to you? If yes, what were the difficulties?					
Do you want to continue to receive the accommodation(s)? If not, why?					

Section 4

Is the accommodation(s) the student is receiving appropriate for the student? Why or why not?

Is the accommodation(s) the student is receiving meant to be a temporary support? If yes, what is the plan to determine when to phase out or discontinue the use of a certain accommodation?

Student signature _____

Signature of Person Conducting the Interview _____

Adapted from *Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment*.

Tool SWD-11

Parent Input Regarding Accommodations

Questions Parents Should Ask About Accommodations for Their Child During Instruction and Assessments

Instruction

- Is my child expected to reach regular or alternate achievement standards? Does this affect what type(s) of accommodation(s) may be available to my child in instruction or on assessments?
- What accommodation(s) does my child need to access to reach academic standards?
- Are there accommodations that may be allowed in instruction that are not currently being provided?
- Are there accommodations being used at home that could be used in instruction to help my child access and learn content or help in performing certain academic tasks?
- How can my child and I advocate to receive accommodations not yet provided in instruction?
- Are the accommodations my child is currently receiving in instruction meant to be a temporary support? If yes, what is the plan to help determine when to phase out or discontinue the use of a certain accommodation?

Assessment

- How are the staff members who work with my child providing accommodations (across general education, special education, or other staff)?
- What are the assessments my child needs to take, what do they measure (e.g., regular or alternate academic standards), and for what purpose is each given?
- Are the accommodations allowed on State assessments also provided for district assessments?
- Can my child participate in part of an assessment with or without accommodations?
- Are there consequences for allowing certain changes to how my child participates in an assessment? How will my child's assessment scores count?
- What are the consequences for the accommodations my child will receive on the assessment?

Tool SWD-11

Questions for Instruction and Assessment

Is the need for each accommodation documented in my child's IEP or 504 Plan?

Are there too many or too few accommodations being provided?

What are my child's preferences for specific accommodations?

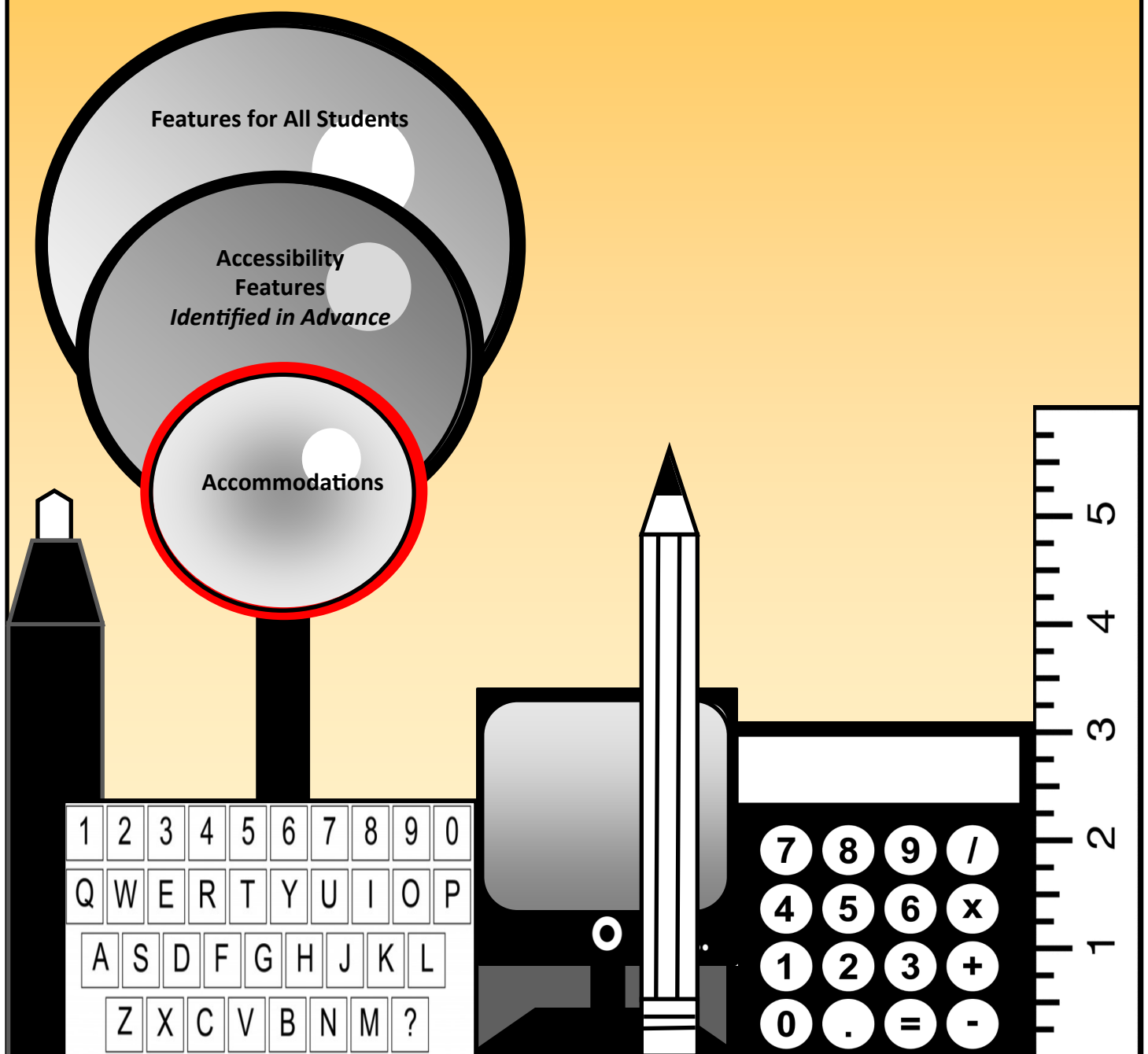
If my child receives accommodations, how will they be provided?

If an accommodation used in instruction is not allowed on an assessment, is there another option to support my child that is allowed? If yes, has it been documented and tried in instruction first? If no, how is my child being prepared to work without the accommodation before the assessment is administered?

Adapted from Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment. Questions are based in part on questions and content from NCLD's Parent Advocacy Brief NCLB: Determining Appropriate Assessment Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, and Testing Students With Disabilities: Practical Strategies for Complying With District and State Requirements, 2nd ed. (2003), by Martha Thurlow, Judy Elliott, and James Ysseldyke

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Section 5: The Six-Step Process for Accommodating English Learners (ELs)



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Section 5: The Six-Step Process for Accommodating English Learners (ELs)

Step 1: Setting Expectations – Expect ELs to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards

Ensuring Equal Access to Instruction and Assessment

Over the past two decades, achievement and accountability reforms in the U.S. have focused on supporting the broad goal of achieving equality of opportunity in our society. The realization of this goal in large-scale testing requires all students to have equal access to grade-level content.

Proponents argue that by including ELs in federal and state assessment accountability systems, there is a greater likelihood of creating a more accurate picture of overall student achievement and growth.

Having individual diagnostic information on which ELs have achieved English language proficiency and no longer need English Language Development (ELD) support is extremely valuable to parents of ELs, their teachers, and school administrators. It indicates ELs' mastery of academic English as well as social proficiency in English. If ELs' academic achievement is not reaching desired performance levels, student test scores may provide information that can be used in designing specific policies or funding to improve ELs' academic performance.

The inclusion of ELs in state assessment and accountability systems is protected by federal and state legislation and civil rights court decisions. These protections mandate that historically excluded student populations such as ELs be included for purposes of equal opportunity, accountability, and representation. Districts are obligated to follow all federal and state guidelines in providing equal educational opportunities to all students. Therefore, it is necessary that the district take care in evaluating and meeting the needs of ELs. The rights of this group of students to an equal education are protected by the force of legislation, judicial opinion, and administrative regulation.

Civil Rights Legislation and Court Cases Ensuring Equal Access for ELs

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans discrimination “based on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” As a result, states are now required to ensure appropriate identification, assessment, and instruction of all students whose native language is not English.

Lau v. Nichols [414 U.S. 563 (1974)] is a class-action suit originally filed on behalf of Chinese-speaking public school students against the San Francisco Unified School District in 1970. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the failure of the San Francisco school system to provide appropriate and meaningful instruction to students who did not speak English denied them the opportunity to effectively participate in the public education program and thus violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In response, states have issued Lau mandate guidelines for districts to ensure students an opportunity to a “meaningful education” regardless of their language background.

Legislation Requiring Participation by ELs

Both federal and state legislation now require the participation of all students, including ELs, in state assessment and accountability systems. Federal provisions for inclusion and accommodation of ELs in state systems are found in the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA provisions require the participation of all students, including ELs, in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. These provisions were first presented in The Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) in 1994, updated in 2001 in The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, and then reauthorized in 2015 in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

IASA stipulated that states "provide for...the inclusion of limited English proficient students who shall be assessed, to the extent practicable, in the language and form most likely to yield accurate and reliable information on what such students know and can do, to determine such students' mastery of skills in subjects other than English" (U.S. Congress, 1994, Section 1113(b)(3)(F)(iii)).

Under Title I of ESEA, states must include ELs in their assessments of academic achievement in reading/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies and must provide ELs with appropriate accommodations, including, to the extent practicable, assessments in the language and form most likely to yield accurate data on what ELs know and can do in the academic content areas until they have achieved English language proficiency.

In addition, the educational experience of ELs is significantly influenced by the mandates of Title I and Title III under the most recent authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA); ELs are one of the targeted subgroups within ESSA. In ESSA, EL accountability is now under Title I and it will be measured at the school level. A school system is obliged under Title III to provide support and services to ELs so as to help them become more skilled in the language. Further, per these regulations, all ELs are expected to attain state-defined levels of English proficiency, and ELs in Grades 3-8 are also expected to attain the targeted content proficiencies in English language arts/literacy, mathematics, science and social studies. At the high-school level, ELs are held accountable for the targeted content proficiencies in English, Algebra, and Science. English language skills are assessed through an English language proficiency assessment (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0).

Students are eligible for support under Title III if their skills in English fall within a certain range of proficiency. The parents of ELs have the right to refuse services offered through the ELD program; **however, the refusal does not remove the child's designation as an EL.** A refusal of service does not exempt the schools from being held accountable for the students' performance on the English language proficiency and content proficiency assessments administered by the state.

Maryland participation requirements support the federal requirements for EL participation in state assessments.

Who is an English Learner?

An EL is a student:

- who communicates in a language other than English; or
- whose family uses a primary language other than English in the home; and
- whose English language proficiency falls within the range established by the State for an ELD program.

Criteria for Identifying ELs

Home Language Survey (HLS):

The HLS must be administered to all new students in Maryland schools. On the student enrollment form, each LEA asks three consistently worded HLS questions to determine which language other than English, if any, is spoken in the home and by the student. Certain responses to these questions indicate that the student may be an EL. The next step is to test the student using the English language proficiency screener to determine his/her eligibility to participate in the ELD program.

Step 2: Setting Expectations — Understanding the Relationship between Language and Content in the Schooling Experience of an EL

ELs' language and content proficiencies are assessed separately to meet the requirements of ESSA, but it is important to recognize that in the schooling experience, language and content are interrelated. Students learn content through language, and students' language skills are deepened through study of content. Social language skills (used to follow basic directions and engage in personal conversations at school) typically develop at a much faster rate than the skills associated with academic language use (reading a long text, writing a long response). It is very possible that an EL can speak English fluently (meaning that he or she can follow what is said and engage in conversations with little difficulty) but may struggle to analyze a text, make inferences, and write English with the same skill of structure and variety as is found in spoken language. This gap is normal; if the gap does not appear to close over an extended period of time, this could be a sign that additional targeted instruction is needed, or of an underlying special education need.

ELs have the intellectual capacity to meet the cognitive demands of the K-12 classroom; their challenges in the classroom are most often a function of their language knowledge or skills than anything else. The ease with which ELs develop their skills in English is influenced by a number of factors including (but not limited to) the structure of their first or home language, the similarities between their first or home language and English, their literacy skills in their first or home language, their prior schooling experiences, the support they receive in learning language and content in their Maryland classroom, their level of access to English input and output outside of school, the level of U.S. schools' demands in relation to the targeted skills compared to schools in their home country, and their overall apprehension about the schooling or language-learning experience. ELs develop their proficiency in English at different rates because of these influences, and it is important to note that even if the EL has a documented special education need, there is research indicating that disabilities or disorders do not preclude bilingual and/or sequential second language development (Genesee, Paradis, and Crago, 2004).

An EL's ability to convey to the classroom teacher his or her understanding of the content and/or application of a skill can be significantly influenced by the way in which the student is asked to display this knowledge/skill. In many American classrooms, one of the ways in which we test students' mastery of content is to have them explain it in their own words. Sometimes, we ask students to do this by means of different terms we have used during instruction as a way to challenge the students' thinking and confirm our perceptions of their grasp of the content. For ELs, this lexical variety or language manipulation can prove to be quite difficult because they are coming from language traditions in which there is only one way to express an idea and/or label a concept: they might not know that different words can mean the same thing or that the same word can have different meanings. Further, to be able to pick up new words in context, ELs need to know even more language in the text than a native-English speaker would in order to decode the meaning, and chances are they will struggle to differentiate the nuances among words with similar meanings. If a new term is used (e.g., "notice," instead of "observe") to prompt students to describe the features of the object under the microscope, ELs may think you are asking them to do something very different and thus give you a completely off-base answer.

At that point, we may make a judgment about their content knowledge, even though a language barrier caused the confusion. In many instances, it is important to use the same language structures or terms to teach and assess content knowledge, but that does not mean an educator should not help the EL deepen his or her understanding of language that can be used in your content area. It just may require more explicit consideration to be most effective.

Step 3: Learning about Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of ELs

What are accommodations?

Accommodations help provide access to grade-level content and materials. Accommodations for ELs involve the application of a standard, preferably research-based, protocol for providing equitable access to instructional and testing procedures, testing materials, or the testing situation in order to allow students meaningful participation in general educational content. Linguistic accommodations for ELs are different from disabilities accommodations.

Effective accommodations for ELs:

- reduce the linguistic load necessary to access the content of the curriculum or assessment;
- address the unique linguistic and sociocultural needs of the student by reducing barriers caused by language rather than by the content being assessed, which will help ensure that instruction and assessment are more likely to focus on the content being taught and assessed rather than on English language proficiency; and
- do not alter the content being assessed. In large-scale assessment, accommodated scores should be sufficiently equivalent in scale so that they can be pooled with unaccommodated scores (Acosta, Rivera, & Shafer Willner, 2008, p. 38.)

(To learn more about linguistic testing accommodations, go to <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu>.)

