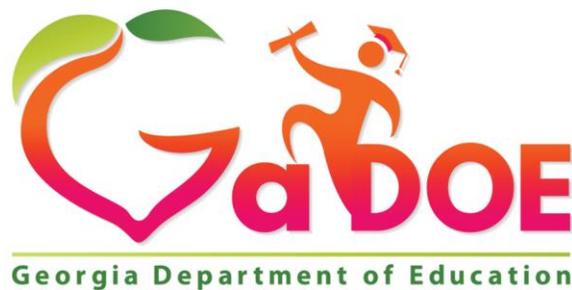


# Accommodations Manual:

## A Guide to Selecting, Administering, and Evaluating the Use of Test Administration Accommodations for Students with Disabilities



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*"Educating Georgia's Future"*

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## Introduction

The Georgia Department of Education's *Accommodations Manual: A Guide to Selecting, Administering, and Evaluating the Use of Test Administration Accommodations for Students with Disabilities* presents a five-step process to guide the selection and use of accommodations. Individualized Educational Program (IEP) teams, Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP)/Section 504 plan committees, educators, and administrators will find this manual helpful as they consider the selection, administration, and evaluation of test administration accommodations for students with disabilities. Accommodations for English Language Learners (ELL) are not addressed in this manual.

Accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the assessment. Broad categories of accommodations include setting, scheduling, presentation, and response. Accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are designed to provide equity, not advantage, and serve to level the playing field for students with disabilities. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.

Importantly, accommodations provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities. Research consistently indicates there should always be a direct link between classroom instructional accommodations and assessment accommodations. Georgia policy mandates that any accommodation provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. Accommodations must be specified in the student's IEP or IAP/504 Plan. No accommodations should be considered for the first time during a state assessment. Simply because a student needs an accommodation does not mean he/she will know how to use it. Students need training and practice in using accommodations. Informed decision making regarding accommodations is critical in ensuring successful and meaningful participation of students with disabilities in the assessment process.

IEP and IAP/504 teams should carefully consider what each assessment requires the student to do in order to take the test. Different tests serve different purposes and may measure content and skills through slightly different means; therefore a specific accommodation may be allowed for one test, but not for another. IEP and IEP/504 teams should always consider the purpose of the assessment and consult Georgia's *Student Assessment Handbook*, published annually by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), to determine if an accommodation is allowed for the assessment under consideration. Accommodations must be considered and discussed individually for each state assessment mandated for the student's grade level and may not be broadly assigned across all assessments. Only accommodations needed by the student, due to the disability, to access the assessment should be considered. Providing accommodations that are not required by the student to access the test may actually interfere with student performance and adversely impact student achievement as measured by the assessment.

The guidance in this manual pertains to students with disabilities who participate in Georgia’s assessments and the instruction they receive. The five steps include the following:

1. Expect students with disabilities to achieve grade-level curriculum standards.
2. Learn about accommodations for instruction and assessment.
3. Select accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual students.
4. Administer accommodations during instruction and assessment.
5. Evaluate and improve accommodation use.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES GUIDING GEORGIA’S STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

### **PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN ASSESSMENTS**

Georgia requires all students to participate in statewide assessment programs. For any grade where all students are assessed, students with disabilities must participate in the regular assessment or the Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA). The GAA is designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, approximately one percent of all students enrolled in assessed grades. All students must be included to the fullest extent possible in all statewide assessments and have their assessment results included with Georgia’s accountability system. The GaDOE participation requirement is supported by federal legislation requiring the participation of students with disabilities in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives.

### **LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITIES**

Local school systems have policies and procedures that require the administration of assessments that are not part of the state assessment program. If a local system administers an assessment other than those specified by the state, the assessment must also include students with disabilities and provide an alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Students with disabilities may not be excluded if an assessment is administered to all students in a particular grade, class, or school. Local school systems must continue to review all assessments administered at the system’s discretion and plan for accommodations and alternate assessment. The system should have policies and guidelines for including students with disabilities in locally administered assessments. For local assessments in grades other than state mandated (K – 8 and 11), systems and schools may use the state alternate assessment (the GAA) or they may develop their own alternate assessment. Local systems and schools are responsible for the scoring and reporting of alternate assessments in grades other than those mandated by the state.

## STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

In Georgia, three groups of students are eligible for accommodations – students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), students with an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP), also known as a Section 504 plan, and English Language Learners with a Test Participation Plan (ELL/TPC). This manual addresses the use of test accommodations for students with disabilities, students with an IEP or IAP. This manual does not address accommodations for ELL students. For information on appropriate accommodations for ELL students, please refer to the *Student Assessment Handbook*.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR USE OF ACCOMMODATIONS

**Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.** The accommodations provided to students in state assessments must be accommodations that are also provided during classroom instruction and assessment. There are some accommodations that may be appropriate for instruction, but may not be appropriate for use on state assessments. There may be consequences (e.g. invalidating a student’s test score) for the use of accommodations on state-mandated tests that are not addressed in this manual or the *Student Assessment Handbook*.

Accommodations must adhere to the following principles:

- Accommodations should enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessments and to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- Accommodations must be based upon individual student needs and not upon a category of disability, level of instruction, time spent in general classroom, or program setting.
- Accommodations must be justified and documented in the student’s IEP or IAP.
- Accommodations must be aligned with and be a part of daily instruction; accommodations must not be introduced for the first time during the testing of a student.
- Accommodations should foster and facilitate independence for students, not dependence.
- Only accommodations listed as approved in Georgia’s *Student Assessment Handbook* may be used on state-mandated tests.

## THE FIVE STEP PROCESS

### STEP 1: EXPECT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

#### FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS REQUIRING PARTICIPATION BY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Several important laws require the participation of students with disabilities in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. These include federal laws such as Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA). Georgia law (20-2-281) also requires the participation of students with disabilities in the assessment process. For more information on how these laws require participation of students with disabilities see Appendix A.

