



Accessibility and Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment Resource Guide and Toolkit

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Accessibility Advisory Committee Participants

Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Charity Flores, *Director of Assessment*

Dr. Kristine David, *Asst. Director of Assessment*

Karen Stein, *Assessment Specialist*

Kristan Sievers-Coffer, *Senior Special Education Specialist*

Stephanie Thompson, *Assessment Specialist (Alternate Assessment)*

Sarah Larrison, *Special Education Specialist*

Kristy Wright, *Special Education Specialist*

Valerie Beard, *Assistant Director of English Learners and Migrant Education Programs*

Adam Pitt, *English Learner Specialist*

Graham Collins, *Federal Grants Specialist*

Special Education

Joel Boehner, *Executive Director of IN*SOURCE*

Lesa Paddock, *IN*SOURCE Parent Liaison to IDOE*

Jolly Piersall, *Director, Indiana IEP Resource Center*

Matthew Johnson, *Indiana IEP Resource Center*

Brady Tragesser, *Indiana IEP Resource Center*

Daniel McNulty, [PATINS Project](#) *State Director*

Dawn Crock, *Indiana School for the Deaf, Special Education Coordinator*

Melissa Lancaster, *Director of Special Education, Forest Hills Special Education Cooperative*

Kim Dodson, *Executive Director, ARC of Indiana*

Tara Rinehart, *Director of Special Education, MSD Wayne Twp*

Tiffany Sanders, *Principal/Director, ISBVI*

Leah Nellis, *Dean of the School of Education, Professor of Education, Indiana University Kokomo*

English Learners

Erika Tran, *MSD Lawrence Twp*

Choonhyun Jeon, *Monroe County Community School Corporation*

Carrie Painter, *Tippecanoe School Corporation*

Jitka Nelson, *Logansport Community High School*

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Background

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 manual is intended as guidelines for the selection, administration, and evaluation of accessibility supports for instruction and assessment of all students, including students with disabilities, English Learners (ELs), ELs with disabilities, and students without an identified disability or EL status.

The Accessibility and Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment Resource Guide and Toolkit is intended for general education, special education and EL teachers, school administrators, test administrators, school coordinators, and related services personnel to use in administering accessibility supports for those students who need them. The manual is also intended for assessment staff and administrators serving all students who currently have the potential to benefit from these accessibility supports on their paths to college and career readiness.

Accessibility supports (features and accommodations) for instruction and assessment apply to all students. The manual 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 start of educational processes.

Recognizing Accessibility Needs for All Students

In the context of new technology-based instruction and assessments, various accessibility supports are available for students to meet their individualized needs and preferences. These new individualized approaches to accessibility place greater responsibility on educator teams and individuals who make decisions about which students need and should receive specific supports among a variety of accessibility choices. Educators should also ensure that students have ample opportunity to practice using accessibility supports or accessing assessment content.

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

Students with disabilities 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 who have been identified as not yet proficient in English based on a WIDA English Language Proficiency Assessment.

English Learners with disabilities (ELs with disabilities) are students who have been identified as not yet proficient in English based on a WIDA English Language Proficiency Assessment and eligible to receive services identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

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.

Five-step Decision-making Process

This section outlines a five-step decision-making process for administering accessibility supports. Figure 1 highlights the five steps discussed in the manual.

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



This section describes a five-step process that can be used to make optimal accessibility decisions for those students who need accessibility supports in the classroom. The five steps follow:

- Step 1: Expect Students to Achieve Grade-level Standards
- Step 2: Learn About Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment
- Step 3: Identify Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment
- Step 4: Administer Accessibility Supports During Instruction and Assessment
- Step 5: Evaluate Use of Accessibility Supports in Instruction and Assessment

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 equitable 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.

Individual educators or teams of educators who are familiar with all characteristics and needs of students should make instructional and assessment decisions for them. Educators are responsible for developing, implementing, and improving accessibility practices for students. The following are the types of educators who may be involved in making accessibility decisions:

- special education teachers, speech language pathologists, ASL specialists, school psychologists, or 504 Plan committee representatives
- language educators and facilitators (EL teachers, administrators and interpreters)
- assessment officials (test administrators, test coordinators, guidance counselors, reading specialists, school psychologists)
- general education teachers (classroom/content teachers)
- EL special education practitioners
- school administrators (principals, school/district officials)
- parents (parents/guardians)
- students (if appropriate)

To accomplish the goal of equal access in education,

- every educator must be familiar with standards and accountability systems at the state and district level;
- 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 grade-level academic content, English Language Proficiency, or alternate assessment standards, and should be expected to achieve these standards 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 the diverse/specific population of students they are serving.
2. Individualized approaches to instruction and assessment are in place, and individualized plans are developed and followed 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,
- use of alternate assessments to assess the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and
- use of different assessment formats to assess the achievement of ELs and students whose native language is not English; these assessments are tailored specifically for ELs at varying developmental, language proficiency, and academic levels and are aligned with content and achievement standards, curriculum, and instruction.

