

Virginia Department of Education's Procedures for Participation of Students with Disabilities In the Assessment Component of Virginia's Accountability System

This document provides information about the participation of students with disabilities in the assessment component of Virginia's accountability system. For students with disabilities this means participation through the Standards of Learning assessments or the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program. Included in this document are:

1. guidelines for determining how students with disabilities will participate in the Standards of Learning assessments or the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program,
2. procedures for providing testing accommodations for the Standards of Learning assessments, and
3. documentation requirements.

Including Students with Disabilities in Virginia's Accountability System

It is the intent of the Commonwealth of Virginia to include all students with disabilities in the assessment component of Virginia's accountability system. The federal regulations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and state regulations under the Virginians with Disabilities Act, Section 51.5-40 *et seq.* of the Code of Virginia, require that individuals with disabilities be given equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the policies and procedures customarily granted to all individuals. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), P.L. 105-17, regulations require that all students with disabilities participate in the state's accountability system. Additionally the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, requires that at least 95% of students with disabilities participate in assessments that measure adequate yearly progress of schools, school divisions, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

For all students with disabilities identified under IDEA, the individualized education program (IEP) team determines how the student will participate in the accountability system. For students identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the 504 committee determines how the student will participate. A student's IEP or 504 plan must specify the student's participation in either of the following according to the set criteria for participation:

The Standards of Learning Assessments, or

The Virginia Alternate Assessment Program.

When determining participation in Virginia's accountability system, all students with disabilities must be first considered for participation in the Standards of Learning assessments.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

I. Including Students with Disabilities in the Standards of Learning Assessments

It is expected that all students, including students with disabilities who are in grades 3, 5, and 8 and those enrolled in courses that have an end-of-course Standards of Learning test, will participate in the Standards of Learning assessments. A current list of all Standards of Learning assessments can be found on the Department of Education's web site at www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/home.shtml or is available from the Department of Education upon request.

The importance of the participation of students with disabilities in the Standards of Learning assessments is reinforced by the fact that, beginning with the students who entered the 9th grade in the fall of 2000, students desiring a standard diploma or advanced studies diploma will need to earn a prescribed number of verified credits. To receive a verified credit the student must earn a passing score on the Standards of Learning tests or a substitute test(s), as outlined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Accountability/soa.html). Additionally, to receive a modified standard diploma¹ a student with a disability must pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments which are currently the Standards of Learning Grade 8 English: Reading and the Standards of Learning Grade 8 Mathematics tests.

II. Role of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team

(For students identified under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

For all students with disabilities identified under IDEA, the individualized education program (IEP) is the plan to ensure that they receive an appropriate education. The IEP process also ensures that each student's parent(s)² is an active participant of the IEP team. Decisions about the participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments, the need for and selection of accommodations, or the non-participation in a Standards of Learning assessment are the responsibility of the IEP team. These decisions should be made during the IEP team meeting that precedes the Standards of Learning assessment administration. If the decisions are not reflected on the current IEP, an IEP meeting must be held to address and document these issues on the IEP prior to the test administration. The ramifications of these decisions made by the IEP team must be clearly explained to and understood by the student's parent(s) and the student if appropriate. A student's IEP must specify the student's participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments as follows:

- participation with no accommodations,

¹ Modified Standard diploma is only available to students with disabilities under IDEA as defined by Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia.

² See the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia for the definition of parent for a child with a disability, 8VAC20-80-10. The parental rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of majority (18 in Virginia) unless certain procedures specified in regulations have been followed, 8 VAC 20-80-72.

- participation with standard and/or non-standard accommodations, or
- non-participation in a Standards of Learning assessment with an explanation of why the student is not participating, a statement of the ramifications of the decision not to participate, and a description of how the student will be assessed in this area (see VI of this section, Non-Participation by Students With Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)).

