



DATE: August 29, 2016

TO: PRINCIPALS OF ALL SCHOOLS

FROM: Office of Assessment
Division of Teaching & Learning

SUBJECT: **Test Accommodations and Procedures for Eligible Students**

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information regarding the appropriate use of testing accommodations that provide eligible students equal opportunity to participate in all test administrations. These accommodations should be implemented for all classroom and State and City test administrations, as long as they do not alter the constructs the tests are designed to measure; the use of testing accommodations that alter the constructs of a test are not permitted. The use of test accommodations should not be indicated on students' transcripts, report cards, or diplomas, but are documented in students' record (e.g. IEP, 504 Plan, instructional plans for ELLs) and on test answer documents, as appropriate. The principal is responsible for disseminating this memorandum to all teachers and all staff involved in the school's testing program.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students eligible for test accommodations are described below.

For more information on the categories below, see NYSED's *Test Access and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/policyguide.htm>.

- **Students with IEPs:** these students are to be tested with only those accommodations that appear specifically on their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and that do not alter the constructs of the test. The information on the student's IEP must be very specific about which accommodation(s) 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 practices for these students.
- **Students who have been decertified:** the Committee on Special Education (CSE) should inform the principal of the student's continuing need for testing accommodations. The most recent IEP decertifying the student should document the need for the continuation of any test accommodation(s).
- **Students with Emergency Need for Accommodations:** Certain testing accommodations may be provided on an emergency basis for any test when necessary, including the City or State examinations.

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Such accommodations apply to General Education students who have temporary disabilities that do not require Special Education services, and to students who initially experience 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, students who are in the hospital, or at home due to an illness may qualify for testing accommodations. *Principals are responsible for informing the Borough Assessment Implementation Directors (BAID) of all emergency test accommodations for students with 504 Plans.* Please refer to the FAQ on testing accommodations for additional information:

<http://intranet.nycboe.net/NR/rdonlyres/E585F7FF-1FE9-4496-9BA9-0C4576E4D46F/0/Acpolicytestaccomm.pdf>

- **Students with 504 Plans:** 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 students under Section 504 is provided at the DOE's Office of School Health website: <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/9D996213-4452-4E03-BFAC-FC718CBBCAC6/0/4RequestforEducationalServicesFrontBack2.pdf>.

Information regarding the types of accommodations allowed for these students on State tests is provided in a State memorandum: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/bilingualservices.htm>.

- **English Language Learners (ELLs) and Former ELLs:** ELLs and former ELLs (up to two years after reaching proficiency on the NYSESLAT) are eligible for certain specified testing accommodations.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Several types of test accommodations are listed below; please note that this list is not exhaustive. In all cases, the provision of test accommodations must directly address the student's diagnosis, disability, or language need, and must not alter the constructs of the test. All accommodations provided to eligible students must be documented on the student's IEP or 504 Plan, as appropriate. For additional information on these and other testing accommodations, please refer to this FAQ <http://intranet.nycboe.net/NR/rdonlyres/E585F7FF-1FE9-4496-9BA9-0C4576E4D46F/0/Acpolicytestaccomm.pdf>.

Flexible Scheduling / Time Limit Extension

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, documentation of the accommodation must indicate the amount of time to be provided (e.g., time and a half), and the maximum amount of time a student should work without a break (e.g., a ten-minute break for each 40 minute test period). Brief rest periods may be permitted during test administration. If it is necessary for a student to leave the room, the student must be accompanied by a proctor.

- Note: For State tests which will be administered over more than one day, NYSED requires three months prior notification; schools must notify the NYSED in writing at: State Education Department, Office of Special Education, 89 Washington Avenue, Room 309 EB, Albany, New York 12234. For

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additional information on application materials needed, please refer to:

<http://intranet.nycboe.net/NR/rdonlyres/E585F7FF-1FE9-4496-9BA9-0C4576E4D46F/0/Acpolicytestaccomm.pdf>

Flexible Setting / Examination Administered in Special Locations

The standard location for test administration may not be appropriate for some students, who may need a different location (e.g. in a separate classroom with a small group or individually) or seat to take a test. The documentation of the accommodation must specify the type of special location and the test or category of the test for which this accommodation must be implemented. 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). Common types of setting/location accommodations are:

- 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.
- Some 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.

Method of Presentation

There are several types of presentation accommodations, some of which are described below.

Revised Test Format / Braille and Large Type

Some students may need a different test format during test administration. Braille and large-type editions are available for City and State tests, and must be ordered as early as possible (any necessary materials will automatically be included with the test booklets):

- New York State tests may be ordered from the SED on the school's regular form. For additional information and support, contact the SED at (518) 474-8220
- NYC tests may be ordered from the Borough Assessment Implementation Directors (BAIDs).

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.

For tests that are machine scored, all responses must be transcribed onto machine-scorable documents.

- 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.

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.

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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*

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.

Proctor assistance may be essential to meet the needs of some students in certain 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.

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 Division of Academics, Performance and Support (DAPS) or by SED.

Revised Test Directions | *Directions Read and Reread Aloud*

Revisions are sometimes made to the test directions in order to ensure that students understand them. Standard directions may be read several times at the start of the examination and may be reread for each new page of test items. 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.

