Statewide Assessment Resource Guide and Toolkit:

Participation Decisions and Use of Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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Statewide Assessment of Students with Disabilities Committee

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INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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The purposes for assembling this committee included the following:

- Identify what questions educators and parents have about statewide assessment requirements and anticipated changes in the future;
- Identify what resources are needed to assist educators and families in making informed, appropriate, and collaborative decisions about statewide assessment for students with disabilities;
- Develop resources for Case Conference Committees (CCC) to use when discussing and making decisions about participation in statewide assessment options and use of accommodations; and
- Inform the work of the resource centers related to statewide assessment professional development needs.

This document and additional resources are available on the EERC and IEPRC websites:

www.indianaeerc.org **www.indianaieprc.org**

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This document is designed to assist Case Conference Committees (CCCs) to engage in informed discussions and make appropriate decisions about participation in statewide assessment and use of accommodations for students with disabilities. The document is organized into two sections. The first section includes common questions and corresponding answers and suggestions. The second section includes a variety of tables, checklists, and tools for use by CCC members.

Statewide Assessment Common Questions and Answers

Why are students with disabilities expected to achieve grade-level academic content standards?

The focus of legislation is aimed at accountability of all students. Both federal and state laws require that all students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments in order to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of students. The practice of inclusion of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers is moving across the country and internationally to provide access to general education curriculum. Teachers are providing instruction for all students to work toward grade-level content standards by using a variety of instructional strategies based on the needs of the students. Students with disabilities are provided accommodations during classroom instruction and assessments to help level the playing field and promote equal access to grade-level curriculum.

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Most states are moving towards next generation assessments for academic content areas. This presents a unique opportunity for educators to include all students with disabilities in working toward grade-level content standards.

What is the difference between an accommodation and modification?

Modification

Beginning with IDEA 2004, the term "modification" is no longer used in relation to district-wide and statewide testing, because the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandates that students be tested using the same standards as those used for non-disabled peers.

A modification is made when the general education curriculum is altered or the performance level expected of students is changed (Nolte & McLaughlin, 2005). A modification is when a student is taught something different from the rest of the class or taught the same information but at a different level of complexity to meet the needs of the student. Prior to the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), the term "modifications" referred to changes in the delivery, content, or instructional level of district-wide or statewide tests for students receiving special education services. Modifications resulted in lowering the expectations and standards by which students with disabilities were assessed. Beginning with IDEA 2004, the term "modification" is no longer used in relation to district-wide and statewide testing, because the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandates that students be tested using the same standards as those used for non-disabled peers.

Nolet and McLaughlin (2005) identify the following examples of modifications:

1. The student is taught something different from the rest of the class.
2. The student is taught the same information, but at a different level of complexity.
3. The student has a reduced assignment (for example, has fewer questions to answer).
4. The student uses a lower-level reading text book, which covers similar subject content.

Parents should be aware that if the student's curriculum is modified so that it is no longer focused on grade-level standards, the student's course of study is changed to one that leads to a certification of completion, not to a high school diploma.

Parents should be aware that if the student's curriculum is modified so that it is no longer focused on grade-level standards, the student's course of study is changed to one that leads to a certification of completion, not to a high school diploma. The decision to make modifications should not be made lightly or by one individual, but requires a CCC team decision.

Accommodations

Accommodations for Instruction

An accommodation is a support or service that is provided to help a student fully access the general education curriculum. Accommodations provided to a student with disabilities during classroom instruction and assessments must also be provided to the student during state assessments, if permitted.

An accommodation is a support or service that is provided to help a student fully access the general education curriculum. Accommodations are changes in the way that materials are presented or students respond (Elliott & Thurlow, 2006). The reason for providing accommodations is that they enable the student to bypass (or partially bypass) the effects of the disability. An accommodation does not change the content of what is being taught, but is a way of providing equal access for the student with a disability to grade-level content and is meant to "level the playing field" with non-disabled peers. Accommodations do not reduce expectations for learning; rather, they change how the content is being taught, made accessible, and/or assessed. What the student is expected to master does not change, and the objectives of the content or activity remain intact.

Accommodations are practices or procedures that are used during classroom instruction so that the teacher has a valid measure of what students with disabilities know and can do. In addition, accommodations allow students with disabilities to complete the same assignments as their non-disabled peers. School assignments and tests completed with accommodations should not alter the content, give an unfair advantage, or change what a test measures. Furthermore, school assignments and tests including accommodations are graded the same way as those completed without accommodations. Accommodations make it possible for students with disabilities to show what they know without being impeded by their disability.