#### INCLUDING ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENTS

Both federal and state laws require that all students with disabilities be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic achievement of students. IEP and IAP team members must actively engage in a planning process that ensures:

- The participation of students with disabilities in mandated assessments programs in one of three ways:
  1. in the general assessment program with no accommodations,
  2. in the general assessment program with accommodations, or
  3. in the GAA for students with significant cognitive disabilities; and
- the provision of accommodations as needed to facilitate student access to grade-level instruction and state assessments.

#### EQUAL ACCESS TO GRADE-LEVEL CONTENT

With the focus of legislation aimed at accountability and the inclusion of all students comes the drive to ensure equal access to grade-level content standards. The state-adopted standards set forth the learning expectations for students at each grade level and course. Teachers ensure that students work toward grade-level content standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. Providing accommodations during instruction and assessments may also promote equal access to grade-level content. To accomplish this goal of equal access:

- every IEP and IAP team member must be familiar with the state curriculum and the accountability systems at the state and system level;
- every IEP and IAP team member must know where to locate the curriculum standards; and
- collaboration between general and special educators must occur for successful student access.

All students with disabilities can work toward grade-level academic content standards, and most of these students will be able to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met:

1. instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by the state curriculum and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners;
2. IEP and IAP for students with disabilities are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for learning how to learn); and
3. appropriate accommodations are provided to help students access grade-level content.

The state's curriculum is the basis of instruction that helps teachers, students, and parents know what topics and skills must be covered and mastered for a particular grade or course. The curriculum establishes the minimum standards, and does not prohibit systems, schools, or teachers from adding material and/or content.

The curriculum drives both instruction and assessment in Georgia's schools, providing guidelines for teachers, students, and state testing programs. Georgia's teachers teach to a curriculum, not to a test or a textbook. Georgia's statewide assessments are aligned with the state-mandated content standards. The standards are posted at [www.georgiastandards.org](http://www.georgiastandards.org).

## STEP 2: LEARN ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

### WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the assessment. Broad categories of accommodations include presentation, response, setting, and scheduling. Accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are designed to provide equity, not advantage, and serve to level the playing field for students with disabilities. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.

The accommodations provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

In Georgia, accommodations may not alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or answer option. Further, accommodations may not provide verbal or other clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education, and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined. However, some accommodations are appropriate for instruction and not assessment.

### DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

Accommodations are commonly categorized in four ways: presentation, response, setting, and scheduling:

- **Presentation Accommodations** — adjusts the presentation of test material and/or test directions.
- **Response Accommodations** — adjusts the manner in which students respond to or answer test questions.
- **Setting Accommodations** — adjusts the place in which the testing normally occurs.
- **Scheduling Accommodations** — adjusts the time allowance or scheduling of a test.

## MODIFICATIONS VERSUS ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations. They provide access. However, modifications or alterations refer to practices that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Consistent use of modifications could adversely affect students throughout their educational career. Examples of modifications include:

- requiring a student to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems),
- reducing assignments and assessments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items,
- revising assignments or assessments to make them easier (e.g., crossing out half of the response choices on a multiple-choice test so that a student only has to pick from two options instead of four), or
- giving a student hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests.

Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and/or classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content. If students have not had access to critical, assessed content, they may be at risk for not meeting graduation requirements. Providing a student with an unapproved modification during a state-mandated assessment constitutes a test irregularity and may result in an investigation into the school's or system's testing practices, as well as an invalidation of the student's score.

### **STEP 3: SELECT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS**

To assure students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every IEP or IAP team member must be knowledgeable about the state curriculum and assessments. Effective decision-making about the provision of appropriate accommodations begins with making good instructional decisions. In turn, making appropriate instructional decisions is facilitated by gathering and reviewing good information about the student's disability and present level of performance in relation to local and state curricular standards. In essence, the process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the IEP or IAP team attempt to 'level the playing field' so that students with disabilities can participate in the general education curriculum. IEP or IAP team meetings that simply engage in checking boxes on a state or local 'compliance' document are neither conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor do they advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum.

IEP and IAP/504 teams should analyze an assessment for what it requires the student to do in order to take the test. Different tests serve different purposes and may measure content and skills through slightly different means; therefore a specific accommodation may be allowed for one test, but not for another. IEP and IAP/504 teams should always consider the purpose of the assessment and consult Georgia's *Student Assessment Handbook* to determine if an accommodation is allowed for the assessment under consideration. Accommodations must be considered and discussed individually for each state assessment mandated for the student's grade level and should not be broadly assigned across all assessments. Only accommodations needed by the student, due to the disability, to access the assessment should be considered. Providing accommodations that are not required by the student to access the test may actually interfere with student performance and adversely impact student achievement as measured by the assessment.

In addition, teams must also consider the following: (a) whether the accommodations are necessary for access to the assessment process; (b) previous experience and usefulness with the recommended accommodations; and (c) whether or not the recommended accommodation affects the integrity of the assessment. Students should receive the accommodations they need in order to participate in the assessment but should not be given more accommodations than are necessary to participate meaningfully.

#### **INVOLVING STUDENTS IN SELECTING, USING, AND EVALUATING TEST ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is critical for students with disabilities to understand their disabilities 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. Teachers and other IEP or IAP team members can play a key role in working with students to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations.

The more a student is involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as the student reaches adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases. Self-advocacy skills become critical here. Students need opportunities to learn which accommodations are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make certain those accommodations are.

## DETERMINING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS USE

When selecting accommodations for state assessments for a student, it is important to look at state policies and procedures to determine whether use of an accommodation is permissible under state guidelines. Use of non-approved accommodations may result in consequences such as the invalidation of a student's score and a testing irregularity. IEP and IAP/504 teams should always consult Georgia's *Student Assessment Handbook* for the most current information on approved accommodations. Accommodations not listed in the *Student Assessment Handbook* may not be used on state-mandated tests without prior approval from GaDOE Assessment Research and Development Division.