III. Role of the 504 Committee

(For students identified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and do not have an IEP)

Each local education agency is required to determine appropriate educational programs for all students with disabilities who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by convening a knowledgeable group to evaluate and determine program needs. Therefore, decisions about the participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments, the need for and selection of accommodations, or the non-participation in a Standards of Learning assessment are the responsibility of a 504 committee of similar composition. Each student's parent, legal guardian or surrogate parent must be a participant in these decisions. These decisions should be made during the 504 committee meeting which precedes the Standards of Learning assessment administration. If the decisions were not made, a 504 committee meeting must be held to address these issues prior to the test administration. The ramifications of the decision must be clearly explained to and understood by the student's parent, legal guardian, or surrogate parent and the student if appropriate. A student's 504 plan must specify the student's participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments as follows:

- participation with no accommodations,
- participation with standard and/or non-standard accommodations, or
- non-participation in a Standards of Learning assessment with an explanation of why the student is not participating, a statement of the ramifications of the decision not to participate, and a description of how the student will be assessed in this area (see VI of this section, Non-Participation by Students With Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)).

IV. Determination of How Students with Disabilities Participate in the Standards of Learning Assessments

It is expected that all students with disabilities in grades 3, 5, and 8 as well as those enrolled in courses that have an end-of-course Standards of Learning test will participate in the Standards of Learning assessments. Only the student's IEP team or 504 committee may determine non-participation in grades 3, 5, and 8 (see VI of this section, Non-Participation by Students With Disabilities from a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)). Students with disabilities who

participate in the Standards of Learning assessments will participate either with accommodations or without accommodations.

Decisions about participation in and how a student with a disability will be tested on the Standards of Learning assessments should be made independently for each Standards of Learning test. In determining how the student is to be tested on the Standards of Learning assessments, the IEP team or 504 committee must base its determination on the fact that the Standards of Learning assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8 measures content covered in previous grades.

NOTE: IEP teams and 504 committees will find the released Standards of Learning test items and the Standards of Learning test blueprints useful in comparing the information on the Standards of Learning assessments with the information covered in the classroom (found at www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/home.shtml).

The IEP team or 504 committee, when determining how the student is to be tested on the Standards of Learning assessments, needs to consider the following questions:

- 1) Has the student received instruction in the content covered by the Standards of Learning assessment? (This question shall be repeated for each Standards of Learning assessment in the four content areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social sciences in grades 3, 5, and 8) and/or

Is the student enrolled in a course for which there is a Standards of Learning end-of-course test?

- If yes, the student takes the assessment and the IEP team or 504 committee then considers the student's need for testing accommodations as indicated in question 2.
- If no, the student should not be tested on this particular Standards of Learning assessment (see VI of this section, Non-Participation by Students With Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)).

If the IEP team answers "no" for all Standards of Learning assessments in grades 3, 5 or 8, the IEP team shall refer to Virginia Alternate Assessment Program section to determine if the student meets the criteria to participate in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program.

NOTE: The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that at least 95% of students with disabilities participate in state assessments that measure adequate yearly progress. These assessments are currently in the areas of reading/language arts and mathematics and will include science beginning in 2007-2008.

The IEP team or 504 committee must remember that there are approved substitute test(s) for end-of-course tests that may be used for earning verified credit (see Virginia Department of Education's document, Substitute Tests for Verified Credit, at www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/home.shtml).

2) Does the student receive accommodations during instruction or classroom assessments in the content covered by the test?

- If no, the student should take the assessment without any accommodations.
- If yes, the IEP team or 504 committee should determine the accommodations needed by the student and document this decision on the student’s IEP or 504 plan. Refer to V of this section, Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, to determine if an accommodation is either standard or nonstandard.

V. Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The IEP team or 504 committee has the responsibility for decisions about the need for and selection of accommodations for students with disabilities. Accommodations allow students with disabilities an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement. Typically, accommodations can be classified in the following categories: timing/scheduling, setting, presentation, and response. The use of accommodations by a student when participating in the Standards of Learning assessments must be determined individually for each Standards of Learning test and identified in the student’s IEP or 504 plan. An example of how an IEP or the 504 plan may document the use of accommodations is:

Standards of Learning Assessments			
Standards of Learning TESTS (list test)	PARTICIPATION	ACCOMMODATIONS	If <u>YES</u> , List Accommodation(s)
	___Yes ___No	___Yes ___No	
	___Yes ___No	___Yes ___No	
	___Yes ___No	___Yes ___No	

Mark any nonstandard accommodation with an asterisk (*). These test scores will be reported as scores that result from a nonstandard administration.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-PARTICIPATION AND HOW THE STUDENT WILL BE ASSESSED
 If no is checked for any test, explain in the space below why the student will not participate in this test, the impact relative to promotion or graduation, and how the student will be assessed in these areas.

Accommodations should be those the student needs and uses during classroom instruction and assessments as identified in the student's IEP or 504 plan. Accommodations should not be used only for participating in a Standards of Learning assessment(s). The student should be familiar with VDOE Procedures for Participation of Students with Disabilities in the Assessment Component of Virginia’s Accountability System

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an accommodation because the use of an unfamiliar accommodation during testing may have a negative impact on the student's performance. Finally, an accommodation based solely on its potential to enhance performance beyond providing equal opportunity to perform is inappropriate.

Accommodations that allow a student to take the test in a different way without changing what the test is measuring are referred to as “accommodations which maintain standard conditions” or “standard accommodations.” Accommodations that significantly change what a test is measuring and do not maintain standard conditions of the test are referred to as “nonstandard accommodations.” Examples of both standard and nonstandard accommodations are listed below.

NOTE: Special procedures (see Appendix A) are to be followed for each of the following accommodations marked with an asterisk (*).

TIMING/SCHEDULING

Standard Accommodations

- time of day
- breaks during test
- multiple test sessions *
- order of tests administration

SETTING

Standard Accommodations

- preferential seating (e.g., at the front of the room or in a study carrel)
- small group testing
- individual testing (one-on-one)
- special lighting
- adaptive or special furniture
- test administered in locations with minimal distractions
- noise buffers
- hospital/home/non-school setting

PRESENTATION

Standard Accommodations

- Braille *
- large print *
- enlarging the answer document
- reading directions to students
- simplifying directions
- interpreting/transliterating directions (e.g., sign language, cued speech) *
- written directions to accompany oral directions
- clarifying directions

PRESENTATION (cont.)

Standard Accommodations (cont.)

- reading of test items aloud (this is a nonstandard accommodation on the English: Reading test) *
- audio-tape version of test items (this is a nonstandard accommodation on the English: Reading test) *
- interpreting/transliterating (e.g., sign language, cued speech) test items (this is a nonstandard accommodation on the English: Reading test) *
- magnifying glass
- amplification equipment (e.g., hearing aid or auditory trainer)
- templates
- masks or markers to maintain place

Nonstandard Accommodations

- reading test items aloud on the English: Reading test *
- using audio-cassette version of the English: Reading test *
- interpreting/transliterating (sign language, cued speech) test items on the English: Reading test *

RESPONSE

Standard Accommodations

- student marks booklet and teacher/proctor transfer answers to answer sheet *
- student responds verbally, points, or indicates an answer and teacher/proctor marks answer sheet *
- abacus
- arithmetic tables (standard accommodation only if test allows a calculator)
- braille *
- large diameter/ special grip pencil
- pencil grip
- word processor *
- typewriter *
- augmentative communication device *
- spell check (including spell checkers)
- spelling dictionary
- tape recorder (only for pre-writing activity to tape response for English writing test)

Nonstandard Accommodations

- dictation to a scribe (writing sample component of the English writing test only) *
- use of a calculator on grade 3 mathematics test and on the computation section of the grade 5 mathematics test (calculators are not routinely supplied to all students)

Nonstandard Accommodations (cont.)