Accommodations provided to a student with disabilities during classroom instruction and assessments must also be provided to the student during state assessments, if permitted. Educators need to be familiar with state policies and procedures for administering statewide assessments and accommodations. State accommodation guidance is summarized in Appendix C of the *Indiana Assessment Program Manual* which is available on the IDOE website at http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/appendix-c-accommodations-guidance.pdf. Guidance regarding appropriate testing format for students – either computer-based or paper-and-pencil – has been provided by the IDOE and is available at http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/individualized-learning/patins-computer-pencil-letter-checklists.pdf.

Accommodations for Statewide Assessment

Assessment accommodations are changes in testing materials or procedures that enable students to participate in assessments in a way that assesses abilities rather than disabilities. Without accommodations, assessments may not accurately measure students' knowledge and skills.

Assessment accommodations are generally grouped into the following categories:

- Presentation (e.g., repeat directions, read aloud, large print, braille)
- Equipment and materials (e.g., calculator, amplification equipment, manipulative)
- Response (e.g., mark answers in book, scribe records response, point)
- Setting (e.g., study carrel, student's home, separate room)
- Timing/Scheduling (e.g., extended time, frequent breaks)

What accommodations are needed so that a student can be in the general education setting?

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's Case Conference Committee (CCC). Accommodations should be chosen based on the individual student's need for the accommodations. After considering the student's individual characteristics, the CCC should identify inclusion needs that require accommodations. When these accommodations are used according to plan, the student should be able to demonstrate what he or she knows during instruction and on assessments. Accommodations used in a general education classroom that are not allowable on the statewide assessment can potentially hinder the student's success on that assessment measure.

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Elliott and Thurlow (2006) suggest six steps to take in identifying accommodations for individual students:

1. Ask the student what helps him/her learn or perform better and what gets in the way of showing what you know and can do.
2. Ask parents and other family members what they do to help the student complete household chores or homework.
3. Consider the strengths and weaknesses in areas linked to the curriculum, identify those skills or behaviors that consistently get in the way of learning.
4. Teach the student how to use accommodations that might be provided.
5. Observe the effects of accommodations provided to determine whether the accommodation is being used and the extent to which it seems useful to the student.
6. Collect data on the effects of accommodations that are used by the student.

Who is involved in making accommodation decisions?

The CCC must make assessment and accommodation decisions for students with disabilities based on individual need in accordance with state and federal guidelines. Students with disabilities must be provided accommodations based on individual need as long as the accommodations do not invalidate the assessment.

What should the CCC consider when selecting accommodations?

To assure students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction, the CCC must participate in the planning process and data review to make sure appropriate accommodations are selected for the student that enable access to grade-level instruction and participation in statewide assessments.

To assure students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction, the CCC must participate in the planning process and data review to make sure appropriate accommodations are selected for the student that enable access to grade-level instruction and participation in statewide assessments. The CCC needs to be familiar with the grade-level standards when making decisions about accommodations and participation in the general education curriculum.

During the decision making process, the CCC should take into account the following:

1. Student characteristics that need to be considered so that accommodations reduce the effect of the disability.
2. Instructional tasks where students are expected to demonstrate grade-level state standards content knowledge and skills, such as assignments and class tests.
3. Consistency with the standards-based IEP for classroom instruction and assessments, and an emphasis on fidelity of implementation for accommodations and achievement standards noted in the IEP.

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities can participate in the alternate assessment (ISTAR-AA) if the criteria for participation are satisfied. The Case Conference Committee determines, based on the eligibility criteria adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education and the student's individual and unique needs, whether a student with a disability will be assessed with ISTAR-AA. The criteria are available at: http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/assessment/istar.

How do we document decisions and use of accommodations?

For students with disabilities, determining appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations during the IEP process should be evidenced by reviewing the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP). The PLAAFP is a state and federal requirement which 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".

The areas in the IEP document where accommodations can be addressed include the following:

1. "Consideration of Special Factors" is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered.

2. "Supplementary Aids and Services" is the area of the IEP that 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" is the section of the IEP that documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in statewide and local assessments.

What documentation is needed to evaluate and improve the use of accommodations?

Selecting and monitoring the effectiveness of accommodations should be an ongoing process, and changes should be made as often as needed. It is important that the accommodations selected address the student's specific areas of need and facilitate the demonstration of skills and knowledge.

What is the connection between accommodations and universal design for learning?

According to Indiana's special education law, Article 7, "Universal design is a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities." Implementing universal design is not simply a matter of providing digital instruction and assessment on computers, but rather working diligently to ensure that the products, services, policies, and/or practices related to the instruction and assessment provide options and supports that enable all students to participate and to achieve.