## STANDARD AND CONDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Georgia has developed a testing program that is inclusive, designed to consider the needs of students with disabilities, and who, with access to the general education curriculum, can participate in regular state assessments with approved accommodations. Two types of accommodations are approved, which include:

- **Standard Accommodations:** those accommodations that provide access to the assessment without altering the construct measured by the assessment.
- **Conditional Accommodations:** more expansive accommodations that provide access for students with more severe disabilities who would not be able to access the assessment without such assistance.

Because conditional accommodations (formally referred to as non-standard accommodations) are more expansive than standard accommodations and may encroach on the skills targeted by the assessments, caution must be exercised in considering whether a student requires a conditional accommodation in order to access the test. Further, test results for a student provided conditional accommodations must be interpreted in light of the conditional accommodations.

**Conditional accommodations should be used sparingly.** State Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 (Testing Programs-Student Assessment) requires that only a small percentage (less than 3%) participate with Conditional Accommodations. The 3% is calculated using the enrollment of all students in the tested grades at the district level. The majority of students requiring accommodations should be able to successfully demonstrate their achievement with standard accommodations. The use of any accommodation must be considered in light of the student's disability and must be required by the student to access

the test because of his/her disability. Conditional accommodations may not be provided solely as a way to help ensure proficiency. The ultimate goal of any accommodation is meaningful measurement of what the student has learned. Guidelines for the use of conditional accommodations are provided on pages 24 – 25.

#### QUESTIONS TO GUIDE ACCOMMODATION SELECTION

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's IEP team or IAP (Section 504) committee. Use the questions provided below to guide the selection of appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities for the first time and for students who are currently using accommodations:

- What are the student's learning strengths and areas that need improvement?
- How does the student's learning needs affect the achievement of grade-level content standards?
- What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade-level content standards?
- What accommodations will increase the student's access to instruction and assessment by addressing the student's learning needs and reducing the effect of the student's disability? These may be new accommodations or accommodations the student is currently using.
- What accommodations does the student use regularly during instruction and classroom assessment?
- What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used?
- What is the student's perception of how well an accommodation worked?
- What difficulties did the student experience when using accommodations?
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about how well the accommodation worked?
- Should the student continue to use an accommodation, are changes needed, or should the use of the accommodation be discontinued?
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations for the student?
- How will the use of accommodations impact the interpretation of the student's scores?

Of the accommodations that match the student's needs, consider:

- the student's willingness to learn to use the accommodation,
- opportunities to learn how to use the accommodation in classroom settings, and
- conditions for use on state assessments.

Plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accommodation. Be certain there is ample time to learn to use instructional and assessment accommodations before an assessment takes place. Finally, plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the student's use of accommodations.

## **STEP 4: ADMINISTER ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT**

### ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments.

### ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

#### Planning for Test Day

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accommodations during state assessments must be mapped out. It is not uncommon for members of the IEP team, most often special education teachers, to be given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating, and providing assessment accommodations for all students who may need them. Thus, it is essential that IEP and IAP team members know and understand the requirements and consequences of state assessments, including the use of accommodations. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel to plan the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on test day.

School Test Coordinators are responsible for the overall conduct of the assessment administration and should be involved in the planning and coordination of accommodations. Prior to the day of a test, the School Test Coordinator should ensure certain test administrators and proctors know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test administrators and proctors need to know whether a student will be allowed extra time to complete the test and when the testing time is ended, what plan exists for the student to continue working. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a student or scribing student responses, must adhere to specific guidelines so that student scores are valid.

#### Administering Assessments and Accommodations

State and local policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. Test administrators, proctors, and all staff involved in test administration must adhere to these policies. The Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (NCME, 1995) states that test administrators and others involved in assessments must

- take appropriate security precautions before, during, and after the administration of the assessment;
- understand the procedures needed to administer the assessment prior to administration;
- administer standardized assessments according to prescribed procedures and conditions and notify appropriate persons if any nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;

- avoid any conditions in the conduct of the assessment that might invalidate the results;
- provide for and document all reasonable and allowable accommodations for the administration of the assessment to persons with disabilities or special needs; and
- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment.<sup>1</sup>

Failure to adhere to these practices may constitute a test irregularity or a breach of test security and must be reported and investigated according to local and state testing policies. Consult the *Student Assessment Handbook* for more specific information about Georgia policies and procedures.

#### ETHICAL TESTING PRACTICES

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices relate to inappropriate interactions between test administrators and students taking the test. Unethical practices include, but are not limited to, allowing a student to answer fewer questions or choose from fewer options, changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses, or giving clues in any way.

#### 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 accommodations is necessary to ensure test results reflect actual student learning.

#### TEST SECURITY

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test items and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. Test security can become an issue when accessible 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). In order 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 with anyone, and (3) return all materials as instructed.

Any action which compromises test security or leads to the invalidation of an individual student's or a group of students' test scores will be viewed by the GaDOE as inappropriate use or handling of test materials and will be treated as such. Any concern regarding test security must be reported to GaDOE immediately. Assessment Administration staff

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<sup>1</sup> National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement*. Washington, DC: Author.

members are available to help system personnel implement appropriate test security procedures.

If questions arise or if any situation occurs that could cause any part of the test administration to be compromised, System Test Coordinators should contact the GaDOE Assessment Administration Division at (404) 656-2668 or (800) 634-4106.