Accommodations offered during instruction and assessment must be consistent for the student. During instruction, accommodations are one subset of differentiated support which promote equal access to grade-level content. Additional differentiated support provided to ELs includes specialized teaching strategies and classroom-based techniques (such as those outlined in the *Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol*; the *Cognitive Analytical Language Learning Approach*, and *Response to Intervention*) and interventions as appropriate. During large-scale assessments, providing accommodations is the primary strategy for ensuring that ELs who are included in state reading, mathematics, science, social studies, or writing assessments are more likely to be tested on their knowledge of the content standards being assessed rather than on their English language proficiency. Therefore, it is very important for educators to become familiar with the Maryland State Department of Education's policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

Accommodation Categories for ELs

There is sometimes confusion among school-based educators concerning the rationales for accommodations intended for ELs and accommodations intended for students with disabilities as indicated in Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) (Shafer Willner, Rivera, & Acosta, 2007). Current practice among many states is to define accommodations for ELs in relation to ELs' unique linguistic and other background needs, rather than using the categories used for students with disabilities.

Accommodations for ELs provide two types of support: direct linguistic support and indirect linguistic support.

- Direct linguistic support accommodations involve adjustments to the language of the test. Such accommodations can be provided in the student's native language or in English.
- Indirect linguistic support accommodations involve adjustments to the conditions under which ELs take the test.

Refer to Step 4 (Selecting EL Accommodations) for the MSDE accommodations allowed for ELs.

Accommodations vs. Modifications

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations; they are one strategy for providing access to grade-level content. In contrast, modifications or alterations change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of ELs and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Using modifications may result in implications that could adversely affect students throughout their educational careers.

Examples of modifications include:

- requiring a student to learn less of the content material than that which native English-speaking peers are required to learn (e.g., fewer objectives and shorter units or lessons), thereby eliminating content as required by the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards;
- qualitatively reducing assignments and assessments so that a student only needs to complete the less difficult problems or items (see below a note regarding quantity of items);
- revising assignments or assessments to make them less difficult (e.g., by 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.

NOTE: Reducing the quantity of assignments or items is not normally a modification; rather, reduction in quantity is a reflection of the fact that ELs may require extra time to complete each assignment and therefore may not be able to complete the same number of items as other students. These students, however, are expected to work on assignments of similar content depth and complexity.

Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and/or classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content and is not a recommended practice for ELs. 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.

Comparison of Accommodations and Modifications*

	Instructional Accommodation	Modification
EXPLANATION	Indicates changes to <u>how</u> the content is: • taught, • made accessible, and/or • assessed. Accommodations do not change what the student is expected to learn. The objectives of the course remain intact.	• Indicates that what is being taught — the content — is modified. • The student is expected to learn something different than the general education standard. • The instructional level or general education benchmarks or number of key concepts to be mastered are changed.
EXAMPLES	• One-on-one instruction, small-group instruction, multisensory approaches, extended time on projects, study guides, highlighted texts, programmed materials, preferential seating, immediate feedback, etc. • Audio materials, world language interpreter, word processor, etc. • Extended time to complete assignments and differentiated assignments or assessments (e.g., draw a diagram, develop a model, perform the answer, and shortened tests)	• A locally developed course to substitute for a general education course (e.g., life skills courses and functional mathematics) • Selected standards instead of all of the standards for the grade-level course • Off-level instruction and performance expectations in a general education setting

*Adopted from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Division of IDEA Coordination

Step 4: Selecting Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Individual ELs

The process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the EL committee attempt to provide equal access to grade-level content so that ELs can participate meaningfully in the general education curriculum. EL committee meetings that simply engage people in checking boxes on a state or local compliance document are not conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor do they advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum.

Gathering and Reviewing Student Information

Effective decision-making about the provision of appropriate accommodations is facilitated by gathering and reviewing a variety of information about the student's level of English language proficiency and current level of academic performance in relation to local and state academic standards.

In the weeks prior to the committee meeting during which the EL Plan will be completed and discussed, gather information on student achievement, including:

- Student demographic information
- EL identification and placement information
- Student level of academic achievement
- Student instructional program

English Learner (EL) Plan

All ELs in Maryland must have a documented EL Plan. One of the goals of this plan is to facilitate student access to grade-level instruction and state assessments. The components of the plan may be contained in several different documents or data sources. The EL Plan should be developed using a committee approach, rather than be developed by one educator at the school. The committee should involve EL staff, academic content staff, and the principal or other school administrator designee. School staff should make every effort to involve parents and the student (especially at the middle-school and high-school levels) in the development and review of the EL Plan.

Each student's EL Plan must contain the following elements:

1. Student demographic information, including:
 - o Language(s) first spoken
 - o Language(s) spoken at home
 - o Language used most often to communicate
 - o Date of entry into U.S.
 - o Local School System enrollment status (date)
 - o Schooling background, including instances of interrupted schooling
 - Short-term: in the past six months

- Long-term: for a period of six months or more and resulting in the student having little or no literacy in his or her native language. (This information can be obtained from parent reporting or on registration forms.)
- 2. EL identification and placement information, including:
 - o Reason for identification of student as qualifying to participate in ELD program;
 - o Level of English proficiency (using the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment as approved by the Maryland State Board of Education); and
 - o Program exit or expected rate of transition for EL students
- 3. Student level of academic achievement
 - o State test scores
 - o Classroom test scores and, if available, informal assessments
- 4. Student instructional program
 - o Method of instruction (content, instructional goals, use of English and native language) in the student's program and in other available programs
 - o How the instructional program will address the student's educational strengths and individual needs
 - o How the program will address English language learning and acquisition (placement in a language instruction educational program)
 - o How the student will meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards and demonstrate growth
 - o Specific accommodations permitted for instruction and for the state-required assessments based on ELP assessment results
- 5. Parental notification elements
 - o The right to remove the child from the instructional program upon request
 - o The right to decline services from the ELD program
 - o Separate parent notification within 30 days if the LEA fails to meet the objectives described to the parents for their child
 - o Whether or not the student will participate and/or be included in accountability in the State-required assessment and accountability system this year, based on whether this is the student's first year of enrollment in a U.S. school

2. EL Committee signatures

- o A list of the names of persons who reviewed the documentation and made the decisions
- o Signatures of parents or guardians or documented attempts to obtain those signatures. (However, the implementation of the EL accommodations plan is not dependent upon receipt of the parental signatures.)
- o Signature of the principal of the appropriate school as an indication of approval for the described accommodations

General Eligibility Requirements for Receiving Accommodations

Who is eligible for EL accommodations on state assessments?

- An EL who has been assessed with an English language proficiency assessment, meets the criteria as an EL, has evaluation data in the EL Plan that demonstrates a need for accommodations, and is participating in instructional programs and services to meet the language and academic content needs of the student.
- An EL whose family has refused instructional services offered through the ELD program, who has been assessed with an English language proficiency assessment, meets the criteria as an EL, and has evaluation data in the EL Plan that demonstrates a need for accommodations.

In each example above, EL accommodations documentation must be prepared and implemented.

Reclassified ELs (RELs) who have exited the ELD program may have access to the accessibility features all students are allowed to receive.

Reminders:

- For State content assessments, an EL who also has either an IEP or a 504 Plan may receive additional accommodations as identified in that plan. Please note that he or she is also eligible for EL accommodations that may not be included in the IEP or 504 Plan.
- For the ELP assessment, accommodations in the EL plan are not allowed.
- For ELs with disabilities, not all accommodations in the IEP or 504 Plan are allowed for the ELP assessment. Refer to the language in the IDEA (1997 and 2004) 34 CFR § 300.160 (b)(2)(i) and 34 CFR § 300.160 (b)(2)(ii).

Recommended Procedure for Selecting Accommodations for ELs

The EL committee may use the following guidance to select accommodations for ELs (and to record these in the student's EL Plan).

General Principles for Accommodating ELs

It is important to remember there is no one-size-fits-all approach to EL accommodations (Abedi, Mirocha, Leon, & Goldberg, 2005). Rather than ask what accommodation was found to be most effective for *all* ELs, it is important to focus on the effectiveness of each accommodation based on the individual EL's English language proficiency and other student background factors that influence a student's achievement of English language proficiency. More is not always better; in fact, too much of the wrong type of support can actually hinder student performance.

While the main characteristic by which ELs are defined is the fact that they are in the process of acquiring the English language, ELs are not, by any means, a homogeneous group. The group is quite heterogeneous in nature. That is to say, EL achievement is influenced by many factors in addition to the shared feature of being in the process of learning English.

Thus, it is important to select accommodations based on specific EL needs. Research indicates that ELs with selected accommodations matched to their linguistic and cultural needs scored higher than (a) ELs with incomplete accommodations — i.e., selection done without matching accommodations to EL-responsive criteria, and (b) ELs who were not provided any accommodations at all (Kopriva, Emick, Hipolito-Delgado, & Cameron, 2007). Remember: the primary purpose of EL assessment accommodations is *not* to improve ELs' rate of passing the state assessments but to allow ELs to *more accurately* demonstrate their knowledge of the content being assessed.

Guidance for Individualizing EL Accommodation Selection

When selecting accommodations for ELs, the EL committee should refer to the criteria in FACT SHEET EL-1 and the evidence of student achievement.

When more guidance is needed, use the following three considerations to inform the criteria in FACT SHEET EL-1. These considerations are derived from EL accommodation research and based on the recommendations found in *The Descriptive study of State Assessment Policies for Accommodating English learners* (Shafer Willner, Rivera, and Acosta, 2008), available at <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu/context.aspx>.

Considerations when selecting accommodations for ELs:
A. Level of English language proficiency (ELP) as measured by the State's ELP assessment

◇ Beginning or intermediate

B. Literacy development in English and/or the native language

◇ Native language literacy

◇ Interrupted schooling or literacy background

C. Factors that impact effective usage of accommodations

◇ Grade or age

◇ Affective needs

◇ Time in U. S. schools

More detailed information about these considerations is below.

A. Consider the student's level of English language proficiency (ELP) as measured by the state's ELP assessment.

The ELP level for each EL is determined by either the student's screener or summative ELP overall composite score. Schools have the option to choose accommodations appropriate for their students within the suggested or permitted accommodations for their ELP level. The ELP assessment performance levels (and how they map to the research based on EL accommodations most appropriate for particular levels of ELP) are as follows:

◇ **ELs with Beginning ELP**

ELs at the lowest levels of ELP (levels 1 and 2) tend to experience the greatest need for accommodations but are the least able to use them. In general, the use of oral supports is recommended over written accommodations in English; however, most of these would not be expected to produce much of an effect for the lowest proficiency levels.

English Language Proficiency Levels		ELP Levels for which ELs Receive Accommodations
Level 1	Entering	Beginning
Level 2	Emerging	
Level 3	Developing	Intermediate
Level 4	Expanding	
Level 5	Bridging (REL)	Advanced – no EL accommodations applicable
Level 6	Reaching (REL)	Proficient – no EL accommodations applicable

◇ **ELs with Intermediate ELP**

ELs at the intermediate level of ELP (levels 3 and 4) have usually developed some literacy in English and are expected to benefit from a wider variety of both written and oral accommodation options.

Decision makers should note that the need for accommodations at this level varies considerably depending upon the unique background characteristics of the student as well as the literacy demands of the test. The existing research suggests that like ELs with beginning ELP levels, those with intermediate ELP levels may find useful native language accommodations such as bilingual word- to-word dictionaries and extra time to use them.

B. Consider the student's literacy development in English and/or the native language.

Adjust the list of accommodations selected in A above based on student background factors concerning the student's literacy development in English and the native language.

◇ **Native Language Literacy**

If the student has developed literacy in his or her native language after receiving instruction in the specific content area being assessed either in his or her home country or in the U.S., provide the student a word-to-word bilingual dictionary along with extended time to use it. Maryland's mathematics assessment is offered in Spanish for ELs as well. ELs are considered eligible to receive one of the following accommodations if they attended school in the U.S. for less than three years and had prior instruction in mathematics in Spanish either in their home country or in a U.S. school:

- o Online Transadaption of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish
- o Paper-based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish

◇ **Interrupted Schooling or Literacy Development in English and Native languages**

If the EL has experienced interrupted formal education during his or her schooling career and as a result, has weaker literacy skills in his or her native language and English, it is highly probable that the EL is more oral-dominant in his or her developing English language proficiency. In this case, provide the EL with oral language support accommodations that are generally offered to ELs with beginning ELP.

C. Consider factors that impact effective usage of accommodations

Adjust the list of accommodations selected in A and B above based on student background factors which can help ensure that accommodations are useful to the student. Grade or age, affective needs, and time in U.S. schools may all impact student ability to use EL accommodations. (For example, older students sometimes refuse accommodations due to the embarrassment of receiving additional support in front of classmates. Students who have just arrived in the U.S. need to gain familiarity with U.S. testing practices and expectations. Anxiety can raise an EL's affective filter and impact test performance.)

1. Include the student in the process of assigning accommodations to ensure use of the accommodation and student understanding of its use.
2. If the student is unfamiliar with standardized testing or computer-based testing, provide test preparation activities prior to the assessment.
3. Ensure that the student has used the accommodations prior to test administration.
4. Administration of tests in special settings, with specialized personnel, in small groups, or individually, while not accommodations, are administrative considerations that might be helpful for increasing students' level of comfort, facilitating test administration, and ensuring more accurate test results, and they should be used when appropriate.

Review your decision.

- Document your decision on the Accommodation Documentation Form for ELs and include it in the student's EL Plan.
- Verify that accommodation(s) are being used on a regular basis during classroom instruction and assessment.
- Review the decision both at the end of the initial EL committee meeting and throughout the school year. It is also recommended that the EL committee meet prior to the state-required assessment to examine any feedback provided by the student's teacher concerning the effectiveness and appropriateness of the accommodation provided.

You may wish to use the questions below as a guide:

- o What accommodation(s) is or are regularly used by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?
- o What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?
- o What difficulties did the student experience in using the accommodation(s)?
- o What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation(s) worked?
- o What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about how the accommodation(s) worked?
- o Should the student use accommodation(s), or are changes needed?

Remember: there is no one-size-fits-all set of accommodations for ELs because ELs are not a homogenous group. Testing accommodations, accessibility features, and administrative considerations need to be customized to the different strengths and needs these students have as they develop English language proficiency.

Step 5: Administering Accommodations During Instruction and Assessments of ELs

Provision of Accommodations During Instruction

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

Provision of 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 essential for all EL committee 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 in planning the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on the test day.

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

Please note: ELs are not allowed to receive accommodations on the English language proficiency assessment. Based upon those indicated on the EL Plan. ELs with disabilities or a 504 Plan may receive accommodations as long as the accommodation does not change the construct being measured.

Administering Assessments and Accommodations

State laws, regulations, and policies specify practices to ensure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. In Maryland, testing regulations and policies are contained in the following documents: the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), this manual, and the *Test Administration and Coordination and Examiner's Manuals* for each state testing program. Test examiners, accommodators, proctors, and all other staff involved in test administration in any way are required to 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; and
- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment.

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. All Maryland educators must be familiar with COMAR and receive training regarding test administration, accommodations, and security procedures. Staff should check with their LAC for more detailed information regarding test security policies.

