



# Accessibility Guide

How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment of All Students

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# Executive Summary

Recent educational reforms have brought about many changes in approaches to accessibility. These new approaches provide an opportunity for students who may not have received accommodations in the past to now benefit from needed accessibility supports employed in instruction and on assessments due to rapidly developing technologies.

This guidebook represents the best thinking up to the point of publication and was developed to reflect current state-level accessibility policies and practices that support students with diverse needs and characteristics and account for instructional and assessment implications, particularly when differentiating among TNReady assessments, the English language proficiency assessment, and alternate assessments. We expect these materials to evolve and improve continuously.

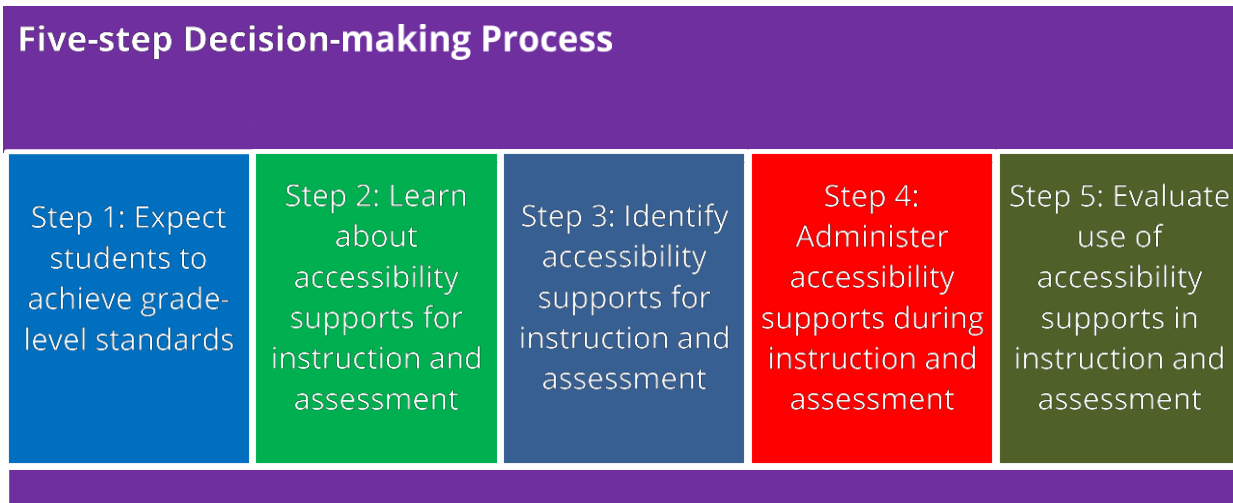
It should also be noted that the same accessibility support may be considered universal for one assessment and an accommodation on another assessment. For example, on an English language assessment, some test items for all English learners (ELs) might contain a text-to-speech support. Whereas, text-to-speech on TNReady is an accommodation only for students who need it as determined by the IEP team. This guide outlines a five-step decision-making process for administering accessibility supports. Figure 1 on the following page highlights the five steps discussed in the manual.

## ***Intended Audience***

This resource is intended for general educators, English as a second language (ESL) educators, and special educators, as well as school administrators, test administrators, school coordinators, and related services personnel for use in administering accessibility supports for those students who need them. Additionally, parents/guardians and students (if appropriate) should be included as possible.

The guidance provided in this document applies to all students who use accessibility supports and/or accommodations for instruction and assessment. This document emphasizes an individualized approach to the implementation of accessibility practices for those students who have diverse needs in the classroom. It recognizes the critical connection between accessibility supports in instruction and accessibility supports during assessment, as well as the need to think about accessibility from the beginning.

Figure 1. Five-step Decision-making Process for Administering Accessibility Supports



# Section I: Recognizing Accessibility Needs for All Students

## *Introduction*

Various accessibility supports are available for all students to meet their individualized needs and preferences. This new individualized approach to accessibility places greater responsibility on educator teams and individual educators to make decisions about which students need and should receive specific supports among a variety of accessibility choices.

For the purposes of this guide, the following definitions are used:

- **Students with disabilities (SWDs)** are students who are eligible to receive services identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- **English learners (ELs)** are students whose native language is not English and who do not yet possess sufficient English language proficiency (ELP) to fully access curriculum that is in English.
- **English learners with disabilities (ELs with disabilities)** are students whose native language is not English, who do not yet possess sufficient ELP to fully access content that is in English, and who have disabilities served by IDEA or Section 504.
- **General education students** are students who do not have an identified disability or EL status. Although we understand that students with disabilities, ELs, and ELs with disabilities are also general education students, we use this term as a simple way to refer to students who do not have a disability, are not identified as an EL, or who are not identified as an EL with a disability.

## *Tiered Approach to Accessibility*

This section highlights the tiered approach to accessibility:

1. allowable test administration conditions for all students;
2. accessibility features for all students, including those features identified in advance; and
3. accommodations per a student's IEP or 504 Plan or EL status.

It is important to note that, in some instances, the same accessibility support may belong to different tiers or be prohibited entirely depending on specific assessment policies and instructional/assessment implications. See Appendix A, Tool 3 for additional details.

### *Tier I: Allowable Test Administration Conditions*

Students are generally tested in their regular classroom and follow the standard test administration schedule for the grade and content area tested. Certain students may require testing at a different time or testing space as long as all requirements for testing conditions and test security are met. See

the calculator policy in Appendix B for additional guidance regarding calculator use on the mathematics and science assessment. In accordance with the principles of universal design for assessment, administrative considerations regarding the timing, scheduling, and setting/locations for assessments are available for any student.

### ***Making Decisions About Allowable Test Administration Conditions***

Although administration conditions are generally available to all students, educators must determine use based on the individual student. Most test administration conditions require scheduling and other logistical planning prior to test administration to ensure the student's assessment experience closely models daily instructional practices. Additional guidance regarding appropriate test administration conditions may be found in the Test Administration Manual (to be released in fall 2017).

## ***Tier II: Accessibility Features***

Accessibility features are supports that are either embedded or provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology (e.g., answer choice eliminator), or non-embedded and provided non-digitally at the local level (e.g., scratch paper). **Accessibility features are available to all students who need them in order to access instructional or assessment content.**

### ***Accessibility Features Identified in Advance Based on Individual Need***

Accessibility features identified in advance based on individual need are those features that are available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators including the parents/guardians and the student, if appropriate) who is familiar with the student's characteristics and needs. Accessibility features identified in advance for technology-based assessment or instruction (e.g., color contrast on a computer screen) are provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology, while non-embedded accessibility features identified in advance (e.g., magnification device) are provided locally. Accessibility features identified in advance must be assigned to a student by trained educators or teams using a consistent process. Accessibility features identified in advance require planning prior to administration to ensure the student is provided the appropriate support. For students participating in an online assessment, this planning may include an additional identification step in the assessment platform. For students participating in a paper-based assessment, this planning may involve a separate test session in order to provide the support in a way that does not disturb other students who do not receive the same support.

### ***Making Decisions About Accessibility Features Identified in Advance Based on Individual Need***

Educators (or teams of educators also including parents/guardians and the student to the highest degree possible) who are familiar with the student's characteristics and needs should make decisions about accessibility features identified in advance based on individual need. Decisions should reflect

those supports that the student requires and uses **during instruction and for assessments**. Student input to the decision, particularly for older students, is strongly recommended.

For students with IEPs or 504 accommodation plans, the IEP or 504 teams should make decisions on what accessibility features identified in advance based on need are to be provided and document which designated features a student needs to be made available. A sample personal needs profile (See Appendix A, Tool 1) can be used for those students without a formal plan. A personal needs profile is an option for teams to use; however, each school must have a way to designate and plan for any accessibility features identified in advance, especially those which may require additional materials or alternate settings identified.

### ***Tier III: Accommodations***

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that ensure equitable access to instructional and assessment content and generate valid assessment results for students who need them. Embedded accommodations (e.g., text to speech) are provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology, while non-embedded designated features (e.g., scribe) are provided locally. Accommodations are generally available for students with a disability served under an IEP or 504 plan and students classified as English learners or English learners in the Transition 1–Transition 4 period. The human reader guidelines in Appendix A, Tool 4 includes embedded and non-embedded accommodations currently used as well as their descriptions and recommendations for use.

### ***Making Decisions About Accommodations***

EL teams, IEP teams, and educators for 504 Plans make decisions about accommodations. For ELs with disabilities, for example, these teams should include an expert in the area of English language acquisition. These decision makers provide evidence of the need for accommodations and ensure that they are noted on the IEP, EL, or 504 plan. Decision makers are responsible for entering information on accessibility features and accommodations from the IEP, 504 plan, or EL plan into the assessment system or a school document so that all needed features and accommodations can be activated or provided for the student. They can accomplish this by identifying one person (for example, a team member or a test coordinator who will follow the state's security guidelines) to enter information into the student's assessment system and/or coordinate with the test administrator.

## Section II: Five-Step Decision-Making Process

This five-step process can be used to make optimal accessibility decisions for those students who need accessibility supports.

### ***Step 1: Expect students to achieve grade-level standards.***

Education is a basic right for all children in the United States. With legislation aimed at the inclusion of all students comes the drive to ensure equal access to grade-level standards. Academic standards are educational targets outlining what students are expected to learn at each grade level. Teachers ensure that students work toward grade-level standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. For some students, accessibility supports are provided during instruction and assessments to help promote equal access to grade-level content.

To accomplish the goal of equal access in education,

- every educator must be familiar with standards and accountability systems at the state and district levels;
- every educator must know where to locate standards; and
- all general, special, and language educators, as well as other educational stakeholders, must collaborate for successful student access.

All students can work toward appropriate, grade-level academic content when the following three conditions are met:

1. Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
2. Individualized approaches to instruction and assessment are in place and individualized plans are developed for those students who need them.
3. Appropriate accessibility supports are provided to help students access instructional and assessment content.

### ***Including all Students in State Assessment Systems***

Federal and state laws, legal cases, and federal guidance require that all students be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of students.