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Technology used for instruction and assessment must include a range of flexible options that can be tailored to individual needs and preferences and must ensure interoperability with assistive technologies used by some students. As the move toward digital delivery of instruction and assessment gains momentum, it is important to keep in mind that not all digital materials or delivery technologies include flexible features that broaden usability and accessibility. These features need to be sought out when considering the acquisition of both digital content and technological systems for the delivery of the content.

Incorporating the principles of Universal Design for Learning into the planning and delivery processes of instruction and assessments can lead to improved engagement and outcomes for all students. Universally-designed instruction and assessments enable educators to plan for and engage students across the full range of variability in flexible learning opportunities and to gain a more accurate understanding of what students know and can do. Flexibility in the presentation of instructional content, the ways in which students can respond, and the engagement of students are the core principles of universally-designed learning environments. In the planning process, it is important to consider potential barriers that students may encounter in the learning process and to proactively plan for reducing those barriers in order to ensure access

to the content and enable the demonstration of knowledge. Universal Design principles are being considered in design of next generation assessments through item development, field testing and implementation.

Tools, Checklists, and Resources

The following section contains multiple resources designed to be used by educators, families, and Case Conference Committee (CCC) members. The resources include the following:

1. **Questions and Considerations During the Assessment and Accommodation Discussion**

   This resource is organized by steps that occur during the CCC discussion about statewide assessment and accommodations. For each step, questions for parents to ask and information for CCC members to consider are provided.

2. **Examples of Accommodations Based on Student Characteristics**

   This resource provides example instruction and assessment accommodations for specific student characteristics or difficulties. These are simply examples that might be appropriate for a student with a specific need or disability. The examples should not be used as a required list for a given student. Additionally, it is important to note that this table includes assessment accommodations that are not allowable on statewide assessments. The use of such accommodations during other assessment tasks should be discussed in advance with a full understanding of possible outcomes for the student. Accommodations that are not allowed on statewide assessments are denoted in bold and with an asterisk. This resource was modified with permission from the Council of Chief State School Officers. Additional examples were added by Indiana practitioners and specialists.

3. **Decision Criteria and Considerations by Statewide Assessment Option**

   This table summarizes the participation criteria for the statewide assessment options. Also included are examples of evidence that CCC members might use when making the decision about which assessment option is most appropriate for a given student. Full state criteria are available at http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/appendix-c-accommodations-guidance.pdf.

4. **Questions for Parents to Ask About Accommodations**

   This resource provides sample questions for parents to ask about accommodations. These questions were modified with permission from the Council of Chief State School Officers.

5. **After-Test Accommodations Questions**

   This resource can be used after an assessment with accommodations has been completed. It includes questions that can be used to interview the student about the provided accommodation(s), including whether a specific accommodation was used, whether it was useful, and whether the accommodation should be used again. Any adjustments or difficulties experienced by the student can also be noted. This resource was modified with permission from the Council of Chief State School Officers.

6. **Assessment Accommodations Agreement**

   This form can be used by a student to communicate his/her accommodation needs to school staff. Typically used by secondary students who intend to pursue postsecondary education, this form helps develop self-advocacy skills. This resource was modified with permission from the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Questions and Considerations During the Assessment and Accommodations Discussion

Step 1: **Ensure all decision makers understand the purpose of the statewide assessment: ISTEP+, ECA, ISTAR, IMAST (Available only through Spring 2014)**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
-What is the purpose of the assessment? -How are the results used? -Who receives my child's assessment results?	Results from statewide assessments are used for multiple purposes. For example, aggregate assessment results are used for school accountability purposes. For an individual student, assessment results are important because they provide teachers, parents, and students themselves with information about skills, proficiency, and achievement.
Step 2: **Ensure all decision makers are aware of the statewide assessment options.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
What assessments are grade-level peers taking? What assessment options are available for my child? What standards are measured by each assessment option?	Assessment options exist so that the CCC can select the most appropriate assessment for a given student. The first option considered should be the standard assessment (ISTEP+ or ECAs). Other options, such as **IMAST (available only through Spring 2014)** and ISTAR, are available for students for whom ISTEP+/ECAs are not appropriate due to the severity and nature of the student's disability and the intensity of services needed by the student.
Step 3: **Ensure all decision makers understand the standard administration procedures for the statewide assessments.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
-How is each assessment option administered? -What accommodations are allowable for each assessment? -Are the accommodations allowed on statewide assessments also provided for local assessments? -What is the impact of needed accommodations not being permitted on statewide assessments?	Guidelines on the standard administration procedures and allowable accommodations for each statewide assessment option are set by IDOE. Accommodations selected for use on statewide assessments should be ones that the student is using on a regular basis for classroom instruction and assessments. Allowing students to use accommodations on a routine basis in the classroom that are not permitted on statewide assessments can negatively impact the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills on statewide assessments.