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 a particular concern when accessible test formats (e.g., braille or large print) are used or when someone other than the student (e.g., an interpreter, reader, or scribe) is allowed to see the test. In order to ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators must (1) be provided with proper training in both specific test administration procedures for each testing program as well as training in specific test security procedures for each test, (2) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (3) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone, and return and account for all materials as instructed.

Refer to Fact Sheet EL-1 in Section 6 for detailed rules for the administration of specific accommodations permitted on State content assessments.

Refer to Appendices B and C for detailed rules for the administration of specific accommodations.



Some of the same considerations for test security apply when students are taking a technology-based assessment. For example, ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the test and that test materials are kept confidential is critical in technology-based assessments. In addition, it is important to guarantee that students are seated in such a manner that they cannot see each other's work stations, are not able to access any additional programs or the Internet when completing the assessment, and are not able to access any saved data or computer shortcuts.

In the event that a student was provided with a test accommodation that was not listed in his or her EL Plan, or if a student was **not** provided with a test accommodation listed in his or her EL Plan, the school must notify the LAC, who in turn will complete the necessary documents. All or part of the student's score may be invalidated for Maryland's Accountability Program purposes.

As noted previously, all staff involved in any way with state testing are required to become familiar with and comply with the state regulation governing Test Administration and Data Reporting Policies and Procedures (Code of Maryland Regulations [COMAR] 13A.03.04). In addition, all staff are required to comply with procedures for each testing program as outlined in the *Test Administration and Coordination Manual (TACM)* and *Examiner's Manual* and any other ancillary materials produced by the State for each assessment. In addition, local district assessments require compliance with general State procedures as well as any district-specific procedures. Check with your LAC for more information. The following code of ethics conforms to the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing developed by the American Education Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education:

IT IS A BREACH OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE VERBAL OR NONVERBAL CLUES OR ANSWERS, TEACH ITEMS ON THE TEST, SHARE WRITING PROMPTS, COACH, HINT, OR IN ANY WAY INFLUENCE A STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE DURING THE TESTING SITUATION. A BREACH OF ETHICS MAY RESULT IN INVALIDATION OF TEST RESULTS AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) OR MSDE DISCIPLINARY ACTION. VIOLATION OF TEST SECURITY CAN RESULT IN PROSECUTION AND/OR PENALTIES AS IMPOSED BY THE MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND/OR THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMAR 13A.03.04 AND 13A.12.05.

Accommodations Monitoring by MSDE

MSDE will send representatives to schools throughout the State to monitor and observe the use of accommodations during instruction and assessment. During testing, the monitor will ensure that standardized testing procedures are being followed. Schools will not be notified in advance of a monitor's visit. All monitors will follow local procedures for reporting to the school's main office and signing the school's visitor log. Monitors will also sign Non-Disclosure Forms as requested by the school and provide a copy of a memorandum from the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Research, Accountability, and Assessment giving authorization to monitor instruction and testing relating to the use of accommodations testing. LEAs who permit central office personnel to make observations during Maryland State testing must train personnel on how to administer accommodations during instruction and assessment.

Step 6: Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Used in Instruction and Assessment of ELs

After the assessment, the members of the EL committee should debrief one another on how well accommodations worked at the district, school, and individual student level. 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 EL students in state and district-wide assessments. Data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may reveal questionable patterns of accommodation 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 EL committee and test administrators need additional training and support.

In addition to information about the use of accommodations within the classroom, information on the implementation of accommodations during assessment needs to be gathered. 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, district, and student levels.

Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodations Use at the School and District Levels

1. Are there policies to ensure that testing practices are ethical, that administration of assessments is standardized, and that test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administration procedures are not compromised with the provision of accommodations?
3. Are students receiving accommodations as documented in their EL plans?
4. Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to directions for the implementation of accommodations?
5. How many EL students are receiving accommodations?
6. Are students using the accommodations provided to them? If not, why not?
7. What types of accommodations are provided, and are some used more than others?
8. How do students who receive accommodations perform on state and local assessments? How many students are being accommodated?

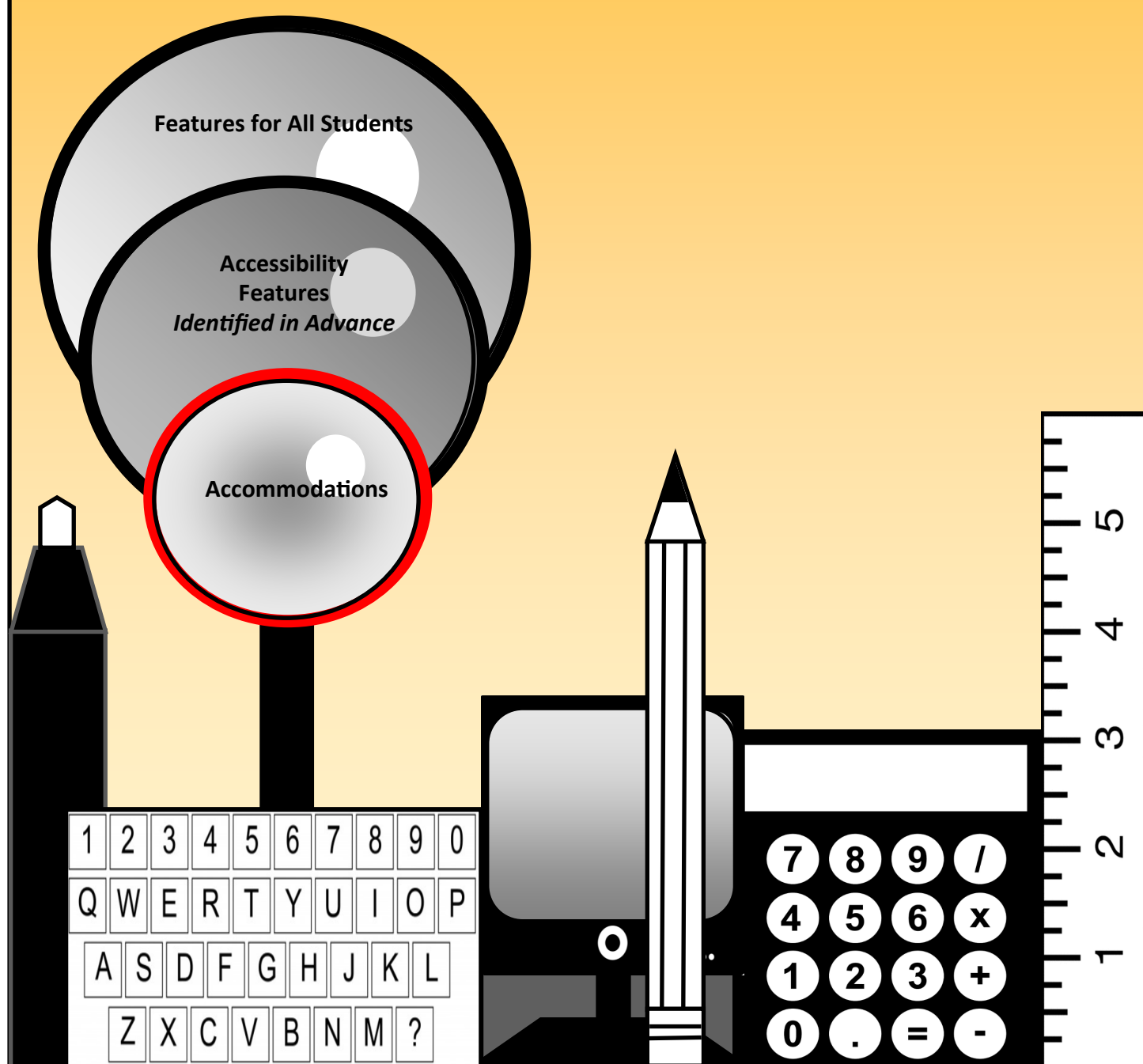
Possible explanations to explore: if students are not meeting the expected level of performance, is this due to their not having had access to the necessary instruction, not having received the accommodation, or having used accommodations that were not effective?

Questions to Guide Evaluation at the Student Level

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

These questions can be used to formatively evaluate the accommodations used at the student level, as well as at the school or district levels. School-level 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 EL committee. It is critical to stress that formative evaluation is not the responsibility of just one individual. The entire EL committee should contribute to the information-gathering and decision-making processes.

Section 6: Accommodations Fact Sheets for English Learners (ELs)



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Section 6: Accommodations Fact Sheets for English Learners (ELs)

Fact Sheet EL-1

Detailed Documentation for EL Accommodations Permitted on State Content Assessments

This Fact Sheet should be used by the EL committee when selecting and documenting accommodations on each English learner's EL Plan. It contains information on each accommodation allowed for ELs during instruction and assessment, the ELs for which the accommodation is appropriate, and the administration directions and/or requirements for testing.

Accommodations Conditions for Use

Notations in the columns on the following pages indicate the conditions under which each type of accommodation may be provided. These conditions are defined as:

- 1. Instruction: the accommodation is applicable to instructional situations;
- 2. Assessment: the accommodation described is permitted for assessment and results in a standard administration of the assessment provided that the accommodation is allowable based upon the specific assessment's accommodation/test administration manual.

Accommodations Code

Each accommodation is assigned a code for use in data capture and analysis. The code will be listed with a number followed by a letter and then the title of the accommodation. For example, 7a: Extended Time. The current coding system used for EL accommodations has been updated from previous years.

Accommodations for English Learners

The table below lists the accommodations on state assessments that are available to ELs and cross-references the accommodations with administration guidelines and allowable uses.

The table below lists Accommodations for ELs. The table describes the activities needed before, during, and after testing necessary to administer these accommodations appropriately.

Accommodations for ELs must be preselected for the students.

REls may have access to the accessibility features all students are allowed to receive and are not eligible to receive EL accommodations.

Accommodations for English Learners (ELs) Permitted on State Content Assessments

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
7a Extended Time	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have extended time selected. The amount of time a student receives must be indicated in the student's EL Plan. • Test Administrator Training: Test Administrators providing this accommodation must review: - o Appendix E: Guidance for Selecting and Administering the Extended Time Accommodation During Testing: Students have until the end of the school day to complete a single test unit administered during the prescribed testing window. It is recommended to test students receiving the extended time accommodation in a separate setting in order to minimize distractions to other students and to schedule these students for testing in the morning in order to allow adequate time for completion of a test unit by the end of the school day.	Instruction and assessment
7b Word-to-Word Dictionary (English/ Native Language)	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have word-to-word dictionary selected. • Materials: Word-to-word dictionaries are provided to students by their school. These dictionaries are based on those used by the student for routine classroom instruction. During Testing: The student uses a published bilingual, word-to-word dictionary that does not include definitions, phrases, sentences, or pictures. The student should be familiar with the dictionary he or she will use during testing. Students should be given ample time to complete the test using the accommodation. If no printed word-to-word dictionary can be found for a specific language, an electronic translator may be used. The device may not connect to the Internet or store information, and therefore, web-based translators are not allowed. A sample list of approved bilingual word-to-word dictionaries is available at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/lep-bilingual-dictionary.pdf.	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Response • 7c Speech-to-Text • 7d Human Scribe	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have Speech-to-Text or Human Scribe selected. • Materials: if student uses software, a separate computer will be needed in addition to the computer used to administer the test. An external device may also be brought to the assessment. • Test Administrator Training: Test Administrators providing the scribe accommodation must review: - o Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation During Testing for Speech-to-Text: a student dictates responses verbally, using an external speech-to-text device or by dictating. The student must be tested in a separate setting. The student must already be familiar with any external device used for this accommodation. After Testing: • Responses must be transcribed exactly as dictated/signed (i.e., the human scribe/signer may not change, embellish, or interpret a student's responses when transcribing) into the student's standard test booklet or answer document. Only transcribed responses will be scored. • Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation • Test Administrators are responsible for collecting all nonscorable student work created using assistive technology devices. Test-related content must be deleted from all devices. Nonscorable student work must be securely shredded.	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
7e General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated in Student's Native Language (by Test Administrator)	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated in Student's Native Language selected. • Materials: - o PARCC will provide written general test administration directions in the top ten languages spoken by students in the PARCC member states each year. - o If written general test administration directions are not available in the student's native language, a local translator fluent both in English and the student's native language may translate and read the directions in the language of the student. • Test Administrator Training: Test Administrators or other qualified interpreters providing the general administration directions in languages other than English must review the directions in advance in order to provide consistent transadaptations. Test Administrators providing this accommodation will ideally be literate and fluent in English as well as in the student's native language, or they may collaborate with a local translator, if available During Testing: The Test Administrator or other qualified interpreter reads aloud the general administration instructions in the student's native language. The student may request that directions be repeated. The student must be tested in a separate setting.	Instruction and assessment
7f General Administration Directions Clarified as Needed in Student's Native Language (by Test Administrator)	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have General Administration Directions Clarified in Student's Native Language selected. • Test Administrator Training: Test Administrators providing this accommodation should be literate and fluent in English as well as in the student's native language. During Testing: The Test Administrator clarifies general administration directions only in the student's native language. Test Administrators or other qualified interpreters providing this accommodation should ideally be literate and fluent in English as well as in the student's native language, or they may be assisted by a translator who speaks the language of the student, if available.	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
7g Online Transadaptation of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	See Paper-Based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish in PARCC.	Instruction and assessment
7h Paper-Based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have Paper-Based Edition in Spanish selected. • Materials: Paper-Based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment. The mathematics assessment may be translated into additional languages. - o Test Administrators providing this accommodation should ideally be literate and fluent in English and Spanish, or may be assisted by an interpreter, if available, since test administration directions will be read to the student in Spanish. During Testing: The student takes a paper-based mathematics assessment in Spanish (or other native language if provided), Spanish kits for paper-based PARCC Mathematics assessment include an English version of the test booklet and mathematics tools so the test can be administered in a bilingual format. Responses must be entered on the Spanish answer document for responses provided in Spanish to be scored. Note: If the student is also receiving a human reader accessibility feature, the test can be read aloud in Spanish only (i.e., the test cannot be read aloud in English in addition to Spanish).	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
7i Large Print Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	Before Testing: • Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have Large Print Edition selected. • Materials: Large Print Test Kit includes a large print assessment booklet, standard test booklet, or answer document for transcription and supplementary large print mathematics materials (large print ruler and protractor), when appropriate. • Test Administrator Training: Test Administrators of students with visual impairments must review: - o Appendix M: PARCC Assessments for Students with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness. - o Appendix A: Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Students Taking the Paper-Based PARCC Assessments. - o Test Administrators providing this accommodation should ideally be literate and fluent in English and Spanish or may be assisted by a translator, if available, since test administration directions will be read to the student in Spanish. During Testing: A large print paper-based form of the mathematics assessment in Spanish is available for a student with a visual impairment who is unable to take a computer-based assessment due to his or her disability. The font size for the PARCC large print edition will be 18 point on paper sized 14" x 18". Students will not record their answers in standard print test booklets or answer documents. Instead, students will circle their answers in the large print test booklets. Students will need to write their answers in boxes at the top of the answer grids, but they do not need to bubble in their answers. In the Test Administrator Scripts, there are several instances which instruct Test Administrators to demonstrate an activity or display information. Demonstrations should be conducted where they are visible for each student (e.g., on the board and near the student). After Testing: Responses must be transcribed verbatim in Spanish by a Test Administrator in a standard student test booklet or answer document, which is included in the Large Print Test Kit. Only transcribed responses will be scored. At least two persons must be present during transcription of student responses (one transcriber and one observer confirming accuracy).	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
	It is recommended that one of the individuals be an LEA or School Test Coordinator. Refer to Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation.	
7j Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish	See Administration Guidelines Human Reader for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish	Instruction and assessment
7k Human Reader for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish	Before Testing: - Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have Human Reader in Spanish (or other languages) selected. - Tools for Identification: IEP teams/504 Plan Coordinators should use the decision-making tool available in Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Assessments to inform their decision-making. - Materials: Read Aloud Kits, which include one copy of the student test booklet and answer document, test booklet for Test Administrators (Human Reader/Signer), and a Human Reader Script transadapted in Spanish. - Test Administrator Training: Human Readers providing this accommodation must review: - The Mathematics Human Reader Script in Spanish at least two full school days prior to testing. Review of the Human Reader Script in Spanish must occur in a SECURE ENVIRONMENT. - Appendix B: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics Assessments - An onsite translator may provide (or assist a Test Administrator to provide) a human read-aloud accommodation in the student's native language. Test Administrators providing this accommodation should ideally be literate and fluent in English as well as in the student's native language, or they may be assisted by an interpreter, if available.	Instruction and assessment