Educators must actively engage in a planning process that addresses:

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

### ***Federal and State Laws, Legal Cases, and Federal Guidance Requiring Student Participation***

To effectively support all students in the classroom, educators should be familiar with federal and state laws, current guidelines, and legal cases that regulate student participation in the educational processes. These documents are particularly important when serving students with disabilities, ELs, and ELs with disabilities. Several important laws require the participation of these students in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. Some of these laws address solely students with disabilities; others regulate educational policies and practices exclusively for ELs. Educators should consider both sets of laws when it comes to instruction and assessment of ELs with disabilities. See Tool 2 in the Appendix for additional information.

### ***Equal Access to Grade-level Content***

Inclusion of all students in large-scale assessments and grade-level standards is mandated by both federal and state laws. Educators ensure that students work toward grade-level standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. **Accessibility supports are provided for students who need them during instruction and assessments to guarantee equal access to grade-level content.** To meet this goal of equal access, educators must be familiar with standards and accountability systems at the state and district levels as well as the locations of these standards and their updates.

All students, including ELs and ELs with disabilities, can work toward grade-level academic content standards while they are improving their English proficiency. They will be able to achieve these standards when 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. Meaningful access of grade-level content by diverse students is also made possible by appropriately selected accommodations. Additionally, to secure successful student access to grade-level content, ESL and special educators, and their general education counterparts, must collaborate when making accessibility decisions.

### ***Step 2: Learn about accessibility supports for instruction and assessment.***

The purpose of these supports is to reduce or eliminate the effects of students' individual barriers that prevent them from demonstrating what they know and can do. **Accessibility supports provided in the classroom do not reduce expectations for learning.** The tiers of accessibility supports empower students with a multitude of choices, enabling them to access instructional and assessment content effectively.

Accessibility supports provided to a student during state assessments, such as accessibility features (e.g., writing tools), accessibility features identified in advance (e.g., human reader for math), or accommodations [e.g., read aloud for English language arts (ELA)], should be provided during classroom instruction and classroom assessments; however, some instructional accessibility supports

may not be appropriate for use on certain statewide assessments. In other cases, accessibility supports provided on assessments may be slightly different from those provided in the classroom (e.g., digital notetaking on an assessment). It is important that educators help students become familiar with the supports provided so that students are not using these tools for the first time on test day. As students become more proficient in instructional content, their need for some accessibility supports may decrease. For instance, ELs may not need native language supports such as a word-to-word dictionary as their English proficiency increases.

When determining accessibility supports for students during assessments, it is important to keep in mind the purpose of the assessment or what you are testing for. For example, the purpose of the grade 3 and 4 fluency section is to measure students decoding and comprehension skills; thus, read aloud of the grade 3 and grade 4 fluency section is not permitted because doing so would invalidate the intended measure of those test questions.

Meaningful collaboration among classroom teachers, school administrators, assessment officials, parents, and students to guarantee beneficial instruction and assessment of students must be encouraged at each level of the organization. Educators should coordinate their accessibility approaches in the classroom through ongoing interaction and collaboration with each other.

### ***Administrative Considerations for Instruction and Assessment***

For both instruction and assessment, some administrative resources and strategies, such as testing at the time that is beneficial to students, should be allowable for all students, and therefore often are not classified as accessibility features or accommodations. These administrative conditions should be used whenever possible for any student who needs it.

### ***Modifications in Instruction and Assessment***

Accessibility supports do not reduce learning expectations. They meet specific needs of students in instruction and assessment and enable educators to know that measures of a student's work produce valid results.

Modifications, on the other hand, refer to practices or materials that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications may change the underlying construct of an assessment. Examples of modifications include:

- requiring a student to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems);
- reducing assignments and assessments so that a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items;
- using an accessibility support that invalidates the intended construct;

- revising assignments or assessments to make them easier (e.g., crossing out half of the response choices on a multiple-choice test so that a student only has to pick from two options instead of four); or
- giving a student hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests.

Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content. Nevertheless, modifications can be used in instruction as long as students do not expect that these modifications will be transferred into assessment. If students have not had access to critical, assessed content, they may be at risk for not meeting graduation requirements and having limited postsecondary options.

### ***Instructional Accessibility Support***

To optimize students' educational experiences, educators should hold regular meetings to coordinate their instructional approaches. Every educator should be familiar with state policies and should consider:

- student characteristics and needs;
- instructional tasks expected of students to demonstrate proficiency in grade-level state standards; and
- consistency between accessibility supports used for classroom instruction and those used on assessments.

Educators should ask:

- What are the student's specific instructional and assessment needs?
- How might student access to curriculum, instruction, and assessment be supported with the goal of developing student independence?
- Does the student require any designated features or accommodations?

A student may not be receiving a necessary accessibility support or may be receiving too many. Research indicates that more is not necessarily better and that providing students with accessibility supports that are not truly needed may have a negative impact on performance. The better approach is to focus on a student's identified needs within the general education curriculum.

### ***Step 3: Identify accessibility supports for instruction and assessment.***

Effective decision making about the provision of appropriate accessibility supports begins with making appropriate instructional decisions. In turn, optimal instructional decision making is facilitated by gathering and reviewing reliable information about the student's access needs, disability, ELP, and present level of performance in relation to local and state academic standards.

**Decisions should be based on individual characteristics and needs.** Making blanket decisions for groups of students at particular language acquisition levels or with particular disabilities is not appropriate. When individualized accessibility decisions are made thoughtfully, they can advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum.

Current state policy delineates assessment criteria that should be used to identify students who may use certain accessibility supports. Students' needs and preferences are probably the most important criteria that should be considered when making optimal accessibility decisions. However, other academic criteria may also help educators determine which accessibility supports should be used. Examples of other academic criteria to consider might include ELP test results, disability needs, oral proficiency in English and other languages, literacy levels in English and native language, implications of special education programs, the kind of education students received before coming to the U.S. (e.g., evidence of limited or interrupted formal education), the amount of time students have spent in English-speaking schools, the amount of time students have spent in the state, performance on other assessments, resources available to students in their native languages, or students' cultural backgrounds.

### ***Documenting Accessibility Supports for All Students***

To ensure continuous monitoring and improvement of accessibility approaches, educators should document how students use accessibility supports. Documenting the accessibility features identified in advance or accommodations available to a student will enable educators to make better informed decisions based on longitudinal data about accessibility supports. Educators should ensure that there are mechanisms of collecting these data to inform their instruction and assessment practices.

### ***Documenting Accessibility Supports Under IDEA and ESSA***

For ELs with disabilities served under IDEA and Title III of ESSA, determining appropriate instructional and assessment accessibility supports should not pose any particular problems for educators who follow appropriate educational practices. With information obtained from the required summary of the student's present levels of academic performance, the process of identifying and documenting accessibility supports should be a fairly straightforward process. The present levels statement is a federal requirement in which collaborative team members must state "how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum—the same curriculum as non-disabled children" [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)]. Depending on the design and overall format of a typical IEP, there are potentially three areas in which accessibility supports can be addressed:

1. Consideration of Special Factors [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered.
2. Supplementary Aids and Services [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes "aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or

other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.”

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

### ***Documenting Accessibility Supports on a Student's 504 Plan***

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide certain accessibility supports 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 designated features or accommodations based on their 504 accommodation plan include students with:

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

### ***Student Characteristics***

Selecting accessibility supports for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's educator or a team of educators who are familiar with the student's needs and characteristics. Accessibility supports should be chosen based on the individual student's characteristics and the student's need for the accessibility supports. After considering the student's individual characteristics, educators should identify inclusion needs that require accessibility supports. When these accessibility supports are used according to the plan, the student will be able to demonstrate what he or she knows and can do for both instruction and assessments.

The following questions can be used to guide the selection of appropriate accessibility supports for students assigned such supports for the first time and for students currently using such supports:

- What are the student's language learning strengths and areas for further improvement?
- How do the student's learning needs affect their achievement of grade-level standards?

- What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade-level standards?
- What accessibility supports will increase the student's access to instruction and assessment by addressing the student's learning needs? These may be new supports or supports the student is currently using.
- What accessibility supports are regularly used by the student during instruction and assessments?
- What are the results of assignments and assessments when accessibility supports are used versus when they are not used?
- What is the student's perception of how well an accessibility support "worked"?
- Are there effective combinations of accessibility supports for this individual student?
- What difficulties does the student experience when using accessibility supports?
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and other specialists about how the accessibility support worked?
- Should the student continue to use an accessibility support, are changes needed, or should the use of the accessibility support be discontinued?

### ***Improving Students in Selecting, Using, and Evaluation Accessibility Supports***

It is critical for students to understand their own needs and to learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and in life. Speaking out about preferences, particularly in the presence of authority figures, may be a new role for students, one for which they may need guidance and feedback. Educators can play a key role in working with students to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating accessibility supports, making sure that the right number of supports is selected, and avoiding employing too many or too few supports.

The more involved students are in the selection process, the more likely they are to use the selected accessibility supports, especially as they reach adolescence, when their desire to be more independent increases as well. Self-advocacy skills become critical here. Students need opportunities to learn which accessibility supports are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make certain those supports are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school. For instance, students with significant cognitive disabilities, many of whom do not have sophisticated expressive communication systems, can show teachers whether or not they prefer certain supports. It is important not to limit the option of student feedback and student self-advocacy for those who can communicate those preferences.

### ***Prior Use of Accessibility Supports***

Students are most successful with testing accessibility supports when they have used them prior to the test. Educators are encouraged to implement accessibility supports in instruction to make sure these

concerns are addressed before the state assessment is administered. Accessibility supports should not be used for the first time on a state test. Instead, it is important to address these concerns ahead of time:

- Plan time for students to learn new accessibility supports.
- Be sure that students know how to use embedded and non-embedded accessibility supports. For embedded supports, there may be practice or sample items or tutorials for students to experience prior to test administration.
- Plan for evaluation and improvement of the use of accessibility supports.

### ***Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment***

In some cases, accessibility supports used in instruction may not be allowed on a test, because they would invalidate the results of the test. This means that the performance no longer reflects what the test was designed to measure. In these instances, teachers should be sure to allow students ample opportunities to perform on classroom tasks and assessments without the use of the accessibility support.

On some assessments, accessibility supports may be presented in a way that is different from their variations used during instruction. To facilitate effective assessment processes, teachers should make sure students are informed of these changes and have a chance to practice the different accessibility supports prior to the test. This is particularly important for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose instruction often happens offline but who have to be prepared for taking online assessments.