## STEP 5: EVALUATE AND IMPROVE ACCOMMODATIONS USE

Accommodations 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 accommodations is necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students with disabilities in state assessments. To that end, state regulations require accurate coding of accommodation use on student answer sheets. Data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may reveal questionable patterns of accommodation use, as well as support the continued use of some accommodations or the rethinking of others. Examination of the data may also indicate areas in which the IEP or IAP team and test administrators need additional training and support.

In addition to collecting information about the use of accommodations within the classroom, information also needs to be gathered on the implementation of accommodations 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 system level and at the student level.

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

### QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION OF ACCOMMODATION USE AT THE SCHOOL OR SYSTEM LEVEL

1. Are there policies to ensure ethical testing practices, the standardized administration of assessments, and test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. Are there procedures in place to ensure test administration procedures are not compromised with the provision of accommodations?
3. Are students receiving accommodations as documented in their IEP and IAP/504 plans?
4. Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to directions for the implementation of accommodations?
5. How many students with IEPs or IAP/504 plans are receiving accommodations?
6. What types of accommodations are provided and are some used more than others?
7. Are conditional accommodations used sparingly and only with those students who require them to access the assessment?
8. How well do students who receive accommodations perform on state and local assessments? If students are not meeting the expected level of performance, is it due to the students not having had access to the necessary instruction, not receiving the accommodations, or using accommodations that were not effective?

## QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

1. What accommodations does the student use during instruction and assessments?
2. What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations are used versus when accommodations 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 accommodations, or using accommodations that were ineffective?
3. What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation worked?
4. What combinations of accommodations seem to be effective?
5. What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations?
6. What are the perceptions of teachers and others about how the accommodation appears to be working?

These questions can be used to formatively evaluate the accommodations used at the student level, as well as the school or system levels. A committee responsible for continuous improvement efforts can address school- and system-level questions, while the student-level questions need to be considered by the IEP or IAP/504 team. It is critical to stress that formative evaluation is not the responsibility of just one individual. The entire IEP or IAP/504 team should contribute to the information gathering and decision-making processes.

## ALLOWABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR GEORGIA'S STUDENT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The following is a table of approved accommodations for use by students with disabilities on Georgia statewide assessments. Additional guidance is also provided in the *Student Assessment Handbook*. Always refer to the more specific directions for use of the accommodation found in each test's administration manual.

## Allowable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

| <b>Setting<br/>Accommodation</b>                                       | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOG Paper | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOG<br>Online | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOC Paper | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOC<br>Online | GKIDS | ACCESS         | NAEP |
|--|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|-------|----------------|------|
| 1. Special education class-room  | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 2. Special or adapted lighting   | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 3. Small group   | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 4. Preferential seating  | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 5. Sound field adaptations   | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 6. Adaptive furniture (e.g. slant board)                               | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 7. Individual or study carrel  | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 8. Individual administration   | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 9. Test administered by certified educator familiar to student         | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| <b>Presentation<br/>Accommodations</b>                                 | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOG Paper | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOG<br>Online | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOC Paper | Georgia<br>Milestones<br>EOC<br>Online | GKIDS | ACCESS         | NAEP |
| 10. Large print/Large Font   | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 11. Sign the directions  | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |
| 12. Sign test questions  | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     |                | S    |
| 13. Sign reading passages  | C <sup>1</sup>                     | C <sup>1</sup>                         | C <sup>1</sup>                     | C <sup>1</sup>                         | S     |                |      |
| 14. Oral reading of test questions in English                          | S <sup>11</sup>                    | S <sup>11</sup>                        | S <sup>11</sup>                    | S <sup>11</sup>                        |       | S <sup>3</sup> | S    |
| 15. Oral reading of reading passages in English                        | C <sup>1</sup>                     | C <sup>1</sup>                         | C <sup>1</sup>                     | C <sup>1</sup>                         |       | S <sup>3</sup> |      |
| 16. Explain or paraphrase the directions for clarity (in English only) | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              |      |
| 17. Braille  | S                                  |  | S                                  |  | S     |                | S    |
| 18. Color overlays, templates, or place markers                        | S                                  | S                                      | S                                  | S                                      | S     | S              | S    |

| <b>Presentation Accommodations</b>   | Georgia Milestones EOG Paper | Georgia Milestones EOG Online | Georgia Milestones EOC Paper | Georgia Milestones EOC Online | GKIDS          | ACCESS           | NAEP           |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 19. Use of highlighter by student  |                              |                               |                              |                               |                | S <sup>2</sup>   | S              |
| 20. Low vision aids (e.g. CCTV, magnifying equipment)  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S                | S              |
| 21. Repetition of directions (in English only)   | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S                |                |
| 22. Audio amplification devices or noise buffer/listening devices  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S                | S              |
| 23. Use directions that have been marked by teacher  |                              |                               |                              |                               |                | S                |                |
| <b>Response Accommodations</b>   | Georgia Milestones EOG Paper | Georgia Milestones EOG Online | Georgia Milestones EOC Paper | Georgia Milestones EOC Online | GKIDS          | ACCESS           | NAEP           |
| 24. Technology applications, such as Braille, word processor, or other communications device with all grammar and spell check devices disabled | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S                | S              |
| 25. Student marks answers in test booklet  | S                            |                               | S                            |                               |                | S <sup>12</sup>  |                |
| 26. Student points to answers  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S <sup>12</sup>  | S              |
| 27. Verbal response in English only  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S <sup>4</sup>   | S              |
| 28. Scribe   | S <sup>6</sup>               | S <sup>6</sup>                | S <sup>6</sup>               | S <sup>6</sup>                | S <sup>6</sup> | S <sup>6,7</sup> | S <sup>8</sup> |
| 29. Braille writer   | S                            |                               | S                            |                               | S              |                  | S              |
| 30. Abacus   | S <sup>9</sup>               |                               | S <sup>9</sup>               |                               |                |                  |                |
| 31. Basic function calculator or adapted basic calculator (e.g. Braille or talking calculator)   | C <sup>1</sup>               | C <sup>1</sup>                |                              |                               |                |                  | S <sup>5</sup> |
| 32. Adapted writing tools (e.g. pencil grips, large diameter pencil)   | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S              | S                | S              |
| 33. Adapted/lined paper  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             |                |                  |                |