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. (Refer to the Resource: *Federal Laws, Court Cases, and Federal Guidance on Student Participation* that highlights federal laws, legal cases, and federal guidance regulating student participation in educational processes.

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 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 locations of these standards and their updates.

All students, including students with disabilities, ELs and ELs with disabilities, can work toward grade-level academic content standards. 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, EL educators, special educators, and their general education counterparts must collaborate when making accessibility decisions.

Step 2: Learn About Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment

Current technology enables educators to introduce computer-based instruction and assessment accessibility supports that facilitate individualized educational processes. The purpose of these supports is to reduce or eliminate the effects of students' barriers that prevent them from demonstrating what they know and can do. **Accessibility supports provided in the classroom do not reduce expectations for learning.** Three tiers of accessibility supports – universal features, designated features, and accommodations – 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 universal features (e.g., writing tools), designated features (e.g., translations), or accommodations (e.g., closed captioning), must also be provided during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments; however, some instructional accessibility supports may not be allowable 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 note taking on an assessment). It is important that educators help students become familiar with the supports provided through the assessment technology platform so that students are not using these tools for the first time on test day. **Accessibility supports should be available to the student throughout the school year regardless of their allowable use on assessments.** A [Released Item Repository](#) of sample items to familiarize students with test content and format is available.

It is critical that educators become familiar with state policies about the appropriate use of accessibility supports during assessments. **In the age of technology-mediated educational practices, accessibility supports facilitate instruction and assessment of students effectively if they are selected and used properly.**

Typically, accessibility support use may not begin and end in the school setting, but this may vary depending on the individual. Also, some universal features may need to be turned off for some students if they interfere with student performance. 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 as their English language proficiency increases. Accessibility supports for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined.

When determining accessibility supports for English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments, it is important to remember that ELP assessments and content area assessments measure different constructs, and therefore, different accessibility supports may be allowed for each. This approach is also true for alternate assessments.

Indiana encourages meaningful collaboration among classroom teachers, school administrators, assessment officials, parents, and students to guarantee beneficial instruction and assessment of students. Educators should coordinate their accessibility approaches in the classroom through ongoing interaction and collaboration with each other.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is not a prepackaged, one size fits all program. Rather, it is a framework for providing comprehensive system of differentiated supported based on the unique needs of individual schools and districts. The proactive premise of MTSS works by striving to prevent school failure, and by addressing academic challenges in a responsive way. MTSS is an integrated, multi-tiered

system of instruction, assessment, and **intervention** designed to meet the achievement and behavioral needs of all learners. It is a framework designed to ensure high-quality instruction.

Universal Design Implications

Universal design principles address policies and practices that are intended to improve access to learning and assessments for all students. Universal design principles are important to the development and review of instructional and assessment content because some ways of presenting content make it difficult for some students to show what they know. When educators employ universal design techniques, they can gain a more accurate understanding of what students know and can do. Universal design techniques should be applied consistently in instruction and assessments. In contrast to retrofitting, these techniques are integrated in instruction and assessment from the start. Educators should consider the following principles of universal design:

- Multiple means of Engagement, to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation
- Multiple means of Representation, to give diverse learners options for acquiring information and knowledge
- Multiple means of Action & Expression, to provide learners options for demonstrating what they know

Universally-designed instructional and assessment content may reduce the need for accommodations and for alternate assessments. Nevertheless, universal design cannot completely eliminate the need for accommodations or for alternate assessments and therefore accommodations should be written into a student's IEP. Universal design can provide states with more accessible assessments and can provide educators with more valid inferences about the achievement levels of all students.

Universal design of assessments does not simply mean that instruction and assessments are carried out in a computer-based environment. With greater implementation of technological solutions, thinking about accommodations and universal design may change. Traditionally, educators have thought of universal design as coming first, and accommodations being applied during instruction and assessment. With current technology, educational stakeholders can build some accommodations into the design of instructional and assessment content itself and redefine some accommodations as universal or designated features to empower greater numbers of students with optimal accessibility options.