### ***Individual Test Characteristics: Questions to Guide Selection of Accessibility Supports***

After considering student characteristics, it is important to look at the task students are being asked to do on the state or district assessment. The following questions may guide decision making:

- What are the characteristics of the test my students will take? Are the test tasks similar to classroom assessment tasks, or does the student need to have the opportunity to practice similar tasks prior to testing?
- Does the student use an accessibility support for a classroom task that is allowed for similar tasks on the state or district tests?
- Are there other barriers that could be removed by using an accessibility support that is not already offered or used by the student?

Consideration of longer term consequences is important as well. For example, as students begin to make postsecondary choices, these may factor into the nature of accessibility choices open to them. Educators may want to discuss whether or how this affects decisions about accessibility for assessments. Educators should also be aware that validity implications are different for ELP assessments than for the TNReady content assessments. Accessibility supports, therefore, should

be selected in accordance to whether language proficiency or content area knowledge is being tested.

### ***Accessibility Policies: Maintaining Validity of Assessment Results***

When selecting accessibility supports for state assessments, it is important to keep in mind both the accessibility policies set to maintain the validity of the results of an assessment and the consequences of accessibility decisions.

Educators should plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accessibility support. They should be certain that there is ample time to learn to use instructional and assessment accessibility supports before an assessment takes place. Finally, they should plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the student's use of accessibility features.

## ***Step 4: Administer accessibility supports during instruction and assessment.***

### ***Accessibility During Instruction***

Students must be provided selected accessibility supports during instruction that necessitates their use. An accessibility support should not be used solely during assessments. Accessibility supports should always be chosen based on students' individual characteristics in order to help them access content meaningfully and equitably.

### ***Accessibility During Assessment***

Once decisions have been made regarding which accessibility supports meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accessibility supports during state and district assessments must be mapped out. A student's plan should reflect these decisions to ensure that all required accessibility supports are available on the test day. It is essential for all educators to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accessibility supports and related technologies. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel to plan the logistics and provision of assessment accessibility supports on the test day.

Prior to the day of a test, teachers should ensure that test administrators and proctors know what accessibility supports each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test administrators and proctors should know whether a student needs to test in a separate location so that plans can be made accordingly. Staff administering accessibility supports, such as reading aloud to a student or scribing student responses, must adhere to specific guidelines so that student scores are valid.

### ***Ethical Testing Practices***

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices include inappropriate interactions between test administrators and students taking the test. They also include, but are not limited to, allowing a student to answer fewer questions, offering

additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses, or giving clues in any way.

### ***Test Security***

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity of a test and validity of test results. To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators must keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content, and return all materials as instructed.

Some of the same considerations for test security apply to accessibility supports. 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 (1) students are seated in such a manner that they cannot see each other's work, (2) students are not able to access any unauthorized programs or the Internet while they are taking the assessment, and (3) students are not able to access any saved data or computer shortcuts while taking the test. In most cases, any special required hardware devices and appropriate applications, such as switches, should be compatible with computer-delivered assessments. Prior to testing, educators should check on device compatibility and make appropriate adjustments if necessary.

### ***Step 5: Evaluate use of accessibility supports in instruction and assessment.***

Accessibility supports 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 accessibility supports is necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students in assessments. Data on the use and impact of accessibility supports during assessments may reveal questionable patterns regarding the use of accessibility supports and inform the continued use of some supports or the rethinking of others.

Data may also indicate areas in which teachers and test administrators need additional training and support. In addition to collecting information about the use of accessibility supports within the classroom, information should be gathered on the implementation of accessibility supports during assessment. Observations conducted during test administration, interviews with test administrators, and conversations with students after testing sessions will likely yield data that can be used to guide the formative evaluation process at the school, district, and student level. Educators, schools, and districts should decide in advance what questions should be answered by the collection of accessibility data in order to apply resources efficiently.

### ***Questions to Guide Evaluation of use of Accessibility Supports at the School or District Level***

Accessibility information can be analyzed in different ways. Here are some questions to guide data analysis at the school and district level.

1. Are there policies to ensure that ethical testing practices, standardized administration of assessments, and test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. Are there procedures in place to ensure test administration is not compromised with the provision of accessibility supports?
3. Was a formal professional development training on accessibility supports conducted for educators?
4. Are students receiving accessibility supports as documented in their student profile or IEP and 504 plans?
5. Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to instructions for the implementation of accessibility supports?
6. How many students are receiving certain accessibility supports?
7. What types of accessibility supports are provided, and are some used more than others?
8. How well do students who receive certain accessibility supports perform on state and local assessments? If students are not meeting the expected level of performance, is it due to the student not having had access to the necessary instruction, not receiving the accessibility support, or using supports that were not effective?

### ***Questions to Guide Evaluation at the Student Level***

The following questions can be used to formatively evaluate accessibility supports used at the student level and inform the individualized decision-making process.

1. What accessibility supports are used by the student during instruction and assessments?
2. What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accessibility supports are used versus when they 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 accessibility supports, or using accessibility supports that were not effective?
3. What is the student's perception of how well the accessibility support worked?
4. What combinations of accessibility supports seem to be effective?
5. What are the difficulties encountered in using accessibility supports?
6. What are the perceptions of teachers and others about how the accessibility support appears to be working?
7. How have the characteristics of the students changed over time to warrant a plan or accessibility support change?

School- and district-level questions can be addressed by a committee responsible for continuous improvement efforts, while the student-level questions need to be considered by educators. It is critical

to stress that formative evaluation is not the responsibility of just one individual. Teams of educators should contribute to the information-gathering and decision-making processes.

### ***Postsecondary Implications***

College and career readiness is an important educational outcome for all students. As students plan for their transition to postsecondary settings, it is important for educators to have documented students' use of accessibility supports so that students can continue to use them as needed in their college and career settings. Colleges and universities may allow fewer accessibility supports than are available in K–12 settings, so it is important for students to document their need to use accessibility supports. This may also be true for students who transition into vocational and other workplace settings. Students should be encouraged to research their accessibility needs within the context of each particular educational institution or place of employment.

In some instances, the standardized assessments used in states for accountability purposes may be viewed differently by higher education institutions for college entrance. The same accessibility supports may not be available in some cases. Schools should communicate with the test vendors to ensure that appropriate guidelines are followed.

# Resources

American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education. (2014). Standards for educational and psychological testing. Available at: <http://www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/standards.aspx>

Association of Test Publishers, Council of Chief State School Officers. (2013). Operational best practices for statewide large-scale assessment programs. Available at: [http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Operational_Best_Practices_for_Statewide_Large-Scale_Assessment_Programs.html)

Laitusis, C., Buzick, H., Stone, E., Hansen, E., & Hakkinen, M. (2012) Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Literature Review of Testing Accommodations and Accessibility Tools for Students with Disabilities. Available at: <https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/literature-review-of-testing-accommodations-and-accessibility-tools-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>

National Center on Educational Outcomes. (2009). Accommodations bibliography. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes. Available at: <https://nceo.umn.edu/docs/OnlinePubs/MNmanuals/MNmanual.pdf>

National Center on Educational Outcomes. (In print). Principles and characteristics of inclusive assessment systems in changing assessment landscapes. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

# Appendix A: Helpful Tools

The following 15 tools are provided to assist educators, parents, and students during the accommodation determination process.

## Tool 1: Personal Needs Profile

### Allowable Test Administration Conditions

In accordance with the principles of universal design for assessment, the following administrative considerations regarding the timing, scheduling, and setting/locations of assessments are available for any student.

**Please check any/all that apply.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> small group testing<br><input type="checkbox"/> time of day<br><input type="checkbox"/> separate or alternate location | <input type="checkbox"/> specified area or setting<br><input type="checkbox"/> adaptive and specialized equipment/furniture<br><input type="checkbox"/> frequent breaks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical</li> <li>○ individual bathroom</li> <li>○ in-chair stretch</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

### Accessibility Features

Students should determine whether they wish to use these tools on an item-by-item basis based on the tools they use during instruction and in daily life. There are a few tools which must be pre-identified for the student before testing begins. These are included in the Accessibility Features Identified in Advance column.

- | Accessibility Features   | Accessibility Features Identified in Advance  |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> highlighter<br><input type="checkbox"/> straight edge/masking tool<br><input type="checkbox"/> place marker<br><input type="checkbox"/> scratch paper | <input type="checkbox"/> color overlay<br><input type="checkbox"/> auditory aides<br><input type="checkbox"/> magnification device<br><input type="checkbox"/> human reader/human signer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ math</li> <li>○ social studies</li> </ul> |

### Accommodations

These are identified in advance by an IEP or 504 team. These accommodations are not available unless selected. Check all that apply.

