



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein
Chancellor

ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM #1, 2008-2009

DATE: August 25, 2008

TO: COMMUNITY SUPERINTENDENTS
AND PRINCIPALS OF ALL SCHOOLS

FROM: Grace Pepe, Director of Assessment Operations 
Office of Accountability (OA)

SUBJECT: Test Accommodations and Procedures for Students with Disabilities,
Students Who Have Been Decertified from Special Education with
Test Accommodations, and General Education Students with 504 Plans

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information and clarification regarding the appropriate use of testing accommodations that provide students equal opportunity to participate in all test administrations. These accommodations should be implemented for all classroom and standardized test administrations. As per the State Education Department (SED), accommodations that alter the construct of an exam are not permitted.

PLEASE NOTE:

READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS ON READING TESTS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) TESTS MAY NOT BE READ ALOUD OR SIGNED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN TEACHER DIRECTIONS.

USING A CALCULATOR ON A TEST THAT MEASURES PROFICIENCIES INVOLVING BASIC CALCULATIONS IS NOT PERMITTED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN TEACHER DIRECTIONS.

SPELL CHECK AND/OR GRAMMAR DEVICES MAY NOT BE USED ON ANY PART OF THE NYS ELA TEST FOR GRADES 3 THROUGH 8.

The principal is responsible for disseminating this memorandum to all staff involved in the school's testing program.

The following directions have been adapted from the SED publication entitled *Test Access and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* (May 2006). For more detailed instructions, please refer to this publication available at: www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/policyguide.htm

- Special Education students are to be tested with only those accommodations that appear specifically on their Individualized

Education Program (IEP). The information on the student's IEP must be very specific about which accommodation should be implemented to take the student's disability into consideration and allow the student to participate in testing on an equitable basis. Test accommodations must be consistent with instructional practice for these students.

- For the student who has been decertified, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) should inform the principal of the student's continuing need for specific modifications. The most recent IEP decertifying the student should document the need for the continuation of any test accommodation(s).
- For non-disabled students, the testing procedures for General Education students may be modified by the principal on an emergency basis for any of the City or State examinations when necessary, as long as the accommodations do not change the student skills being tested. Such accommodations would apply to General Education students who have temporary disabilities that do not require Special Education services. They would also apply to students who initially experience long-term disabilities that may or may not require Special Education services, but which occur shortly before the administration of the City/State examination. For example, students with broken arms, students with temporary visual problems, or students who are in the hospital or at home due to an illness may qualify for testing accommodations. Students who have ongoing conditions that affect their ability to take tests under regular conditions, but who do not require Special Education services, may also qualify for testing accommodations in accordance with a plan developed pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Information regarding the development of a plan and the procedures for determining test accommodations for non-disabled students under Section 504 is attached to this memorandum. (Attachment #1.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Flexible Scheduling/Time Limit Extension

Some students may require flexible scheduling of examinations. These students may have disabilities which affect the rate at which they process information. Physical disabilities, such as visual or motor impairments, may decrease students' working rates. Students who require special equipment, such as a typewriter, or students who dictate their responses to an amanuensis, may require more than the usual time to complete examinations.

Other students who are health impaired may tire easily or require frequent breaks. Hyperactive students and those students with a short attention span may require rest periods or diversion from a single activity. Students with health impairments may have limited vitality and tire easily or require periodic restroom visits.

Flexible scheduling includes extending the time allowed for the student to complete the test and/or administering the test in several brief sessions. To facilitate the appropriate implementation of this accommodation, the IEP or 504 Plan should indicate the amount of time to be provided (e.g., time and a half). If it is necessary for a student to leave the room, the student must be accompanied by a proctor. Brief rest periods may be permitted during the administration of these examinations. The test duration, in which the maximum amount of time a student should work without a break, must be specified (e.g., a ten-minute break for each 40 minute test period). Special arrangements must be made for tests which will be administered over more than one day. For those State tests which will be administered over more than one day, the SED requests three months prior notification.

Flexible Setting/Examination Administered in Special Locations

For some students, the standard location for test administration may not be appropriate. For example, a student may take an examination in a separate classroom with a small group, or individually. The IEP or 504 Plan must specify the type of special location and the test or category of the test for which this accommodation must be implemented. A student who is at home or hospitalized due to an illness may take an examination in either setting if the student is medically able. Other students may require an alternate environment to accommodate specialized equipment or furniture. Large tables, which are taller than an average desk, may be necessary to accommodate a student in a wheelchair. A study carrel may be helpful for a hyperactive child or one with a short attention span who is easily distracted or unable to stay on task.