Step 4: **Ensure all decision makers understand the consequences associated with each statewide assessment option.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
-How will my child's test scores be used? -How does the assessment decision influence programming and services for my child? -How does the selected assessment option impact my child's chance to graduate with a diploma?	The decision about which assessment option will be utilized should not drive placement or services for the student. Students for whom ISTAR is the most appropriate assessment are learning content based on grade-level alternate achievement standards and are not earning credits toward a high school diploma.
Step 5: **Determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary for the student.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
-What are my child's needs and preferences? -What accommodations will reduce the effect of my child's disability on assessment results? -What accommodations are regularly used by my child during instruction and classroom assessments? Are the accommodations permitted on statewide assessments?	A student's need for assessment accommodations should be based upon a variety of information and data from students, teachers, and parents. Information from the student includes how helpful the student perceives an accommodation is/was, what accommodations the student prefers, and how willing the student is to learn to use a given accommodation. Input from teachers might include perceptions about the impact and usefulness of an accommodation, information about the student's performance when using/not using assessment accommodations, and what staff training is needed.
Step 6: **Determine which statewide assessment option will be used for the student.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
-Which assessment option will provide the best information about my child's skills? -Are any of the accommodations that my child needs not allowable on the assessments? -What is the rationale for the selected assessment option?	Accommodations should be selected based upon the student's needs and difficulties. Selected accommodations should reduce the effect of the child's disability on assessment results and performance.

Step 7: **Ensure assessment accommodation decisions are documented in the IEP.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
-Are the necessary and appropriate accommodations included in the IEP? -What is the rationale for the accommodations?	The present levels section of the IEP should include information about what accommodations have been effective during instruction and classroom assessment. This information can assist the CCC in making decisions about statewide assessment participation. The IEP should document the CCC's decision about what assessment option will be administered and what accommodations are necessary. It is important to remember that the decision about what statewide assessment the student will take should be re-visited and changed when needed.
Step 8: **Communicate selected assessment accommodations to the person responsible for administering the statewide assessments.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
-Who will make sure that these accommodations are used on statewide assessments? -What information will be gathered about the usefulness of the accommodation?	Decisions about statewide assessment participation and accommodations need to be communicated to the person responsible for test administration in the school corporation. In most school corporations, this involves the teacher of record and the test coordinator. The CCC should discuss what information will be collected about the administration and usefulness of the accommodations during the assessment administration so that decisions about future accommodations can be well-informed.
Step 9: **Following administration, evaluate whether the selected accommodations were appropriate and necessary for future assessments.**	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
-Were the accommodations used? -Were there any difficulties with the accommodations? -Are any adjustments needed? -Should the accommodations be used again? -Does the selected assessment option seem appropriate for future administrations? -What did my child think about the accommodations?	Information and data regarding the usefulness, appropriateness, and any difficulties implementing the accommodations during previous statewide assessments should be discussed by the CCC. This information should guide decisions about future administrations of the assessment and should be used to determine whether a different assessment option needs to be chosen and whether accommodations need to be changed or discontinued.

Examples of Accommodations Based on Student Characteristics

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND OR LOW VISION		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Large print • Magnification devices, AT (e.g., CCTV, video magnifier) • Low-tech optical devices (e.g., handheld magnifier, stand magnifier, handheld telescope) • Braille (e.g., Literary, Nemeth) • Low-tech devices (e.g., braillewriter, slate and stylus) • Tactile graphics • Text read aloud (e.g., live reader, student reads out loud to him/herself) • Assistive Technology tools (e.g., Braille notetaker, electronic braillewriter, portable digital talking book player, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer, electronic tablet) • Auditory/screen reader • Electronic calculators and dictionaries • Large print or Braille notes, outlines, and instructions • Descriptive video	• Large print • Magnification devices (e.g., CCTV, video magnifier) • Low-tech optical devices (e.g., handheld magnifier, stand magnifier, handheld telescope) • Braille (e.g., Literary, Nemeth, foreign language, computer) • Low-tech devices (e.g., braillewriter, slate and stylus) • Tactile Graphics • Text read aloud (e.g., live reader, student reads out loud to him/herself) • Assistive Technology tools (e.g., Braille notetaker, electronic braillewriter, portable digital talking book player, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer, electronic tablet) • Auditory/screen reader • Electronic calculators and dictionaries • Large print or Braille notes, outlines, and instructions • **Descriptive Video***