| Scheduling Accommodations  | Georgia Milestones EOG Paper | Georgia Milestones EOG Online | Georgia Milestones EOC Paper | Georgia Milestones EOC Online | GKIDS | ACCESS          | NAEP |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------|------|
| 34. Frequent monitored breaks                                    | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S     | S               | S    |
| 35. Optimal time of day for testing                              | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S     | S               | S    |
| 36. Extended time  | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             | S     | S               | S    |
| 37. Flexibility in the order of administration for content areas | S                            | S                             | S                            | S                             |       | S               |      |
| 38. Extending sessions over multiple days                        |                              |                               |                              |                               |       | S <sup>10</sup> |      |

| Footnotes   |
|---|
| 1. Restricted to eligible students only; see guidance for eligibility. For oral reading, screen reader is the preferred method of administration (exception Signing of Reading Passages). Where a human reader delivers the accommodation, examiners must adhere to directions provided in the Read-Aloud Guidelines. |
| 2. Paper-Pencil Mode: Allowed for ACCESS Listening, Reading, and Writing; not allowed for ACCESS Speaking. Online Mode: Provided as an accessibility tool (not an accommodation) for ACCESS Listening, Reading, and Writing; not allowed for ACCESS Speaking.   |
| 3. Allowed for ACCESS Writing only.   |
| 4. Allowed for ACCESS Listening, Reading, Speaking; not allowed for ACCESS Writing.   |
| 5. Only NAEP calculator active blocks will be given to students who need this accommodation.  |
| 6. Use of a scribe is allowable if guidelines are followed exactly.   |
| 7. Use of a scribe is not allowed for ACCESS Speaking.  |
| 8. Accommodation not allowed on NAEP Writing assessments.   |
| 9. Allowed for students with visual impairments only.   |
| 10. Paper-Pencil Mode: Allowed for ACCESS Listening and Reading; not allowed for ACCESS Writing and Speaking. Not allowed for any domain via online test mode.  |
| 11. Screen reader is the preferred method of administration. Where a human reader delivers the accommodation, examiners must adhere to directions provided in the posted Read-Aloud Guidelines.   |
| 12. Paper-Pencil Mode: Allowed for ACCESS Listening, Reading, and Writing; not allowed for ACCESS Speaking. Online Mode is not recommended for students requiring this accommodation.   |

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONDITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Conditional accommodations must be used sparingly and only when the student requires the accommodation to access the test due to the disability. The student's IEP team must determine and document that the conditional accommodation is absolutely necessary in order for the student to participate in the general testing program. Guidance on the use of each conditional accommodation is provided below.

Note: Given the purpose of each assessment program may differ, accommodations may be standard for some assessments, but conditional for other assessments.

### **Eligibility Guidelines: Reading of Reading Passages**

#### **Guidance for Use of Conditional Accommodation 13: Sign reading passages.**

The use of this conditional accommodation for the English Language Arts Georgia Milestones, *regardless of grade level*, must be restricted to only those students with IEPs who meet the **ALL** eligibility criteria outlined below:

1. The student is deaf and has a specific documented disability that severely limits or prevents his or her ability to decode text at any level of difficulty, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so; **and**
2. The student has access to printed materials only through a sign-language interpreter or is provided with signed text or other electronic format during routine instruction; **and**
3. There are clear and specific goals within the student's IEP addressing the deficits which necessitate the need for this conditional accommodation.

Under secure conditions, supervised by the School or System Test Coordinator, the sign interpreter may review test materials prior to the test administration to plan appropriate signing.

#### **Guidance for Use of Conditional Accommodations 15: Oral Reading of reading passages.**

The use of this conditional accommodation for the English Language Arts Georgia Milestones, *regardless of grade level*, must be restricted to only those students with IEPs who meet **ALL** eligibility criteria outlined below:

1. The student has a specific documented disability that severely limits or prevents his or her ability to decode text at any level of difficulty, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (i.e., the student is a non-reader, not simply reading below grade level); **and**
2. The student has access to printed materials only through a reader or other electronic format during routine instruction; **and**
3. There are clear and specific goals within the student's IEP addressing the deficits which necessitate the need for this conditional accommodation.

**NOTE:** The preferred method of administration for this conditional accommodation is the screen reader. Where a human reader delivers the accommodation, examiners must adhere to directions provided in the posted Read-Aloud Guidelines.

### **Eligibility Guidelines: Calculator Usage**

#### **Guidance for Use of Conditional Accommodations 31: Basic function calculator or adapted basic calculator.**

The use of this conditional accommodation for the Mathematics Georgia Milestones for students in **grades 3 - 5** must be restricted to only those students with IEPs who meet **ALL** eligibility criteria outlined below:

1. The student has a specific disability that prohibits him or her from performing basic calculations (i.e., addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division), even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so; **and**
2. The student is unable to perform calculations without the use of a calculation device, which the student uses for routine classroom instruction; **and**
3. There are clear and specific goals within the student's IEP addressing the deficits which necessitate the need for this conditional accommodation.

**NOTE:** Only a basic function or basic adapted calculator may be used; scientific and other advanced calculators are strictly prohibited. The test administrator may not provide any assistance or direction to the student regarding the use of the calculator.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS NOT SPECIFIED IN THIS DOCUMENT

On rare occasion, a student may require an accommodation that is not listed in the *Student Assessment Handbook*. If a unique situation arises and an individual student requires an accommodation that is not in this manual, approval must be sought from the GaDOE Assessment Division prior to the use of the accommodations on any state-mandated test. Key consideration for approving the use of the accommodation includes protecting the integrity of the assessment and what the assessment measures. Addressing the issue of validity involves an examination of the purpose of the test and the specific skills to be measured. Accommodations that impact the validity and reliability of the assessment cannot be approved. The *Student Assessment Handbook* outlines the procedures for requesting consideration of accommodations not listed as approved.