Description and Guidance for Selecting Accommodation	Administration Guidelines	Allowable Use
	During Testing: A Test Administrator (Human Reader or Human Signer) reads aloud to a student using the provided Human Reader Script in Spanish. The student must be tested in an individual or small-group setting, and the Test Administrator must provide the read-aloud in Spanish only (i.e., the test cannot be read aloud in English in addition to Spanish). Small groups should only be used if all students are able to work at approximately the same pace. The number of students in a small group is determined by individual states. After Testing: Human Reader Scripts are secure, and Test Coordinators are responsible for returning the Human Reader Scripts with the nonscorable materials.	

**All appendix references in this section refer to the PARCC AF&A Manual.

Fact Sheet EL-2

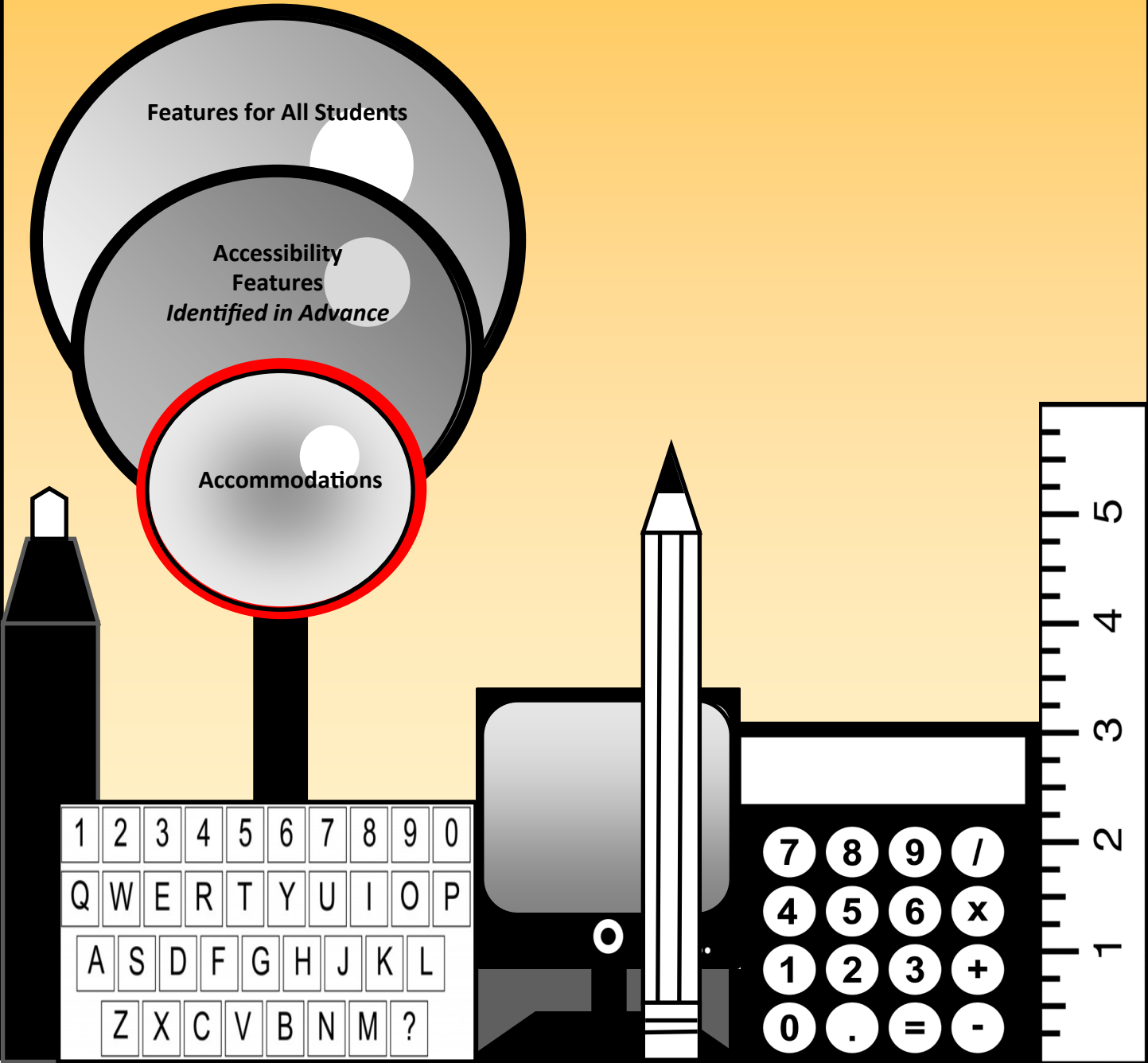
Sample Strategies for Differentiated Instruction

The chart includes a sample of essential strategies recommended for providing differentiated instruction for ELs across all content areas. This document may be useful in guiding the discussions of the EL committee to determine the instructional differentiation that relates to the applicable accommodations for school-based and county- and state-mandated assessments. For allowed accommodations on state content assessments, please refer to the table in Fact Sheet EL-1.

Category	Strategies for Differentiated Instruction
Direct Linguistic Support in English: Oral/Written	• Provide ample repetition of language and tasks: repeat, restate, rephrase, review, and reread. • Keep explanations and directions brief and concise: focus on key concepts and vocabulary. • Highlight and explicitly teach key vocabulary needed to accomplish the assigned task. • Enhance oral presentations with nonverbal (e.g., visual) and written support, graphic organizers, and modeling. • Allow students time to check and discuss understanding of directions and material with peers. • Present materials through multiple, diverse modes using audiovisual and other technology (e.g., audio-books). • Introduce and develop new vocabulary by using visual aids • Use electronic devices to present content to students. • Allow ongoing use of bilingual dictionaries during reading and writing assignments in order to clarify meaning when possible. • Use leveled texts or adapt texts by shortening or simplifying language to make the content more accessible. • Encourage and allow for nonverbal responses such as pointing, nodding, pictures, manipulatives, and graphic organizers. • Adjust expectations for language output (e.g., by accepting isolated words and phrases). • Allow shortened responses and require fewer assignments (e.g., by focusing on the quality of a reduced number of instructional objectives). • Pair ELs with strong speakers and writers (i.e., buddies). • Encourage buddies to take a dictated response during pair work. • Request oral explanations of concepts that ELs can better express orally than in writing. • Allow ELs to dictate responses into a recording device as evidence of completion of assigned written work.
Indirect Linguistic Support/Test Administration Practices	• Chunk instruction into shorter segments to allow for monitored breaks. • Expand assignments so that they cover a longer period. • Extend wait time for oral and written participation and responses. • Plan most challenging tasks and subjects earlier in the day or period or at another time that is best for the student. • Seat ELs close to speaker, screen, or reader. • Dedicate support staff to work with ELs in addition to classroom teacher. • Provide small-group instruction. • Pair or group ELs with buddies who will assist with modeling and explaining tasks. • Work one-on-one with students.

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Appendices



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Appendix A: Maryland Guidance to IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments

Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, July 1, 2017

Introduction

This document is intended to help guide Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams as they determine whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments, assessments based on alternate achievement standards, are appropriate for individual students. The assessments were developed to ensure that all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, are able to participate in an assessment that is a measure of what they know and can do in relation to the grade level Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS), Maryland State Curriculum (SC), and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) Core Content Connectors (CCC). The Maryland Alternate Assessments are a part of a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment tools for students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the general assessments with or without accommodations. 34 CFR § 300.16(c)(1). IEP teams must consider a student's individual characteristics when determining whether a student with a disability should participate in the general assessment, with or without accommodations, or in the Maryland Alternate Assessments, keeping in mind that students with a "significant cognitive disability" are represented by a small number of Maryland students. COMAR 13A.05.01.09A(1)(f) & (g).

This document outlines the steps that an IEP team must take in determining whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for a student. These include (a) reviewing student records and important information across multiple school years and settings (e.g., school, home, community) and (b) determining whether the student fits all of the criteria for participating in the alternate assessments as outlined in this document.

A student who participates in the Maryland Alternate Assessments participates in all content areas of English/language arts, Mathematics, and Science. The likelihood of a student fulfilling graduation requirements to earn a diploma decreases as a student continues to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Therefore, it is critical for the IEP team to revisit eligibility decisions in relation to student progress. A student's IEP must be reviewed at least once annually. Additional IEP team meetings to develop, review, or revise the student's IEP may occur during the calendar year of the current IEP. During the IEP team meeting, as part of the IEP process, the IEP team is required to plan for the student's participation in instruction and assessments during the term of the current IEP.

Assessment Design and Administration in English/language arts and Mathematics

The Maryland Alternate Assessments for English/language arts (reading and writing) and Mathematics are given in grades 3 through 8 and 11. These are online assessments (with paper and pencil option) of approximately 30 test items that assess approximately ten prioritized content targets per grade level in each content area. These content targets were identified for each grade based on learning progressions and alignment to the grade level MCCRS. The assessment includes multiple choice items and constructed response items. Each content target is assessed by items that have been carefully and intentionally designed to assess a range of ability and performance.

The assessment design includes allowances for flexibility in administration (for example, a student may respond to administrator-presented stimuli rather than to the item stimuli on the computer). A trained testing administrator familiar to the student (e.g., the student's teacher) facilitates the administration and items are administered over the course of one or more testing sessions as needed. Testing sessions are scheduled within a testing window of approximately eight weeks, scheduled by the State.

Assessment Design and Administration in Science

The Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (Alt-MISA) is an online assessment which measures a participating student's progress on attainment of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-span expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in grades 5, 8, and 11. The Science Essential Elements (EE) address a small number of science standards, representing the breadth, but not the depth, of coverage across the entire standards framework. A trained testing administrator familiar to the student (e.g., the student's teacher) facilitates the administration and items are administered over the course of one or more testing sessions as needed. Testing sessions are scheduled within a testing window of approximately twelve weeks, scheduled by the State.

Guidance for Participation Decisions

Maryland's Alternate Assessments Participation Criteria and Checklist is provided in Appendix A. IEP teams must use the guidelines to determine whether a student participates in Maryland Alternate Assessments. As reflected in the guidelines, to participate a student must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and meet all three of the following criteria:

1. The student has a "significant cognitive disability."

AND

2. The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards in English/language arts and Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards.

AND

3. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized, and repeated instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in adapted and modified curriculum.

Participation Descriptions

The student has a "significant cognitive disability." A review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as a collection of behaviors, including conceptual, social, interpersonal, and practical skills, essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

Having a significant cognitive disability is not determined by just an IQ score, but rather a holistic understanding of a student. The term "significant cognitive disability" is a designation given to a small number of Maryland students with disabilities for purposes of their participation in the statewide assessment program. Students eligible to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA. 34 CFR 200.1(f)(2).

When IEP teams are making a decision as to whether a student is a student with a "significant cognitive disability" for participation in the alternate assessment, IEP teams must review and discuss multiple sources of information for evidence of a significant cognitive disability including for example, psychological assessments, assessments of adaptive skills, classroom observations, formal and informal assessment data, as outlined in the participation guidelines. The IEP team must also document why the general curriculum and assessments are inappropriate even with accommodations; how the student will be assessed; and why the alternate assessments are appropriate. COMAR 13A.05.01.09A(1)(g).

The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) in English/language arts and Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The student's disability or multiple disabilities affect how the student learns curriculum derived from the MCCRS and NGSS. The alternate academic achievement standards are derived from the MCCRS English/language arts and Mathematics and are called the Core Content Connectors (CCC). A CCC is a representation of the essential "core" or big idea of the content standard in the MCCRS. Each CCC was identified by examining hypothesized learning progressions developed by the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), aligned with the MCCRS to determine the critical content for students with significant cognitive disabilities. For more information

on NCSC and the CCCs, visit the [NCSC resources](#) website.

The student requires extensive, direct, individualized, and repeated instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in adapted and modified curriculum aligned with grade level content standards. The student's needs for extensive, individualized, repeated, and direct instruction is not temporary or transient. His or her need for substantial adaptations and supports in order to access and achieve linked grade and age-appropriate standards requires substantially adapted materials and customized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

The IEP team must annually consider the following information to determine whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for an individual student:

- Description of the student's instruction, including data on progress
- Classroom work samples and data
- Examples of performance on assessment tasks to compare with classroom work
- Results of district-wide assessments
- Results of individualized English/language arts, Mathematics, and Science assessments
- IEP information including:
 - o Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, goals, and short-term objectives
 - o Considerations for students with individualized and substantial communication needs or modes (from multiple data sources)
 - o Consideration for students who may be learning English as a second or other language (e.g., English Learners) that may interfere with an accurate assessment of his or her academic, social, or adaptive skills.

What Not to Use as Criteria for Participation Decisions

In addition to the three criteria for determining participation, there are other issues that may affect a student's learning experience and his/her ability to learn that are not appropriate to consider during the decision-making process for the Maryland Alternate Assessments. These include:

- A disability category or label
- Poor attendance or extended absences
- Native language/social/cultural or economic differences
- Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
- Academic and other services the student receives
- Educational environment or instructional setting
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- English Learner (EL) status
- Low reading and mathematics achievement level
- Anticipated disruptive behavior
- Impact of test scores on accountability system
- Administrator decision

- Anticipated emotional distress
- Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/augmentative and alternate communication devices) to participate in assessment

Participation Tools

There are several tools that may be helpful to IEP teams as they collect and organize evidence before making a decision about whether a student meets the eligibility criteria set forth in this document for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Participation forms and other tools designed to assist teams in collecting and reviewing evidence to determine whether it is appropriate for an individual student to participate are provided in the appendices.