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND OR LOW VISION (CONTINUED)		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Type on a Brailler • Speak into tape recorder/digital recorder • Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus) • Use personal note taker • Provide boundaries for written response (e.g., use of bold line paper)	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Type on a Brailler • Speak into tape recorder/digital recorder • Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus) • Provide boundaries for written response (e.g., use of bold line paper)
Setting	• Change location to reduce distraction • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., lighting) • Change location to access special equipment	• Change location to reduce distraction • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., lighting) • Change location to access special equipment
Timing and Scheduling	• Extended time • Provide additional breaks	• Extended time • Provide additional breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Captioning • Visual cues • Written notes, outlines, and instructions • Captioned videotape and descriptive video • Provide advanced organizers and outlines of lectures for student to follow • Use gestures (e.g., point to materials) • Repeat questions and responses from classmates including identification of the speaker • Allow student to copy notes from classmate • Use captioned versions of instructional films and include script when possible • Give interpreter instructional materials in advance • Learn manual signs and teach them to hearing classmates • Allow student to use relay services and videophones	• Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Screen reader
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor if the student uses his/her voice clearly • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor • **Use spelling and grammar assistive devices*** • **Use visual organizers*** • **Use graphic organizers***

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING (CONTINUED)		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Setting	• Change location to reduce distraction • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)	• Change location to reduce distraction • Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)
Timing and Scheduling	• Extended time • Provide additional breaks	• Extended time • Provide additional breaks
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WEAK MANUAL DEXTERITY, DIFFICULTY WITH PENCIL, DIFFICULTY TYPING ON STANDARD KEYBOARD		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Express response to scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use thick pencil or pencil grip • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use thick pencil or pencil grip
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: ARTICULATION AND SPEECH SOUND PRODUCTION DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Model and exaggerate correct production of sounds • Ensure student attends to speaker's mouth when modeling	Not applicable
Response	• Allow extra response time • If unintelligible, use Voice Output Device (VOD)/AAC device • Another student or adult reads written responses • Pair visual supports (sign language, pictures, gestures) with speech • Avoid asking student to repeat	• Allow extra response time • If unintelligible, use Voice Output Device (VOD)/AAC device • Another student or adult reads written responses • Pair visual supports (sign language, pictures, gestures) with speech • **Avoid asking student to repeat***
Setting	• Minimize background and environmental noise	• Minimize background and environmental noise
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SPEECH FLUENCY DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Allow nonverbal response (thumbs up/down, response cards) • Call on only when he/she volunteers • Partner/choral reading (when reading aloud) • Give advance notice for being called on or asked to read aloud (provide time for anticipation of his/her turn) • Eliminate competition to "have the floor" • Use non-verbal cue ("secret signal") to remind of fluency-enhancing techniques • Avoid finishing student's sentences • Allow extra time for verbal responses	• **Allow nonverbal response (thumbs up/down, response cards)*** • Avoid finishing student's sentences/interrupting • Allow extra time for verbal responses
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: VOICE DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Allow for use of amplification (e.g., microphone, sound enhancement system) • Allow non-verbal responses • Minimize background and environmental noise • Use non-verbal cue ("secret signal") to remind of good vocal habits when responding aloud	• Allow for use of amplification (e.g., microphone, sound enhancement system) • **Allow non-verbal responses*** • Minimize background and environmental noise
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing/ Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: LANGUAGE – AUDITORY COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Instructor should speak slowly and deliberately • Use recorded information to allow for repeated presentations • Frequent checks for understanding (ask him/her to restate information, not imitate) • Reduce length of oral information or break into smaller units • Reduce complexity of oral information (simplify vocabulary, sentence complexity) • Provide visual supports (e.g., pictures, visual/graphic organizer, study guide, buddy notes, videos, movies) • Use hands-on activities (e.g., act-out, demonstrate) • Allow extra time • Restate • Rephrase • Summarize • Pre-teach (e.g., vocabulary, language, concepts) • Signal topic changes • Encourage creation of own vocabulary picture cards	• Instructor should speak slowly and deliberately • **Frequent checks for understanding (ask him/her to restate information, not imitate)*** • **Reduce length of oral information or break into smaller units*** • **Reduce complexity of oral information (simplify vocabulary, sentence complexity)*** • **Provide visual supports*** • Allow extra time
Response	Not applicable	Not applicable
Setting	• Maximize positive listening environment (e.g., use microphone, sound enhancement system)	• Maximize positive listening environment (e.g., use microphone, sound enhancement system)
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: LANGUAGE – VERBAL EXPRESSION		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Allow extra response time • Allow use of visual supports • Allow use of VOD/AAC device (high- or low-tech) • Provide model/sample sentence • Provide carrier phrase (e.g., open-ended statement for student to supply one or two words) • Restate child's verbal output, provide correct model • Avoid asking student to repeat	• Allow extra response time • **Allow use of visual supports*** • Allow use of VOD/AAC device (high- or low-tech)
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DECODING DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	• Human reader • Screen reader • Videotape	• Human reader only if screen reader is not available • Screen reader
Response	• Timing/Scheduling	Not applicable
Setting	• Change location so student does not distract others • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Change location so student does not distract others • **Use written notes, outlines, and instructions***
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITTEN EXPRESSION DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g., electronic spelling device, spell check on computer) • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to a scribe through speech • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • **Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g. electronic spelling device, spell check on computer)***
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: MATHEMATICAL DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments**
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Use calculation devices • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Use math tables and formula sheets	• Use calculation devices • Use math tables and formula sheets • **Visual organizers*** • **Graphic organizers***
Setting	Not applicable	Not applicable
Timing and Scheduling	Not applicable	Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: PHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	Not applicable	Not applicable
Response	• Express response to scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communications device • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIG Mack, Jelly Bean switch, or DynaVox) • Use written notes, outlines, and instructions	• Express response to scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communications device • Type on, or speak to, word processor • Speak into tape recorder • **Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet*** • Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIG Mack, Jelly Bean switch, or DynaVox)
Setting	• Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment	• Change location to increase physical access • Change location to access special equipment
Timing and Scheduling	• Extended time • Multiple or frequent breaks	• Extended time • Multiple or frequent breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DIFFICULTY SUSTAINING ATTENTION OR EFFORT		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Use books on tape or recorded books to help focus on text • Give short and simple directions with examples • Offer choices • Use of manipulatives	• Break questions into smaller sets and allow student to complete sets, taking breaks as needed • Offer choices
Response	• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet • Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Highlight key words in directions • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns	• **Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet*** • **Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet*** • **Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses*** • **Use visual organizers*** • **Use graphic organizers*** • **Highlight key words in directions** • **Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding*** • **Use template*** • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns
Setting	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Provide cushion or positioner	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Use of manipulatives • Use of private room or individual proctoring • Provide cushion or positioner
Timing and Scheduling	• Use short segment test booklets (when available) • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Schedule tests in the morning • Cue student to begin working and stay on task • Change testing schedule or order of subtests • Limit reading periods • Schedule activities requiring more seat time in the morning and more hands-on and physical activities in the afternoon • Divide long-term assignments	• **Use short segment test booklets (when available)*** • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Schedule tests in the morning • Cue student to begin working and stay on task • **Change testing schedule or order of subtests***

