

# Accommodations Guidelines

- PSSA
- PSSA-M
- **Keystone (paper/pencil)**



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

for

**Students with IEPs and  
Students with 504 Plans**

**Revised 1/12/2011**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Federal and State Laws Requiring Participation By Students With Disabilities</i> .....	4
<i>Including All Students with Disabilities in State Accountability Assessments</i> .....	7
<i>Equal Access to Grade-level Content</i> .....	9
Part 2: Learn about Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment .....	12
<i>What are accommodations?</i> .....	12
<i>Description of Accommodations Categories</i> .....	12
<i>The Difference Between Accommodations and Modifications</i> .....	13
Part 3: Select Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment for Individual Students .....	14
<i>Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s IEP</i> .....	14
<i>Documenting Accommodations on a Student’s 504 Plan</i> .....	15
<i>Questions to Guide Accommodation Selection</i> .....	16
<i>Involving Students in Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accommodations</i> .....	17
<i>Questions To Guide Evaluation at the Student Level</i> .....	18
Part 4: Administer Accommodations during Instruction and Assessment .....	19
<i>Accommodations During Instruction</i> .....	19
<i>Accommodations During Assessment</i> .....	19
<i>Ethical Testing Practices</i> .....	20
<i>Standardization</i> .....	20
<i>Test Security</i> <sup>21</sup>	
Part 5: Evaluation of Accommodations.....	23
<i>Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accommodation Use at the School or District Level</i> .....	23
Explanation of Tables.....	24
TABLE 1: Presentation Accommodations .....	24
<i>What are presentation accommodations?</i> .....	24
<i>Who can benefit from presentation accommodations?</i> .....	24
TABLE 2: Response Accommodations .....	34
<i>What are response accommodations?</i> .....	34
<i>Who can benefit from response accommodations?</i> .....	34

<b>TABLE 3: Setting Accommodations.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<i>What Are Setting Accommodations?.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Who Can Benefit from Setting Accommodations?.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<b>TABLE 4: Timing and Scheduling Accommodations.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>What Are Timing and Scheduling Accommodations?.....</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Who Can Benefit from Timing and Scheduling Accommodations?.....</i>	<i>44</i>
<b>Overview of Table 5, 6, and 7: Tips for Choosing and Administering Accommodations.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<i>Table 5: Examples of Accommodations Based on Student Characteristics.....</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Table 6: Do’s and Don’ts When Selecting Accommodations.....</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>Table 7: Guidelines for Administering Specific Accommodations.....</i>	<i>47</i>
<b>TABLE 5: Examples of Accommodations Based on Student Characteristics .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>TABLE 6: Do’s and Don’ts When Selecting Accommodations .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>TABLE 7: Guidelines for Administering Specific Accommodations .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>Unique Accommodations.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Presentation Accommodations.....</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Response Accommodations.....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Setting Accommodations.....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Timing and Scheduling Accommodations .....</i>	<i>60</i>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<i>Appendix A: Contact Information.....</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Appendix B: Confidentiality Agreement.....</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Appendix C: Acknowledgements.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Appendix D: Sample demographics page.....</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Appendix E: Teacher Tools .....</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Appendix F: ASIST.....</i>	<i>72</i>

***All accommodations that are available for the general PSSA are also available for the PSSA-M and Keystone paper/pencil exams (except the Audio CD is not available for the PSSA-M and the Keystone Exams). The IEP Team should continue to consider all four accommodation categories.***

***Part 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 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

### **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 district-wide assessments:

“(16) PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENTS.—“(A) IN GENERAL.—All children with disabilities are included in all general State and district wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments where necessary and as indicated in their respective individualized education programs. “(B) ACCOMMODATION GUIDELINES.—The State (or, in the case of a district wide assessment, the local educational agency) has developed guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. (IDEIA, §612(a)(16)(A)).

The definition of an IEP with an accommodation statement is in the following sections of IDEA:

“(d) INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this title: “(A) INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM.—“(i) IN GENERAL.—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— “(VI)(aa) a statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on State and district wide assessments consistent with section 612(a)(16)(A); (IDEIA, §614(d)(1)(A)(i)(IV)).

