

ACCOMMODATIONS MANUAL

**How to Select, Administer,
and Evaluate Use of
Accommodations for
Instruction and Assessment
of Students with Disabilities**



State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards



5 IMPORTANT STEPS

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

Step 1

Expect students with disabilities to achieve grade level academic content standards

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENTS

- The participation of students with disabilities in assessments is required by the following federal and state laws:
 - No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA)
 - State Laws (Insert specific state laws here)

ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

- Assessments for Accountability help to measure:
 - How successful schools are in including all students in standards-based education
 - How well students are achieving standards
 - What needs to be improved for specific groups of students

INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS IN INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENTS

- To include all students in standards-based instruction and assessments:
 - Provide accommodations during instruction and assessment to increase access
 - Use alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities
 - Follow state guidelines for decisions about the provision of alternate assessments

3 CONDITIONS FOR HIGH EXPECTATIONS

1. Teachers qualified to teach content areas and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners
2. IEPs that provide specialized instruction (e.g., reading strategies, study skills)
3. Accommodations which increase access to instruction and assessment

EQUAL ACCESS TO GRADE LEVEL CONTENT

- Remember that equal access to grade level content is the goal
- Every IEP team member must be familiar with state and district content standards and where to locate standards and updates
- Collaboration between general and special educators is key

BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION

- Definition: General and special education teachers working as a team for the benefit of students with disabilities
- Promotes understanding of general and special education teacher roles and responsibilities

COLLABORATION

- Provides opportunities to gain new skills (e.g., general educator's knowledge of content—special educator's knowledge of specialized instructional techniques)
- Serves as a support building process that fosters the creation of a collaborative school culture



Step 2



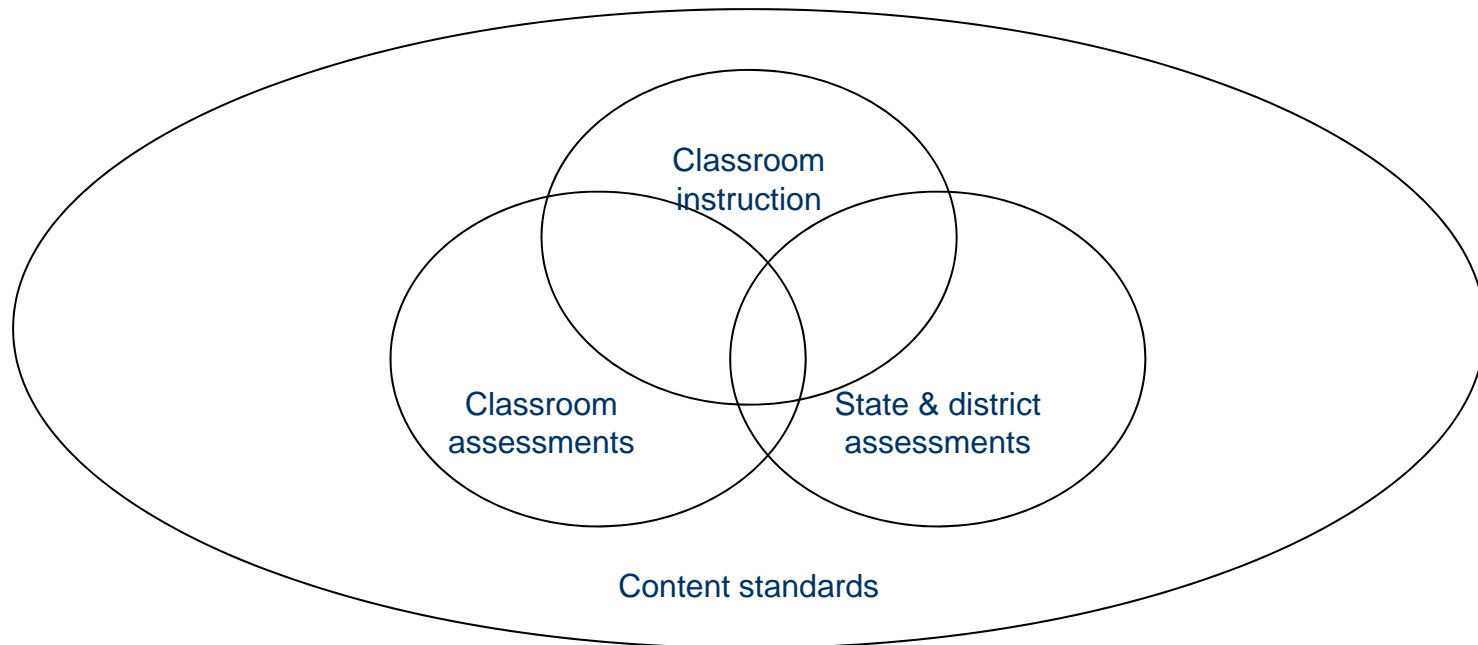
Learn about accommodations for instruction
and assessment

ACCOMMODATIONS

- Definition: Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities.
- Accommodations reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability and do not reduce learning expectations.

ACCOMMODATIONS APPLICATIONS

- The use of accommodations is linked through each of these areas:



ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

- Presentation Accommodations
 - Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual.

ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

- Response Accommodations
 - Allow students to complete assignments, tests, and activities in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.

ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

- **Setting Accommodations**
 - Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.

ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

- Timing/Scheduling Accommodations
 - Increase the allowable length of time to complete a test or assignment and may also change the way the time is organized.

MODIFICATIONS

- Changing, lowering, or reducing learning or assessment expectations
- May result in implications that could adversely affect a student throughout that individual's educational career
- Examples include
 - Requiring a student to learn less material
 - Revising assignments or tests to make them easier

STATE-SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICIES

- On this slide, describe state specific accommodations policies and procedures

Step 3

Select accommodations for instruction and
assessment

Documenting Accommodations

- Accommodations can be documented in 3 areas of the IEP
 - Consideration of Special Factors—
assistive technology devices and services
 - Supplementary Aids and Services—
aids, services, and other supports
 - Participation in Assessments—
how a student will participate in state and district-wide assessments

WHAT DOESN'T WORK

- Checking off every accommodation available on the IEP form, hoping “something” will work
- What else doesn't work?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What are the student's learning strengths and needs?
- How do the student's learning needs affect the achievement of grade level content standards?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 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 reducing the effects of the disability?

REVIEW CURRENT ACCOMMODATIONS

- What accommodations are currently used by the student during instruction and for assessments?
- What are results for assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used?
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations?

REVIEW CURRENT ACCOMMODATIONS

- What difficulties did student experience when using accommodations?
- What is student's perception of how well accommodations "worked"?
- What are perceptions of parents, teachers and specialists about how well accommodations "worked"?

BASED ON THIS REVIEW

- Decide whether the student should
 - Continue using an accommodation “as is”
 - Use an accommodation with changes
 - Have an accommodation discontinued

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
- Conditions for use on state assessments

PLANNING USE OF NEW ACCOMMODATIONS

- Plan how a student will learn to use each new accommodation
- Be certain there is sufficient time to learn to use instructional and assessment accommodations before test day
- Plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of accommodations use

INVOLVE STUDENTS

- Involve students in selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations
- The more input students have in selecting their accommodations, the more likely the accommodations will be used
- Students should see accommodations as adding value to their daily life—not only in school—but for postsecondary, career, and community life



Step 4



Administer accommodations during instruction
and assessment

COORDINATING THE LOGISTICS

- Accommodations during instruction
- Logistics of providing the accommodations must be mapped out
- Teachers and other IEP team members are often given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating, and providing assessment accommodations
- Prepare for the implementation of accommodations prior to, on, and after day of assessment.

PRIOR TO DAY OF ASSESSMENT

- Be certain test administrators and proctors know the accommodations that must be provided to individual students
- Accommodation forms and databases can be used to monitor the implementation of accommodations on day of assessment
- Where will a student with “extended time” accommodation continue assessment? Where will student who requires a “read to” accommodation take assessment?
- Know how to administer accommodations

FOLLOWING THROUGH ON DAY OF ASSESSMENT

- Test administrators must understand the importance of:
 - Ethical Testing Practices
 - Standardization
 - Test security

ENSURING STANDARDIZATION

- Standardization: The adherence of uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment
- Strict adherence to guidelines for instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure that test results reflect actual student learning

ENSURING STANDARDIZATION

- The objective of providing assessment accommodations is to make fair comparisons with other students taking the test

ETHICAL TESTING PRACTICES

- Unethical Testing Practices refer to inappropriate interaction between test administrator and students taking test
- Unethical practices include:
 - “coaching” student during test
 - editing student responses
 - giving clues in any way
 - changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information

TEST SECURITY

- Test security: Ensuring the confidentiality of test questions and answers
- Vital in maintaining test integrity and validity
- Can become an issue when accessible test formats are used or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test

TEST SECURITY WITH SPECIAL TEST FORMATS

- To ensure test security and confidentiality:
 - Keep testing materials in a secure place
 - Keep all test content confidential; do not reveal test content to anyone
 - Return all materials as instructed



Step 5



Evaluate and improve accommodations use

USING FORMATIVE EVALUATION

- Use formative evaluation to “turn over useful information quickly to make improvements” in accommodation use
- Useful information can be obtained from members of the IEP planning team—evaluation is a team effort
- Formative evaluation is based on the premise of using information for continuous improvement

WHY EVALUATE ACCOMODATIONS USE

- To ensure the meaningful participation of all students in state and district-wide assessments
- To reveal questionable patterns of accommodations use
- To identify IEP/504 team members, test administrators, or others in need of additional training and support

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LEVEL

- Are there policies to ensure standardized and ethical assessment administration and that test security practices are followed before, during, and after assessment?
- Are there procedures to ensure assessment administration procedures are not compromised with the provision of accommodations?
- Are students receiving accommodations as documented in the IEP and 504 plans?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LEVEL

- Are there procedures in place to ensure test administrators adhere to directions for the administration of accommodations?
- How many students are receiving accommodations?
- What types of accommodations are provided and are some used more than others?
- What are the results for students when accommodations are used? If students are not demonstrating expected level of performance, did students have access to instruction in assessed content? Was the accommodation effective?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

- What accommodations are used by the student during instruction and on assessments?
- What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations are/are not used? If student not demonstrating expected performance level, did student have access to instruction in assessed content, receive accommodation, or was accommodation not effective?

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

- What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation "worked"?
- What seem to be effective "combinations" of accommodations?
- What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations for a student?
- What are the perceptions of teachers and others about how the accommodation appears to be "working"?