

ELDA

Special Populations and Accommodations

This section discusses testing for students with disabilities according to the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as students who have been designated gifted and/or talented, a State-defined special education category.

The choice of a test administrator for students who receive accommodations should be made at the school level. All test administrators, proctors, and sign-language interpreters must be trained in test security, administration procedures, and accommodations. The School Test Coordinator should give each test administrator whose testing group includes students approved for accommodations a list of those students in the group, specifying the accommodations each is to receive. IDEA special education students and Section 504 students who receive the same accommodations may be tested together.

IDEA SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

All LEP-designated special education students with disabilities according to IDEA are to be tested. On their answer documents or inventories, *Special Education Student* must be coded in the Education Classification field and their **primary** exceptionality must be coded in the Special Education Exceptionality field.

Test Administration Procedures for IDEA Special Education Students

Exceptions to standard test administration procedures may be made for special education students if the accommodations are addressed in the students' IEPs and routinely used in classroom instruction and assessment. Approved accommodations that are used must be coded in the Special Education Student Test Accommodations field on the students' answer documents or inventories after testing is completed. More than one accommodation may be used.

STUDENTS WITH ONE OR MORE DISABILITIES ACCORDING TO SECTION 504

For testing, the LDOE has adopted the definition of disability derived from the regulations for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For the definition and eligibility requirements, see *Bulletin 118*.

All LEP-designated students with one or more disabilities according to Section 504 are to be tested. *Regular Education Student* must be coded in the Education Classification field on each student's answer document or inventory, and Yes must be coded in the field asking if the student is eligible for services according to Section 504.

Test Administration Procedures for Section 504 Students

Test accommodations are permitted for these students if they are routinely provided in the students' regular instructional and assessment program and if the other conditions specified in the administrative guidelines for Students with Disabilities according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are met. The school Section 504 Coordinator must provide the School Test Coordinator and the district Section 504 Coordinator a list of the Section 504 students at the school and their approved standardized test accommodations by the deadline designated by the district. Test accommodations may not be used if the student does not have a current IAP.

School districts must have a system of documenting and tracking test accommodations for all students who receive Section 504 services. Districts may use the Data Validation form previously required or use a different method for managing this information. This documentation does not have to be submitted to the LDOE.

Test accommodations that are used must be coded on students' answer documents or inventories in the Test Accommodations for Students with Disabilities According to Section 504 field after testing is complete. More than one accommodation may be used.

GIFTED AND TALENTED SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Students may be designated as gifted, as talented, or as both. Students so designated are classified by the State as special education and should be so coded in the Education Classification field. Their scores, however, are aggregated with those of regular education students in subgroup reports.

If students are designated both gifted and talented, then *Gifted* should be coded as the primary exceptionality.

These students may also qualify under Section 504 and be eligible for accommodations in testing. Such students should be coded both as special education and as Section 504. An IAP must have been completed for the student to receive test accommodations. Accommodations for these students should be coded under Section 504 after testing is completed. More than one accommodation may be used.

TEST ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SECTION 504 STUDENTS

Test accommodations are provided to minimize the effects of a disability to ensure that a student can demonstrate the degree of achievement he or she actually possesses. **Test accommodations should not be different from or in addition to the accommodations documented on the students' IEP or IAP and provided in regular classroom instruction and assessment.** Individual or small group administration must be used if the accommodations will interfere with the testing of other students (*Answers Recorded, Tests Read Aloud*). The goal in using accommodations is to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity in assessment, not to give students with disabilities an unfair advantage over other students or to subvert or invalidate the purpose of the tests. (See *Bulletin 118*.)

If an accommodation—even an approved accommodation—is not provided in classroom instruction and assessment, it is inappropriate to provide that accommodation during testing. For example, if a student does not dictate answers to a tape recorder during classroom instruction and assessment, then using a tape recorder—*Assistive Technology*—would not be appropriate as a test accommodation. All accommodations must be documented on the IEP or IAP for the student to receive them.

Approved accommodations that are used in testing must be marked in the appropriate field of the answer documents or inventories after testing is completed.

The following test accommodations may be used for IDEA special education students and for students with disabilities according to Section 504.

Braille: For the grades 3 through 12 tests only, braille editions of the Reading, Writing, and Listening test booklets and special instructions for administering the braille edition are provided, which describe modifications from the standard print edition and identify omitted items. For Speaking, the scoring rubrics and prompts not needing modification for braille are in the *Speaking Scoring Guide*. For the prompts that require modification, the braille instructions contain the modified prompts that you should read aloud to the student. Graphics are provided for only a few items as indicated in the braille instructions. Generally, all test items in the standard print edition of the test booklet are included in the braille test booklet. If an item is omitted from the braille test, students receive credit for it. **To ensure students receive credit for the omitted item, nothing must be marked for that item on the scorable answer document and Braille must be coded as an accommodation.** The test administrator must transfer **all** braille answers to a scorable answer document, including multiple-choice and brailled responses. Both *Braille* and *Transferred Answers* must be coded as accommodations on the answer document. Student responses not transferred to a scorable answer document will not be scored. The scorable answer document should be returned to the School Test Coordinator with other used answer documents. Braille-written responses must be returned with the scorable answer document to which responses were transferred. Braille test booklets should be returned with other test booklets.