Administrative Considerations for Instruction and Assessment

For both instruction and assessment, some administrative resources and strategies, such as testing in small groups, should be allowable for all students. Though available to all students, some students need this accommodation to be successful in classroom situations. The need should be recorded in the IEP.

Modifications in Instruction and Classroom 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 refer to practices or materials that change, lower, or reduce state-required learning expectations. Modifications may change the underlying construct of an assessment.

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 transfer to a state assessment. If students have not had access to critical, assessed content, they may be at risk for not meeting graduation requirements.

Instructional Accessibility Supports

To optimize students' educational experiences, educators should collaborate on their instructional approaches. Every educator needs to be familiar with state policies. Educators 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 instruction and assessment needs? How might student access to curriculum, instruction, and assessment be supported with the goal of developing student independence? Does the student need any designated features or accommodations? A student may not be receiving an accessibility support he or she really needs 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.

To ensure that all students are engaged in standards-based instruction, their educators should consider their unique needs and characteristics when making instructional accessibility decisions. For ELs with disabilities for example, IEP team members should consider the degree of each student's language- and disability-related needs. Accessibility decisions should be individualized based on the particular language- and disability-related challenges faced by ELs with disabilities. Students with high English language needs and low disability-related needs will require more language-based supports while their counterparts with high disability-related needs and low English language needs will require more supports that remove disability-related barriers. At the same time, students with high English language needs and high disability-related needs may benefit from more intensive language- and disability-related supports while students with low English language needs and low disability-related needs will require fewer supports that alleviate linguistic and disability-related assessment challenges.

This approach of accounting for varying English language- and disability-related needs for ELs with disabilities was developed to reinforce the idea that students in each of the four sections will require different instructional support. Moreover, variability within each section should be taken into account, and students' individualized needs should be addressed on an individual basis. **This approach also aims to reiterate that educators should fully account for the complexity of both language and disability implications during the instruction and assessment of ELs with disabilities.**

Step 3: Identify Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment

To ensure that all students are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every educator must be knowledgeable about the state and district academic standards and assessments. 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, English language proficiency, 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, which includes a student's input, they can advance equitable opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum.

State policies generally delineate assessment policy 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-related criteria, such as: English language proficiency 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 the student received before coming to the U.S., the time spent in English speaking schools, the time spent in your state, performance on other assessments, the resources available to students in their native languages, or the student's cultural background may also help educators determine which accessibility supports should be used. It is also important to remember that certain accessibility supports may be used on some types of assessments but are prohibited on other types because they have the potential to invalidate the measured construct. Thus, such linguistic supports as glossaries may be helpful on content assessments but would compromise English language proficiency assessment results.

Documenting Accessibility Supports for All Students

To ensure continuous monitoring and improvement of accessibility approaches, educators should document how students use accessibility supports. Documenting what designated features (if any) are used/not used for each particular student and what accommodations are available to this student will enable educators to make more informed decisions based on longitudinal data about accessibility supports. Educators should ensure that they are collecting data to inform their instruction and assessment practices with regard to accessibility supports. Refer to Appendix for examples.

Documenting Accessibility Supports Under IDEA

For ELs with disabilities served under IDEA, 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 Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP), the process of identifying and documenting accessibility supports should be a fairly straightforward event. The PLAAFP 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 at least 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]

Decision-making Process

The decision-making process for providing accessibility supports should include consideration of at least these three factors:

1. Student characteristics – disabilities, language proficiency, cultural background and accessibility supports used in classroom instruction/assessments to access and perform in academic standards and state tests.

2. Classroom instruction and assessment tasks – knowledge about what tasks are required in instruction and on state assessments and ways to remove physical and other barriers to a student’s ability to perform those tasks.
3. Accessibility policy – accessibility policy for an assessment or for part of an assessment and consequences of decisions.

If multiple accessibility supports are employed for a student, educators should also be cognizant of the possible interactions of these accessibility supports. For instance, the highlighter might change colors if the color contrast is turned on.

Student Characteristics

Selecting accessibility supports for instruction and assessment is the role of a student’s educators, the student, and parents/guardians 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 of further improvement (applicable to all students, not just ELs)?
- How do the student’s learning needs affect the 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 for assignments and assessments when accessibility supports are used and not used?
- What is the student’s perception of how well an accessibility support “worked”?
- Are there effective combinations of accessibility supports?
- 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 revisions/enhancements needed, or should the use of the accessibility support be discontinued?