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: ANXIETY		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Give short and simple directions with examples • Allow for note-taker/recorder or provide copies of other's notes • Tape record lectures or discussions	• Read orally
Response	• Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Highlight key words in directions • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns • Provide word banks, equation sheets or other tools to assist with "blanking out"	• **Provide alternative format to test - write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet*** • Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • **Use visual organizers*** • **Use graphic organizers*** • **Highlight key words in directions*** • **Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding*** • **Use template*** • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns • **Provide word banks, equation sheets or other tools***
Setting	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Allow student to choose seat • Allow student to become familiar with environment	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Allow student to choose seat • Allow student to become familiar with environment • Use of private room or individual proctoring
Timing and Scheduling	• Use short segment test booklets (when available) • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Change testing schedule or order of subtests • Provide testing schedule to student ahead of time • Provide test information ahead of time – number of questions, form of test (multiple-choice, etc.), subject matter,	• **Use short segment test booklets (when available)*** • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • **Change testing schedule or order of subtests or segment exams over time periods*** • Provide testing schedule to student ahead of time • Provide test information ahead of time – number of questions, form of test

	how scored • Increase frequency of exams • Provide course alternative with no exams • Provide make-up exams	(multiple-choice, etc.), subject matter, how scored • **Increase frequency of exams*** • **Provide course alternative with no exams*** • **Provide make-up exams***
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SEIZURES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Give clear and consistent directions • Allow for note-taker/recorder or provide copies of other's notes and outlines • Tape record lectures or discussions • Give assignments in familiar format	• Read orally • Provide tests in familiar format • Provide text versions of oral directions and questions
Response	• Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Provide study aides, review sheets with key concepts	• **Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses*** • **Use visual organizers*** • **Use graphic organizers*** • **Highlight key words in directions*** • **Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding*** • **Use template*** • **Provide word banks, equation sheets , multiple-choice, true/false, matching *** • Provide tests in familiar format
Setting	• Sit in front of room	• Sit in front of room • Use of private room or individual proctoring
Timing and Scheduling	• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Change testing schedule or order of subtests • Provide make-up exams	• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • **Change testing schedule or order of subtests or segment exams over time periods*** • **Provide make-up exams*** • Allow more time