- **Appendix A Participation Criteria and Checklist**: This form includes the participation guidelines and a way to indicate the evidence that was used in making decisions and the considerations that should not be the basis of making decisions.
- **Appendix B Decision Flowchart for Participation**: This flowchart shows the sequence of decisions made by the student's IEP team when determining whether a student should participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who decides whether a student should participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments?

The IEP team makes the determination of how a student will participate in instruction and statewide assessments. The IEP team must follow Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments. No one member of the IEP team makes this decision. Parents, teachers, administrators, and the student (as appropriate) make the decision based on evidence and adherence to the Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments. All participation decisions must be made on an annual basis by the student's IEP team.

Beginning July 1, 2017, parents must provide written consent for their child to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments (Md. Code Ann., Educ. §8-405(f)).

2. How do we know that a student has a “significant cognitive disability”?

Maryland does not define “significant cognitive disability” in terms of a “cut off” IQ score. Most students with significant cognitive disabilities have intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism, but not all do. Furthermore, not all students with these disabilities are considered to have a “significant cognitive disability.” Many students eligible to receive special education and related services under these categorical labels may be able to participate in general assessments, with or without accommodations. A significant cognitive disability is pervasive, affecting student learning across all content areas and in social and community settings. Students demonstrating academic deficits or difficulties solely due to specific learning disabilities, speech- language impairments, other health impairments, and emotional-behavioral disabilities do not qualify for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Students, however, may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA. 34 CFR 200.1(f)(2). Performing three to four grade levels below peers without disabilities is not, by itself, evidence of a significant cognitive disability. Academic deficits or difficulties alone do not indicate that a student has a significant cognitive disability. Determination for student participation in the alternate statewide assessments must be evidence-based and made individually for each student by the IEP team using the criteria set forth in this document. A student who is eligible for the alternate statewide assessments is one for whom the general assessments are inappropriate even with accommodations. Students demonstrating mild to moderate cognitive disabilities may be more appropriately placed in the general assessments with or without accommodations. Anticipated or past low achievement on the general assessment does not mean the student should be taking the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

3. How do I know if the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for an English Learner (EL) with an IEP whose language proficiency makes it difficult to assess content knowledge and skills?

An English Learner should be considered for the alternate assessment if his/her intellectual functioning indicates a significant cognitive disability using assessments in his/her spoken language as appropriate and he/she meets the other participation criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Assessments of adaptive behavior and communication should take into account linguistic and sociocultural factors for valid interpretation of these assessments, alongside progress on goals and objectives in the student's IEP used to determine what may or may not be a significant cognitive disability. If an EL with an IEP does not meet the criteria for the alternate assessments, he/she should take the general assessments with or without accommodations as appropriate. EL status alone is not appropriate to consider as criteria for participation in the alternate assessments.

4. What if it is impossible to assess a student because the student does not appear to communicate?

All attempts should be made to find a mode of communication with the student as soon as he or she is enrolled in school. If various approaches and technologies do not appear to demonstrate a consistent mode of communication, then consider that all behavior that the student exhibits is a form of communication, and use this as a starting point. A critical element in assessing all students is a focus on communicative competence as the base for student access to the MCCRS. Best practice is that students have a communication system in place that allows them to demonstrate an understanding of academic concepts prior to participation in statewide accountability assessments. However, students must still participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments with or without a communication system. Each IEP team should continue to provide the necessary supports in order to develop a communication system for a student.

5. If a student has been tested in the past on an alternate assessment, but the current IEP team determines that the student does not meet the criteria set forth in the Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments, can the student participate in the general assessment?

Yes. The IEP team must ensure that the student receives appropriate instruction on the MCCRS and participates in the required general assessments for their current grade level with or without accommodations.

6. Is it possible that a decision to participate in the alternate assessment could change as a student gets older?

Yes. Participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments requires that the student has a significant cognitive disability and is instructed using content that has been significantly modified from that which is provided to the student's typically developing peers. Even though students with significant cognitive disabilities may be identified early, sometimes prior to starting school, they may be able to participate in the general assessment during their elementary grades. IEP teams should be especially cautious about student with significant cognitive disabilities participating in an alternate assessment in their early school years. When the level of support needed for the student to participate in the breadth of the MCCRS and the general assessment increases, the IEP team may determine that participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessment is appropriate.

7. What is the relationship between the Maryland Alternate Assessments and a Maryland High School Diploma?

In order to earn a Maryland High School Diploma, a student must meet a number of requirements, including passing the general State assessments (PARCC) or completing a Bridge Plan for Academic Validation. COMAR 13A.03.02.09B. If a student with a disability cannot meet the requirements for a diploma, but has met other criteria, the student will be awarded a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E.

The vast majority of students with disabilities will participate in the PARCC assessments and/or Bridge Plan

for Academic Validation, even if they are eventually unable to meet the requirements for a diploma and are awarded a certificate instead. For example, the student must pass all required courses, must pass the end-of-year assessment assigned to each required course, and must pass the required standard State assessments (PARCC or HSA). During this time of transition to the PARCC assessments, graduation criteria may change depending on State Board decisions regarding graduation requirements and statewide assessments.

A student with a significant cognitive disability may not meet the requirements for a diploma if the student participates in the Maryland Alternate Assessments and continues to receive instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards through high school. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E(4). In that case, the student would be eligible for a certificate.

However, a student who is participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments could eventually earn a diploma by meeting all graduation requirements. The IEP team must continually monitor the student's progress to determine if and when that is a possibility, before making the final decision to award a certificate during the student's last year in high school. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E(3). Because the likelihood of fulfilling the requirements to earn a diploma decreases as a student continues to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments, it is critical for the IEP team to revisit its eligibility decisions in light of student progress.

8. What process should be followed if the parent disagrees with the IEP team's decision for the student to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments?

Effective July 1, 2017, Maryland law requires that the IEP team must obtain the written consent of a parent if the team proposes to identify a child for the Maryland Alternate Assessments (Md. Code Ann., Educ. §8-405(f)).

If the parent does not provide written consent to identify their child for the Maryland Alternate Assessments, the IEP team must send the parent written notice of their consent rights no later than five (5) business days after the IEP team meeting informing them that: 1) the parent has the right to either consent to or refuse to consent to the action proposed; and 2) if the parent does not provide written consent or a written refusal within fifteen (15) business days of the IEP team meeting, the IEP team may implement the proposed action (Md. Code Ann., Educ. §8-405(f)(2)).

If the parent provides a written refusal, the IEP team may not identify the child for the Maryland Alternate Assessments. If the IEP team disagrees with the parent's decision and/or determines that the failure to provide consent results in a failure to provide the child with a free appropriate public education (FAPE), the IEP team may use the dispute resolution options listed in Education Article §8-413 (mediation or due process) to resolve the matter (Md. Code Ann., Educ. §8-405(f)(3)). For further information on the recent Parental Consent legislation, please refer to the Technical Assistance Bulletin, "Parental Consent Under Maryland Law."

9. Who may we contact with questions about the assessment and this important decision?

Please contact the Maryland State Department of Education for additional information.

Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

Karla Marty, M.Ed., Chief, Accommodations and Assessment Section
Phone: 410-767-0256 | Email: karla.marty@maryland.gov

Nancy Schmitt, M.S.Ed., Special Education Assessment Specialist
Phone: 410-767-0256 | Email: nancy.schmitt@maryland.gov

Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment, and Accountability

Douglas Strader, Ed.D., Assessment Director, Education Accountability Branch
Phone: 410-767-0048 | Email: douglas.strader@maryland.gov

Glossary

- **Alternate Academic Achievement Standards:** Performance standards which are based on a limited sample of content that is linked to grade-level content standards. This content, however, may not fully represent grade-level content and may include content which is substantially modified.
- **Alternate Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (Alt-MISA):** The alternate Science assessment based on the Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements. For more information, visit the [Dynamic Learning Maps](#) (DLM) website.
- **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC):** Communication generating devices such as text-to- speech communication aids, picture or symbol boards, etc.
- **Accommodation:** A change in materials or procedures that facilitates access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change the construct or intent of what is being taught or measured. Assessment accommodations are intended to allow the student to participate in the assessment and to produce valid results that indicate what a student knows and can do.
- **Adaptive behavior:** A collection of behaviors, including conceptual, social, interpersonal, and practical skills, defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
- **Communicative competence:** A consistent, meaningful, and reliable means of expressing thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.
- **Constructed response item:** A type of question that asks students to compose their own answer to the question or prompt.
- **Content target:** Content standards that are the focus of the assessment. For the Maryland Alternate Assessments, the content targets are defined by the Core Content Connectors in English/language arts and Mathematics and the Essential Elements in Science.
- **Core Content Connector (CCC):** A representation of the essential “core” content of a standard in the MCCRS. Each CCC was identified by examining hypothesized learning progressions aligned with the MCCRS to determine the critical content for students with significant cognitive disabilities. For information, visit the [National Center and State Collaborative](#) (NCSC) wiki website.
- **English Learner (EL):** A student whose native language is a language other than English or a student who comes from an environment where a language other than English has a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency. An EL’s difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be a barrier to learning in classrooms instructed in English and to performance on assessments presented in English.
- **Essential Elements (EE) for Science:** specific statements of knowledge and skills linked to grade-band expectations. EEs address a small number of science standards representing the breadth, but not the depth, of coverage across the general education framework. For more information, visit the [Dynamic Learning Maps](#) website.
- **Evidence:** Specific and measurable sources of information being used to identify student characteristics that either meet or do not meet the participation criteria.
- **Extensive, individualized, repeated, and direct instruction:** Concentrated instruction designed for and provided to an individual student. This type of instruction is needed by students with significant cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in content. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.
- **Learning progression:** A description of the way in which typically developing students may develop and build academic competencies over time. Learning progressions are used by teachers to determine where a student is in the process of learning a specific skill or understanding a concept.
- **Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS):** A set of content standards that define what students are expected to learn at each grade in order to leave school ready for college or careers.

For more information on the MCCRS, visit the [School Improvement in Maryland](#) website.

- **Modification:** A change in materials or procedures during instruction and assessment that changes the learning expectations of the grade level content. Modifications during instruction may be appropriate on a temporary basis for scaffolding the student's understanding and skills. Assessment modifications result in invalid measures of a student's knowledge and skills and thus should be avoided.
- **Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA):** The English/language arts and Mathematics alternate assessment given in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The assessment is based on the CCCs.
- **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS):** Research-based content standards for grades K-12 which set the expectations for what students should know and be able to do.
- **Participation criteria descriptor:** Information about the characteristics students possess in order to meet the participation criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments.
- **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC):** An annual year-end general education assessment in English/language arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and high school.
- **Pervasive:** Present across academic content areas and across multiple settings including school, home, and community.
- **Selected response items:** Assessment items that are structured for students to respond by choosing an answer (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, etc.).
- **Substantial supports:** Support from the teachers and others (e.g., resource teacher, co-teacher, aide) and various material supports within the student's environment. Examples include adapting text for assessments and learning, and extensive scaffolding of content to support learning.
- **Substantially modified materials:** Various classroom and other materials that have been altered in appearance and content from the materials that peers without disabilities use for instruction or assessment. Examples include significantly shortening the length of passages, or using raised dots and hand-over-hand counting when identifying a matching number in mathematics.

Appendix A:

Participation Criteria and Checklist

Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

Participation Criteria and Checklist

IEP teams are **required** to use this *Participation Criteria and Checklist* when identifying students with a “significant cognitive disability” for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. In order for the student to be eligible to participate, the IEP team must answer **AGREE** to **ALL** of the criteria items. **If the IEP team disagrees, responding with a DISAGREE for one or more questions, the IEP team should stop using this form and consider the student eligible for participation in the general PARCC assessment with or without accommodations.** The IEP team must use multiple sources of information, such as the current IEP, results from formal and informal assessments, data gathered from classroom assessments, and information gathered from parent/guardian/student that document academic achievement to guide the decision-making process for participation in the appropriate instructional framework and statewide assessment.

IEP Team Date _____

Student Name _____ Disability Code _____ DOB _____

Residence School _____ Service School _____

Service County _____ Grade _____

SASID# _____ LEA Number _____

IEP Team Chairperson _____ Signature _____

(IEP Team Chairperson signature verifies that all established criteria were considered.)

Team Members: Each participant should print name, provide title, and sign/date below:

Name (please print)	Title	Signature	Date

***If the parent does not attend the meeting and does not sign this form, attach documentation parent notification and informed consent for the meeting along with notification of the decisions of the IEP team that were provided to the parent.**

Parent/Guardian Understanding

I have been informed that if my child is determined eligible to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments through the IEP team decision-making process:

1. My child will be progressing toward a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion. If my child continues to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments, he/she may not be eligible for a Maryland High School Diploma. His/her continued participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments will not prepare him/her to meet the high school diploma requirements. _____ (Parent/Guardian initials)

2. The decision for my child to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments must be made annually.
 _____ (Parent/Guardian initials)

AGREE	DISAGREE	Maryland Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria	Maryland Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria	Sources of Evidence (check if used)
		1. The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP)		
		2. The student has a significant cognitive disability.	Review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. <i>Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i> <i>See Glossary, page 11.</i>	_____ Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test. _____ Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment. _____ Results of individual and group administered achievement tests. _____ Results of informal assessments. _____ Results of individual English/language arts, science, and mathematics assessments. _____ Results of district-wide assessments. _____ Results of language assessments including English Learner (EL) assessments, if applicable.
		3. The student is learning content derived from the MCCRS.	Goals and objectives listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade- level MCCRS and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student. The grade level curriculum is significantly modified in order for the student to access knowledge and skills that are appropriate.	_____ Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials, including work samples. _____ Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives for the IEP. _____ Data from scientific research-based interventions. _____ Progress monitoring data.
		4. The student requires extensive, direct, repeated, and individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student (a) requires extensive, direct, repeated, and individualized instruction and support that is not of temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially modified materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across academic content.	_____ Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials, including work samples from both school and community-based instruction. _____ Teacher collected data and checklists. _____ Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives, and post- school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 14 and older unless State policy or the IEP team determines a younger age is appropriate.

The criteria for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate. A student who participates in the Alternate Assessments participates in the assessments for all content areas of English/language arts, Mathematics, and Science.

Evaluation Review of Cognitive/Adaptive Ability

Individual Cognitive Ability Assessment:

Name and Title of Examiner: _____

Most Recent Test Date: _____

Assessment: _____

Score(s): _____

Assessment Comments: _____

Educational Assessment:

Name and Title of Examiner: _____

Most Recent Test Date: _____

Assessment: _____

Score(s): _____

Assessment Comments: _____

Adaptive Skills Assessment:

Name and Title of Examiner: _____

Most Recent Test Date: _____

Assessment: _____

Score(s): _____

Assessment Comments: _____

Please use this space to include any additional assessment data/scores that guide the IEP team discussion (optional):

All Standard and Composite Scores shall be considered when reviewing multiple sources of data. **If documentation in one of the requested areas is not available, a detailed explanation is required below.** Please include any medical or other information that may have prevented administration of the assessment in the requested areas.