When matching accessibility supports with students' needs, educational teams should consider the following:

- opportunities to learn how to use the accessibility support in classroom and community settings, and
- conditions for use on state assessments.

Involving Students in Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accessibility Supports

It is critical for students to understand their needs and learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Some students have had limited experience expressing personal preferences and advocating for themselves. Speaking out about preferences, particularly in the presence of “authority figures,” may be a new role for students, one for which they need guidance and feedback. Educators can play a key role in working with students to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating age appropriate, peer-like 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. 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 they prefer certain supports. It is important to not limit the option of student feedback and student self-advocacy for those who cannot communicate those preferences easily.

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 student needs to 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 post-secondary 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 content assessments. Accessibility supports, therefore, should be selected in accordance to whether language proficiency or content area knowledge is being tested.

Educators should create a plan that describes who will teach the student how and when to use each new accessibility support. They should be certain there is ample time to learn to use instructional and assessment accessibility supports before an assessment takes place. It is important that students understand their accommodations and accessibility choices better in order to advocate for themselves. 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

During Instruction

An accessibility support should **not** be used solely during assessments. Students must be provided selected accessibility supports during instruction that necessitate their use. Accessibility supports should always be chosen based on a student's individual characteristics in order to help them with accessing content meaningfully and equitably.

As Indiana moves toward providing assessments on technology-based platforms, educators must make sure that students have opportunities to become familiar with the technological aspects of the assessment process and utilize these supports as part of their instruction. In addition to taking practice tests using the same testing platform, it is also important for educators to provide opportunities for all students to use technology for learning.

In some cases, teachers may use accessibility supports without realizing that they do, equating these supports to instructional strategies. It is important that teachers be aware of the range of accessibility supports available for their students and use these supports appropriately and consistently in instruction and assessment.

During Assessment

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.

Providing accessibility supports through the testing platform can ensure that the provision of accessibility is standardized from student to student and district to district. However, it is important to monitor the provision of accessibility supports on test day to ensure that supports are delivered and the technology is working as it should. Teachers should be in communication with assessment coordinators in a timely manner to ensure that the assessment is properly programmed and verified with the appropriate accessibility supports for a student.

The same accessibility supports cannot always be used on various types of assessments (content assessments, ELP assessments, alternate assessments). For instance, stacked translations may be appropriate on content or alternate assessments but would likely invalidate the measured construct on ELP assessments.

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, telling a student they may want to review and answer, or giving clues in any other way. Educators should refer to a state's integrity or ethical practices guides if they are available.

Standardization

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accessibility supports is necessary to ensure that test results reflect actual student knowledge. Test administrators and proctors should also carefully adhere to state policies that lay out what to do when selected accessibility supports do not work well.

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. If non-embedded accessibility supports are used, assessment security can become an issue when other test formats are used (e.g., braille, large print) or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader, scribe). To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to (1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content, and (3) return all materials as instructed. Some of the same considerations for test security apply to embedded 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 terminals, (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 with local test coordinators to verify 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 are necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students in state- and district-wide assessments. Data on the use and impact of accessibility supports during assessments may reveal questionable patterns of the use of accessibility supports, as well as inform the continued use of some supports or the rethinking of others.

Examination of the 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 needs to be gathered on the implementation of accessibility supports during assessment. Observations conducted during test administration, interviews with test administrators, and talking with students after testing sessions will likely yield data that can be used to guide the formative evaluation process at the school or district level and at the student level.

Gathering information on accessibility supports may be easier in a technology-based assessment platform, when these supports are programmed into the system. However, just because information *can* be collected does not automatically indicate that it is meaningful. 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.

Information on the use of accessibility supports can be feasible to collect when it is coded on the test form with other student information.

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 ethical testing practices, the standardized administration of assessments, and that test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. Are there procedures in place to ensure test administration 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 IEP, ILP 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 ineffective supports?

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 ineffective?
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 the use of 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 and each individual student. 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. For additional support contact the [PATINS](#) resource center.

Post-secondary Implications

College and career readiness is an important educational outcome for all students. As students plan for their transition to post-secondary 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 education institution or place of employment.

In some instances, standardized assessments are used in states for accountability purposes. These tests 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.

Statewide Assessment Common Questions and Answers

1. 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 access 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.

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 accessing grade-level content standards.