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SENSORY ISSUES		
Category	**Accommodations to Consider for Instruction**	**Accommodations to Consider for Assessments** Note: Not all accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. Those accommodations that are not allowed are listed in bold and marked with an "*".
Presentation	• Give short and simple directions with examples • Allow for note-taker/recorder or provide copies of other's notes • Tape record lectures or discussions • Provide advance notice of fire drills • Provide written or picture schedule of daily activities • Provide manipulatives or chewables for self-regulation • Provide headphones/earplugs to reduce noise at lunch, recess, fire drills	• Oral and written directions
Response	• Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet • Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses • Use visual organizers • Use graphic organizers • Highlight key words in directions • Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding • Use template • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns • Allow student ample time to answer orally in class	• **Provide alternative format to test - write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet*** • **Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet*** • **Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses*** • **Use visual organizers*** • **Use graphic organizers*** • **Highlight key words in directions*** • **Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding*** • **Use template*** • Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns
Setting	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Provide cushion or positioner	• Sit in front of room • Change location to reduce distractions • Provide cushion or positioner • Use of private room or individual proctoring

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SENSORY ISSUES (CONTINUED)		
Timing and Scheduling	• Use short segment test booklets (when available) • Allow for multiple or frequent breaks • Change testing schedule or order of subtests • Provide testing schedule to student ahead of time	• **Use short segment test booklets (when available)*** • **Allow for multiple or frequent breaks*** • **Change testing schedule or order of subtests or segment exams over time periods*** • **Provide testing schedule to student ahead of time*** • Allow extended time

Modified with permission. Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities (2nd ed) (2005). Washington, DC: Professional Development and Communications Study Group of the Assessing Special Education Students (ASES) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS), Council of Chief State School Officers. Available at www.ccsso.org.

Decision Criteria and Considerations by Statewide Assessment Option				
	Assessment Options			
	ISTEP+/ECA without Accommodations	ISTEP+/ECA with Accommodations	**IMAST** **(Available only through Spring 2014)**	Alternate
IDOE Criteria and Considerations for Decision Making				
Presence of Disability	Considerations: -The presence of a disability exists and is documented. -The presence of disability does not necessarily mean that a testing accommodation is needed. -A student's CCC should decide whether accommodation is needed, based on the needs of the student in specific academic areas.	Considerations: -The presence of a disability exists and is documented. -A student's CCC determines the need for a testing accommodation based on the student's needs in specific academic areas. -Selected accommodations should be ones that the student uses on a regular basis in his/her educational program. -Accommodations must be those that are allowable per IDOE criteria. -Selected accommodations should be documented in the student's IEP.	IDOE criteria: The student's disability has prevented the student from achieving proficiency as measured by previous ISTEP+ tests or through other assessments that validly document grade-level academic achievement. Considerations: -The presence of a disability exists and is documented. -Consider the student's skills and needs in specific academic areas by reviewing prior assessment performance (e.g., Acuity, mCLASS, IREAD, local assessments, and progress monitoring data). -Is prior performance on statewide and district assessments consistent with daily performance?	IDOE criteria: There is empirical evidence of a severe disability or a significant cognitive disability that precludes the acquisition of achievement standards necessary to obtain a high school diploma. Considerations: - The presence of a significant cognitive disability exists and is documented. -Data documents that the disability is such that the student is unable to acquire, maintain, generalize, and apply academic skills across environments even with extensive and individualized instruction.

			-How does the student's performance compare to grade-level expectations, criterion-referenced goals, and progress goals?	