Appendix A	AGREE	DISAGREE	<i>Evidence shows that the decision for participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments <u>was not based on the list below.</u></i> To consider a student eligible for participation in the Alternate Assessments, the IEP team must answer <u>AGREE</u> to <u>ALL</u> of the items listed below. NOTE: A <u>DISAGREE</u> response indicates the student <u>did not</u> meet the eligibility criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments, and therefore, will participate in the general curriculum and the MSA or PARCC assessments with or without accommodations, as appropriate, based on his/her IEP. Please refer to the Maryland Accommodations Manual for more information about accommodations and Maryland assessments.
			1. A disability category or label.
			2. Poor attendance or extended absences.
			3. Native language/social/cultural or economic differences.
			4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.
			5. Academic and other services the student receives.

AGREE	DISAGREE	<i>Evidence shows that the decision for participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments <u>was not based on the list below.</u></i> To consider a student eligible for participation in the Alternate Assessments, the IEP team must answer AGREE to ALL of the items listed below. NOTE: A DISAGREE response indicates the student <u>did not meet the eligibility criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments</u> , and therefore, will participate in the general curriculum and the MSA or PARCC assessments with or without accommodations, as appropriate, based on his/her IEP. Please refer to the Maryland Accommodations Manual for more information about accommodations and Maryland assessments.
		6. Educational environment or instructional setting.
		7. Percent of time receiving special education services.
		8. English Learner (EL) status.
		9. Low reading and mathematics achievement level.
		10. Anticipated disruptive behavior.
		11. The impact of test scores on accountability system.
		12. Administrator decision.
		13. Anticipated emotional stress.
		14. Need for accommodations, e.g., assistive technology/ACC to participate in the assessment process.

IEP Team Statement of Assurance:

Our decision was based on multiple pieces of evidence that, when taken together, demonstrated that the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for this student; that his/her academic instruction will be based on alternate academic achievement standards (the CCCs and EEs linked to the MCCRS); that the additional considerations listed above were not used to make this decision; and that any additional implications of this decision were discussed thoroughly, including that participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments will not qualify a student for a regular high school diploma.

34 CFR § 300.160.d

AGREE	DISAGREE	Name	Title

Eligibility Criteria

As documented through the eligibility criteria and additional criteria listed above, it has been determined that the student is learning a sample of content that is linked to grade-level content standards, but does not fully represent grade level content as assessed on the PARCC, HSA, or MISA assessments. Therefore, the student may not earn a proficient score on the general assessments even with the provision of accommodations.

_____ AGREE _____ DISAGREE

If the IEP team checked DISAGREE above, the student **does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments** as listed above and, therefore, the student will participate in the PARCC, HSA or MISA assessments with or without accommodations, as appropriate based on his/her IEP. Refer to the Maryland Accommodations Manual for more information about accommodations and Maryland's assessments.

Assessment Participation

The IEP team agreed that the student met all criteria listed on this eligibility tool; therefore, the IEP team determined the student eligible to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

_____ AGREE _____ DISAGREE

The historical data (current and longitudinal across multiple settings) justifies the IEP team's decision for the student to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

_____ AGREE _____ DISAGREE

Please use the space below to provide justification of the IEP team decision.

Please use the space below to document any disagreement with this decision by any IEP team member.

Parent Consent Form

MODEL PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

To comply with the requirements of Education Article §8-405(f)

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____ LSS: _____

Parent Name: _____

IEP Team Meeting Date

____/____/____

1. The individualized education program (IEP) team proposes to (*select all that apply*):

Enroll the child in an alternative education program that does not issue or provide credits towards a Maryland High School Diploma;

Identify the child for the alternative education assessment aligned with the State's alternative curriculum; and/or

Include restraint or seclusion (circle one or both) in the IEP to address the child's behavior as described in COMAR 13A.08.04.05.

2. If the IEP team has proposed any of the actions above, then the IEP team must obtain written consent from a parent.
3. If the parent does not provide written consent at the IEP team meeting, then the IEP team must send the parent written notice of their consent rights no later than five (5) business days after the meeting. If the parent is at the meeting, the notice may be hand delivered to avoid delay.
4. If the parent refuses to consent to any of the actions proposed, the IEP team may use dispute resolution (mediation or due process) to resolve the matter.

NOTICE TO PARENT:

1. You have the right to either consent to OR refuse to consent to any of the actions proposed by the IEP team above.
2. If you do not provide written consent OR a written refusal within fifteen (15) business days of the IEP team meeting, the IEP team may implement the proposed action.
3. The deadline for you to respond starts from the date of the IEP team meeting at which the action was proposed. See the other side of this form to provide your written consent or a written refusal – and return it before the deadline.

IEP Team Meeting Date

____/____/____

Written Consent

I, _____, on behalf of my

child, _____, (Parent Name)(Child Name)

hereby **AGREE** to allow the individualized education program (IEP) team to implement the following proposed actions (*select all that apply*):

Enroll the child in an alternative education program that does not issue or provide credits towards a Maryland High School Diploma;

Identify the child for the alternative education assessment aligned with the State's alternative curriculum; and/or

Include restraint or seclusion (*circle one or both*) in the IEP to address the child's behavior as described in COMAR 13A.08.04.05.

Signature

Date

Written Refusal

I, _____, on behalf of my

child, _____, (Parent Name)(Child Name)

hereby **DO NOT AGREE** and refuse to allow the individualized education program (IEP) team to implement the following proposed actions (*select all that apply*):

Enroll the child in an alternative education program that does not issue or provide credits towards a Maryland High School Diploma;

Identify the child for the alternative education assessment aligned with the State's alternative curriculum; and/or

Include restraint or seclusion (*circle one or both*) in the IEP to address the child's behavior as described in COMAR 13A.08.04.05.

Signature

Date

Appendix B: Eligibility Participation Decision Flowchart

This flowchart must be used with Appendix A: Participation Criteria and Checklist

Consider these:

- Parent input
- Individual Cognitive Ability Tests
- Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
- Individual/group administered achievement tests
- District-wide alternate assessments
- English language proficiency assessment (if applicable)
- Data from scientific research-based interventions
- Progress monitoring data
- Results of informal assessments
- Teacher-collected data and checklists
- Examples of curriculum, instructional materials, and work samples from community-based instruction
- Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals, and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and Transition Plan

The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).



The student's records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that most significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.



The student requires modifications to instruction that do not represent the full scope and sequence of assigned curriculum.



The student requires extensive, direct, repeated, and individualized instruction and support that is not of temporary transient nature.



The student uses substantially modified materials with individualized methods of accessing information in alternate ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across academic content.



The IEP team has obtained the written consent of a parent.



The student may participate in the Alternate Assessments.



Student must participate in the general assessments if ALL the criteria are not met.

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Appendix B: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation

Individuals who provide the scribe accommodation to a student (“accommodators”) must comply with the following procedures when working with students in a testing situation.

Scribe: A qualified person who writes down what a student dictates by an assistive communication device, pointing, communication by the student via interpretation/transliteration (examples include American Sign Language, signed English, and Cued Speech), or speech. Scribing may include “dragging and dropping” selected response items, as appropriate.

All accommodators must be trained by the local school system as indicated in each assessment Test Administration Coordination Manual (TACM). Accommodators must sign a Test Administration and Certification of Training Form and a Non-Disclosure Agreement. The scribe must hold Maryland certification or be under the direction of a Test Administrator holding Maryland certification.

Qualifications for the Scribe

- It is preferable for the scribe to be a familiar person such as the teacher or paraprofessional who is typically responsible for scribing during regular instruction. If it is a new scribe to the student, give them time to work together during instruction prior to the assessment day.
- For students who are deaf, the scribe must be fluent in receptive and expressive American Sign Language (ASL) and/or signed English.

Process for Scribe Accommodator

- **A scribe accommodator may only administer the scribe accommodation to one student at a time during a test session.** This accommodation must be administered so that other students are not able to hear the accommodated student’s response.
- Before the administration of the test, the School Test Coordinator (STC) should provide the scribe a copy of the test and the examiner’s directions prior to the start of testing to become familiar with the directions and format of the test.
- The student is responsible for punctuation and may indicate punctuation in several ways. The student may punctuate as he/she dictates. For example, when stating the sentence “The cat ran.” the student will say, “The cat ran period.” The student may dictate more than one sentence at a time and add punctuation after the fact when given the scribed sentences to proofread.
- The scribe can automatically capitalize in these cases:
 1. The scribe should capitalize the first letter in the beginning of a sentence if the student **has** indicated punctuation ending the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, “The cat ran period. The cat jumped period.” The scribe would write “The cat ran. The cat jumped.”
 2. The first word in any paragraph.
- The student must specify capitalization in these cases:
 1. The first letter in the beginning of a sentence, if the student **has not** indicated punctuation ending the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, “The cat ran. The cat jumped.” The scribe would write “The cat ran the cat jumped.”
 2. Other capitalization (e.g., capitalization of proper nouns, acronyms, etc.).
- The scribe may hand write, or type, to record the student’s work. For the online tests, the scribe accommodation may be implemented in one of two ways, depending on which way best meets the needs of the particular student: (1) the scribe may write in the paper and pencil test edition test

book/answer sheet or (2) the scribe may enter student responses directly onto the computer using the online test edition.

- The scribe must produce legible text.
- The student will dictate sentences or paragraphs in the same manner used during instruction and assessment. The scribe should have the student proofread the dictation and the scribe may also read it aloud at student request. The student may dictate changes to the scribe, and the scribe will make those changes exactly as dictated by student. Students may proofread to add punctuation, and may change any capitalization or spelling they wish even if it is incorrect.
- The scribe may not question or correct student choices.
- The scribe may ask the student to restate (or sign) words or parts as needed.
- A student using a scribe must be given the same opportunity as other students to plan and draft a constructed response. This means that the scribe may write an outline or other plan as directed by the student. The scribe shall write the words of the student exactly as dictated, no more and no less, during the entire test session/part. The scribe may record the session for accuracy.
- For constructed response test items (writing tasks), the scribe should be told by the STC the preferred mode of recording the student's response before the date of the test. During testing, the student may then dictate the constructed response using any one of the three listed methods:
 1. Into an audio recording device
 2. Into a speech-to-text converter (e.g., voice recognition software, etc.)
 3. Directly to a scribe
- The scribe may record the session for accuracy. The original recording should be erased after the scribe has transcribed the responses.

The Scribe Should Adhere to the Following Parameters During a Test Session/Part:

The following are a list of **acceptable parameters**:

1. The scribe may ask "Are you finished?" or "Is there anything you want to add or delete?"
2. The scribe may respond to procedural questions asked by the student such as, "Do I have to use the entire space to answer the question?" — the scribe can indicate "no."
3. If the student requests that the scribe read a response that was already dictated, the scribe must read what the student dictated previously in an even voice, being careful not to cue the student to errors.

The following are a list of **unacceptable parameters**:

1. The scribe cannot give the student specific directions, e.g., "First, set the equations equal to one another," or "make sure that the equation is set equal to Zero."
2. The scribe cannot tell the student if his/her answer is correct or incorrect.
3. The scribe cannot answer questions related to the content posed by the student, e.g., "Is this the right way to set up the problem?" "Can you tell me what this word means?"
4. The scribe cannot alert the student to mistakes made during testing.
5. The scribe cannot prompt the student in any way that would result in a better response or essay.
6. The scribe cannot influence the student's response in any way.

Special Considerations When Scribing for a Student Who Uses ASL or Cued Speech

- When ASL is being used during scribing, the scribe may ask clarifying questions regarding the use of classifiers.
- The scribe will make conceptual translations from ASL to English.
- The scribe will write exactly what is heard. Probing or clarifying questions are not allowed. For students using ASL, classifiers are permitted. Classifiers give descriptive information about a noun or verb such as: location, kind of action, size, shape and manner.

Transcription Policy

If a student's responses must be transcribed after test administration is complete, at least two persons must be present during the transcription of student responses. One of these persons will be the transcriber and the other will be an observer confirming the accuracy of the transcription. It is highly recommended that one of the individuals be the School Test Coordinator.

If a student requires a scribe due to a recent illness or injury, an Emergency Accommodations Form (Appendix H) must be completed per the directions on the document and kept on file at the school.

Be sure to consult each specific Test Administrator Manual for specific scribe protocols for each assessment.

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Appendix C: Guidance for Selecting, Training and Administering the Extended Time Accommodation

What are Timing Accommodations?

The Extended Time Accommodation is considered a Timing Accommodation which changes the allowable length of time to complete assignments, tests, 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 tests. Other changes may include the particular time of day, day of the week, or number of days over which a particular activity, assignment, or test takes place. This accommodation must be documented in the student's IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan. The accommodation must be provided for instruction and assessment as specified in the IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan.

Who Can Benefit from the Extended Time Accommodation?

Timing accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and tests. 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, audio materials, scribe).

Extended time may require a student's IEP, 504 or EL Team to determine a fairly specific amount of extra time to complete assignments, projects, and tests. For example, a particular student may customarily receive time and one half. This means that a student is allowed 90 minutes to take a test that normally has a 60-minute limit.

Decisions regarding Extended Time must 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, tests, 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 just knowing that plenty of time is available to complete the task. Students who have too much time may lose interest and motivation to do their best work. Teachers and test examiners must make certain that the extended time accommodation is selected when other accommodations, which may increase the time needed for the student to respond, are chosen for the student. These accommodations may include human reader, text reader, or dictated response scribe.

Extended time is used for each session/part of an administrated test. Test Examiners may not extend a single test session/part over multiple days. If a student is unable to complete multiple test sessions/parts in one day due to the amount of extended time required, then the multiple day accommodation may be appropriate for the student. Refer to Tool SWD-7 for more details regarding the Multiple Day Accommodation.

Documenting the Extended Time Accommodation in a Student's IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan

Each student's IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan must document the amount of extended time typically required for assessments. IEP Teams should determine the routine for providing extended time to students.

For example:

1. The student cues the teacher that he or she needs more time. The teacher permits the student to continue working on the test.
2. The teacher asks the student whether he or she needs more time. The teacher provides more time if the student requests it.
3. Predetermine the time period. Students should be informed (ahead of time) of the time frame for the subtest or test (i.e. time and half for each session, so if the session time is 60 minutes, a student receiving the extended time accommodation may receive 90 minutes).

Some students may require extended time to complete an assessment or a portion of an assessment (a session/part). The additional time may be required due to frequent breaks, or simply because the student needs more time to complete the test. Or, another accommodation may necessitate a time extension (e.g., generally a scribe takes longer to write). In all cases, this must be specified in the student's IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan and not determined at the time of the test.