On April 9, 2007, the final regulations regarding the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Assessments or IDEA 2004 were released by the U.S. Department of Education in the Federal Register:

**§ 300.160 Participation in assessments.** (a) *General.* A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and district-wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs. (b) *Accommodation guidelines.* (1) A State (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, an LEA) must develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. (2) The State's (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA's) guidelines must— (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

## 22 PA Code

### Chapter 14

Final Chapter 14 regulations were published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on June 28, 2008, and became effective on July 1, 2008. The Special Education regulations in Pennsylvania for school districts are found under the 22 PA Code, Chapter 14. Chapter 14 provides regulatory guidance to ensure compliance with the federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, and its regulations.

**§ 14.102. Purposes.** (a) It is the intent of the Board that children with disabilities be provided with quality special education services and programs. The purposes of this chapter are to serve the following:

(1) To adopt Federal regulations by incorporation by reference to satisfy the statutory requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400--1482) and to ensure that:

(i) Children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education which is designed to enable the student to participate fully and independently in the community, including preparation for employment or higher education.

(ii) Children with disabilities have access to the general curriculum, and participate in State and local assessments as established and described in Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment).

**Chapter 15 § 15.1. Purpose.** Section 504 and its accompanying regulations protect otherwise qualified handicapped students who have physical, mental or health impairments from discrimination because of those impairments. The law and its regulations require public educational agencies to ensure that these students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the ability of the protected handicapped student in question. School districts are required to provide these students with the aids, services and accommodations that are designed to meet the educational needs of protected handicapped students as adequately as the needs of nonhandicapped students are met. These aids, services and accommodations may include, but are not limited to, special transportation, modified equipment, adjustments in the student's roster or the administration of needed medication.

### No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Stronger accountability for results is one of the four basic education reform principles contained in NCLB. This law complements the provisions in providing public accountability

at the school, district, and state levels for all students with disabilities. NCLB 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 NCLB is stronger accountability for results for all students. Through this federal legislation, in addition to other state and local district 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 NCLB that hold schools accountable for educational results. The Pennsylvania state accountability system is based on assessment anchor content standards (what students should learn) and academic achievement standards (how much they should learn) in reading, mathematics, and science (added in 2007-08). The PSSA is the mechanism for checking whether schools have been successful in students attaining the knowledge and skills defined by the assessment anchor content standards. By 2005-06, states had to 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, district, and state accountability are based on measuring success in educating all students and determining what needs to be improved for specific groups of students. The accountability system is defined in terms of adequate yearly progress (AYP), a way to measure the improvement in achieving assessment anchor content standards for all students and designated subgroups each year. Schools, districts, and states are held accountable for improvements on an annual basis by public reporting<sup>1</sup> and ultimately through consequences if AYP is not achieved.

---

1

Each parent/guardian receives a report of their child’s reading and mathematics assessment results. Also included in this report are district and state results.

## **INCLUDING ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE ACCOUNTABILITY ASSESSMENTS**

Both federal and state laws require that all students with disabilities be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of students. Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members must actively engage in a planning process that addresses:

- assurance of the provision of accommodations to facilitate student access to grade-level instruction and state assessments, and
- use of alternate assessments to assess the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities

**Use the following links to access:**

- **Chapters 4, 14, and 15 Regulations**
- **Modified Pennsylvania System of School Assessment(PSSA-M)**
- **Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA)**
- **Keystone Exams**

22 Pa. Code § 4.51. State assessment system. (j) Children with disabilities shall be included in the State assessment system, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary. As appropriate, the Commonwealth will develop guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in the State assessment as determined by each child's Individualized Education Program team under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and this part.