## FACT SHEET 1: CATEGORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS

| CATEGORY OF ACCOMMODATION | WHO CAN BENEFIT   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Presentation              | Students who benefit most from presentation accommodations are those with print disabilities, defined as difficulty or inability to visually read standard print because of a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability.   |
| Response                  | Response accommodations can benefit students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities (including difficulties with memory, sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization).  |
| Setting                   | Setting accommodations, which are changes in instructional and assessment locations, can benefit students who are easily distracted in large group settings and who concentrate best in a small group or individual setting. Changes in location also benefit students who receive accommodations (e.g. reader, scribe, frequent breaks) that might distract other students. Students with physical disabilities might need a more accessible location, specific room conditions, or special equipment.   |
| Scheduling                | <p>Scheduling accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and assessments. Extra time may be needed to process written text (e.g., a student with a learning disability who processes information slowly), to write (e.g., a student with limited dexterity as a result of arthritis), or to use other accommodations or equipment (e.g., assistive technology, audiotape, scribe).</p> <p>Students who cannot concentrate continuously for an extended period or who become frustrated or stressed easily may need frequent or extended relaxation breaks. It may also help to schedule in the morning those classes and tests that require the greatest concentration for students who have difficulty concentrating and staying on task as the day progresses. Scheduling changes might also be helpful for students on medications that affect their ability to stay alert or who have more productive times of the day.</p> <p>Some students with health-related disabilities may have functioning levels that vary during the day because of the effects of medications or diminishing energy levels. For example, blood sugar levels may need to be maintained by eating several times a day at prescribed times. These students could be accommodated by scheduling tests and activities around the eating schedule, or by allowing food to be taken to the classroom or testing site. Students who fatigue easily may need to take some academic classes and tests before rather than after a physical education class or recess, or may need to reduce physical activity.</p> |

## FACT SHEET 2: EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS BASED ON STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

| STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND, LOW VISION, PARTIAL SIGHT |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Category   | Accommodations to Consider for Instruction   | Accommodations to Consider for Assessments  |
| Presentation   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large print</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Tactile graphics</li> <li>• Human reader</li> <li>• Audiotape or compact disk (CD)</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Large print or Braille notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Descriptive video</li> <li>• Talking materials</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large print/Large Font</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Human reader/Screen Reader</li> <li>• Assistive Technology</li> </ul>  |
| Response   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>• Type on brailler or note taking device</li> <li>• Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>• Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus)</li> <li>• Use personal note taker</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>• Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>• Type on brailler</li> <li>• Abacus</li> <li>• Use calculator</li> </ul> |
| Setting  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>                       |
| Scheduling   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> </ul>   |

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF; HARD OF HEARING**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Presentation    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Visual cues</li> <li>• Written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Videotape and descriptive video</li> <li>• Provide advanced organizers and outlines of lectures for student to follow</li> <li>• Use gestures (e.g., point to materials)</li> <li>• Repeat questions and responses from classmates</li> <li>• Allow student to copy notes from classmate</li> <li>• Use captioned versions of instructional films and include script when possible</li> <li>• Give interpreter instructional materials in advance</li> <li>• Learn manual signs and teach them to hearing classmates</li> <li>• Allow student to use telecommunication device</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> </ul>  |
| Response        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to scribe or interpreter</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>• Use spelling and grammar assistive devices</li> <li>• Use visual organizers</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to scribe or interpreter</li> <li>• Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> </ul>   |
| Setting         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul> |

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

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Response        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>Use adapted keyboard or mouse</li> <li>Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>Use adapted pencil or pencil grip</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>Use word processor or adapted key board (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>Use adapted pencil or pencil grip</li> </ul> |

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY DECODING**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Presentation    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Audiotape or CD</li> <li>Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> <li>Videotape</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> </ul> |
| Setting         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change location so student does not distract others</li> </ul>                |

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITING DISABILITY**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Response        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> </ul> |

| <b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: MATHEMATICS DISABILITY</b> |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Category</b>                                       | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>   |
| Response  | Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculator</li> <li>• Visual organizers</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Math tables and formula sheets</li> </ul>   | Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Calculator</li> </ul>   |
| <b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: PHYSICAL DISABILITY</b>    |  |   |
| <b>Category</b>                                       | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>  | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>   |
| Response  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor (including adapted key board)</li> <li>• Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIGmack, Jelly Bean switch, or Dynavox)</li> <li>• Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>• Use word processor or adapted key board (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> </ul> |
| Setting   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>  |
| Scheduling  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> <li>• Multiple or frequent breaks</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> <li>• Multiple or frequent breaks</li> </ul>  |

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: EASILY DISTRACTED; SHORT ATTENTION SPAN**

| <b>Category</b> | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>   | <b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Presentation    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use books on tape or recorded books to help focus on text</li><li>• Give short and simple directions with examples</li></ul>  |  |
| Response        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li><li>• Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet</li><li>• Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses</li><li>• Use visual organizers</li><li>• Use graphic organizers</li><li>• Highlight key words in directions</li><li>• Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding</li><li>• Use template</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li><li>• Use template or place-marker</li></ul>  |
| Setting         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sit in front of room</li><li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sit in front of room</li><li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li></ul>  |
| Scheduling      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use short segment test booklets (when available)</li><li>• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks</li><li>• Schedule tests in the morning</li><li>• Cue student to begin working and stay on task</li><li>• Change testing schedule or order of subtests</li><li>• Limit reading periods</li><li>• Schedule activities requiring more seat time in the morning and more hands-on and physical activities in the afternoon</li><li>• Divide long-term assignments</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks</li><li>• Schedule tests in the morning</li><li>• Change testing schedule or order of subtests</li></ul> |

## **FACT SHEET 3: DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN SELECTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

**Do...**make accommodation decisions based on individualized needs.

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

**Do...**select accommodations that reduce the effect of the disability to access instruction and demonstrate learning.

**Don't...**select accommodations unrelated to documented student learning needs or are intended to give students an unfair advantage.