All classroom and standardized tests must be administered in special locations when specified on a student's IEP or 504 Plan. When administering a test in a special location, the standard procedure for administering the test must be followed as closely as possible while implementing any other test accommodation(s).

Revised Test Format/Braille and Large Type

Some students may not be able to take a test using the standard test format. Some students do not have the ability to read regular-sized print. Braille and large-type editions are available for City and State tests. Braille or large-type materials must be ordered as early as possible; New York State tests may be ordered from the SED on the school's regular form, and NYC tests may be ordered from the Assessment Implementation Directors (AIDs). Questions may be referred to the SED at (518) 474-8220 or to your AID. Any necessary materials will automatically be included with the test booklets.

Large-type materials are exact reproductions of the regular examinations. They may be administered at the same examination site, under the same testing conditions, and with the same directions as the regular examinations.

Braille examinations do not require special directions to the student; therefore, separate or special answer sheets are not provided. The student may answer the questions in any manner appropriate and familiar to the student. The student may write, type, or answer in braille, dictate to a proctor or a mechanical recording device, or use any combination of these methods. All responses must be transcribed onto machine-scorable documents for those tests that are machine scored.

When a braille examination is prepared by the SED, any question omitted because it could not be reproduced in braille is clearly indicated in braille on the examination booklet and in type on the scoring key. When questions are omitted, the credits are prorated on a special key that is enclosed with the braille booklet. The person scoring the examination does not need to do any additional computations to prorate the examination.

Revised Test Directions/Directions Read and Reread Aloud

Standard directions may be read several times at the start of the examination and may be reread for each new page of test items.

Revisions are sometimes made to the test directions in order to ensure that students understand them. Some examples of changes in the directions include rewriting them in simpler language, underlining key words, or providing a set of directions for each new set of skills in the examination. The test administrator should be sure that the student understands the directions, but should not provide additional information or interpretation.

Use of Aids/Visual Magnification and Auditory Amplification

Some students may be unable to read test items without the use of aids. Some students may be unable to hear items presented orally. These students require the use of aids during testing and may use masks or markers to maintain place, visual magnification devices, or auditory amplification devices.

Use of Aids/Test Questions Read Aloud or Signed

Proctor assistance may be essential to meet the needs of some students in testing situations. Examples of proctor assistance that students may require include reading test items or providing cues to maintain on-task behavior. The use of sign language is permissible for deaf and hearing-impaired students.

When a proctor reads an examination to a student, the regular examination booklet is used and items are read as they appear on the page. The proctor should obtain the examination booklet from the principal at least one hour before the required starting time so that he or she can become familiar with the examination questions before reading them to the student.

In rare circumstances, a student's IEP or 504 Plan may indicate that test questions are to be read aloud. Accordingly, this accommodation must be implemented on all classroom and standardized tests, except when this modification changes the construct of an exam. In this case, the SED does not permit the accommodation. If test questions are read, the use of this test accommodation MUST be indicated on the students' test answer documents to ensure that the test is rated appropriately by the Office of Accountability (OA) or by the SED. Such annotation should not be included on a transcript, report card, or diploma. This accommodation is not permitted on the NYC and NYS ELA tests for Grades 3-8 unless specified in the Test Directions.

Use of Aids/Answers Recorded in an Alternate Manner

Some students may be unable to move from the test booklet to the answer form to record responses. Such students require accommodation to the answer format. Examples of ways in which answers may be recorded include changing the size or location of the space for responses, or allowing students to record answers directly in the test booklets. All responses must be transcribed onto machine-scorable documents for those tests that are machine scored.

Some students may require the use of aids because they are unable to record their responses to examination questions in the conventional manner. Examples of ways to modify the manner in which answers are recorded include dictation to an amanuensis or to a tape recorder, and the use of equipment such as computers, typewriters, word processors, pointers, communication boards, and adaptive writing instruments. The student who uses an aid to record responses must provide all information regarding the spelling of difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, grammar, etc. This information is not required from students whose disability affects their spelling and punctuation skills. Additional accommodations (i.e., the use of spell check or grammar devices) will be provided for these students. However, this accommodation is not permitted on the NYS ELA Test for Grades 3-8, on the ELA Regents, or on the NYC E-PAL test for Grades 2 and 3.