Method of Test Response

There are several types of accommodations regarding the method of test response, some of which are described below.

Revised Response Format | *Answers Recorded in an Alternate Manner*

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

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.

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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 (scribe) or to a recording device, and the use of equipment such as computers, 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.

Use of Aids | *Use of Calculator, Abacus, and Arithmetic Tables*

NOTE: USING A CALCULATOR ON A TEST THAT MEASURES PROFICIENCIES INVOLVING BASIC CALCULATIONS IS NOT PERMITTED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED IN TEACHER DIRECTIONS. THIS ACCOMMODATION IS NOT PERMITTED ON THE NYC OR NYS MATHEMATICS TESTS FOR GRADES 3-8, UNLESS SPECIFIED IN THE TEACHER DIRECTIONS.

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 devices for all students. In cases where these aids are not permitted for all students as part of the test administration, only those students whose disability affects memorization or computation skills and whose IEP or 504 Plan specifies the use of this accommodation may use computational aids, and only when providing such aids would not alter the constructs of the test (e.g. the test questions do not measure proficiencies involving basic calculations).

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 and ELL status.
- Inform your BAID at the BAO of all emergency test accommodations for students with 504 Plans.
- In coordination with the school test coordinator, responsible for the creation, documentation, and execution of the school's plan for ensuring that test accommodations on NYS and NYC tests are provided in accordance with documented student needs.
- Ensure that answer documents and scan sheets for NYS and NYC exams correctly indicate which accommodations students received on the test.

School Teachers

- Use all testing accommodations indicated on a student's IEP or 504 Plan consistently on standardized test administrations and on all classroom tests (e.g., spelling tests, mid-term examinations, end-of-term examinations, etc.) as long as the accommodations are permitted and do not alter the constructs of the test.

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

Giving students testing accommodations that they are not entitled to receive is an example of misconduct on the part of teachers/administrators. **Any cases of suspected adult misconduct must be reported immediately to the principal**; the principal must then notify:

- 1) NYCDOE Office of Assessment by e-mailing testsecurity@schools.nyc.gov; and
- 2) NYC Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation (SCI): (212) 510-1500.

For additional information on testing accommodations, please refer to this FAQ:

<http://intranet.nycboe.net/NR/rdonlyres/E585F7FF-1FE9-4496-9BA9-0C4576E4D46F/0/Acpolicytestaccomm.pdf>

This memorandum is available at:

<http://intranet.nycboe.net/Accountability/Assessment/YearlyTesting/MemorandaProcedures>

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact your BAID (Attachment #1). Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

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Attachment #1

New York City Department of Education
 Division of Academics, Performance, and Support
 2013-2014 Assessment Implementation Directors

Borough Assessment Office	Borough Assessment Implementation Director
<p>MANHATTAN COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 333 Seventh Avenue 7th Floor New York, NY 10001</p>	<p>Louise Smith Lsmith2@schools.nyc.gov (212) 356-3784 (212) 356-7523 (FAX)</p>
<p>BRONX COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12 1 Fordham Plaza 7th Floor Bronx, NY 10458</p>	<p>Sharon Cahr SCahr@schools.nyc.gov (718) 741-5559 (718) 741-7954 (FAX)</p>
<p>BROOKLYN COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23 & 32 131 Livingston Street Room #506 Brooklyn, NY 11201</p>	<p>David Rapheal DRaphea@schools.nyc.gov (718) 935-5965 (718) 935-2246 (FAX)</p>
<p>QUEENS COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, & 30 28-11 Queens Plaza North 2nd Floor, Room #43 Long Island City, NY 11101</p>	<p>Barbara Marcisak BMarcis@schools.nyc.gov (718) 391-8352 (718) 391-6088 (FAX)</p>
<p>STATEN ISLAND COMPRISING DISTRICTS: 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, & 31 715 Ocean Terrace Building A, Room #A127 Staten Island, NY 10301</p>	<p>Jose Garcia JGarcia17@schools.nyc.gov (718) 390-1579 (718) 420-5665 (FAX)</p>
<p>SPECIAL EDUCATION D 75 400 First Avenue Room #662C New York, NY 10010</p>	<p>Mary Margaret Little mlittle3@schools.nyc.gov (212) 802-1521 (917) 256-4245 (FAX)</p>
<p>ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS D 79 4360 Broadway Room #419 New York, NY 10033</p>	<p>Joanne Mitchell JMitchell5@schools.nyc.gov (917) 521-3639x0 (917) 521-3649 (FAX)</p>

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CHARTER SCHOOLS		
D 84	52 Chambers St Room #405 New York, NY 10007	Rosanna Castro RCastro12@schools.nyc.gov (212) 374-2153 (212) 374-5581 (FAX)
HOME INSTRUCTION		
	3450 E. Tremont Ave. 1st Floor Bronx, NY 10465	Angela Velez Avelez16@schools.nyc.gov (718) 794-7241 (718) 794-7237 (FAX)
HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION		
	3450 E. Tremont Ave. 1st Floor Bronx, NY 10465	Keri Kaufmann KKaufmann@schools.nyc.gov (718) 794-7266 (718) 794-7263 (FAX)