- | Embedded Accommodations                 | Non-embedded Accommodations  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> text-to-speech | <input type="checkbox"/> assistive technology<br><input type="checkbox"/> calculator<br><input type="checkbox"/> scribe<br><input type="checkbox"/> read aloud |

## ***Tool 2: Federal Laws, Court Cases, and Federal Guidance on Student Participation***

<b>Federal Law</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<a href="#">Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)</a>	<p>ESSA was issued on December 10, 2015 and reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the national education law and commitment to equal opportunity for all students. The bill mandates annual reporting of disaggregated data of groups of students, generating information about whether all students are achieving and whether schools are meeting the needs of low-income students, students of color, students with disabilities, and English learners. Specific ESSA requirements include provisions for:</p> <p>“(I) the participation in such assessments of all students;  “(II) the appropriate accommodations, such as interoperability with, and ability to use, assistive technology, for children with disabilities (as defined in section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(3))), including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and students with a disability who are provided accommodations under an Act other than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), necessary to measure the academic achievement of such children relative to the challenging State academic standards or alternate academic achievement standards described in paragraph (1)(E); and  “(III) the inclusion of English learners, who shall be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided appropriate accommodations on assessments administered to such students under this paragraph, including, to the extent practicable, assessments in the language and form most likely to yield accurate data on what such students know and can do in academic content areas, until such students have achieved English language proficiency...”</p>
<a href="#">Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</a>	<p>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</p>

Federal Law	Summary
	<p>disabilities in state and district-wide assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include:</p> <p>Children with disabilities are included in general state and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary [Sec. 612 (a) (16) (A)]. The term ‘individualized education program’ or ‘IEP’ means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes...a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP team determines that the child will not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and how the child will be assessed [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (V) and VI)].</p> <p>For the small group of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are also English learners, these assessments will be an important tool to measure their progress in learning English.</p> <p>IDEA, 34 CFR §§300.160(b)(2)(i) and (ii):</p> <p><u>(2)</u> The State's (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA's) guidelines must:</p> <p><u>(i)</u> Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and</p> <p><u>(ii)</u> Instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.</p>
Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act	Section 504 provides individuals with disabilities with certain rights and protects individuals with disabilities against discrimination in federally funded programs and activities. Section 504 states that:

Federal Law	Summary
	<p>No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705(20) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any executive agency.</p> <p>In school settings, 504 legislation guarantees and protects students with disabilities who may not otherwise have an IEP, but are still considered an individual with disabilities. The definition of a student with disabilities is much broader under 504 than it is under IDEA. An important part of the 504 plans developed by schools for students with disabilities are often the lists of accommodations that the student can use on assessments.</p> <p>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensure a level playing field for students with disabilities in a wide range of settings, including testing, and similarly to the IDEA provide for reasonable testing accommodations to be given to students with disabilities as outlined/as needed. Title III of the ADA requires equal access and participation. The IEP/504 team is charged with making accommodations decisions for all IDEA/504 eligible students every year, as part of the annual IEP/504 process.</p>

Legal Case	Summary
Lau v. Nichols (1974)	<p>The federal office of civil rights established a policy for the provision of equal educational opportunities for ELs. This policy was described in a memorandum in 1970:</p> <p>“Where the inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students.”</p>

Legal Case	Summary
	<p>This memorandum does not tell districts what steps they must take to ensure the equal opportunities for ELs. However, it does state that the law is violated if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>┐ students are excluded from effective participation in school because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction;</li> <li>┐ national origin minority students are inappropriately assigned to special education classes because of their lack of English skills;</li> <li>┐ programs for students whose English is less than proficient are not designed to teach them English as soon as possible, or if these programs operate as a dead-end track; or</li> <li>┐ parents whose English is limited do not receive school notices or other information in a language they can understand.</li> </ul> <p>This law was tested in the Supreme Court Case, Lau v. Nichols. In 1974, the Supreme Court upheld this law, supporting the premise that if students cannot understand the language of instruction, they do not have access to an equal opportunity education. The Supreme Court said the following:</p> <p>There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.</p> <p>All students in the United States, regardless of native language, have the right to a quality education. An equal education is only possible when students are able to understand the language of instruction.</p>
Castañeda v. Pickard (1981)	On June 23, 1981, the Fifth Circuit Court issued a decision that is the seminal post-Lau decision concerning education of language minority students. The case established a

Legal Case	Summary
	<p>three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's program for EL students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy?</li> <li>2. Are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively?</li> <li>3. Does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome?</li> </ol>
Brookhart v. Illinois State Board of Education (1983)	<p>This case demonstrated the necessary steps that a district is required to take in order to ensure that students with disabilities are prepared for graduation standards. School districts need to pay careful attention to ensure that students are aware of diploma requirements, and IEPs need to be written with these specific graduation requirements in mind.</p>

Federal Guidance	Summary
<a href="#">Questions and answers regarding inclusion of ELs with disabilities in ELP assessments and Title III annual measurable achievement objectives</a> and <a href="#">Addendum</a>	<p>This joint guidance document developed by the federal office of elementary and secondary education (OESE) and the office of special education and rehabilitative services (OSERS) was released on July 18, 2014 to help states and school districts understand how Part B of the IDEA and Titles I and III of the ESEA address the inclusion of ELs with disabilities in annual state ELP assessments.</p> <p>The 2014 guidance was amended by the July 2015 Addendum. The two documents address states' general obligations around including ELs with disabilities in ELP assessments, responsibilities of IEP teams, accommodations and alternate assessments, exit from EL status, annual measurable achievement objectives, initial identification, and other considerations.</p>
<a href="#">Dear Colleague Letter</a>	<p>Issued on January 7, 2015, by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education, this</p>

Federal Guidance	Summary
	document covers state and local educational agencies' obligations to EL students and addresses common civil rights issues. A separate section of the document discusses the issue of evaluating ELs for special education services and providing special education and English language services. This document is accompanied by resources for students and parents available in multiple languages.
<a href="#">Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements: Testing Accommodations</a>	Issued in September, 2015, by the Department of Justice, is a response to questions and complaints about excessive and burdensome documentation demands, failures to provide needed accommodations, and failures to respond to requests for testing accommodations in a timely manner. The guidance applies to testing entities (private, state, local) that have exams related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary, postsecondary, professional, or trade purposes.
<a href="#">English Learner Tool Kit</a>	This document was jointly developed by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice and issued in September, 2015 to help state and school districts support ELs by fulfilling the obligations in the Dear Colleague Letter of January 7, 2015. The tool kit includes 10 chapters, one for each of the "common civil rights issues" discussed in the January 7, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter.
<a href="#">Peer Review of State Assessment Systems</a>	This guidance was issued in September, 2015 by OESE and is required by ESEA Section 1111(e) to ensure the technical soundness of each state's assessment system. This version was revised after the previous version was suspended in December, 2012. The document is reorganized and includes updates based on revised professional standards.

### ***Tool 3: Testing Conditions and Accommodations***

The charts below are provided to inform educators, parents, and students about the most common testing conditions and accommodations as they apply to paper-based assessments. The list is not exhaustive; however, the goal is to assist decision makers in identifying which feature requires an IEP/504 Plan, an English learner (EL) status, or is available to any student with an identified need. As a reminder, the feature(s) chosen should be used consistently during daily instruction before it is allowed during state testing.

Allowable Test Administration Conditions: Available to any student based on individual need. The following administrative considerations regarding the timing, scheduling, and setting/locations of assessments are available for any student.

<b>Administrative Consideration</b>	<b>ELA</b>			<b>Social Studies</b>			<b>Math</b>			<b>Science</b>		
	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any
Small Group Testing			x			x			x			x
Time of Day			x			x			x			x
Separate or Alternate Location (flexible setting)			x			x			x			x
Specified Area or Setting			x			x			x			x
Adaptive and Specialized Equipment or Furniture			x			x			x			x
Frequent Breaks			x			x			x			X

**Accessibility Features:** Students should determine whether they wish to use these tools on an item-by-item basis based on the tools they use during instruction and in daily life. Certain features, such as magnification equipment, may need prior planning. Please coordinate with the building testing coordinator for any features identified in advance which require logistical planning.

<b>Accessibility Feature</b>	<b>ELA</b>			<b>Social Studies</b>			<b>Math</b>			<b>Science</b>		
	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any
Highlighter			x			x			x			x
Straight Edge Line Reader/Mask Tool			x			x			x			x
Auditory Aids			x			x			x			x
Color Overlay			x			x			x			x
Human Reader/Human Signer <i>*N/A to grade 2 or fluency subparts in grades 3 and 4</i>	x*					x			x	x	x	
Place Marker			x			x			x			x
Scratch Paper			x			x			x			x
Eliminate Answer Choices			x			x			x			x
General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Clarified and/or Repeated as Needed			x			x			x			x
Magnification/Enlargement Device			x			x			x			x
Redirect Student to the Test			x			x			x			x
Glossary in Footnotes			x			x			x			x
External Spell Check Device			x			x			x			x
Student Reads Assessment Aloud to Self			x			x			x			x

**Accommodations:** An accommodation reduces or decreases a barrier that makes a task difficult; it does not change the task itself. Accommodations are not provided to help a student perform better on the assessment. Accommodations are provided to level the playing field. Accommodations are only available to students with a disability served under an IEP or 504 plan, or students classified as ELs.

<b>Accommodations</b>	<b>ELA</b>			<b>Social Studies</b>			<b>Math</b>			<b>Science</b>		
	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any	IEP/504	EL	Any
Adult Transcription*	x			x			x			x		
Assistive Technology*	x			x			x			x		
Braille/Large Print	x			x			x			x		
Extended Time	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	
Human Reader/Human Signer	x					x			x	x	x	
Visual Representations for Math							x					
Rest/Breaks	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	x	
Unique Accommodation Request	x			x			x			x		
Word to Word Dictionary		x			x			x			x	

\*Also available to a student with a short-term injury.

## ***Tool 4: Human Reader Guidelines***

### ***Background***

The purpose of the human reader accommodation for the ELA/literacy assessment is to provide access to printed or written texts for a very small number of students with print-related disabilities who would otherwise be unable to participate in the assessment because the disability severely limits or prevents their ability to access printed text by decoding or due to a visual impairment. A human reader for grade 2 subparts which are not read aloud to all students and the fluency subparts for grade 3 and grade 4 is not permitted.

### ***Qualifications for Readers***

- The human reader should be an education professional who is familiar with the student and who is typically responsible for providing this feature in the classroom.
- The human reader must be trained in accordance with test administration and security policies and procedures. The human reader must have prior experience in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this support to a student during test administration.
- The human reader must be familiar with the reader guidelines for math and non-math content.

### ***Preparation Procedures***

- Human readers must read and sign a test security/confidentiality agreement consistent with state policy prior to test administration.
- Human readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test environment and format of the test in advance of administering the read aloud support during operational testing.
- Human readers are expected to be knowledgeable of procedures for reading aloud text by content area (see Table 1).
- Human readers must clearly distinguish between the test content that should and should not be read aloud to students. Reading aloud test content that is not permitted will result in a test misadministration and will invalidate the test. Text outside of what is read to all students may not be read aloud to any student for the grade 2 assessment. The fluency subpart of the grade 3 and grade 4 assessments may not be read aloud to any student.
- Prior to administering the test, the human reader should inform the student of the parameters of the read aloud support, if applicable.
- The human reader must be aware of whether the student requires additional accessibility supports that have been approved for use during the test.

### ***Guidelines for Reading Aloud***

- The test environment must be configured in such a way as to ensure that the read aloud does not interfere with the instruction or assessment of other students (e.g., ensuring adequate spacing so that the reader's voice does not carry to other students who are not receiving the accommodation or testing in a separate setting).
- The human reader must read test content exactly as written and as clearly as possible.
- The human reader must communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.