Use of Aids/Use of Calculator, Abacus, and Arithmetic Tables

Some students have the ability to complete narrative problems and involved computations, but may have a disability which affects skills necessary for computation or memorization of arithmetic facts. Some students may be unable to memorize arithmetic facts or they may have attention deficits, which inhibit the processing of complicated calculations. Many testing programs now permit the use of calculators and other manipulatives for all students. In those cases where these aids are not permitted for all students as part of the test administration, only those students

whose disability affects the student's skill to either memorize or compute basic math facts may use computational aids, and only when the questions being asked do not measure proficiencies involving basic calculations. Such students may use calculators, abaci, and arithmetic tables whenever necessary for all math tests, provided that use of these aids does not change the construct of the exam, in which case, the SED does not permit the accommodation. This accommodation is not permitted on the NYC or NYS Mathematics tests for Grades 3-8, unless specified in the Teacher Directions.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

School Principals

Inform teachers of their responsibilities in carrying out testing accommodations approved for individual students for all classroom and standardized tests.

Ensure the implementation of appropriate testing accommodations based on students' IEPs or 504 Plans.

Inform your AID at the ISC of all emergency test accommodations for students with 504 Plans.

SECURITY VIOLATIONS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF INVESTIGATION (SCI) (212) 510-1500, AND TO THE AIDs. THE SED MUST BE CONTACTED FOR STATE TESTING IRREGULARITIES (518) 474-8220.

School Teachers

All testing accommodations indicated on a student's IEP or 504 Plan must be used **CONSISTENTLY** on standardized test administrations and when all classroom tests (e.g., spelling tests, mid-term examinations, end-of-term examinations, etc.) are administered.

Be aware of all possible test accommodations and be skilled in their implementation.

If you have any questions regarding this test memorandum, please contact your AID (Attachment #2). Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

This memorandum is available at:

http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos_0809/default.asp.

GP: arn

Attachments

c: Marcia Lyles
James Liebman
Bonnie Brown
Linda Wernikoff
Assessment Implementation Directors

**REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS UNDER SECTION 504 of the REHABILITATION ACT of 1973
2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR**

Student's Name: Last: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____
Male: _____ Female: _____ D.O.B: _____ I.D. #: _____
Borough: _____ District: _____ School: _____ Grade: _____ Class: _____
School Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

Physician's Statement for Requested 504 Accommodations (if applicable):

1. Describe the nature of the concern: _____

2. Medical Diagnosis/Disability: _____

3. Describe how the disability affects the student's educational performance: _____

4. List/describe the educational service(s) that are being requested: _____

Physician's Name (Print) _____	Physician's Signature _____
Physician/Clinic's Address _____	NYS Registration No. _____ Date Signed _____
Zip Code _____	Physician/Clinic's Telephone No. _____ Physician/Clinic's Fax No. _____

Parent's Statement for Requested 504 Accommodations:

1. Describe the nature of the concern: _____

2. Describe how the disability affects the student's educational performance: _____

3. List/describe the 504 accommodations that are being requested: _____

To determine whether 504 accommodations are necessary, a 504 team will convene to review your request. If a 504 Accommodation Plan is necessary it will be completed by the school with your input. This plan must be reviewed annually.

By submitting this Request for 504 Accommodations, I am requesting that my child be provided with specific educational accommodation(s) by the New York City Department of Education (the "Department"). I have provided the full and complete information regarding this request for educational accommodation(s) in this form. I understand that the Department, its agents, and its employees involved in the provision of the above-requested accommodation(s) are relying on the accuracy of the information that I have provided in this form to determine whether and to what extent my child will be provided with accommodations under Section 504.

Please Print Parent/Guardian's Name & Address Below:

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____
Date Signed _____
Daytime Telephone No. _____

REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS UNDER SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973
2008- 2009

**DO NOT WRITE BELOW
(FOR NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION USE ONLY)**

Student's Name: _____		OSIS No: _____	
Reviewed by: _____		_____	
Name (Please Print)		Title	Date
Request for Educational Service(s)			
Approved _____	Denied _____	Referred for Further Review _____	
Reason Request Approved or Denied:			
Referred to CSE _____		Sent to School 504 Coordinator _____	
Date of Referral _____		Date of 504 Team Mtg. _____	
_____		_____	
Signature		Date	

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY**
CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT SUPPORT**2008-2009 ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTORS**