- use of arithmetic tables on grade 3 mathematics test and on the computation section of the grade 5 mathematics test (an arithmetic table is considered comparable to a calculator and calculators are not routinely supplied to all students)
- use of a calculator with additional functions to those routinely supplied to all students

If a student utilizes a nonstandard accommodation, the record of that score will be accompanied by a notation explaining that the score resulted from a nonstandard administration. A student with a disability, who has passed a Standards of Learning assessment utilizing any accommodation, including a nonstandard accommodation, has passed for all purposes including earning a verified credit.

NOTE: Questions about any accommodations not listed here and whether the accommodation results in a standard or nonstandard administration of the test should be directed to the local education agency's Director of Testing who will consult with Department of Education staff as needed. Accommodations that violate test security are not permitted.

VI. Non-Participation of Students with Disabilities in a Standards of Learning Assessment(s)

A. Standards of Learning Assessments for Grades 3, 5, and 8

Non-participation in a Standards of Learning assessment in grades 3, 5, and 8 should be considered only for students who have not received instruction in content covered by the Standards of Learning assessment. The IEP team or 504 committee must base its determination on the fact that the Standards of Learning assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8 measure content covered in previous grades.

If the IEP team or 504 committee determines that it is not appropriate for the student to participate in a Standards of Learning assessment, the consequences of this decision must be fully explained so that the student's parent, legal guardian, or surrogate parent and the student, if appropriate, understand the consequences. At the elementary and middle school level these consequences may include:

- The student will not have the opportunity to participate in the school's remediation recovery program, which is available to students who have not passed the English: Reading and/or mathematics Standards of Learning tests in grades 3, 5, and 8;
- Teachers, parents and the student will not receive the information on student progress contained in the Standards of Learning score reports; and
- The student may not have the opportunity to experience a Standards of Learning assessment prior to taking the assessments needed for graduation.

NOTE: The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that at least 95% of students with VDOE Procedures for Participation of Students with Disabilities in the Assessment Component of Virginia's Accountability System

disabilities participate in state assessments that measure adequate yearly progress. These assessments are currently in the areas of reading/language arts and mathematics and will include science beginning in 2007-2008.

The following non-participation procedures and practices must be followed by the IEP team or the 504 committee:

1. The IEP team or 504 committee shall review the IEP/504 plan of each student with respect to participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments.
2. The IEP team or 504 committee must document its determination that a student will not participate in a particular Standards of Learning assessment. This documentation shall include a statement of the reasons why a particular assessment is not appropriate for the student and how the student will be assessed in that area.

The following are not acceptable reasons for why a particular assessment is inappropriate:

- The student's disability;
- The belief that the student may fail the test;
- The belief that the student does not need this assessment to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate with an advanced studies diploma, a standard diploma, a modified standard diploma, a special diploma, or a certificate;
- The student is reading or is performing below grade level;
- The belief that the experience will be too stressful for the student;
- The student's behavior prohibits taking the test with a group; and
- The student has not mastered all of the curriculum that is covered on the 3rd, 5th, or 8th grade Standards of Learning assessments.

This documentation must be attached to or become part of the student's IEP or 504 plan and must indicate that the consequences of this decision have been fully explained to and understood by the student's parent, legal guardian or surrogate parent, or student, if appropriate, and that the parent's and student's due process rights have been explained.

3. a. **Students with a 504 plan** must participate in the Standards of Learning assessment in at least one of the four content areas at grades 3, 5, and 8.
- b. **Students with an IEP** must participate in the Standards of Learning assessment in at least one of the four content areas at grades 3, 5, and 8 or in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP). If the IEP team determines that a student will not participate in any of the Standards of Learning assessments, then the IEP team needs to determine if the student meets the criteria to participate in the VAAP (see Virginia Alternate Assessment Program section). If the student does not meet the criteria, then the student will participate in either the English: Reading or the mathematics test of the Standards of Learning assessment program at grades 3, 5, and 8.

If the parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student requests non-participation in a particular Standards of Learning assessment, an IEP team or 504 committee will be convened to consider the request. The IEP team or 504 committee should document its deliberations and its decision relative to this request in the student's IEP or 504 plan.