Large Print: For the grades 3 through 12 tests only, the large-print edition is essentially an enlarged version of the standard print edition of the test booklets. All test items in the standard print edition of the test booklet are included in the large-print test booklet, though the page layout may vary slightly. Students who use the large-print edition may circle their answers for the multiple-choice in the large-print test booklet. The test administrator must transfer all multiple-choice responses to a scorable answer document. (See page 71 of the *ELDA Test Administration Manual*.) Students must write their responses to the Writing test in

the answer document. The test administrator should write “Transferred” on the top front cover of the large-print test booklet, **not** on the answer document. Student responses not transferred to a scorable answer document will not be scored. The large-print test booklets must be returned with other test booklets. Both *Large Print* and *Transferred Answers* must be coded as accommodations on the answer document. Do **not** photocopy the large-print test booklet.

Answers Recorded: If a student is unable to write due to his or her disability, the test must be administered individually to allow the student to dictate orally or sign his or her responses to the test administrator, who must record them on the scorable answer document. Scribes and others supporting a student’s test taking must be neutral in responding to the student during test administration. The assistance in testing must not cue any answer, and the recorded responses must accurately represent the student’s choices. If a scribe assists on the Writing test, the scribe must write exactly what the student dictates, without punctuation and capitalization, on a separate sheet of paper. The student must then edit what the scribe wrote and provide any punctuation, capitalization, or other changes. The scribe then must copy the edited response to the scorable answer document. Student responses not recorded on a scorable answer document will not be scored. Both a student’s and a test administrator’s handwriting may appear within an answer document but not on the same response. If a student’s and a test administrator’s handwriting appear on a written response in the answer document, only what the student has written will be scored for that particular response. Both *Answers Recorded* and *Individual/Small Group Administration* must be coded as accommodations on the answer document. The edited responses on the separate sheet of paper must be returned to the School Test Coordinator with the scorable answer document to which responses were transferred.

Assistive Technology: Assistive technology may include **but is not limited to** a computer, tape recorder, grip for a pencil, visual magnification device, communication device, mask or marker to maintain place, speech synthesizer, or an electronic reader. An electronic reader may not be used during the Reading test. **Spell check, glossaries, grammar check, dictionaries, and thesauruses are not allowed on ELDA.** If a student records responses on a computer or anything other than the scorable answer document, the responses must be transferred to a scorable answer document. Student responses

not transferred to a scorable answer document will not be scored. The answer document must be coded for the accommodations *Assistive Technology* and *Transferred Answers*. All documents, computer disks, or other materials containing test items or student responses must be returned to the School Test Coordinator and maintained in the locked, secure area, until test scores are returned and any questions regarding the scores have been resolved. The School Test Coordinator also must verify that test items and student responses are removed from computer hard drives, including from the recycle bin (Windows) or trash (Mac).

Extended Time: Since the grades 3 through 12 Reading and Writing tests are untimed, every student must be given sufficient time to respond to every test item. Time for the Reading and Writing tests may be extended and/or adjusted for certain students, such as those who have short attention spans or those who may be unable to concentrate for long periods of time on a given task. The test administration schedule for all tests may be altered to allow for intermittent short breaks during the testing period. Or it may be determined appropriate to administer each test in a number of short sessions. The time of day each test is administered may be adjusted to a time more beneficial to the student. **These tests must be completed within the testing window.** If testing is to be continued after an extended break or on another day, the test administrator must put a nonpermanent place marker, such as a sticky note, on the answer document where the student stopped testing and monitor the testing that follows to ensure that the student does not return to previously attempted items. **For the Listening and Speaking tests, which are timed, the CDs may be paused between items but no part of the CD may be replayed.**

Communication Assistance: For statewide assessments, communication assistance is signing or cuing the test for students who are hearing impaired. A test administrator and/or sign-language interpreter who is fluent in the signing or cuing modality routinely used by the student should be available to repeat or clarify directions and sign the test **if warranted by the student’s reading level as documented** on the IEP or IAP. The test should be signed directly as written. **The passages, introductions, items/questions, and answer options on the Reading test cannot be signed or cued.** However, the directions, which appear in this manual and at the beginning of each part of the Reading test, may be signed or cued. On the Speaking and Listening tests, the prompts may be signed to the students

who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students who communicate through signing, not orally, may sign their responses to the Speaking prompts. The test administrator must exercise caution to avoid providing answers. It is a breach of test security to provide signs or cues that convey answers or to sign the Reading test, which results in an invalid score. (See *Bulletin 118*.)