2. What are the Indiana statewide assessments and who participates?

ILEARN

The purpose of *Indiana's Learning Evaluation Assessment Readiness Network (ILEARN)* is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades 3-8, Biology, and United States Government in grade 10. In particular, ILEARN reports student achievement levels according to the Indiana College and Career Ready Standards that were adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education. ILEARN is criterion-referenced assessment and is designed to measure students' mastery of the standards for accountability purposes.

ISTEP+ Grade 10

The purpose of ISTEP+ 10 is to measure student achievement beginning in Grade 10. ISTEP+ assesses student proficiency for accountability purposes on English/Language Arts, and Mathematics according to the Indiana Academic Standards that were adopted by the Indiana State Board of Education.

IREAD-3

The purpose of the *Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD-3)* assessment is to measure foundational reading standards through grade three. Based on the *Indiana Academic Standards*, IREAD-3 is a summative assessment that was developed in accordance with HEA 1367 (also known as PL 109 from 2010) which "requires the evaluation of reading skills for students who are in grade three beginning in the Spring of 2012 to ensure that all students can read proficiently before moving on to grade four."

I AM

Federal law (IDEA 2008) and state law require that all students participate in Indiana's assessment system. For most students with special needs, this law requires participation in ILEARN assessments, with or without accommodations. For students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3-8 and 10, however, the Case Conference Committee may determine that Indiana's Alternate Measure (I AM), an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) is the most appropriate

assessment for the student for accountability purposes.

ISTAR-KR (Kindergarten Readiness)

The purpose of *ISTAR Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR)* is to measure readiness skills in children from infancy to kindergarten. A derivative of Indiana's Early Learning Standards (which are part of the Foundations to *Indiana Academic Standards*), ISTAR-KR is aligned to the *Indiana Academic Standards* for Kindergarten in the areas of English/language arts and mathematics and includes three functional areas: physical, personal care and social-emotional skills. Data from ISTAR-KR assessments are used in state reporting for PK students receiving special education services. The assessment may also be used for local purposes in grades PK through 1.

English Language Proficiency Assessment (WIDA-ACCESS, WIDA Alternate)

The purpose of the English Language Proficiency assessments is to determine a student's level of English proficiency for students in grades K-12. WIDA is the assessment administered in Indiana. WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) is administered upon a student's arrival in the United States, to determine which English Learner (EL) services are appropriate for the student. The annual assessment, ACCESS for ELs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is administered in January and February, to determine the student's current level of English proficiency. The annual assessment is also used for accountability purposes.

NAEP

The purpose of the *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)*, also known as "The Nation's Report Card," is to determine performance for a selected sample of students within Indiana. NAEP is administered annually to students in grades 4, 8, and 12, and can be used to compare student performance across the United States and over time.

College Placement Exams (e.g. PSAT, SAT, AP, PLAN, ACT)

The purpose of the college placement exams is to prepare students to enter college. Typical accommodations that are agreed upon during a case conference committee may not be eligible for use on these exams. Please reference the following links for more information:

PSAT, SAT, AP: <https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>

PLAN and ACT: <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/disab/>

3. What are Accommodations?

Accommodations can be divided into two purposes: Accommodations for instruction and accommodations for statewide assessments.

A. Accommodations for Instruction

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 or the complexity of what is being taught, but is a way of providing equal access for the student with a disability to grade-level content. 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 tasks and assessments 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.

B. 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 (not permitted on ILEARN and I AM in grades 3-5), 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)

State accommodation guidance is available on the IDOE website at

<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/accessibility-and-accommodations-guidance-1819-final-051118.pdf>

4. 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. Be aware that some accommodations used in a general education classroom are not allowable on the statewide assessment (e.g., Calculator is not permitted on ILEARN and I AM in grades 3-5).

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.

5. 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.

6. What should the CCC consider when selecting accommodations?

To ensure 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:

- Student characteristics that need to be considered so that accommodations reduce the effect of the disability.
- Instructional tasks where students are expected to demonstrate grade-level state standards content knowledge and skills, such as assignments and class tests.
- 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 (I AM) 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 using the alternate assessment. The criteria are available at: <https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/iam>.

7. 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:

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

8. 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.