B. Standards of Learning End-of-Course Assessments

Students with disabilities must take all applicable end-of-course Standards of Learning assessments if the student is enrolled in the course. Students who are auditing a course or being instructed in only part of the content and thus not enrolled do not take the Standards of Learning end-of-course assessment. In such cases, the course title and code should reflect the instruction being provided the student.

NOTE: There may be a small number of students with IEPs in grades 9-11 who will not be enrolled in any courses for which there is an end-of-course Standards of Learning assessment, will not be working towards an advanced studies diploma, standard diploma, or modified standard diploma, and will not meet the criteria of the VAAP. For these students, the IEP team must document this on the IEP. This documentation must include a statement of why the VAAP is not appropriate for the student; how the student will be assessed; indicate that the consequences have been fully explained so that the student's parent(s) or the student understand the consequences; and indicate that parent's and student's due process rights have been explained.

If the parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student requests non-participation in a particular Standards of Learning assessment, an IEP team or 504 committee will be convened to consider the request. The IEP team or 504 committee should document its deliberations and its decision relative to this request in the student's IEP or 504 plan.

VIRGINIA ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) is only for those students with disabilities who have an IEP and is considered only after the student has been considered for participation in each of the Standards of Learning assessments.

I. Who Should Be Tested

Only students with disabilities who are eligible under IDEA; have an IEP; and who meet the VAAP guidelines for participation will be assessed through the VAAP. Students with disabilities who have only a 504 plan are not eligible to participate in the VAAP.

II. Purpose of the VAAP Assessments

The purpose of the VAAP is to evaluate the performance of students who have traditionally been exempted from state assessment programs. Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act (IDEA 1997) reflect the intent to extend educational accountability and reform to all students, including those with disabilities.

III. Role of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team

(For students identified under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

For all students with disabilities identified under IDEA, the individualized education program (IEP) is the management tool to ensure that they receive an appropriate education. The IEP process also ensures that each student's parent(s) is an active participant of the IEP team. Decisions about the participation in the VAAP assessment are the responsibility of the IEP team. These decisions should be made during the IEP team meeting that precedes the Standards of Learning assessment administration in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11. If decisions about participation in Virginia's accountability system are not reflected on the current IEP, an IEP meeting must be held to address and document these issues on the IEP prior to the test administration. The ramifications of these decisions made by the IEP team must be clearly explained so that the student's parent(s) and the student, if appropriate, understand the consequences. Additionally, parent(s) and student should be provided with an explanation of their due process rights.

IV. Determination if Students with Disabilities Participate in the VAAP

Only students with disabilities who have an IEP, who are in grades 3, 5, 8 and 11, and who are non-participants in all Standards of Learning assessments at that grade level (3, 5 and 8) or who are working toward educational goals other than those prescribed for a modified standard diploma, standard diploma, or advanced studies diploma (grade 11) are considered for participation in the VAAP. The IEP team has the responsibility to determine and document that the student meets all of the following criteria by answering "yes" for each of the statements. If team members determine that the student does not meet a specific criterion, this indicates the student is not a candidate for alternate assessment and should be considered for appropriate participation in the Standards of Learning Assessments.

The IEP team should answer questions 1 – 4 for all students in elementary and middle school for whom the VAAP is being considered and should answer questions 1 – 5 for all students who are in high school for whom the VAAP is being considered.