Intensity of Instruction	Considerations: -If accommodations are not needed and used on a regular basis in order for the student to access grade-level content through instruction and/or assessment purposes, accommodations most likely are not necessary or appropriate. -The CCC makes the decision about need for accommodations and provides documentation in the student's IEP.	Considerations: -Accommodations that have been needed and used on a regular basis for the student's instruction should be considered for use on statewide assessments. -Input from the student, teacher, and parent can be helpful in selecting accommodations that have been effective as part of the student's educational program. -In accordance with state guidelines, the CCC determines the need for a testing accommodation based on the student's specific needs. -The CCC makes the decision about need for accommodations and provides documentation in the student's IEP.	IDOE Criteria: The student is able to meaningfully access curriculum for enrolled grade level, but is not likely to achieve grade-level proficiency within the same time frame as other students. Considerations: In applicable subject area(s): -IEP progress monitoring data indicates that achieving grade-level proficiency within one year is unlikely even with significant growth. -Documentation of the level, frequency, and nature of intervention and instruction. -Documentation of the provision and impact of instructional accommodations should be discussed by the CCC and included in the student's IEP.	IDOE Criteria: Even when provided access to a differentiated general education curriculum and individualized instruction with extensive modification and support, the student is unable to derive reasonable educational benefits without significant individualized modification to content and performance expectations. Considerations: -The IEP documents the need for services that are intensive, frequent, and across settings. - The IEP includes extensive modifications and supports in order to allow the student to derive reasonable educational benefit. - Documentation of the provision and impact of instructional accommodations should be discussed by the CCC and included in the student's IEP.

Curricular Outcomes	Considerations: -The student's course of study is leading toward a high school diploma.	Considerations: - The student's course of study is leading toward a high school diploma.	IDOE Criteria: The student is expected to earn a high school diploma prior to exiting high school, either by demonstrating proficiency on any required graduation examination or through the appeals process. Considerations: -IEP includes content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. -Documentation that the student's disability has prevented them from achieving proficiency as measured by previous ISTEP+ attempts or through other assessments that validly document grade-level academic achievement. -Documentation of the provision and impact of instructional accommodations. -The student's course of study is leading towards a high school diploma.	IDOE Criteria: IEP goals and objectives focus on basic functional performance and communication areas. Considerations: -IEP goals address areas based on grade-level alternate achievement standards. -IEP goals address areas that are reasonable for educational benefit. -IEP goals focus on areas that differ substantially in form and/or substance from that of most other students. --Student's course of study is leading toward a certificate of completion.

Questions for Parents to Ask About Accommodations

Questions about accommodations during *Instruction*

Is my child expected to reach regular or alternate achievement standards? Does this affect what types of accommodations are available to my child during instruction or on assessments?

What accommodations does my child need to access and reach academic standards?

Are there accommodations that could be allowed during instruction that are not currently being provided?

Are there accommodations being used at home that could be used during instruction to help my child access and learn content and/or help in performing certain academic tasks?

Are the accommodations my child is receiving during instruction meant to be a temporary support? If so, what is the plan to help determine when to phase out or discontinue the use of a certain accommodation?

How are the staff members who work with my child providing accommodations (across general, special education, or other staff)?

Questions about accommodations during *Assessment*

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?

Are the accommodations allowed on state tests also provided for local tests?

Can my child participate in part of an assessment with or without accommodations?

If my child is not taking the general assessment, is it because the test is "too hard" or because the accommodation needed is not allowed on the assessment?

Are there consequences for allowing certain changes to how my child participates in a test? How will my child's test scores count?

Do consequences of accommodations vary by type of test?

Questions about accommodations during *both Instruction and Assessment*

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

Are there too many or too few accommodations being provided?

What are my child's preferences for specific accommodations?

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

If an accommodation used during instruction is not permitted on a test, is there another option that is allowed? If so, has it been documented and tried during instruction first? If not, how is my child being prepared to work without the accommodation before the test?

List other questions here.

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After-Test Accommodations Questions

Use this form after a test to interview a student about the provided accommodation(s): whether it was used, whether it was useful, and whether it should be used again. Also note any adjustments or difficulties experienced by the student in either how the accommodation was administered or in using the accommodation during the assessment.

Student_____ Date_____

Questions	**Test Taken (List)**			
Was the accommodation used?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Was the accommodation useful?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Were there any difficulties with the accommodation? Are adjustments needed?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Should the accommodation be used again?	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Adjustments or Difficulties Experienced				

Student signature _____

Assistant signature (if applicable) _____

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Assessment Accommodations Agreement

This form communicates the assessment accommodations that I need as a student. These accommodations are listed on my Individualized Education Program (IEP).

I,_____,
(Student's name)

need the following accommodations to take part in this assessment:

- (list accommodation)
- (list accommodation)
- (list accommodation)

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

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

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

_____ _____
(Student signature) (Date)

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Elliott, J.L. & Thurlow, M.L. (2006). *Improving Test Performance of Students with Disabilities…on District and State Assessments (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Nolet, V. & McLaughlin, M. J. (2005). *Accessing the General Curriculum: Including Students with Disabilities in Standards-Based Reform, (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.