Some students may require only a brief extension to finish their work. In these cases, students generally keep working until finished. When students need extensive time to finish, the test is usually scheduled over several sessions to avoid student fatigue.

Logistics Planning for the Extended Time Accommodation

Students who require this accommodation may need to take the test in another room for the following reasons:

- Providing the student with additional time may distract other students.
- Students may become distracted by their classmates who are at different places in the assessment. For example, directions given to other students may interfere with the student's concentration.
- Older students may be embarrassed about needing an accommodation and would prefer to keep it private.

Procedure for Ending the Extended Time Accommodation with Students

If a student has extended time documented on his/her IEP, 504 Plan and EL Plan and the "extended time" exceeds the testing session, once the student completes a particular "session/part", the test examiner can move on to the next session/part, or move on to the next phase in the testing process (i.e., take a break, proceed with end of test day procedures etc.). The extended time accommodation must be given in one continuous block of time. The extended time student cannot be told to close the book at the end of the standard session testing time and then be brought back to that session at a later time to complete the extended time accommodation. Special attention must be considered when arranging testing groups to ensure that students without the extended time accommodation do not receive more than the specified testing time stated in the Examiner's Manual for each assessment.

If a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Plan does not specify the amount of extended time given to a student during an assessment, then the test examiner should work with the School Test Coordinator (STC) to ensure that parameters are established ahead of testing. For example, once the student closes the test book this is the test examiner's cue that the student has completed the session. When administering the extended time during State assessments it is imperative for the STC to carefully plan ahead of time in order to be prepared to administer the assessment.

Determine the routine for ending the extending time accommodation. For example:

1. The student cues the teacher, with a predetermined cue, indicating that he or she is finished.
2. The teacher asks the student whether he or she needs more time. The teacher provides more time if the student requests it.
3. Predetermine the time period. Inform the student of the time frame for the session/part or test prior to the administration of the assessment.

NOTE: When a student has too much time to finish an assessment, he/she may engage in nonproductive guessing or change answers when they should not be changed.

Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for English Language Arts/Literacy Assessments

Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan Decision-Making Tool

Directions: This tool has been developed to assist IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators in identifying students who may be appropriate candidates to receive the accommodation for text-to-speech (computer-based), ASL video (computer-based), or human reader/human signer (paper-based) for the PARCC ELA/literacy summative. PARCC states will each determine whether this tool is optional or required, based on their individual state policies or practices. This tool must be reviewed and completed at the student's annual IEP meeting.

Student Name: _____ D.O.B.: _____ Grade: _____

School/Program: _____ State ID #/Local ID#: _____

District/LEA: _____ State: _____

IEP Team Members or 504 Plan Coordinator/Staff		
Title	Print Participant Name, Participant Must Initial	Date
IEP Team Chairperson or 504 Coordinator:		
Special Education Teacher(s):		
General Education Teacher(s):		
IEP Team member(s) qualified to interpret reading evaluation results:		
Parent(s)/Guardian:*		
Student (if a team participant):		
Other IEP team member(s):		

Verification of Parent/Guardian Notification (optional):* _____ (Parent/Guardian Initials)
I have been informed by my child's school that my child will receive a text-to-speech, ASL video or human reader/human signer accommodation for a PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment.

* If the parent/guardian does not initial this form, the school should attach documentation of notification to the parent and date of notification to this form regarding the decision to provide the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation to the student, and keep this form with the student's records.

If all guidelines listed are met, and the student is given the **text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation** for the PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment, he/she will receive a valid score on the assessment. If all guidelines are not met, and the student is given the **text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation** on a PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment, the student's assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results; i.e., the student would be considered a "non-participant" for the English language arts/literacy assessment. The Maryland State Department of Education will continue to evaluate through the monitoring process if and when an invalidation of a student's test score will occur.

Guidelines for IEP Team or 504 Plan Consideration	Additional Guidance	Agree/Disagree
The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan.	Student has an approved IEP or current 504 plan.	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree
In making decisions on whether to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators are instructed to consider whether the student has: - Blindness or a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille; OR - A disability that severely limits or prevents him/her from accessing printed text, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (e.g., student is unable to decode printed text); OR - Deafness or a hearing impairment and is severely limited or prevented from decoding text due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation	For the screen reader accommodation, the IEP team or 504 plan coordinator must determine whether the student is blind or has a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille. For the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation, the IEP team or 504 plan coordinator must determine whether the student has a disability that severely limits or prevents him or her from decoding text. This accommodation is not intended for a student reading somewhat (i.e., moderately) below grade level. The IEP or 504 plan must document objective evidence from a variety of sources (including state assessments, district assessments, AND one or more locally-administered diagnostic assessments or other evaluation) that indicate that the student's ability to decode text is severely limited or prevented or that the student is blind or visually impaired and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille. States may provide additional guidance for their respective states based on state policy or practice. <u>Maryland's Guidance:</u> IEPs team must use multiple data sources to document a student's decoding deficient. IEP team must first review the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards in the areas of decoding to determine where a student's skills are in approximation to the state standards. IEP teams must understand the issues that may signal that a student has a significant decoding deficit (i.e. difficulty matching sounds and letters or trouble spelling phonetically).	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree

Guidelines for IEP Team or 504 Plan Consideration	Additional Guidance	Agree/Disagree
Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 plan, teams and plan coordinators should also consider whether: • The student has access to printed text during routine instruction through a reader or other spoken-text audio format, or interpreter; • The student's inability to decode printed text or read braille is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; or • The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions in the foundational reading skills to continue to attain the important college and career-ready skill of independent reading.	States may provide additional guidance for their respective states in order to define intensive instruction and interventions based on state policy or practice. <u>Maryland's Guidance:</u> • A student must be receiving research or evidenced-based intervention at the time the accommodation decision is made. • All intervention services a student receives must be in addition to the core instruction. • All interventions must be in place for at least two years. • Research-based interventions are established on multiple, systematic investigations, including testing and evaluations, and are designed to develop or contribute to generalized knowledge. • Evidence-based refers to an instructional program or collection of practices that have been tested and shown to have a record of success. That is, reliable, trustworthy, and valid evidence indicates that when that program or set of practices is used, students can be expected to make adequate gains in academic achievement.	☐ Agree ☐ Disagree

List the data and/or evaluation sources that were used to document the decision to give the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation to the student on the English language arts/literacy assessment(s):

1) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment (Note: the most current assessment used cannot be more than two years old):

Name and Title of Test Administrator: _____

Most Recent Testing Date: _____

Score(s): _____

Provide a Summary of the Results: _____

2) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment: _____

Name and Title of Test Administrator: _____

Most Recent Testing Date: _____

Score(s): _____

Provide a Summary of the Results: _____

3) List any additional assessment data, scores, and/or evaluation results that were used to guide the decision-making process for IEP teams or 504 plan coordinators regarding the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation for the PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment(s):

4) List the instructional interventions and supports specifically related to reading decoding that are currently provided to the student as well as those interventions provided in the most recent school years:

- Intensive reading interventions have been provided to the student for _____ years. Intensive reading intervention is one where the frequency, duration and monitoring of progress occurs weekly.
- List interventions in chronological order beginning with the current school year.

School Year	Name of Intervention	Description	Frequency (number of minutes and number of days per week)

List any additional relevant information regarding the student:

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Appendix E: Test Administration Protocol for the Human Reader Accommodation for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Assessments, and the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments

In cases where a student requires a text-to-speech accommodation on the English language arts/literacy (ELA/L) and/or a text-to-speech accessibility feature on the mathematics, science and social studies assessments, but cannot participate in the computer-based assessment and takes the paper-based assessment instead, a Human Reader must provide the accommodation to the student. Human Readers who provide the accommodation to a student on the ELA/L or the accessibility feature on the mathematics, science and social studies assessments must follow these procedures during testing to ensure the standardization of the oral presentation of the assessments.

Procedures for Human Readers Providing the Human Reader Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments or the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for the Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments

1. Readers must be trained locally to administer each assessment, as indicated in the Test Administrator Manual (TAM).
2. Readers must read verbatim (word for word) only what is printed in the test book (or in rare cases, on the computer screen) without changing, emphasizing, or adding words. Readers may not clarify (except for test directions), provide additional information, assist, or influence the student's selection of a response in any way.
3. Readers must speak in a clear and consistent voice throughout the test administration, using correct pronunciation, and without vocal inflections that may provide clues to, or mislead, a student. Readers should be provided a copy of the test and the Test Administrator's directions two school days prior to the start of testing, in order to become familiar with the words, terms, symbols, signs, and/or graphics that will be read aloud to the student.
4. Readers should emphasize only the words printed in boldface, italics, or capital letters and inform the student that the words are printed that way. No other emphasis or vocal inflection is permitted.
5. Readers may repeat passages, test items, and response options, as requested, according to the needs of the student. Readers should not rush through the test and should ask the student if they are ready to move to the next item.
6. Readers may not attempt to solve mathematics problems, or determine the correct answer to a test item while reading, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection which may mislead the student.
7. Readers must attempt to maintain a neutral facial expression, neither smiling nor frowning during the test, which may be interpreted by the student as approval or disapproval of the student's answers.
8. Readers must be familiar with the student's IEP or 504 plan, and should know in advance which accommodations are required by the student, and for which test (ELA/L and/or Mathematics) the student is designated to receive a Human Reader.
9. Readers must be aware of whether a student requires additional tools, devices, or adaptive equipment

that has been approved for use during the test, such as a magnifier, closed circuit television (CCTV), abacus, braille, slate and stylus, etc.

10. If a reader is unsure how to pronounce an unfamiliar word, advise the student of the uncertainty and spell the word.
11. When reading a word that is pronounced like another word with a different spelling, the reader may spell the word after pronouncing it, if there is any doubt about which word is intended.
12. Readers must spell any words requested by the student.
13. When reading passages, readers must be aware of punctuation marks. Readers may read the passage, or selected lines a second time, with all punctuation marks indicated.
14. When test items refer to a particular line, or lines, of a passage, reread the lines before reading the question and answer choices. For example, the reader should say, "Question X refers to the following lines..." then read the lines to the student, followed by question X and the response options.
15. When reading selected response items, readers must be careful to give equal stress to each response option and to read all of them before waiting for a response.
16. If a reader is also scribing the student's responses, or if another adult will scribe, and the student designates a response choice by letter only ("D," for example), the reader must ask the student if he/she would like the response to be reread before the answer is recorded in the answer booklet.
17. If the student chooses an answer before the reader has read all the answer choices, the Human Reader must ask if the student wants the other response options to be read.
18. After the reader finishes reading a test item and all response options, the reader must pause and allow the student to pause before responding. If the pause has been lengthy, say: "Do you want me to read the question or any part of it again?" When rereading questions, readers must avoid emphasis on words not bolded, italicized, or capitalized.
19. Readers must refer to each assessment's specific Audio Guidelines (if available) to ensure consistency in how items are read.

Procedures for Providing the Human Reader Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments or the Human Reader Accessibility Feature for the Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments to a Small Group of Students

Human Readers may read the test aloud to a small group of students (no more than 5), rather than individually, provided that each student has the Human Reader accommodation/accessibility feature listed in an IEP, 504 plan, or Personal Needs Profile (in the case of mathematics, science and social studies).

The following procedures must be followed:

- Students with the Human Reader accessibility feature for mathematics, science and social studies or Human Reader accommodation for ELA/L that need to be grouped together must be taking the same test form, since test questions will differ on each form of the test.
- Students not receiving the Human Reader accessibility feature for mathematics or the Human Reader accommodation for ELA/L may not be tested in the same location as students who are receiving the human accessibility feature for mathematics, science and social studies or Human Reader accommodation for ELA/L.

Appendix F: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan

Directions: The unique accommodation request must be submitted to the MSDE by the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) at least **six** weeks prior to testing to ensure a final MSDE response is received before testing begins. Responses from the MSDE for requests received by the LAC for unique accommodations will occur at least one week prior to the test administration.

This form **must** be completed and submitted to the MSDE for approval. A copy of this form must be filed in the student's IEP and assessment record and a copy must be retained by the LAC at the central office.

Local School System: _____ LEA#: _____ School Name: _____

Student Name: _____ D.O.B.: _____ Disability Code: _____

Local ID#: _____ Grade: _____ SASID# _____

IEP ☐ 504 Plan ☐

Please select the appropriate assessment:

☐ HSA ☐ MSAA ☐ PARCC ☐ MISA

Please select the appropriate content area(s):

☐ Algebra/Data Analysis ☐ English ☐ Alt-MISA
☐ Science ☐ Government ☐ Mathematics

Date of Approved IEP or 504 Plan: _____

Test Administration Date(s): _____

1. Provide a brief description of accommodation: _____

2. What objective evidence supports the need for this accommodation?

3. Is the accommodation being implemented during instruction, classroom assessments, benchmark assessments, and/or other district assessments? ☐ Yes or ☐ No; If yes, please describe how it is being implemented.

4. How will the school administer this accommodation on test day? (for example, who will administer the accommodation, in what setting, etc.)?

5. Has the school team established previous parameters around administering this accommodation during classroom instruction and assessment? If so, what are they?

Assurances

In submitting this form to the MSDE, the school team has agreed to the following assurances:

1. This accommodation will be documented in the student’s IEP or 504 Plan.
2. The school team has met and has considered all standard (allowable) accommodations prior to proposing this unique accommodation.
3. Parent(s)/guardian(s) were provided an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process for this accommodation.
4. The proposed accommodation will be used for routine class instruction and assessment.

Preparer’s Name/Title:

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local Director of Special Education/504 Specialist Approval and Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local Accountability Coordinator Acknowledgement Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local Explanation of Approval or Denial:

(MSDE Use Only)

MSDE Action and Signature/Date: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

MSDE Explanation of Approval or Denial:

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Appendix G: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an EL Plan

Directions: The unique accommodation request must be submitted to the MSDE by the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) at least **six** weeks prior to testing to ensure a final MSDE response is received before testing begins. Responses from the MSDE for requests received by the LAC for unique accommodations will occur at least one week prior to the test administration.

This form **must** be completed and submitted to the MSDE for approval. A copy of this form must be filed in the student's EL Plan and assessment record, and a copy must be retained by the LAC at the central office.

Local School System: _____ LEA#: _____ School Name: _____

Student Name: _____ D.O.B.: _____ English Proficiency Level: _____

Local ID#: _____ Grade: _____ SASID# _____

Please select the appropriate assessment:

☐ MISA ☐ PARCC ☐ HSA

Please select the appropriate content area(s):

☐ Algebra/Data Analysis ☐ English ☐ Reading
☐ Science ☐ Government ☐ Mathematics

Date of Approved IEP or 504 Plan: _____

Test Administration Date(s): _____

Date student entered a Maryland Public School: _____

How many years has student been in Maryland?

Did the student have a break in Maryland education? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, how long?