- The human reader should avoid gesturing, head movements, or any other verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words.
- The human reader must avoid conversing with the student about test items and respond to the student's questions by repeating the item, words, or instructions verbatim as needed.
- The human reader must not paraphrase, interpret, define, or translate any items, words, or instructions.
- The human reader may provide spelling of any word in a writing item prompt if requested by the student.
- The human reader should adjust his/her reading speed and volume if requested by the student.

### ***Post Administration***

The human reader must not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.

### ***English Usage/Conventions***

- **Punctuation:** Read all text as punctuated.
- **Ellipses:** When an ellipsis is used to signify missing text in a sentence, pause briefly, and read as "dot, dot, dot."
- **Quotations:** Quotation marks should be verbalized as "quote" and "end quote" at the beginning and end of quoted material, respectively.
- **Emphasis:** When words are printed in boldface, italics, or capitals, tell the student that the words are printed that way. In order not to provide an unfair advantage to students receiving this support, human readers should be cautious not to emphasize words not already emphasized in print. Emphasis is appropriate when italics, underlining, or bold is used in the prompt, question, or answers.
- **Misspellings:** In some cases, a test item may present a word or phrase that is intentionally misspelled as part of the assessment. In these instances, the student is required to respond in a specific way. When presented with intentionally misspelled words, human readers should not attempt to read the word(s) aloud, as pronunciation is somewhat subjective.

### ***Images/Graphics***

- Before describing a picture or graphic, the human reader should determine whether the details of the picture are necessary to understanding and responding to the item(s). In many cases, an image will be used to accompany a passage or reading excerpt as a piece of visual interest that is not essential in responding to the item.
- Describe the image/graphic as concisely as possible following a logical progression. Focus on providing necessary information and ignoring the superfluous. Use grade-appropriate language when describing the image/graphic.
- Read the title or caption, if available.
- Any text that appears in the body of an image may be read to a student. Read text in images in the order most suited for the student's needs. Often the reader moves top to bottom, left to right, or general to specific in accordance with teaching practices.

### ***Passages***

- Read the passage in its entirety as punctuated (e.g., pauses at periods, raised intonation for questions). Do not verbalize punctuation marks other than ellipsis and quotation marks as noted above.
- If the student requires or asks for a specific section of the passage to be re-read with the punctuation indicated, the human reader should re-read those specific lines within the passage and indicate all punctuation found within those lines as many times as requested by the student.
- When test questions refer to particular lines of a passage, read the lines referenced as though they are part of the stem.

### ***Graphic Organizers***

- Before reading a graphic organizer, the human reader should discern the most appropriate and logical manner in which to present the information. In general, information should be presented from broad to specific as indicated by the visual components of the document. The human reader should read the terms exactly as indicated in the graphic organizer. No other information should be articulated. For example, the human reader should not create sentences if information is bulleted or appears in a title or label.
- Use common, grade-appropriate language throughout the item and the test when referring to graphic organizers and their attributes (labels, blank cells, stems, etc.).

### ***Mathematical Expressions***

- Mathematical expressions must be read precisely and with care to avoid misrepresentation by a student who has no visual reference. For mathematics items involving algebraic expressions or other mathematical notation, it may be preferable for the reader to silently read the mathematical notations or the entire question before reading it aloud to the student.
- Test readers read mathematical expressions with technical accuracy. Similar expressions should be treated consistently.
- In general, numbers and symbols can be read according to their common English usage for the student's grade level.
- Numbers greater than 99, however, should be read as individual numbers.
- Additional examples may be found in the tables.
- Abbreviations and acronyms should be read as full words. For example, "10 cm" needs to be read as "ten centimeters." Some abbreviations may be read differently by different readers. For example,  $cm^3$  may be read as "cubic centimeters" or "centimeters cubed."

### ***Suggested Text Reader Script***

The following is a suggested script to be read to the student(s) prior to the test day. This may be read as an introduction on the day of testing and/or during a practice session.

"Hi \_\_\_\_\_,

- I cannot help you with any answers.

- I will not be using different character voices or changes in my tone when I read. I will be using a very direct voice that does not change very much, no matter how exciting the story or test item gets.
- If there is a picture that has words in it, I will read those words. If you ask, I will re-read the words as well.
- Sometimes there may be something about a word or phrase that might give you a hint if I read it out loud. In those cases, I will skip the word, point to it on screen [or on your booklet if braille or print on demand], and continue to read.
- You can ask me to re-read parts of the test if you didn't hear me or need more time to think.
- You can ask me to pause my reading if you need to take a break.
- You can ask me to slow down or speed up my reading, or read louder or softer if you are having trouble understanding what I read.
- I will only read certain types of punctuation, but if you need me to re-read a sentence and tell you how it was punctuated, I can do that.
- If you ask me a question about the test, all I will say is: "Do your best work. I cannot help you with that."
- Do you have any questions for me about how we'll work together during the test?"

**Table 1: Test Reader Guidance for Mathematics**

Numbers

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Large whole numbers	632,407,981	Six three two comma four zero seven comma nine eight one
	45,000,689,112	Four five comma zero zero zero comma six eight nine comma one one two
Decimal numbers	0.056	Zero point zero five six
	4.37	Four point three seven
Fractions – common	$\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{4}{5}$	One half, one fourth, two thirds, four fifths. Other common fractions include "sixths, eighths, tenths"
Fractions – not common- read as numerator over denominator	$\frac{14}{25}$	Fourteen over twenty-five
	$\frac{487}{6972}$	Four eight seven over six nine seven two
Mixed numbers – read with "and" between whole number and fraction	$3\frac{1}{2}$	Three and one-half
	$57\frac{3}{4}$	Fifty-seven and three fourths
Percentages	62%	Sixty-two percent
	7.5%	Seven point five percent
	0.23	Zero point two three percent

Money: if it contains a decimal point, read as “dollars and cents”	\$4.98	Four dollars and ninety-eight cents
	\$0.33	Thirty-three cents
	\$5368.00	Five three six eight dollars
Negative numbers: do NOT read negative sign as “minus”	-3	Negative three
	-5/8	Negative five eighths
	-7.56	Negative seven point five six
Dates (years)	1987	Nineteen eighty-seven
	2005	Two thousand five
Roman numerals	I	Roman numeral one
	II	Roman numeral two
	III	Roman numeral three
	IV	Roman numeral four
Ratios	x: y	x to y

### Operations

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Addition	$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ +27 \\ \hline \end{array}$ or $13 + 27 =$	Thirteen plus twenty-seven equals
	$13 + 27 = ?$	Thirteen plus twenty-seven equals question mark
Subtraction	$\begin{array}{r} 487 \\ -159 \\ \hline \end{array}$ or $487 - 159 =$	Four eight seven minus one five nine equals
	$487 - 159 = ?$	Four eight seven minus one five nine equals question mark
Multiplication	$\begin{array}{r} 63 \\ \times 49 \\ \hline \end{array}$ or $63 \times 49 =$	Sixty-three times forty-nine equals
	$63 \times 49 = ?$	Sixty-three times forty-nine equals question mark
Division: vertical or horizontal	$\frac{120}{15} = 8$  Or  $120 \div 15 = 8$	One two zero divided by fifteen equals eight
Operations with boxes	$3 + \square = 8$	Three plus box equals eight

### Expressions

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
	$N + 4$	N plus four
	$8x - 3$	Eight x minus three

Expressions containing variables (any letter may be used as a variable)	$4(y-2) + 5 = 7$	Four open parenthesis y minus two close parenthesis plus five equals seven
	$V = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$	V equals four-thirds pi 'r' cubed
	$\frac{ t -2}{6} \leq 15$	The absolute value of t (pause) minus two (pause) over six is less than or equal to fifteen
	$x^2y^3 = -36$	X squared y cubed equals negative thirty-six or x to the second power times y to the third power equals negative thirty-six
	$156x \geq 4$	One five six six x is greater than or equal to four
Coordinate pairs Answer choices with no other text	The point (-1, 2)	The point (pause) negative one comma two
	The point A is at (6, 3)	The point A is at (pause) six comma three
	A. (-3, -4)	A (pause) negative three comma negative four
Parallels	$\overline{AB} \parallel \overline{CD}$	Line segment AB is parallel to line segment CD
	$\overline{AB} \perp \overline{CD}$	Line segment AB is perpendicular to line segment CD

### Eligibility Guidance for Read Aloud for TNReady English Language Arts

The following guidance is only applicable to the TNReady English language arts (ELA) assessment for grades 3–8 and the English I, English II, English III, and English IV end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The fluency subpart for grade 3 and grade 4 may not be read aloud to any student. Reading aloud the fluency subpart would invalidate the intended measure and is not permitted for the TNReady assessment. Read aloud for science is an IEP team decision. Students who are classified as EL may be provided read aloud for science, if needed. Read aloud for math and social studies is an accessibility feature identified in advance for any student with an identified need. The provision of read aloud to any student who does not meet the guidance may be deemed a report of irregularity due to improper accommodation use.

The decision to read the ELA TNReady assessment aloud is not one to be undertaken lightly. Reading is a fundamental life skill. If a student requires the ELA test to be read to him or her, then the student should be in intense intervention and provided supported reading during his regular school day.

The following chart is provided as additional guidance to determine if a student's disability is significant enough to warrant a read aloud for an ELA assessment. For a student with a visual impairment, the IEP team must consider the impact of the visual impairment on the student's ability to access printed text and current ability to utilize assistive technology, such as an external magnification device.

504 Plan	IEP
Does the student have a documented decoding or fluency deficit which precludes access to printed text?	Does the student have a documented decoding or fluency deficit which precludes access to printed text?
Is the student engaged in intense Tier III intervention to address specific deficit?	Does the student have a goal to address deficit listed in the present level of educational performance.
Does the student need supported reading in core academic instruction?	Is the student engaged in intense intervention to address specific deficit?
	Does the student need supported reading in core academic instruction?

### **Additional English Language Arts Guidance for Grades 2, 3, and 4**

The following guidance is intended to support educators in the appropriate test administration procedures for portions of the ELA assessment in grades 2, 3, and 4.