Click here: <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/s4.51.html>



Click here: <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter14/chap14toc.html>



Click here: <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter15/chap15toc.html>

## **PSSA-M**

The Pennsylvania System of Student Assessment-Modified (PSSA-M) at grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 is a statewide assessment based on modified achievement standards for students with disabilities. The assessment is intended for students with disabilities functioning above the lowest 1% of the population, but not at a level that allows them to access the general Pennsylvania System of Student Assessment (PSSA). The PSSA-M reflects the same emphasis and patterns as the general PSSA while utilizing a similar style and format. However, the modifications, including fewer items and revisions and enhancements to items, allow students with disabilities a better assessment opportunity in which to demonstrate proficiency.



Click here:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/special\\_education/7465/assessment/607491](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/special_education/7465/assessment/607491)

## **PASA**

The Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) at grades 3–8 & 11 is a statewide alternate assessment in math, reading, and science, designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Specifically, it is intended for those who are unable to participate meaningfully in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the modified PSSA (PSSA-M), or the general Keystone Exams even with accommodations. **(Note: The alternate writing assessment is designed, administered, and scored by the individual student's teacher.)** By administering the PASA to students with significant cognitive disabilities, schools achieve compliance with federal laws and the Pennsylvania School Code that require that all students participate in general the statewide accountability system.



Click here: <http://www.pasaassessment.org>

## **KEYSTONE EXAMS**

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in the subject areas of Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Literature, English Composition, Biology, Chemistry, U.S. History, World History, and Civics and Government. The Keystone Exams are one component of Pennsylvania's new system of high school graduation requirements. Keystone Exams will help school districts guide students toward meeting state standards—standards aligned with expectations for success in college and the workplace. In order to receive a diploma, students must also meet local district credit and attendance requirements and complete a culminating project, along with any additional district requirements.



Click here: <http://www.pdesas.org/>



## EQUAL ACCESS TO GRADE-LEVEL CONTENT

Assessment anchor content standards are educational targets for students to learn at each grade level. 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, LEAs must ensure

- IEP team members are familiar with assessment anchor content standards and accountability systems at the state and district level;
- IEP team members know where to locate assessment anchor content standards and updates; and
- IEP teams have a clear explanation of the difference between assessments based on grade level academic achievement standards and those based on alternate achievement standards.

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 state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
2. IEPs for students with disabilities are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for “learning how to learn”).
3. Appropriate accommodations are provided to help students to access grade-level content.

**Use the following link to access:**

- **Pennsylvania IEP template**



Click here:

<http://www.pattan.net/regforms/EnglishSpecialEducationForms.aspx?pageNumber=1>

**Use the following links to access:**

- **Pennsylvania Academic Standards**
- **Assessment Anchor Content Standards**
- **Pennsylvania Alternate Academic Content Standards**

- In 1999, Pennsylvania adopted academic standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Mathematics. Academic Standards for Science became final in January, 2002. These standards identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels. School districts may design curriculum and instruction to ensure that students meet or exceed the standards' expectations.
- The Assessment Anchor Content Standards clarify the standards assessed on the PSSA or PSSA-M and can be used by educators to help prepare their students for the PSSA or PSSA-M



Click here:

[http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state\\_academic\\_standards/19721](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_academic_standards/19721)

Like the PSSA and PSSA-M, the PASA is designed to take a snapshot of students' typical performance on a small sample of academic skills from the PA Alternate Standards, which were derived from the PA Academic Standards. The PA Alternate Standards were developed by the PASA Project Team in collaboration with content area experts, and were validated through field tests.



Click here:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/special\\_education/7465/pasa\\_information/619900](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/special_education/7465/pasa_information/619900)

The Keystone Exams are aligned to the Pennsylvania Keystone Course Standards, Curriculum Frameworks and Assessment Anchors/ Eligible Content. All were developed by Pennsylvania educators. The Pennsylvania Keystone Course Standards, Curriculum Frameworks, and Assessment Anchors/ Eligible Content are available on the Standards Aligned System (SAS) website at [www.pdesas.org](http://www.pdesas.org).