Where did the student go during this break?

Was the student schooled during this break? ☐ Yes ☐ No

1. Provide a brief description of accommodation:

2. What objective evidence supports the need for this accommodation?

3. Is the accommodation being implemented during instruction, classroom assessments, benchmark assessments, and other district assessments? ☐ Yes or ☐ No; If yes, please describe how it is being implemented.

4. How will the school administer this accommodation on test day? (For example, who will administer the accommodation, in what setting, etc.?)

5. Has the school team established previous parameters around administering this accommodation during classroom instruction and assessment? If so, what are they?

Assurances

In submitting this form to the MSDE, the school team has agreed to the following assurances:

1. This accommodation will be documented in the student's EL Plan.
2. The school team has met and has considered all standard (allowable) accommodations prior to proposing this unique accommodation.
3. Parent(s)/guardian(s) were provided an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process for this unique accommodation(s).
4. The proposed accommodation will be used for routine class instruction and assessment.

Preparer's Name/Title:

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local ESOL Manager/Supervisor Approval and Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local Accountability Coordinator Acknowledgement Signature/Date

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

Local Explanation of Approval or Denial

(MSDE Use Only)

MSDE Action and Signature/Date:

☐ Yes

☐ No

Print Name/Title

Signature

Date

Phone Number

MSDE Explanation of Approval or Denial:

Appendix H: Emergency Accommodation Form for State Assessments

Directions: If prior to or during testing, the school principal (or principal's designee) determines that a student requires an emergency accommodation, this form must be completed and submitted to the Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) for approval. A copy of this form must be filed in the testing archives and a copy must be retained by the LAC at the central office.

Local School System: _____ **LEA#:** _____ **School Name:** _____

Student Name: _____ **D.O.B.:** _____ **Local ID#:** _____

Grade: _____ **SASID#** _____

Name(s) and Title of Person(s) Completing this Form:

Staff Member's Name

Title/Position

Staff Member's Name

Title/Position

Staff Member's Name

Title/Position

Reason for requesting an emergency testing accommodation (attach documentation if requested by LAC):

Describe what the testing accommodation will be:

Who will administer the accommodation? _____

Staff Member's Name

Title/Position

Principal Signature

Date

Local Accountability Coordinator Signature

Date

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Appendix I: Student Accommodation Refusal Form

If a student refuses an accommodation listed in his or her IEP, 504 Plan or EL Plan, the school should document in writing that the student refused the accommodation, and the accommodation must be offered and remain available to the student during testing. This form must be placed in the student's file and a copy must be sent to the parent on the day of refusal. School Test Coordinators (STCs) should work with Test Examiners (TEs) to determine who else should be informed when a student refuses an accommodation.

Local School System: _____ LEA# _____ School Name: _____

Student's Name: _____ D.O.B.: _____

Disability Code or English Proficiency Level for ELs: _____

Local ID# _____ Grade: _____ SASID#: _____

Name of Assessment: _____ Content Area: _____

Time Student Refused the Accommodation(s): _____

Accommodation(s) Refused: _____

Reason(s) for Refusal: _____

Date: _____

Student's Signature: *(optional)* _____

Signature of Test Examiner: _____

NOTE: A copy of this form must be sent home to the parent, and a copy placed in the student's file for use at the student's next IEP meeting.

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Appendix J: Human Signer Guidelines

Test Administration Protocol for the Human Signer Accommodation for English Language Arts/ Literacy (ELA/L) Assessments, and the Human Signer Accessibility Feature for Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Assessments

In cases where a student requires a sign language accommodation on the English language arts/literacy (ELA/L) assessments and/or a sign language accessibility feature on the mathematics, science and social studies assessments, and for whom the American Sign Language (ASL) video accommodation is not appropriate, a human signer must be provided. Human signers for assessments must follow these procedures during testing to ensure the standardization of the signed presentation to the students.

Procedures for Human Signers Providing the Human Signer Accommodation for the ELA/L Assessments or the Human Signer Accessibility Feature for the Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments

1. Signers must be trained on test administration policies by local test coordinators, as indicated in the Test Administrator Manuals (TAM).
2. Signers should use signs that are conceptually accurate (except for SEE2 users), with or without simultaneous voicing, translating only the content that is printed in the test book or on the computer screen without changing, emphasizing, or adding information. Signers may not clarify (except for test directions), provide additional information, assist, or influence the student's selection of a response in any way. Signers must do their best to use the same signs if the student requests a portion repeated.
3. Signers must sign (or sign and speak when using Sim-Com [Simultaneous Communication]) in a clear and consistent manner throughout test administration, using correct production, and without inflections that may provide clues to, or mislead, a student. Signers should be provided a copy of the test and the administrative directions prior to the start of testing (check individual state policy for the amount of time allowed), in order to become familiar with the words, terms, symbols, signs, and/or graphics that will be read aloud to the student.
4. Signers should emphasize only the words printed in boldface, italics, or capital letters and inform the student that the words are printed that way. No other emphasis or inflection is permitted.
5. Signers may repeat passages, test items, and response options, as requested, according to the needs of the student. Signers should not rush through the test and should ask the student if they are ready to move to the next item.
6. Signers may not attempt to solve mathematics problems, or determine the correct answer to a test item while signing, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection which may mislead the student.
7. Signers must use facial expressions consistent with sign language delivery and must not use expressions which may be interpreted by the student as approval or disapproval of the student's answers.
8. Test Administrators must be familiar with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan, and should know in advance which accommodations are required by the student, and for which test the student is designated to receive a human signer. Test Administrators must be aware of whether a student requires additional tools, devices, or adaptive equipment that has been approved for use during the test, such as a magnifier, closed circuit television (CCTV), abacus, braille, slate, stylus, etc., and if use of these tools impacts the translation of the test, the signer should be made aware of this.
9. Upon review of the test, if a human signer is unsure how to sign and/or pronounce an unfamiliar word, the signer should collaborate with an ASL-fluent content expert (if available) which sign is most appropriate to use. If the signer is unable to obtain this information before the test, the signer should advise the student of the uncertainty and spell the word.

10. When using an ASL sign that can represent more than one concept or English word, the signer must adequately contextualize the word, in order to reduce ambiguity. The signer may also spell the word after signing it, if there is any doubt about which word is intended.
11. Signers must spell any words requested by the student during the test administration.
12. When test items refer to a particular line, or lines, of a passage, resign the lines before signing the question and answer choices. For example, the signer should sign, "Question X refers to the following lines...", then sign the lines to the student, followed by question X and the response options.
13. When signing selected response items, signers must be careful to give equal emphasis to each response option and to sign options before waiting for the student's response.
14. When response choices will be scribed, the signer should inform the student at the beginning of the test that if the student designates a response choice by letter only ("D," for example), the signer will ask the student if he/she would like the response to be signed again before the answer is recorded in the answer booklet or the computer-based test.
15. If the student chooses an answer before the signer has signed all the answer choices, the human signer must ask if the student wants the other response options to be signed.
16. After the signer finishes signing a test item and all response options, the signer must allow the student to pause before responding. If the pause has been lengthy, ask: "Do you want me to sign the question or any part of it again?" When signing questions again, signers must avoid emphasis on words not bolded, italicized, or capitalized.
17. Signers should refer to the PARCC ASL Glossary for technical vocabulary (signs used on the ASL video accommodation) for consistency in providing the accommodation.

Procedures for Providing the Human Signer Accommodation for ELA/L Assessments or the Human Signer Accessibility Feature for the Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Assessments to a Small Group of Students

Human signers may sign the test to a small group of students, rather than individually, provided that each student has the human signer accommodation/accessibility feature listed in an IEP, 504 plan, or Student Registration/Personal Needs Profile (in the case of mathematics only). See individual state policy for clarification.

The following procedures must be followed:

- The maximum allowable number of students in a human signer small group is five students.
- Students with the human signer accessibility feature for ELA/L mathematics, science and social studies or human signer accommodation for that will be grouped together must be administered the SAME TEST FORM, since test questions will differ on each form of the test.
- Students not receiving the human accessibility feature for ELA/L mathematics, science and social studies or human signer accommodation for may not be tested in the same location as students who are receiving the human signer accessibility feature for mathematics or human signer accommodation for ELA/L.

Sign-System-Specific Procedures

Human signers must deliver the accommodation in the language or communication mode used by the student according to the student's IEP or 504 plan.

American Sign Language (ASL)

Human signers delivering the accommodation via ASL must use appropriate ASL features (including signs, sentence structure, non-manual markers, classifiers, etc.) while protecting the construct being measured by the assessment. Although it is necessary for a human signer to use appropriate non-manual markers to ensure proper delivery of test content in ASL, the human signer must be careful not to cue students while doing so.

English-Based Sign Systems (SEE2, CASE, Sim-Com, etc.)

Human signers delivering the accommodation via an English-based signing system must use the features of the communication mode used by the student. Human signers delivering the test in Signing Exact English (SEE2) should use the rules of that signing system (e.g., specific signed vocabulary, prefixes, suffixes, etc.). Human Signers delivering the test in other English-based signing systems (CASE, Sim-Com, etc.) should use the rules of those signing systems (conceptually accurate signs, English word order, etc.), with or without simultaneous voicing.

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Appendix K: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Crosswalk

Features for All Students

Features		Maryland*	NAEP
1b	Audio Amplification	Yes	Yes
1c	Bookmark (Flag Items for Review)	Yes	No
1e	Blank Scratch Paper	Yes	Yes
1f	Eliminator Answer Choice	Yes	Yes
1g	General Administration Directions Clarified	Yes	Yes
1h	General Administration Directions Read Allowed and Repeated as Needed	Yes	Yes
1i	Highlight Tool	Yes	Yes
1j	Headphones or Noise Buffers	Yes	Yes
1k	Line Reader Mask Tool/General Masking	Yes	Yes
1l	Magnification/Enlargement Device	Yes	Yes
1m	Notepad	Yes	No
1n	Pop-Up Glossary	Yes	No
1o	Redirect Student to Test	Yes	No
1p	Spell Check or External Spell Check Device	Yes	No
1t	Writing Tools	Yes	Yes
1u	Graphic Organizer	No (IO)	No
1v	Audio Materials	No (IO)	Yes

* IO = Instruction Only

Accessibility Features for All Students Identified in Advance

Features		Maryland*	NAEP
1a	Answer Masking	Yes	Yes
1d	Color Contrast (Background/Font Color)	Yes	Yes
1q	Student Reads Assessment Aloud to Him/Herself	Yes	Yes
1r	Text To Speech for the Mathematics, Science and Government Assessments	Yes	Yes
1s	Human Reader or Human Signer for Mathematics, Science and Government Assessments	Yes	Yes
2a	Small Group Testing	Yes	Yes
2b	Time of Day	Yes	Yes
2c	Separate or Alternate Location	Yes	Yes
2d	Specified Time or Setting	Yes	Yes
2e	Adaptive and Specialized Equipment or Furniture	Yes	Yes
2f	Frequent Breaks	Yes	Yes
2g	Reduce Distractions to Self	Yes	Yes
2h	Reduce Distractions to Others	Yes	Yes
2i	Change Location within School	Yes	Yes
2j	Change Location Outside School	Yes	Yes
2k	Unique Accessibility Feature	Yes	Yes

* IO = Instruction Only

Presentation Accommodations

Accommodations		Maryland*	NAEP
3a	Assistive Technology: Non Screen Reader	Yes	Yes
3b	Screen Reader Version (for a student who is blind or visually impaired)	Yes	No
3c	Refreshable Braille Display	Yes	No
3d	Hard Copy Braille Edition	Yes	Yes
3e	Tactile Graphics	Yes	No
3f	Large Print Edition	Yes	Yes
3g	Paper Based Edition	Yes	Yes
3h	Closed Captioning of Multi-Media Passages	Yes	Yes
3i	Text to Speech for ELA/I Assessments	Yes	No
3j	ASL Video for ELA/I Assessments	Yes	No
3k	Human Reader/Human Signer for ELA/I Assessments	Yes	No
3l	ASL Video for Mathematics, Science and Government Assessments	Yes	No
3m	Human Signer for Test Directions	Yes	Yes
3n	Human Reader, including manual control of item audio and repeat item audio	Access Only	No
3o	Notes and Outlines	Yes (IO)	No
3p	Partner Assisted Scanning	Yes	No
3q	Unique Presentation Accommodations	Yes	Yes

* IO = Instruction Only

Response Accommodations

Accommodations		Maryland*	NAEP
4a	Assistive Technology	Yes	Yes
4b	Braille Note-Taker	Yes	Yes*
4c	Braille Writer	Yes	Yes*
4d	Calculation Device (on Calculation Sections)	Yes	Yes**
4e	Calculation Device (on Non-Calculator Sections)	Yes	Yes**
4f	ELA/I Selected Response Speech to Text	Yes	No
4g	ELA/I Selected Response Human Scribe	Yes	Yes
4h	ELA/I Selected Response Human Signer	Yes	No
4i	ELA/I Selected Response Assistive Technology Device	Yes	No
4j	Mathematics, Science and Government Response Speech-to-text	Yes	Yes
4k	Mathematics, Science and Government Response Human Scribe	Yes	Yes
4l	Mathematics, Science and Government Response Human Signer	Yes	Yes
4m	Mathematics, Science Response Assistive Technology Device	Yes	Yes
4n	ELA/L, Science, Government Constructed Response Speech-to-Text	Yes	Yes
4o	ELA/L, Science, Government Constructed Response Human Scribe	Yes	Yes
4p	ELA/L, Science, Government Constructed Response Human Signer	Yes	Yes
4q	ELA/I, Science, Government Constructed Response External Assistive Technology Device	Yes	Yes
4r	Monitor Test Response	Yes	Yes
4s	Word Prediction Device, External Device	Yes	No
4t	Answers Recorded in Test Book	Yes	Yes
4u	Recording Device	Yes (IO)	No
4w	Unique Response Accommodations	Yes	Yes

* IO = Instruction Only

**Consult NAEP Test Administrator Manual for Requirements.

Timing Accommodations

Accommodations		Maryland*	NAEP
5a	Extended Time	Yes	Yes
5b	Unique Timing Accommodations	Yes	Yes

* IO = Instruction Only

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Appendix L: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners

Accommodations	Maryland	NAEP
7a Extended Time	Yes	Yes
7b Word-to-Word Dictionary (English/Native Language)	Yes	Yes
7c Speech to Text: Mathematics and Science Response	Yes	Yes*
7d Human Scribe: Mathematics and Science Response	Yes	No
7e General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated in Student's Native Language (by Test Administrator)	Yes	Yes
7f General Administration Directions Clarified as Needed in Student's Native Language (by Test Administrator)	Yes	Yes
7g Online Transadaptation of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	Yes	Yes
7h Paper-Based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	Yes	Yes
7i Large Print Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish	Yes	No
7j Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish	Yes	Yes
7k Human Reader for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish	Yes	Yes*

* Excludes Reading

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Appendix N: References

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