**Do...**be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP or IAP.

**Don't...**use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP or IAP.

**Do...**be familiar with the types of accommodations that can be used as both instructional and assessment accommodations.

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

**Do...**be specific about the “Where, When, Who, and How” of providing accommodations.

**Don't...**simply indicate an accommodation will be provided “as appropriate” or “as necessary.”

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

**Don't...**check every accommodation possible on a checklist simply to be “safe.”

**Do...**evaluate accommodations used by the student.

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

**Do...**get input about accommodations from teachers, parents, and students, and use it to make decisions at IEP or IAP team planning committee meetings.

**Don't...**make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations alone.

**Do...**provide accommodations for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction.

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

**Do...**select accommodations based on specific individual needs in each content area.

**Don't...**assume certain accommodations, such as extra time, are appropriate for every student in every content area.

## **FACT SHEET 4: GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**

#### **Read Aloud Test Directions and Items**

Test readers must ensure that all students understand what is expected of them when reading test directions aloud. Students must have an opportunity to ask questions and understand how to mark their answers before they begin taking the test. However, test readers should not answer questions about specific test items. When reading test items aloud, test readers must be careful not to inadvertently give clues that indicate the correct answer or help eliminate some answer choices. Readers should use even inflection so that the student does not receive any cues by the way the information is read. It is important for readers to read test items/questions and text word-for-word, exactly as written. Readers may not clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance to students. Note that in the areas of mathematics, science, and social studies, there are no passages – only test items. As a result, when delivering this accommodation, all parts of a test item may be read.

#### **Sign Language Interpreter**

If a student's teacher serves as the interpreter in a testing situation, it is recommended that a second person is present to monitor for quality and fairness. If allowed to sign test items and prompts, interpreters must not clarify, elaborate, paraphrase, or provide assistance with the meaning of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items. Interpreter services need to be arranged prior to test day.

#### **Large Print/Large Font**

If a student needs a large-print test edition, it must be ordered in a timely manner. After a student finishes a large-print edition of a test, a certified educator, under the supervision of the School Test Coordinator, must transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet.

#### **Braille**

If a student needs a braille test edition, it must be ordered in a timely manner. The test administrator for a braille test needs to be provided with a print version of the test during test administration. After a student finishes a braille edition of a test, a certified educator, under the supervision of the School Test Coordinator, must transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet or response form.

### **RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**

#### **Writing in Test Booklet**

Allow the student to write in the test booklet instead of on an answer sheet. After a student finishes the test, a certified educator, under the supervision of the School Test Coordinator, must transcribe the student's answers *exactly* onto a standard answer sheet or response form, including any double coding the student may have erroneously done, etc.

### **Dictation to Scribe**

Scribes may be provided for students with verified disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression or a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing. Scribes must be impartial and should be experienced in transcription. They must write exactly what the student dictates. Scribes are not allowed to elaborate on what is being written. They cannot answer or explain anything to the student during testing and must be careful not to give hints of any type. Detailed instructions for the use of the scribing accommodation on the Georgia Writing Assessments are provided in the test administration manual.

## **SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **Supervised Test Locations**

It may be difficult to find testing locations that are private and free of distractions, especially when many students in a building are tested at the same time. Each student tested in a private location needs adult supervision by a certified educator and each adult supervisor needs clear instructions about test administration procedures. This includes students tested in the home, hospital, and residential or other alternative settings.

## **SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **Providing Extended Time**

Timed tests usually require students to request a fairly specific amount of extra time. A common extension is time and one half. This means that for a test normally taking 60 minutes, a student may be allowed 90 minutes. Double time may also be allowed. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the type of accommodations being provided, the disability involved, and the type of test. For example, if a reader or scribe is used, double time may be appropriate. Specifying unlimited time is not appropriate or feasible.

# TEACHER TOOL 1

## ACCESS NEEDS THAT MAY REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS

Directions: Use these questions to identify various types of presentation, response, setting, and scheduling accommodations for students with disabilities. The list is not exhaustive—its purpose is to prompt members of IEP teams and 504 planning committees to consider a wide range of accommodation needs. Use the list in planning by indicating Y (YES), N (NO), or DK/NA (Don't Know/Not Applicable).