Section 1

(Answer for all students being considered for the VAAP)

1. Does the student have a current IEP?
2. Does the student demonstrate impairments that prevent completion of curriculum based on the Standards of Learning even with program and testing accommodations? (*data sources: psychological evaluation, intelligence and achievement test, social adaptive behavior test results, observations from parents and teachers, social maturity data, curricular content, etc.*)

3. Does the student's present level of performance indicate the need for extensive, direct instruction and/or intervention in a life skills curriculum that may include personal management, recreation and leisure, school and community, vocational, functional academics, communication, social competence and motor skills to accomplish the application and transfer of life skills? (*data sources: informal and formal assessment results, checklists, data logs, work samples, structured or spontaneous observations from teachers and parents, measurable IEP goals, scheduling matrix, curricular content, list of necessary supports, etc.*)
4. Does the student require intensive, frequent, and individualized instruction in a variety of settings to show progress and acquire, maintain, or generalize life and/or functional academic skills? (*data sources: measurable IEP goals, scheduling matrix, instructional strategies effectiveness data, list of various inclusive settings, learning style inventory, etc.*)

Section 2

(Answer for all students in high school who are being considered for the VAAP)

5. Is the student working toward educational goals other than those prescribed for a modified standard, standard or advanced studies diploma program? (*data sources: list of diploma options and requirements, curricular content, measurable IEP goals, transition plan, parent and student discussion, etc.*)

If the answer to all questions 1 – 4 for all students in elementary and middle school for whom the VAAP is being considered is “yes”, then the student participates in the VAAP. If the student does not meet a specific criterion, this indicates the student is not a candidate for alternate assessment and then the student will participate in either the English: Reading or the mathematics test of the Standards of Learning assessment program at grades 3, 5, and 8.

If the answer to all questions 1 – 5 for all students who are in 11th grade for whom the VAAP is being considered is “yes” then the student participates in the VAAP. There may be a small number of students with IEPs in grades 9-11 who will not be enrolled in any courses for which there is an end-of-course Standards of Learning assessment, will not be working towards an advanced studies diploma, standard diploma, or modified standard diploma, and will not meet the criteria of the VAAP. For these students, the IEP team must document this on the IEP. This documentation shall include a statement of why the VAAP is not appropriate for the student; how the student will be assessed; indicate that the consequences have been fully explained so that the student’s parent(s) or the student understand the consequences; and indicate that parent’s and student’s due process rights have been explained.

APPENDIX A

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IN PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH CERTAIN ACCOMMODATIONS ON THE VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This specifies procedures to be used when providing students with disabilities with certain accommodations on the Standards of Learning assessments.

ACCOMMODATION IN TIMING/SCHEDULING

Multiple Test Sessions

The Standards of Learning tests are not timed. However, some students may be unable to concentrate for a long period of time or may have short attention spans. For such a student, it may be advisable to divide up the test into segments which the student can accomplish and check over in one session/sitting; and to schedule these short sessions over several days. The student may not go back to a previous segment once the segment has been completed.

The direct-writing assessment must be conducted in one sitting. The session should be scheduled for a period long enough to accommodate the needs of the student.

ACCOMMODATIONS IN PRESENTATION

All students should be experienced in or provided training in the test format before attempting the test. This is best provided as part of regular instruction well in advance of the actual test administration.

Braille

A copy of the Braille tests will be provided in regular print to test examiners or proctors working with Braille readers. If needed, transcriber's notes will accompany the Braille booklets.

If the student's answers are recorded on a Braille answer sheet, the responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official qualified to transcribe Braille. The regular answer document and Braille answer sheet must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The Braille answer sheet shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Large Print

If the student marks the answers on an enlarged copy of the answer booklet, the student's answers must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and large-print answer sheet must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The large-print answer sheet shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Interpreting /Transliterating Directions (e.g., sign language, cued speech)

Testing sessions for students who are deaf or have hearing impairment who normally communicate in sign language or using cued speech may include a qualified interpreter or transliterator for test directions or to interpret/transliterate questions answered by the test examiner. (The interpreter's role and code of ethics prohibits answering questions directly). The test examiner, who must be present for the testing session, must read the test directions as presented in the Test Examiner's Manual aloud so that they can be interpreted/transliterated. Student questions must be directed to the test examiner and answered by him or her, and the interpreter/transliterator will communicate the response. The interpreter/transliterator should also communicate sample questions or test questions that are read aloud as part of the test directions.