Reading any text outside of the general teacher directions would dramatically change the intended construct measured and invalidate the student's score. Test administrators must follow all teacher directions to ensure that a valid and reliable measure of student achievement is obtained. This guidance is applicable to all students participating in the grade 2 and grades 3 and 4 TNReady assessments.

Students who are visually impaired, blind, hard of hearing, and/or deaf are precluded from specific sections of the ELA assessment for grades 2, 3, and 4. Additional guidance regarding participation in the fluency sections for students who are visually impaired; participation in the listening sections for students who are visually impaired; and participation in the listening sections for students who are deaf and hard of hearing is provided in the test administration manuals.

**Writing: Grades 2 and 3**

During this subpart, students are provided independent reading of both the texts. Once the student's independent reading is complete, the test administrator will read the related text and writing prompt to the student while the student follows along. The test administrator must follow the directions provided. For a student who is deaf or hard of hearing and relies upon an interpreter, the student may be provided a second independent read once the interpreter completes the signing of the text read aloud by the test administrator.

**Fluency: Grades 2, 3 and 4**

Measures of fluency must be reliable and valid to ensure users of the assessments that the results obtained are reliable, meaning the results will provide consistent measures of fluency and will not vary depending on the test administration. The purpose of the fluency section is to assess the student's ability to decode and comprehend. Therefore, it would defeat the purpose of those assessment items to read them to the student. The fluency items may not be read aloud to any student. Students who are visually impaired are excluded from participation, and the score will not be calculated in their report.

## ***Tool 5: Scribe Guidelines***

### **Background**

A scribe is an adult who writes down or inputs onto the computer what a student dictates via speech or an assistive communication device. A guiding principle in providing a scribe during test administration is to ensure that the student has access to and is able to respond to test content.

### **Qualifications of Scribes**

- The scribe should be an education professional who is familiar with the student, and who is typically responsible for providing this accommodation in the classroom.
- The scribe must be trained in accordance with test administration and security policies and procedures as articulated in test administration manuals, accessibility and accommodations manuals, and related documentation.
- The scribe must have prior experience in providing scribing or transcribing services and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this accommodation to a student during operational test administration.

### **Preparation Procedures**

- Scribes must read and sign a test security/confidentiality agreement prior to test administration.
- Scribes are expected to familiarize themselves with the test format and test environment using a practice test in advance of the testing session if administering the scribe accommodation during operational testing.
- Scribes must be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan if the student for whom they are scribing has a disability so that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations
- Scribes must know if the student requires additional accessibility features or accommodations that have been approved for use during the test.
- Scribes should meet with the student in advance and practice scribing with the student prior to the assessment.

### **Guidelines for Scribing**

- Scribing must be provided in a separate setting so as not to interfere with the instruction or assessment of other students.
- For computer-based administrations, scribes must enter student responses directly into the test interface, making use of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility supports available for a given item and student.
- Scribes should comply with student requests regarding use of all available features within the test environment.
- Scribes must avoid conversing with the student about test items and record the student's responses verbatim even if they contain errors.
- Scribes may respond to procedural questions asked by the student (e.g., test directions, navigation within the test environment, etc.).

- Scribes may not respond to student questions about test items if their responses compromise the validity of the test. The student must not be prompted, reminded, or otherwise assisted in formulating his or her response during or after the dictation to the scribe.
- Scribes may ask the student to restate words or parts of a sentence as needed. Such requests must not be communicated in a manner suggesting that the student should make a change or correction.
- Scribes may not question or correct student choices, alert students to errors, prompt, or influence students in any way that might compromise the integrity of student responses.
- Scribes may not edit or alter student work in any way, and must record exactly what the student has dictated.
- The student must be allowed to review and edit what the scribe has written.

### **Post Administration**

The scribe must not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.

### **Guidelines for Transcription**

- Responses must be transcribed verbatim onscreen or in the paper test booklet by the test administrator as soon as possible after the test is administered.
- Any stored test content on the word processing device must be deleted after the transcription is completed. While awaiting transcription, the device with recorded answers must be stored in a secured, locked location.

## ***Tool 6: Human Signer Guidelines***

In cases where a student requires a sign language support, a human signer is provided. Human signers must follow these procedures during testing to ensure the standardization of the signed presentation to the students.

1. Signers must be trained on test administration policies by local test coordinators.
2. Signers should use signs that are conceptually accurate, 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 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. Specific to the ELA writing subpart in grade 3 and grade 4, consistent with the test administration directions provided for all students, the student who requires a human signer should be provided the opportunity to independently read the writing prompt and passage. Once the student completes the independent reading of the text, the human signer may sign the writing prompt and passage to the student. The student should be provided an additional opportunity to independently read the writing prompt and passage, if needed. This additional step must be taken into consideration when determining if the student will require extended time.

## ***Tool 7: Dos and Don'ts When Selecting Accessibility Supports***

**Do...**make accessibility decisions based on individualized needs (e.g., the student's amount of time in the country, disability needs, etc.).

**Don't...**make accessibility decisions based on whatever is easiest to do (e.g., preferential seating).

**Do...**select accessibility supports that reduce the effect of the disability and language barrier to access content and demonstrate learning.

**Don't...**select accessibility supports unrelated to documented student learning needs or to give students an unfair advantage.

**Do...**be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP, 504, or EL plan.

**Don't...**use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP, 504, or EL plan.

**Do...**turn off certain universal features for some students if these features prove to be distracting.

**Don't...**assume that all universal features should be available to all students without previous try-outs.

**Do...**select designated features based on input of one or more informed educators.

**Don't...**make blanket decisions about designated features.

**Do...**ensure that accommodations are selected based on multiple stakeholders' input.

**Don't...**make unilateral decisions about accommodations.

**Do...**make decisions about designated features and accommodations prior to the assessment day.

**Don't...**assume that various combinations of accessibility supports will work effectively without testing these combinations.

**Do...**be specific about the "Where, When, Who, and How" of providing accessibility supports.

**Don't...**assume that all instructional accessibility supports are appropriate for use on assessments.

**Do...**refer to state accessibility policies and understand implications of selections.

**Don't...**simply indicate an accessibility support will be provided "as appropriate" or "as necessary."

**Do...**evaluate accessibility supports used by the student.

**Don't...**check every accessibility support possible on a checklist simply to be "safe."

**Do...**get input about accessibility supports from teachers, parents, and students.

**Don't...**assume the same accessibility supports remain appropriate year after year.

**Do...**provide accessibility supports for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction or ensure that students practice each support sufficiently.

**Don't...**provide an assessment accessibility support for the first time on the day of a test.

**Do...**select accessibility support based on specific individual student needs.

**Don't...**assume certain accessibility supports, such as a dictionary, are appropriate for every student.

### ***Tool 8: Accessibility Supports from the Student's Perspective***

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

#### **Questionnaire**

1. What parts of learning are easiest for you?

2. Tell me something in class that you do well.

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

3. What parts of learning are hardest?

4. Tell me something you do in class that is hard.

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

5. In the list that follows, write down all of the challenges you currently have related to learning. Then look at a list of accessibility supports. Next to each class, write down what supports you think might be helpful for you.

Challenge List

(Things that are hard)

Accessibility Supports

### ***Tool 9: Parent Input on Accessibility Supports***

The following are questions parents should ask about accessibility supports (universal features, designated features, and accommodations) in instruction and assessment.

<b>Instruction</b>	<b>Accessibility Supports</b>
What instructional supports does my child need to access and reach the academic standards?	What are the tests my child needs to take, what do they measure (e.g., regular or alternate academic standards), and for what purpose is each given?
How can my child and I advocate to receive accessibility supports not yet provided in instruction?	Are the accessibility supports allowed on state tests also provided for district tests?
Are there any accessibility supports that my child uses at home but does not have available in the classroom?	How can I support my child at home to ensure that my child can access homework meaningfully?
Are the accessibility supports my child is receiving in instruction meant to be temporary? If yes, what is the plan to help determine when to phase them out?	Can my child participate in part of an assessment with or without certain accessibility supports?
How are the various staff members who work with my child providing accessibility supports (across content instruction, English language development, special education, or other staff)?	Are there consequences for allowing certain changes to how my child participates in a test? How will my child's test scores count?
What is the setting or model of program support my child receives for instruction?	Do consequences of accessibility supports vary by type of test?

## Questions for Instruction and Assessment

- ☐ Is the need for each accessibility support documented in my child's Personal Needs Profile (PNP) (or a similar tool) and/or EL, IEP, or 504 plan?
- ☐ Are there too many or too few accessibility supports being provided?
- ☐ What are my child's preferences for specific accessibility supports?
- ☐ If my child needs designated features or accommodations, how will they be provided?
- ☐ If an accessibility support provided on a test is not used in instruction, or is not presented in the same format (e.g., an online calculator for a test), how will my child be given opportunities to practice using the accessibility support?
- ☐ If an accessibility support used in instruction is not allowed on a test, is there another allowed option to assist my child? If yes, has it been documented and tried in instruction first? If no, how is my child being prepared to work without the accessibility support before the test? What evidence is there to know if my child was able to access or use the accessibility supports provided?

Other questions you may have:

*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.*

### ***Tool 10: Accessibility Supports in the Classroom***

Use this chart to track different aspects of how a student uses accessibility supports (universal features, designated features, and accommodations) in your classroom. This will help inform decision making on assessment accessibility supports.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What accessibility supports does the student use in the classroom? List them in the chart. Then, follow the questions in the chart.

<b>Questions</b>	List accessibility supports—universal features (turned off), designated features, and accommodations.				
Is it noted in the student's PNP (or another tool) and/or EL, IEP, or 504 plan?					
For what task(s) is it used? (e.g., task type or standard).					
Does the student use it for that task every time? Note how often.					
Does the student use it alone or with assistance? (e.g., aide, peers?)					
Notes: (e.g., does one accessibility support seem more effective when used with another on a task, etc.)					
If the accessibility support is presented differently on the test (e.g., an online calculator), how can you give the student opportunities to practice using it?					