Click here:

<http://www.pdesas.org/Assessment/Keystone>

**Use the following link to access:**

- **Pennsylvania Accountability Plan**

Pennsylvania developed the Pennsylvania Accountability Plan in compliance with the Federal *No Child Left Behind* Act, which was enacted in 2002, as a way to measure school improvement and student achievement.

The Pennsylvania Accountability System:

- Applies to all schools and students.
- Is based on Pennsylvania's assessment anchor content standards.
- Sets a goal to have 100% of students proficient or above by 2014.
- Uses a valid, reliable assessment system.
- Provides for rewards, assistance and consequences.



**Click here:**

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania\\_accountability\\_system\\_%28pas%29/8752](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania_accountability_system_%28pas%29/8752)

## Part 2: Learn about Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment

### WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.

Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations. IEP teams or 504 case managers make decisions about accommodations based upon classroom instruction. 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. For example, the PSSA and PSSA-M reading assessment measures, in part, how well a student can decode, or make sense of, printed text. If the reading passages and items are read aloud to a student, however, it may become an assessment of listening skills and not of reading skills. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations generally also will 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.

### DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

Accommodations for instruction and assessment are commonly categorized in these ways: presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling:

- **Presentation Accommodations**— Allow students to access print information in alternate ways. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual. [Table 1]
- **Response Accommodations**— Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer. [Table 2]
- **Setting Accommodations**— Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting. [Table 3]
- **Timing/Scheduling Accommodations**— Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is

organized. [Table 4] *Refer to Tables 1-4 for specific examples of accommodations in these categories. Please note that the list of examples is not exhaustive.*

## **THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS**

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations. They are intended to provide access to instruction and assessment so that students can meet these expectations. In contrast, modifications might intentionally change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and/or classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content.

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 classroom assessments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items,
- revising assignments or classroom 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 classroom tests.

## **Part 3: Select Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment for Individual Students**

To ensure students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every IEP team member must be knowledgeable about the state academic standards, assessment anchor content standards, 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 academic standards. In essence, the process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the IEP team attempt to “level the playing field” so that students with disabilities can participate in the general education curriculum. When selecting accommodations for state assessments with a student, it is important to look at state policies and procedures. Assessment accommodations that result in invalid scores are commonly referred to as modifications, adaptations, alterations, and nonstandard or nonapproved accommodations. The terminology can be confusing and terms may have different meanings in various contexts.

### **DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT’S IEP**

For students with disabilities served under IDEA, determining appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations should not pose any particular problems for IEP teams that follow good IEP practices. With information obtained from the required summary of the student’s present level of educational performance (PLEP), identifying and documenting accommodations should be a fairly straightforward process. The PLEP is a federal requirement in which IEP team members must state “how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum—the same curriculum as non-disabled children” [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)].

In the design and overall format of a typical IEP, there are potentially three areas in which accommodations can be addressed:

1. “Consideration of Special Factors” [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered
2. “Supplementary Aids and Services” [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes “aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate

3. "Participation in Assessments" [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

**Use the following link to access:**

- **Pennsylvania IEP template**



**Click here for IEP template:**

<http://www.pattan.net/regsforms/EnglishSpecialEducationForms.aspx?pageNumber=1>

## **DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT'S 504 PLAN**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide accommodations to students with disabilities even if they do not qualify for special education services under IDEA. The definition of a disability under Section 504 is much broader than the definition under IDEA. All IDEA students are also covered by Section 504, but not all students covered by Section 504 are eligible for services under IDEA. Section 504 states:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. [29U.S.C.Sec.794]

§ 15.2 of the Pennsylvania School Code give the following definition for students who may receive assessment accommodations based on their 504 service agreement:

*Protected handicapped student*—A student who meets the following conditions:

- (i) Is of an age at which public education is offered in that school district.
- (ii) Has a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the student's school program.
- (iii) Is not eligible as defined by Chapter 14 (relating to special education services and programs) or who is eligible but is raising a claim of discrimination under § 15.10 (relating to discrimination claims).