Questions and Considerations during the Assessment and Accommodations 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

Step 1: Ensure all decision makers understand the purpose of the statewide assessment.	
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 on Indiana academic standards.
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 (ILEARN 3-8, ISTEP+ 10, End of Course Assessments (ECAs), IREAD-3, and WIDA when applicable). Other options, such as the alternate assessment (I AM and WIDA Alt when applicable), are available for students for whom general assessments are not appropriate due to the severity and nature of the student's disability and the intensity of services needed by the student. ¹

Step 3: Ensure all decision makers understand the standard administration procedures for the statewide assessments.	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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? 	<p>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.</p>
Step 4: Ensure all decision makers understand the consequences associated with each statewide assessment option.	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for CCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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? 	<p>The decision about which assessment option will be utilized should not drive placement or services for the student. Students for whom alternate assessment 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.</p>
Step 5: Determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary for the student.	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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? 	<p>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.</p>
Step 6: Determine which statewide assessment option will be used for the student.	
Questions for Parents to Ask	Considerations for the CCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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? 	<p>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.</p>

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.

¹ For more information on Indiana Assessments go to: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment>

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.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND OR LOW VISION

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Large print booklet
- Magnification devices or built in zoom tools (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 (built in text to speech)
- Reads aloud to self
- Assistive Technology tools (e.g., Braille note taker, electronic braillewriter, portable digital talking book player, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer, electronic tablet)
- Auditory/screen reader
- Electronic calculators and dictionaries (only the built in calculator is available for state testing, calculator not permitted on ILEARN and I AM in grades 3-5)
- Braille notes, outlines, and instructions
- Descriptive Video

Response

- Express response to a scribe through speech
- Type on, or speak to, word processor
- Type on a Braille
- 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

Timing and Scheduling

- Extended time
- Provide additional breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Sign language (based on student's communication modality)
- Audio amplification devices
- Live or remote captioning (i.e., Communication Access Realtime Translation - CART)
- Visual cues
- Written notes, outlines, and instructions
- Captioned digital and visual media)
- 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
- Give interpreter instructional materials in advance
- Learn manual signs and teach them to hearing classmates
- Allow student to use relay services and
- Videophones
- Screen reader
- Human reader following a script

Response

- Express response to a scribe through speech/sign language
- 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

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)

Timing and Scheduling

- Extended time
- Provide additional breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WEAK MANUAL DEXTERITY, DIFFICULTY WITH PENCIL, DIFFICULTY TYPING ON STANDARD KEYBOARD

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: VOICE DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Not applicable

Response

- Allow for use of amplification (e.g., microphone, sound enhancement system)
- Minimize background and environmental noise
- Use non-verbal cue ("secret signal") to remind of good vocal habits when responding aloud
- Allow non-verbal responses

Setting

- Not applicable

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: ARTICULATION AND SPEECH SOUND PRODUCTION DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Model and exaggerate correct production of sounds
- Ensure student attends to speaker's mouth when modeling
- Extended time (slow down, give plenty of wait time for responses)

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

Setting

- Minimize background and environmental noise
- Test individually to reduce distraction
- Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking)

Timing and Scheduling

- Allow student time to activate device

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SPEECH FLUENCY DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- 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
- Allow extra time for verbal responses
- Allow nonverbal response (thumbs up/down, response cards)
- Avoid finishing student's sentences/interrupting

Setting

- Not applicable

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: LANGUAGE – AUDITORY COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Instructor should speak slowly and deliberately
- Use recorded information to allow for repeated presentations
- 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
- 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

Response

- Not applicable

Setting

- Maximize positive listening environment (e.g., use microphone, sound enhancement system)

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: LANGUAGE – VERBAL EXPRESSION

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Not applicable

Response

- 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

- Small group

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DECODING DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Videotape
- Human reader only if screen reader is not available
- Screen reader

Response

- Timing/Scheduling

Setting

- Change location so student does not distract others
- Use written notes, outlines, and instructions

Timing and Scheduling

- Extended time

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITTEN EXPRESSION DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Not applicable

Response

- Express response to a scribe through speech
- Type on, or speak to, word processor
- Speak into tape recorder
- Use written notes, outlines, and instructions
- Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g. electronic spelling device, spell check on computer)

Setting

- Not applicable

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: MATHEMATICAL DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- Not applicable

Response

- Use calculation devices (calculator not permitted on ILEARN and I AM in grades 3-5)
- Use math tables and formula sheets
- Video clips
- Web site support
- Use visual organizers
- Use graphic organizers

Setting

- Not applicable

Timing and Scheduling

- Not applicable

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: PHYSICAL DIFFICULTIES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

Presentation

- 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
- Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIG Mack, Jelly Bean switch, or DynaVox)
- Use written notes, outlines, and instructions
- Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet

Setting

- Change location to increase physical access
- Change location to access special equipment

Timing and Scheduling

- Extended time
- Multiple or frequent breaks

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DIFFICULTY SUSTAINING ATTENTION OR EFFORT

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

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

Response

- 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

Setting

- Sit in front of room
- Change location to reduce distractions
- Provide cushion or positioner
- Use of manipulatives
- Use of private room or individual proctoring

Timing and Scheduling

- 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

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

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
- Provide word banks, equation sheets or other tools to assist with "blinking out"
- Provide alternative format to test - write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet
- 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
- Use of private room or individual proctoring

Timing and Scheduling

- 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, how scored
- Increase frequency of exams
- Provide course alternative with no exams
- Provide make-up exams
- 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

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SEIZURES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

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

- 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
- 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
- Change testing schedule or order of subtests or segment exams over time periods
- Provide make-up exams
- Allow more time

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: SENSORY ISSUES

Note: Not all accessibility features and accommodations are permitted on statewide assessments. For specific assessments, please refer to the [Accessibility and Accommodations Guidance](#).

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

- 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
- Consider room temperature, lighting, and other sensory related needs of students
- Routine adjustment and impact on hunger and thirst or other schedules

Timing and Scheduling

- 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

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 <https://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/ilearn-policy-and-guidance>.

Decision Criteria and Considerations by Statewide Assessment Option			
	Assessment Options		
	General Assessments without Accommodations	General Assessments with Accommodations	Alternate Assessments
IDOE Criteria and Considerations for Decision Making			
Presence of Disability	<p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. 	<p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. 	<p><u>IDOE criteria:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.

<p>Intensity of Instruction</p>	<p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. 	<p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. 	<p><u>DOE Criteria:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Considerations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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.
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Curricular Outcomes	<u>Considerations:</u> -The student's course of study is leading toward a high school diploma.	<u>Considerations:</u> - The student's course of study is leading toward a high school diploma.	<u>IDOE Criteria:</u> IEP goals and objectives focus on basic functional performance and communication areas. <u>Considerations:</u> -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.
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Diploma Options

Reading, writing and math are essential life skills, and students must demonstrate a basic understanding of English/language arts and mathematics as part of the requirements for graduation. For updated information on diploma options based on expected year of graduation (cohort), please see:

<http://www.doe.in.gov/ccr/indianas-diploma-requirements>

Graduation Waiver Process

The assessment requirement for graduation can be met in three ways. For updated information on the graduation waiver process, please see: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/meeting-assessment-requirement-graduationwaiver-process>

Federal Laws, Court Cases, and Federal Guidance on Student Participation

Federal Laws	
ESSA	<p>The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was issued on December 10, 2015 (https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/hrpt354/CRPT-114hrpt354.pdf). It reauthorizes 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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...
IDEA	<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 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</p>

	<p>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>(2) The State's (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA's) guidelines must:</p> <p>(i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and</p> <p>(ii) Instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.</p>
<p>Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act</p>	<p>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</p> <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 is 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 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>
<p>Legal Cases</p>	
<p>Lau v. Nichols (1974)</p>	<p>The 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> <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"> ● students are excluded from effective participation in school because of their inability to speak and understand the language of instruction; ● national origin minority students are inappropriately assigned to special education classes because of their lack of English skills; ● 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 ● parents whose English is limited do not receive school notices or other information in a language they can understand. <p>This law was tested in the Supreme Court Case, <i>Lau v. Nichols</i>. 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 style="padding-left: 40px;">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)	<p>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 three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district’s program for EL students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is it considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy? 2. Are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively? 3. Does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome?
Brookhart v. Illinois State	<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</p>