### ***Tool 11: After-test Accessibility Questions***

Use this form after a test to interview a student about the accessibility supports (universal features, designated features, and accommodations) provided, used, whether they were useful and whether they should be used again. Also note any adjustments or difficulties experienced by the student in either how the accessibility support was administered or in using the accessibility support during the assessment.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Accessibility support used: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Test Taken (List)</b>			
Was the accessibility support used?  Comments:	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Was the accessibility support useful?  Comments:	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Were there any difficulties with the accessibility support? (Are adjustments needed?)  Comments:	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Should the accessibility support be used again?  Comments:	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

## ***Tool 12: Assessment Accessibility Plan***

### Student Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

### Case Information

ESL Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Education Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Building/School: \_\_\_\_\_

General Education Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Accessibility supports that the student needs for this assessment and date arranged:

Accessibility Supports	Date Arranged
------------------------	---------------

1.

2.

3.

4.

Comments:

Person responsible for arranging accessibility supports and due date:

Person Responsible	Due Date	Date Arranged
--------------------	----------	---------------

1.		
----	--	--

2.		
----	--	--

3.		
----	--	--

4.		
----	--	--

Comments:

Room assignment for assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Planners for this process (signatures): \_\_\_\_\_

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

### ***Tool 13: Accessibility Journal***

One way to keep track of what accessibility supports work for students is to support them in keeping an “accessibility journal.” The journal lets the student be “in charge” and could be kept up to date through regular consultation with an ESL teacher, special educator, general education teacher, assessment administrator, or other staff members. In the journal, students document the items listed below, which makes it much easier for educators to decide which accessibility support to document.

- ☐ Accessibility supports used by the student in the classroom and on tests
- ☐ Test and assignment results when accessibility supports are used and not used
- ☐ Student’s perception of how well the accessibility support “works”
- ☐ Effective combinations of accessibility supports
- ☐ Difficulties of accessibility support use
- ☐ Perceptions of teachers and others about how the accessibility support appears to be working

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

1. What would you include as headings for the journal?
2. When would the student make entries in the journal, and what types of support would the student need to make these entries?
3. With whom would the student share journal entries, and when would it be done?

### ***Tool 14: Identifying Roles and Responsibilities***

Directions: This activity can be completed in small groups. Complete the items below, and discuss roles and responsibilities through the lens of providing standards-based education to your students.

Your Role as You See It:

The Role of Other Colleagues as You See Them:

#### Discussion Issues

1. Is your role clear in your provision of standards-based education to your students?
2. What appear to be similarities and differences between perceived roles and responsibilities of various educators?
3. To what extent does collaboration among educators occur in your building or district? What are some of the barriers or obstacles for collaboration?
4. Are our boundaries clear? What are you doing now that you feel may be “out of your jurisdiction?”
5. What are some opportunities or barriers that can either facilitate or hinder future opportunities for general, ESL, and special educator collaboration?

*Adapted from Delaware Accommodation Activity Sheets, Delaware Department of Education.*

### ***Tool 15: Questions to Guide Evaluation at the School and District Levels***

Discuss the following questions with other educators:

- ☐ Are there procedures in place to ensure test administrators adhere to directions for the administration of accessibility supports (universal features, designated features, and accommodations)?
- ☐ In what ways can you use assessment data and accessibility data to ensure appropriate accessibility supports are being used?
- ☐ In what ways are you currently evaluating the methods of students receiving accessibility supports? How can you improve these methods?

# Appendix B: Calculator Policy

## **Mathematics Calculator Policy**

### **Central Beliefs**

The TNReady Calculator Policy is based on two central beliefs:

1. Calculators are important tools and, in order to be ready for career and college, students need to understand how to use calculators effectively.
2. In order to demonstrate mastery of the mathematics standards, students must demonstrate many skills without reliance on calculators.

**Therefore, at all grade levels and in all courses, the math assessment will include both calculator-permitted subparts and calculator-prohibited subparts.**

- There will be one calculator-prohibited subpart and two calculator-permitted subparts at all grade levels.
- Information on the types of questions on the calculator-prohibited section of TNReady can be found [here](#).

### **Rationale**

Calculator functionalities should align with the mathematics in each grade band. In grades 3–5 mathematics, our state standards focus on **solidifying** a student’s computational fluency with whole numbers. Students are also **developing** an understanding of fractions and beginning the process of developing computational fluency with fractions. Students should not have calculator functionalities available to them for concepts that are in the developmental stage.

As stated within our central beliefs, students should have the opportunity to interact with technology and the opportunity to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving with the aid of a calculator. However, in order to provide an equitable assessment experience for all Tennessee students, the type of calculator used by students should be consistent in functionality. As fractional understanding is in the developmental phase over this grade band, students do not need a fraction key—they need to be able to demonstrate their conceptual understanding of fractions and operations with fractions. Thus, third through fifth grade students will be allowed a four-function calculator, which does not include any of the prohibited functionalities, on the calculator-permitted subparts, such as fractions.

### **Test Administration Guidelines**

- It is the responsibility of the test administrator to ensure the regulations outlined in this policy pertaining to calculator use are followed.
- All memory and user-entered programs and documents must be cleared or removed before and after the test.
- A student may use any grade band-specific permitted calculator on the calculator-permitted subparts.
- Students should have access to no more than one handheld calculator device for calculator-permitted subparts.

- As we transition to online in future years, students will have access to practice with the same calculator functionalities that will be available on the operational assessment on both the item sampler and the practice tests.

### **Grades 3–5:**

#### ***Handheld Calculator Types***

For grades 3–5, students may use any four-function calculator, which does not include any of the prohibited functionalities. *Please note: this is not an exhaustive list of calculator types, and students should be familiar with particular functions at the appropriate grade level.*

#### **Examples of permitted calculators:**

- Casio HS 4 Basic
- Sharp ELSI Mate EL-2405A
- TI-108

#### **Examples of permitted functionalities:**

- Addition
- Subtraction
- Multiplication
- Division
- Square root ( $\sqrt{x}$ )
- %

#### **Examples of prohibited calculators:**

- Casio CFX-9970
- Casio FX260
- HP-40G
- Sharp EL344RB
- TI-15
- TI-30XA
- TI-30IIS
- TI-34
- TI-84 plus family
- TI-89
- TI-NSpire (non-CAS) and TI-NSpire-CX (non-CAS)
- TI-NSpire (CAS version)

#### **Examples of prohibited functionalities:**

- Fraction manipulation
- Fraction to decimal conversions/decimal to fraction conversions
- Square key ( $x^2$  or  $x^y$ )
- Pi ( $\Pi$ )
- Graphing capability

- Data entry
- Matrices
- Regression
- Trigonometric functions (sine, cosine, tangent)
- Logarithm (log and/or ln) and exponential functions ( $a^x$  and/or  $e^x$ )
- Any calculator with CAS (computer algebra system) capabilities (including any programs or applications)
- Wireless communication capability
- QWERTY keyboard
- Cell phones, tablets, iPads, etc.

### **Grades 6–8:**

#### ***Handheld Calculator Types***

For grades 6–8, students may use any four-function or scientific calculator, which does not include any of the prohibited functionalities. *Please note: this is not an exhaustive list of calculator types, and students should be familiar with particular functions at the appropriate grade level.*

#### **Examples of permitted calculators:**

- Casio FX260
- Casio HS 4 Basic
- Sharp EL344RB
- Sharp ELSI Mate EL-2405A
- TI-15
- TI-30XA
- TI-30IIS
- TI-34
- TI-108

#### **Examples of permitted functionalities:**

- Square root ( $\sqrt{x}$ )
- %
- Fraction manipulation
- Square key ( $x^2$  or  $x^y$ )
- Pi ( $\square$ )
- Trigonometric functions (sine, cosine, tangent)

#### **Examples of prohibited calculators:**

- Casio CFX-9970
- HP-40G
- TI-84 plus family
- TI-89
- TI-NSpire (non-CAS) and TI-NSpire-CX (non-CAS)
- TI-NSpire (CAS version)

**Examples of prohibited functionalities:**

- Graphing capability
- Matrices
- Regression
- Logarithm (log and/or ln) and exponential functions ( $a^x$  and/or  $e^x$ )
- Any calculator with CAS (computer algebra system) capabilities (including any programs or applications)
- Wireless communication capability
- QWERTY keyboard
- Cell phones, tablets, iPads, etc.

**EOC:*****Handheld Calculator Types***

Students may use any four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator, which does not include any of the prohibited functionalities. *Please note: this is not an exhaustive list of calculator types, and students should be familiar with particular functions at the appropriate grade level.*

**Examples of permitted calculators:**

- Casio FX260
- Casio HS 4 Basic
- Sharp EL344RB
- Sharp ELSI Mate EL-2405A
- TI-15
- TI-30XA
- TI-30IIS
- TI-34
- TI-84 plus family
- TI-108
- TI-NSpire (non-CAS) and TI-NSpire-CX (non-CAS)

**Examples of permitted functionalities:**

- Square root ( $\sqrt{x}$ )
- %
- Fraction manipulation
- Graphing capability
- Data entry
- Square key ( $x^2$  or  $x^y$ )
- Pi ( $\square$ )
- Trigonometric functions (sine, cosine, tangent)
- Matrices
- Regression

**Examples of prohibited calculators:**

- Casio CFX-9970
- HP-40G
- TI-89
- TI-NSpire (CAS version)

**Examples of prohibited functionalities:**

- Any calculator with CAS (computer algebra system) capabilities (including any programs or applications)
- Wireless communication capability
- QWERTY keyboard
- Cell phones, tablets, iPads, etc.

***TNReady Science Assessment Calculator Guidance*****Grades 3–5****General Education Assessment**

The TNReady science assessment in grades 3–5 does not require the use of a calculator. Tennessee science standards for this grade band do not have a mathematical component, and therefore, students are not permitted to use a calculator. It is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators for students in this grade band.

**TCAP-ALT Science**

The alternate science assessment for grades 3–5 does not require the use of a calculator. Alternate assessment targets for this grade band were derived from Tennessee science standards and do not have a mathematical component. It is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators for students in this grade band.

**Grades 6–8****General Education Assessment**

The TNReady science assessment in grades 6–8 does not require the use of a calculator. Tennessee science standards for this grade band include basic math fluency for students at this grade level. In grades 6 or 8, it is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators as the mathematical component included is basic addition and subtraction. In grade 7, the science standards may include items requiring basic multiplication and/or division; therefore, an IEP team may need to consider the use of a calculator for the seventh grade assessment year.