## QUESTIONS TO GUIDE ACCOMMODATION SELECTION

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student’s IEP team or 504 plan committee. Use the questions provided below to guide the selection of appropriate accommodations for students receiving special education services or a 504 plan for the first time and for students who are currently using accommodations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the students’ learning strengths and areas of need for further improvement?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade-level content standards?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What accommodations are regularly used by the student during instruction and for classroom assessments?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the accommodation appropriate for each content area and construct being assessed?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will the use of an accommodation invalidate the state or district-wide assessment score? If yes, does the IEP team understand any local or state policy consequences?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the results for assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used? How are the results documented?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the student’s perception of how well an accommodation “worked?”</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there effective combinations of accommodations?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What difficulties did the student experience when using accommodations?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about how the accommodation worked?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should the student continue to use an accommodation, are changes needed, or should the use of the accommodation be discontinued?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has the team reviewed the accommodations the student used on the previous PSSA tests? Are changes needed? Have they been documented or updated on Part 3 of the IEP?</li></ul>



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.                                       |

Critical steps to consider:

- |   |
|---|
| • 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.  |
| • Be certain there is ample time to convene an IEP meeting and/or revise the IEP to reflect the accommodation needs of the student in order to access the assessment. |
| • Plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the student's use of accommodations.   |

## **INVOLVING STUDENTS IN SELECTING, USING, AND EVALUATING 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 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 students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach 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 provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school.

## **QUESTIONS TO GUIDE EVALUATION AT THE STUDENT LEVEL**

1. What accommodations are used by the student 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 not using accommodations effectively?
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?

*Refer to Tables 5 and 6 for additional information.*

## **Part 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 assessment. However, not all accommodations used during instruction may be used during assessment.

### **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 and district assessments must be mapped out. It is essential for all IEP team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and 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.

Prior to the day of a test, be 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 a presentation accommodation and what staff, space, and/or technology is needed for the student to complete the test. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a student or writing student responses, must adhere to specific guidelines so that student scores are valid.

#### **Administering Assessments and Accommodations**

State and local laws and 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>2</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 state and local testing policies.

## **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. Providing accommodations that invalidate the test may also violate professional ethics. Unethical practices include allowing a student to answer fewer questions, changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing (e.g. paraphrasing, explaining, giving suggestions about test items), editing student responses, or giving clues in any way.

During test administration, test administrators may only help students understand where and how to mark their answers, encourage students to keep trying, and clarify general test directions for students having difficulty.

## **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.

---

<sup>2</sup>

National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement.

## TEST SECURITY

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions 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., electronic test format) 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, (3) return all materials as instructed, and (4) careful monitoring of students and student behavior. Pennsylvania Test Security Procedures can be found on the PDE website, as well as in the PSSA Handbook for Assessment Coordinators and Administrators and from the district test coordinator.

### Planning for Test Day

Provided below is a sample checklist that gives examples of suggested activities for school personnel to complete to assist in providing accommodations for the PSSA, PSSA-M & **Keystones**.

Planning Checklist
<p><b>Throughout the school year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate group determines accommodations for identified students with choices based on individual student needs.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Document accommodations on the student's IEP, 504 plan, or student folder.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Students use documented accommodations <u>regularly</u>.</li></ul> <p><b>In preparation for test day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Order special test editions for individual students based on information contained in their education plan (enlarged print, braille, etc.).</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Distribute to test administrators the list of accommodations for students that he/she supervises during the administration of the PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystones.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange adult supervision (with substitutes available).</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Train test administrators for each student receiving accommodations in small group or individual settings (if test administrator is not the student's regular teacher).</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for trained readers, scribes, and qualified interpreters for individual students (with substitutes available).</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for special equipment and check for correct operation (tape recorder, CD player, calculator, computer, word processor, braille/notetaker with spell/grammar checker turned off).</li></ul>

- Examine schedule to secure appropriate testing location.
- Secure test settings similar to the regular educational environment for the student.
- Inform staff, students, and parents of testing schedule.
- Replace defective equipment.
- Provide “Testing: Do Not Disturb” signs.