INTEGRATED SERVICE CENTER	ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTORS
MANHATTAN COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6	
333 Seventh Avenue	Suzanne Muller
7 th Floor	(212) 356-3784
New York NY 10001	(212) 356-7523 (FAX)
	SMuller@schools.nyc.gov
BRONX COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12	
1 Fordham Plaza	Sharon Cahr
7 th Floor	(718) 741-5559
Bronx NY 10458	(718) 741-7954 (FAX)
	SCahr@schools.nyc.gov
BROOKLYN COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23 & 32	
131 Livingston Street	David Rapheal
Third Floor	(718) 935-5965
Brooklyn NY 11201	(718) 935-4888 (FAX)
	DRaphea@schools.nyc.gov
QUEENS COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30	
28-11 Queens Plaza North	Barbara Marcisak
2 nd Floor, Room #43	(718) 391-8352
Long Island City NY 11101	(718) 391-6886 (FAX)
	BMarcis@schools.nyc.gov
STATEN ISLAND COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, & 31	
715 Ocean Terrace	Judy Cohen
Building A, Room #A127	(718) 390-1579
Staten Island NY 10301	(718) 420-5665 (FAX)
	JCohen32@schools.nyc.gov
LONG ISLAND CITY, SCAN CENTER COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6	
44-36 Vernon Boulevard	Marie Busiello
Room #202	(718) 349-5636
Long Island City NY 11101	(718) 349-5632 (FAX)
	MBusiel@schools.nyc.gov
LONG ISLAND CITY, SCAN CENTER COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12	
44-36 Vernon Boulevard	Luz Solomita
Room #211D	(718) 349-5605
Long Island City NY 11101	(718) 349-5632 (FAX)
	LSolomi@schools.nyc.gov

LONG ISLAND CITY, SCAN CENTER		
COMPRISING DISTRICTS:		
13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, & 32		
44-36 Vernon Boulevard		Louise Smith
Room #202		(718) 349-5646
Long Island City NY 11101		(718) 349-5642 (FAX)
		LSmith2@schools.nyc.gov
LONG ISLAND CITY, SCAN CENTER		
COMPRISING DISTRICTS:		
24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30		
44-36 Vernon Boulevard		Rita Magier
Room #207		(718) 349-5618
Long Island City NY 11101		(718) 349-5642 (FAX)
		RMagier@schools.nyc.gov
LONG ISLAND CITY, SCAN CENTER		
COMPRISING DISTRICTS:		
17, 18, 20, 21, 22 & 31		
44-36 Vernon Boulevard		José Garcia
Room #207		(718) 349-5635
Long Island City NY 11101		(718) 349-5632 (FAX)
		JGarcia17@schools.nyc.gov
SPECIAL EDUCATION		
D 75	400 First Avenue	Steven Weinrich
	Room #662C	(212) 802-1521
	New York NY 10010	(917) 256-4245 FAX
		SWeinri@schools.nyc.gov
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS		
D 79	4360 Broadway	Melissa Viscovich
	Room #419	(917) 521-3611
	New York NY 10033	(917) 521-3649 FAX
		MViscovich@schools.nyc.gov
CHARTER SCHOOLS		
D 84	52 Chambers St	Joshua Morales
	Room #405	(212) 374-5550
	New York NY 10007	(212) 374-5581 FAX
		JMorales5@schools.nyc.gov
D 84	52 Chambers St	Jeannemarie Hendershot
	Room #405	(212) 374-5550
	New York NY 10007	(212) 374-5581 FAX
		JHendershot@schools.nyc.gov
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION		
	3450 E. Tremont Ave.	Moira Magro
	1st Floor	(718) 794-7241
	Bronx NY 10465	(718) 794-7237 FAX
		MMagro@schools.nyc.gov
HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION		
	3450 E. Tremont Ave.	Keri Kaufmann
	1st Floor	(718) 794-7266
	Bronx NY 10465	(718) 794-7263 FAX
		KKaufmann@schools.nyc.gov

CHILDREN FIRST NETWORK (CFN)

CFN1

Mara Ganeles
131 Livingston Street
Room #305A
Brooklyn NY 11201
Tel. (347) 601-5559
Mganeles@schools.nyc.gov

CFN2

Maria Esponda
Russell Gonzalez
4630 Broadway
Room #530
New York NY 10033
Tel. (917) 569-3675 or (347) 276-2926
Mesponda@schools.nyc.gov
Rgonzal16@schools.nyc.gov

CFN3

Josh Dragoon
333 Seventh Avenue
Room #805
New York NY 10001
Tel. (212) 356-3912
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CFN4

Heather Benson
90-27 Sutphin Blvd.
Room #145
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Hbenson2@schools.nyc.gov