**TCAP-ALT Science**

The alternate science assessment for grades 6–8 does not require the use of a calculator. Alternate assessment targets for this grade band were derived from Tennessee science standards and do not have a mathematical component. It is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators for students in this grade band.

## **High School End-of-Course**

### **Biology General Education Assessment**

The TNReady end-of-course biology assessment does not require the use of a calculator. Tennessee science standards for this course do not have a mathematical component, and therefore, students are not permitted to use a calculator. It is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators for students in this course.

### **Alternative Assessment for Biology**

The alternate science assessment for biology does not require the use of a calculator. Alternate assessment targets for this course were derived from Tennessee science standards and do not have a mathematical component. It is unnecessary for IEP teams to recommend the use of calculators for students in this course.

### **Chemistry Assessment**

The TNReady end-of-course chemistry assessment requires the use of a calculator for all students. Tennessee science standards for this course have a very strong mathematical component, and therefore, students will need to have a calculator in order to complete the assessment. Calculators should be recommended by IEP teams as an accommodation for students in this grade band.

# Appendix C: Determining Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

IEP and 504 Plan team members, including parents, must engage in a thoughtful process that determines the necessary accommodations to facilitate the student's access to grade-level instruction and full participation in state and district assessments. The purpose of the manual is to guide team members in selecting appropriate accommodations.

## **Understanding Accommodations**

Accommodations are tools and procedures that provide equal access to instruction and assessment for students with disabilities. Access is the opportunity and ability for an individual to participate in the instruction, discussions, activities, products, and assessment provided to all students within a public school. Accommodations are provided to “level the playing field.” Without accommodations, students with disabilities may not be able to access grade-level instruction or participate fully on assessments. They are intended to offset the effects of the disability and to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Accommodations are intended to reduce, or even eliminate, the effects of a student's disability. They do not, however, reduce learning expectations and should not give a false picture of what a student knows and can do. Reliance on accommodations should never replace appropriate and rigorous instruction in the content area.

Informed decision making regarding accommodations is critical for ensuring successful and meaningful participation of students with disabilities in instruction and assessments. Ideally, accommodations should be the same or similar across classroom instruction, classroom tests, and state and district tests. However, it is important to note that some accommodations are only for use during instruction and cannot be used on state and district assessments. The IEP team should clearly distinguish between classroom and state accommodations when making these decisions. A student who is provided an accommodation during classroom instruction that is not allowed on a state test should be provided opportunities to practice without the use of that accommodation.

In order to make effective accommodations decisions, the IEP and 504 teams should gather and review information about the student's present level of academic achievement, their functional performance in relation to the curriculum, and the supports the student requires during instruction and classroom assessment. Team meetings could include discussions about providing the student equal learning opportunities and identifying practices and approaches intended to help the student overcome learning obstacles during instruction and assessment.

Accommodations are generally grouped into the following categories:

**Presentation** (e.g., repeat directions, read aloud, use of larger bubbles on answer sheets): allows 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** (e.g., mark answers in book, use reference aids, point, use of computer): allows students to complete activities assignments and tests in different ways to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.

**Timing/Scheduling** (e.g., extended time, frequent breaks): increases the allowable length of time to complete a test or assignment and may also change the way the time is organized.

**Setting** (e.g., study carrel, special lighting, separate room): changes the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.

### **Accommodations vs. Modifications**

Accommodations are not the same as modifications. Accommodations are intended to lessen the effects on a student's disability; they are not intended to reduce learning expectations. Changing, lowering, or reducing learning expectations is usually referred to as a modification or alteration. Unlike accommodations, consistent use of modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and the grade-level expectations. This may have a negative impact on the student's educational career, as the student may not continue to progress and be able to obtain a regular diploma.

### **State and Federal Law Regarding Assessment Accommodations**

Current federal and state laws require students who attend public schools to participate in annual testing in specific academic areas and grades outlined in the law, including students with disabilities. Requiring the inclusion of all students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments helps ensure that schools, school districts, and states are held accountable for the achievement of these students. These laws also require students with disabilities (those individuals covered under an IEP or Section 504 Plan) to be provided with appropriate accommodations necessary to participate in these tests.

The use of accommodations which invalidate the intended learning outcome does not give an accurate measure of the student's skills and could result in an invalidation of test scores which would count the student as non-proficient. All IEP and 504 Plan team members need to be familiar with state policies and guidelines regarding the use of accommodations on state assessments. Making sound decisions about testing accommodations requires all team members to know:

- ☐ The test (content, types of test questions, and testing conditions);
- ☐ The state's testing guidelines; and
- ☐ The state's accommodation guidelines.

### **Who Decides**

All students with disabilities (those with an active IEP or 504 Plan) are entitled to the appropriate accommodations that allow them to fully participate in state and district testing. The student's IEP and

504 Plan team select the accommodations for both instruction and assessments. Accommodations should be chosen on the basis of the individual student's needs, not on the basis of disability category, grade level, or instructional setting. Once selected, accommodations should be used consistently for instruction and assessment. Each teacher and others responsible for the implementation of the accommodations must be informed of the accommodations that must be provided.

### **Selecting Accommodations**

Determining necessary accommodations should be part of the development of each IEP or 504 Plan. The following questions should be considered in the selection process:

- What are the student's learning strengths and needs?
- How do the student's learning needs affect the achievement of the grade-level content standards?
- What specialized instruction does the student need to achieve the grade-level content standards?

Next, discuss and review the accommodations the student has already been using. Ask the following questions:

- What accommodations is the student regularly using in the classroom and on tests?
- Has the student been willing to use the accommodation?
- What is the student's perception on how well an accommodation has worked?
- What are the perceptions of the parents, teachers, and others about how the accommodations appear to have worked?
- Have there been difficulties administering the selected accommodations?

The following are questions that IEP and 504 Plan teams should ask about assessment accommodations:

#### ***Is the student using any accommodations during classroom instruction that will not be allowed when taking state or district-wide assessments?***

Because of the nature of certain accommodations, they are only allowed for instruction, not testing. If a student is accustomed to using such accommodations, the IEP team should make certain that the student understands that a particular accommodation won't be available during testing and work to find an acceptable accommodation that can support the student during testing in a comparable manner.

#### ***Are the assessment accommodations selected allowed for the specific assessment?***

There is a tremendous variance among acceptable accommodations for specific assessments. Be sure to follow specific assessment guidance documents which will list acceptable accommodations.

#### ***Does the student show a documented need for all selected accommodations?***

Research has shown that IEP or 504 Plan teams frequently select accommodations in a bundle, such as extended time and a different setting. However, the student might only need one of these

accommodations. The IEP team has a responsibility to make sure the student is neither under or over accommodated.

***Are all selected accommodations documented in the IEP or 504 Plan?***

The student's active IEP or 504 Plan should contain documentation for all accommodations that have been selected, for both instruction and assessment. Once documented in the IEP or 504 Plan, accommodations must be provided. Implementation of accommodations is mandatory, not optional.

***Does the student understand how to use the selected assessment accommodations?***

Students should have ample time to learn to use the accommodations available to them during assessment. Be sure the student is willing to use the accommodation and has used the accommodation before test day.

***Does the school have an advance planning process to ensure the proper implementation of the testing accommodations chosen and documented in my child's IEP or 504 Plan?***

Accommodations are only as effective as their proper implementation. Unfortunately, implementation of accommodations can become difficult on testing days when school employees are stretched. Advance planning for accommodations such as quiet space, readers, or accommodated forms is critical to the ethical administration of assessment accommodations.

**Evaluating Accommodations**

Evaluating how effective the accommodations are should be an ongoing process; only by closely reviewing the impact of an accommodation can improvements happen. IEP or 504 Plan teams should not assume that accommodation selection carries over from year to year. Annually, the team should review:

- each accommodation and the results of tests when the accommodation was used;
- student's perspective of how well each accommodation is working;
- effective combinations of accommodations; and
- perceptions of teachers, paraprofessionals, and other specialists about how the accommodations appear to be working.

Finally, the team should ensure that accommodations do not lead to inappropriate testing practices such as:

- coaching students during testing;
- editing student work;
- allowing a student to answer fewer questions or reduce the number of responses required;
- giving clues to test answers in any way; and/or
- changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information.

## Guide to Choosing Accommodations

### Presentation Accommodations

May Require for Access	Questions to Ask	Instruction Examples	Assessment Examples
Students with print disabilities, defined as difficulty or inability to visually read standard print because of a physical, sensory or cognitive disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the student read and understand directions?</li> <li>Does the student need text routinely read aloud?</li> <li>Has the student been identified as having a reading disability?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large print</li> <li>Magnification devices</li> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Audio tapes</li> <li>Digital textbooks</li> <li>Talking materials (calculators, clocks, timers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen reader</li> <li>Text to speech</li> <li>Braille</li> <li>Visual representations for math</li> </ul>

### Response Accommodations

May Require for Access	Questions to Ask	Instruction Examples	Assessment Examples
Students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities (including difficulties with memory sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the student use a pencil or other writing instrument?</li> <li>Does the student have a disability that affects his ability to spell?</li> <li>Does the student have trouble tracking from one page to another and maintaining her place?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribe</li> <li>Note-takers</li> <li>Tape recorder</li> <li>Respond on test booklet</li> <li>Spelling and grammar devices</li> <li>Graphic organizers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech to text</li> <li>Adult transcription</li> <li>Scratch paper</li> <li>Word prediction</li> </ul>

### Timing and Scheduling Accommodations

May Require for Access	Questions to Ask	Instruction Examples	Assessment Examples
Students who need more time, cannot concentrate for extended periods, have health-related disabilities, fatigue easily, special diet and/or medication needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the student work continuously during the entire time allocated for test administration?</li> <li>Does the student tire easily because of health impairments?</li> <li>Does the student need shorter working periods and frequent breaks?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extended time</li> <li>Frequent breaks</li> <li>Multiple testing sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extended time</li> <li>Frequent breaks</li> </ul>

### Setting Accommodations

May Require for Access	Questions to Ask	Instruction Examples	Assessment Examples
Students who are easily distracted in large group settings or concentrate best in small groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do others easily distract the student?</li> <li>Does the student have trouble staying on task?</li> <li>Does the student exhibit behaviors that would disrupt other students?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change of room or location in room</li> <li>Earphones or headphones</li> <li>Study carrels</li> </ul>	