Board of Education (1983)	diploma requirements, and IEPs need to be written with these specific graduation requirements in mind.
Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1 (2017)	<p>On March 22, 2017 the U.S. Supreme Court (sometimes referred to as Court) issued a unanimous opinion in Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1, 137 S. Ct. 988. In that case, the Court interpreted the scope of the free appropriate public education (FAPE) requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Court overturned the Tenth Circuit’s decision that Endrew, a child with autism, was only entitled to an educational program that was calculated to provide “merely more than de minimis” educational benefit. In rejecting the Tenth Circuit’s reasoning, the Supreme Court determined that, “[t]o meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP [individualized education program] that is reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.” The Court additionally emphasized the requirement that “every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.”</p> <p>The Endrew F. decision is important because it informs our efforts to improve academic outcomes for children with disabilities. To this end, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) is providing parents and other stakeholders information on the issues addressed in Endrew F. and the impact of the Court’s decision on the implementation of the IDEA. FAQ</p>
Federal Guidance	
Questions and Answers Regarding Inclusion of English Learners with Disabilities in English Language Proficiency Assessments and Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives	<p>This joint guidance document developed by the 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 local educational agencies understand how Part B of the <i>IDEA</i> and Titles I and III of the <i>ESEA</i> address the inclusion of ELs with disabilities in annual state ELP assessments. Retrieved July 25, 2016, from www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/q-and-a-on-elp-swd.pdf.</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. Retrieved July 25, 2016, from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/addendum-q-and-a-on-elp-swd.pdf.</p>
Dear Colleague Letter on the Nondiscriminatory Administration of School Discipline	<p>Issued on January 7, 2015, by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education, this 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.</p>

	Retrieved July 25, 2016, from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf .
Dear Colleague Letter on FAPE/IEP Alignment	Issued on November 16, 2015, by the U.S. Department of Education (the Office of Special and Rehabilitative Services), this document addresses the entitlement of each eligible child with a disability to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) aligned with the child's individualized education program (IEP). Retrieved July 25, 2016, from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/guidance-on-fape-11-17-2015.pdf .
Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements: Testing Accommodations	Issued in September 2015 by the Department of Justice, this is the Department's 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. Retrieved July 25, 2016, from http://www.ada.gov/regs2014/testing_accommodations.html .
English Learner Tool Kit	This document was jointly developed by the Department of Education and Department of Justice and issued in September 2015 to help state and local education agencies help 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. Retrieved July 25, 2016, from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html .
Peer Review of State Assessment Systems	This guidance was issued in September 2015 by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (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. Retrieved July 25, 2016, from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/assessguid15.pdf .

Appendix A: Parent Input on Accessibility Supports

Questions Parents Should Ask about Accessibility Supports (Universal Features, Designated Features, and Accommodations) in Instruction and Assessment

About Instruction

- What instructional supports does my child need to access and reach the academic standards?
- How can my child and I advocate to receive accessibility supports not yet provided in instruction?
- Are there any accessibility supports that my child uses at home but does not have available in the classroom?
- 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?
- 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)
- What is the setting or model of program support my child receives for instruction?

About Accessibility Supports

- 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 accessibility supports allowed on state tests also provided for district tests?
- How can I support my child at home to ensure that my child can access homework meaningfully?
- Can my child participate in part of an assessment with or without certain accessibility supports?
- 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 accessibility supports vary by type of test?

Questions for Instruction and Assessment

Is the need for each accessibility support documented in my child's IEP, ILP 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 the student? 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 the 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.

Appendix B: 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. Students in higher grades may do this independently, or filling out this form could be facilitated through a discussion between a teacher and a student.

Student: _____

Date: _____

Accessibility support used: _____

Questions	Supports Available (List)			
Was the accessibility support used? <i>(Circle Yes or No and record optional comments.)</i>	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Was the accessibility support useful? <i>(Circle Yes or No and record optional comments.)</i>	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Were there any difficulties with the accessibility support? <i>(Are adjustments needed?) (Circle Yes or No and record optional comments.)</i>	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
Should the accessibility support be used again? <i>(Circle Yes or No and record optional comments.)</i>	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

Student signature

Appendix C: 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)

Modified with permission. Christensen, L., Carver, W., VanDeZande, J., & Lazarus, S. (2011). Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate the use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers. Available at:

http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Assessing_Special_Education_Students_%28ASES%29.html

Appendix D: Do's and Don'ts When Selecting Accommodations

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.

Appendix E: Assessment Accommodations Plan

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

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

2. Explain what you do well in this class.

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

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

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

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

These are all things in which an accommodation may be helpful for you.

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

Class List

Classes

Accommodations

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

Appendix F: Teacher Evaluation of Classroom Accessibility Features and Accommodations

Teacher Name: _____

Subject: _____

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Please list each accessibility support (feature or accommodation), rate its effectiveness, and comment about what you think might improve effectiveness, if needed.

Accessibility Support	Not effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
1. How could the effectiveness of this accessibility support be improved?	1	2	3
2. How could the effectiveness of this accessibility support be improved?	1	2	3
3. How could the effectiveness of this accessibility support be improved?	1	2	3

Resources

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