|  | Y                        | N                        | DK/<br>NA                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b>   |                          |                          |                          |
| 1. Does the student have a visual impairment that requires large-type or braille materials?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Is the student able to read and understand directions?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Can the student follow oral directions from an adult?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Does the student need directions repeated frequently?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Are assistive technology devices indicated on the student's IEP?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Has the student been identified as having a reading disability?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Does the student have low or poor reading skills that may require the reading of tests or sections of tests that do not measure reading comprehension in order to demonstrate knowledge of subject areas? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Does the student have a hearing impairment that requires an interpreter to sign directions?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Does the student have a hearing impairment and need a listening device?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS</b>   |                          |                          |                          |
| 10. Does the student have difficulty tracking from one page to another and maintaining that student's place?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Does the student have a disability that affects the ability to record that student's responses in the standard manner?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Can the student use a pencil or writing instrument?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Does the student use a word processor to complete homework assignments or tests?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Does the student use a tape recorder to complete assignments or tests?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Does the student need the services of a scribe?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Does the student have a disability that affects that student's ability to spell?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Does the student have a visual or motor disability that affects that student's ability to perform math computations?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| <b>SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS</b>   | Y                        | N                        | DK/<br>NA                |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 18. Do others easily distract the student or does that student have difficulty remaining on task?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Does the student require any specialized equipment or other accommodations that may be distracting to others?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Does the student have visual or auditory impairments that require special lighting or acoustics?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Can the student focus on the student's own work in a setting with large groups of other students?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. Does the student exhibit behaviors that may disrupt the attention of other students?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. Do any physical accommodations need to be made for the student in the classroom?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS</b>  |                          |                          |                          |
| 24. Can the student work continuously for the length of time allocated for standard test administration?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. Does the student use other accommodations or adaptive equipment that require more time to complete test items (e.g., Braille, scribe, use of head pointer to type)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. Does the student tire easily due to health impairments?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. Does the student have a visual impairment that causes eyestrain and requires frequent breaks?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. Does the student have a learning disability that affects the rate at which that student processes written information?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. Does the student have a motor disability that affects the rate at which that student writes responses?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. Does the student take any type of medication to facilitate optimal performance?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. Does the student's attention span or distractibility require shorter working periods and frequent breaks?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## TEACHER TOOL 2

### ACCOMMODATIONS FROM THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

*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 could 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 might 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

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Classes

Accommodations

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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

### TEACHER TOOL 3

## ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS AGREEMENT

*This is an example of a form a student could carry on test day. Some accommodations (e.g., special test editions) need to be arranged long before test day but should still be included on this list to make certain the student receives the correct test booklet. A similar form could be carried to class to remind teachers about daily accommodations. Different schools, teachers, and students might format these statements differently.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Student's name)

need the following accommodations to take part in this assessment:

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

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)

## TEACHER TOOL 4

### LOGISTICS PLANNING CHECKLIST

*Directions: This Logistics Planning Checklist can be used in the planning and implementation of assessment accommodations for students. Use the checklist by indicating Y (Yes), N (No), or NA (Not Applicable).*

| <b>ACCOMMODATIONS THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR</b> |   | Y                        | N                        | NA                       |
|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.   | Accommodations are documented on students' IEP or 504 plan.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.   | Students use accommodations regularly and evaluates use.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3.   | A master accommodations plan/data base listing assessment accommodation needs for all students tested is updated regularly.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>PREPARATION FOR TEST DAY</b>                    |   |                          |                          |                          |
| 4.   | Special test editions are ordered for individual students based on information contained in master accommodations plan (e.g., braille, large print).  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5.   | Test administrators/proctors receive a list of accommodation needs for students they will supervise (list comes from master accommodations plan/data base).   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6.   | Adult supervision is arranged and test administrators receive training for each student receiving accommodations in small group or individual settings, including extended time (with substitutes available). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.   | Trained readers, scribes, and sign language interpreters are arranged for individual students (with substitutes available) and provided room locations with rosters.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8.   | Special equipment is arranged and checked for correct operation (e.g., calculator, word processor with spell and grammar check disabled).   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>ACCOMMODATIONS ON THE DAY OF THE TEST</b>       |   |                          |                          |                          |
| 9.   | All eligible students receive accommodations as determined by their IEP or 504 plan.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10.  | Provision of accommodations is recorded by test administrator.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11.  | Providers of accommodations are available as needed (e.g., interpreters, readers, scribes)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12.  | Plans are made to replace defective equipment.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**CONSIDERATION AFTER THE DAY OF THE TEST**

Y N NA

- |   |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. Responses are transferred to scannable answer sheets for students using special equipment and adapted test forms and response documents | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. All equipment is returned to appropriate locations.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Students who take make-up tests receive needed accommodations   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Effectiveness of accommodations use is evaluated by test administrators and students, and plans are made for improvement.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## **APPENDIX A**

### **FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS REQUIRING PARTICIPATION BY STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

#### ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY ACT (ESEA)

Stronger accountability for results is one of the four basic education reform principles contained in ESEA. This law complements the provisions in providing public accountability at the school, system, and state levels for all students with disabilities. ESEA explicitly calls for

...the participation in such assessments of all students [Sec. 1111 (3) (C) (i)]. (The term ‘such assessments’ refers to a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments.) The reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities—as defined under Section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—necessary to measure the academic achievement of such students relative to state academic content and state student academic achievement standards [Sec. 1111 (3) (C)(ii)].

One of the basic reform principles of ESEA is stronger accountability for results for all students. Through this federal legislation, in addition to other state and local system initiatives, assessments aimed at increasing accountability provide important information with regard to

- how successful schools are including all students in standards-based education,
- how well students are achieving standards, and
- what needs to be improved upon for specific groups of students.

There are several critical elements in ESEA that hold schools accountable for educational results. Academic content standards (what students should learn) and academic achievement standards (how well they should learn) in reading/language arts and mathematics (with science added in 2007-08) form the basis of state accountability systems. State assessments are the mechanism for checking whether schools have been successful with students attaining the knowledge and skills defined by the content standards. By 2005-06, states must provide assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics for all students, including students with disabilities, in grades 3-8 and once in high school. By 2007-08, states must provide science assessments in at least one grade in each of three grade spans (3-5, 6-9, 10-12) each year. School, system, and state accountability is based on measuring success in educating all of its students and determining what needs to be improved for specific groups of students. The accountability system is defined as a way to measure the improvement in achieving standards for all students and designated subgroups each year. Schools, systems, and states are held accountable for improvements on an annual basis by public reporting and ultimately through consequences if accountability goals and requirements are not met.

## INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2004

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 system-wide assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include:

Children with disabilities are included in general state and system-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 system-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP team determines that the child will not participate in a particular state or system-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].

Based on current trends, the use of assessments for accountability purposes will likely increase in the future, supported by other legislative initiatives passed by states in their efforts to implement educational reform.