Interpreting /Transliterating (e.g., sign language, cued speech) Test Items

The test examiner must be very careful when an interpreter/transliterator is used to interpret/transliterate test items so as not to lead the student to a correct answer by facial expression or by repeating any part of the test which is not specifically requested by the student. An interpreted/transliterated administration must be proctored. The test examiner and the proctor must verify in writing that the test administration was conducted according to the standardized procedures. This written verification shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Reading of Test Items Aloud

The test examiner must be very careful when reading the tests aloud not to lead the student by intonation or to repeat any part of the test which is not specifically requested by the student. In particular, care must be taken to describe graphics without leading the student to the correct response. The audiocassette provides a taped version of the test instructions and test items. The examiner who is to read the tests aloud should consult the tape for the standard approach to reading the material. A printed test (either regular or large-print) or a Braille copy of the test should be used in conjunction with reading the test aloud in order to provide the student multi-sensory stimulation. Test items must be read in English.

For an oral administration, an audiotape recording must be made of the entire testing session. The audio recording of the testing session shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Audiotape Version of Test

This is the preferred type of oral administration as it provides uniform administration statewide.

The student should have instructional experience with audiocassettes, such as using audiocassette versions of textbooks or taping lectures in class. Unless the student has experience with using audiocassettes, the audiocassette may cause more difficulty than assistance.

The audiocassette may be used in conjunction with a printed test (either regular or large-print) or a Braille test.

ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE

It is important to remember that even when accommodations are provided, all responses on the assessments should be the student's response, not one interpreted by others.

Student Marks Booklet and Teacher/Proctor Transfer Answers to Answer Sheet

When this accommodation is chosen, student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and test booklet must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The test booklet shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Student Responds Verbally, Points, Uses Augmentative Device with Auditory Output, or Indicates an Answer and Teacher/Proctor Marks Answer Sheet

Students who are unable to respond to test items by marking the regular answer document, a Braille or large-print answer sheet, or in a test booklet may have a teacher/proctor record the answers. A audiotape must be made of the exchange. Student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and audio taped record must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The audio taped record shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Brailier

Blind and low-vision students may use a Braillewriter to write essays or record answer choices to multiple-choice questions on the Standards of Learning tests. Student responses must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official qualified to read Braille. If a student has written his/her response to the writing assessment with a Braillewriter and has used Braille shorthand, the transcriber shall request the student to spell the English words. The regular answer document and Brailled material must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The Brailled material shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Word Processor, Typewriter or Augmentative Communication Device

This accommodation is available for students who are blind or have visual impairments, who do not read Braille, and students who have an orthopedic impairment, a specific learning disability or other disability that interferes with the composing process. It allows these students to use a typewriter, word processor, or augmentative communication device to complete the direct-writing assessment portion of the Standards of Learning writing tests. Only augmentative communication devices, which produce student responses verbatim, may be used. If the augmentative communication device produces an auditory output, it should be treated as dictation to a scribe (see next section). It must be documented that the student uses a typewriter, word processor, or augmentative communication device for his/her written work.

The typed or printed essay must be transcribed to the regular answer document by a school official. The regular answer document and student production must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The student's production shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the scores are received and verified.

Because the regular administration allows the use of a dictionary, a hand-held "spell checker" or the spell checking capacity of a computer can be used, but the student must not be prompted to use it. A document stating that the typed or printed essay is entirely the student's own, and that no "grammar checker" was used must be signed by the student, test examiner, and proctor, and filed with the student's permanent records.

Dictation to a Scribe

Writing Assessment only

The student will dictate (or use an augmentative communication device with auditory output) his/her response to the writing assessment in English to a second person (scribe) who will transcribe it. The session between the student and scribe must be recorded on audiotape and given to Division Director of Testing along with the transcription. The scribe, who should have experience working with the student, must format, capitalize and punctuate only as directed by the student. The scribe's transcription and taped record must be verified by a second school official to ensure that no errors in transcription occurred. The scribe's transcription and taped record shall be retained on file in the office of the Division Director of Testing until the established appeal period is over.