Transferred Answers: If a student recorded answers in the test booklet or on a separate sheet of paper or used braille, large-print, or other technological assistive devices documented on the student's IEP or IAP, the test administrator must transfer the student's responses onto a scorable answer document exactly as the student wrote them and write "Transferred" on the top front cover of the large-print test booklet or other material from which the answers were transferred, **not** on the answer document. Student responses not transferred to a scorable answer document will not be scored. (See page 71 of the *ELDA Test Administration Manual*.) Both a student's and a test administrator's handwriting may appear within an answer document but not on the same response. If a student's and a test administrator's handwriting appear on a written response in the answer document, only what the student has written will be scored for that particular response. The School Test Coordinator must verify that all responses have been transferred.

Individual/Small Group Administration: Tests may be administered to an individual or a small group of students (maximum, eight) who require more attention than can be provided in a larger classroom. If other selected accommodations affect the standard administration of the test (*Answers Recorded, Tests Read Aloud*), individual or small group administration **must** be used. Students testing in small groups must be seated an adequate distance apart to prevent copying. Students who have the accommodation *Individual Administration* must be tested one on one by a test administrator in a separate location from other students.

Tests Read Aloud: Students receiving this accommodation must have been provided it in classroom assessment. These students should have the Writing test read aloud. The Listening and Speaking tests are contained on audio CDs. **The Reading test cannot be read aloud.** Do **not** read aloud the passages, introductions, items/questions, or answer options on the Reading test. However, the directions, which appear in this manual and at the beginning of each part of the Reading test, should be read aloud. The Writing test must be read aloud

exactly as written. When reading, the test administrator must exercise caution to avoid providing answers. It is a breach of test security to provide signs or cues that convey answers or to read aloud the Reading test, which results in an invalid score. (See *Bulletin 118*.)

Other: Any necessary accommodations may be used, but they must be determined by the IEP team or Section 504 committee and documented on the student's IEP or IAP and must not breach test security or invalidate the meaning of the test score or the purpose of the test. Examples of other accommodations include highlighting the task or verbs in the directions on the test or assisting the student in tracking the test items.

NOTE: All students may have directions repeated in the Reading and Writing tests. Repeating directions is not an accommodation for these tests. However, **only** the practice question on the grades 3 through 12 Listening and Speaking CDs may be replayed; none of the test items may be replayed.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS

The following guidelines should be considered for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. **Read these before administering the test.**

The intent of accommodations is to present the instructions to students in a manner that will allow them to demonstrate skills that have been acquired. The signing modality routinely used in the students' classroom instruction should be considered when administering the tests. Both a test administrator and sign-language interpreter may be used to administer the test, but both must be trained in test security and administration.

On the Speaking and Listening tests, the prompts may be signed to the students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Students who communicate through signing, not orally, may sign their responses to the Speaking prompts.

Physical Setting

- Students' auditory listening devices should be in good repair and used during the testing period.
- Students who depend primarily on lip reading should be seated no more than ten feet from the test administrator.
- The test is to be administered in a student's usual mode of communication.

- Be sure the room is well lighted, with the source of light directed toward the test administrator; that is, the test administrator should avoid standing in front of windows or other sources of bright light.
- Be sure students are watching the test administrator during the delivery of all instructions.
- If portions of the test are signed, as warranted by a student's reading level and documented on the IEP or IAP, then the test may be projected using a document camera or transparencies. The School Test Coordinator may request transparencies of the test from the District Test Coordinator, who requests these from the LDOE, Division of Assessments and Accountability. (Only transparencies of the **directions** to the Reading test will be provided.) All transparencies must be turned in to the School Test Coordinator with the test booklets and answer documents, to be returned to the District Test Coordinator. The transparencies are secure documents. District Test Coordinators must return them to the LDOE, Division of Assessments and Accountability.

Use of Signs and Fingerspelling

- Fingerspelling must not be used to administer items that require students to demonstrate the skill of spelling.
- Signs must not be used when the sign would reveal the answer to the question. These words are to be fingerspelled. Care should also be taken in the use of nonmanual markers (facial expression, body language, objects) that might reveal the answer to the question.
- Test items should be signed exactly as written.
- A test administrator and/or interpreter who is fluent in the signing modality routinely used by a student should be available to repeat or clarify directions and sign the tests **with the exception of the passages, introductions, items/questions, and answer options on the Reading test, which cannot be signed or cued.** A score obtained by signing a reading test would offer no information about a student's reading ability and thus be invalid.