**On test day**

- All designated students receive appropriate accommodations.
- Record provided accommodations carefully and accurately.
- Secure substitutes as needed.

**After test day**

- Complete student accommodation information on answer sheets (e.g. use of audiotape, dictation to a proctor, use of computer, etc.).
- Return ALL student booklets (including braille and enlarged print versions).
- Return ALL tapes and/or CD recordings.
- Collect and destroy all scratch paper.
- Collect and destroy all original transcribed student work.
- Permanently delete and remove files of all PDE permitted electronically produced test formats and student work.
- Return all equipment to appropriate locations.
- Schedule make-up tests promptly.
- Students who take “make-up” tests receive appropriate accommodations.
- Evaluate effectiveness of utilized accommodations.
- Record accommodations provided on required PSSA, PSSA-M, Keystone documents.

**Use the following link to access:**

**PSSA and PSSA-M Test Security Procedures**



Click here:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/testing\\_accommodations\\_\\_\\_security/7448/pssa\\_test\\_security\\_procedure/507625](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/testing_accommodations___security/7448/pssa_test_security_procedure/507625)

## **Part 5: Evaluation of Accommodations**

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 decision-making about accommodation use. Accommodation information can be analyzed in different ways. Here are some questions to guide data analysis at the student level and the school and district level.

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

1. What policies exist to ensure ethical testing practices, the standardized administration of assessments, and that test security practices are followed before, during, and after the day of the test?
2. What procedures are 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 504 plans?
4. What procedures are in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to directions for the implementation of accommodations?
5. How many students with IEPs or 504 plans are receiving accommodations?
6. What types of accommodations are provided and are some used more than others?
7. 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 accommodation, or not using the accommodations effectively?

## Explanation of Tables

Tables 1-4 categorize accommodations as **Standard** or **Not allowable PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil**.

An accommodation that is categorized as **Standard** is allowable for some or all of the PSSA, PSSA-M, and **Keystone paper/pencil** tests. A brief description of the accommodation and the identification of the test(s) that allows each accommodation are included in each description.

An accommodation that is categorized as **Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil** may not be used for the tests. An accommodation that is not allowed is listed under either the **Ethics/Security** column (*refer to page 20*) and/or **Invalidates score** column. An accommodation that invalidates a score no longer measures the skill intended for assessment (*refer to page 13 accommodations vs. modifications*).

**Note: The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes that if an accommodation categorized as *Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil* has been used, the circumstances surrounding its use will determine whether security has been violated and/or the action was unethical.**

## TABLE 1: Presentation Accommodations

### WHAT ARE PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS?


Presentation accommodations allow students to access print instruction and assessments in alternate ways. These alternate modes of access include auditory, tactile, visual, and a combination of auditory and visual accommodations.




### WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS?


Students who benefit most from presentation accommodations are those with print disabilities, defined as difficulty or inability to visually read and/or manipulate standard print because of a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability.




**TABLE 1: PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS**

TACTILE PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & <b>Keystone (paper/pencil)</b>	
		Ethics/ Security	Invalidates score
<p><b>Braille</b></p> <p>Not all students who are blind read braille fluently or use braille as their primary mode of reading or writing. Decisions also need to be made by the IEP team about whether a student will use contracted or uncontracted braille. The Nemeth Braille Code is a system of braille that makes it possible to convey technical expressions in a written medium to students who are blind or visually impaired. The Nemeth Braille Code contains numerous technical symbols that occur in mathematics and science.</p> <p>Braille test editions for the Grade 12 Retest, Math, Reading, Writing and Science PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil tests</b> must be ordered from DRC. Orders are placed online during Enrollment Verification Window. Contact DRC @ 1-800-451-7849 (PSSA) or 1-888-551-6935 (<b>Keystones</b>) for orders outside of online ordering window.</p>			








<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>VISUAL PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p><b>Ethics/ Security</b></p>	<p><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p><b>Enlarged print</b></p> <p>Enlarged print editions of tests and instructional materials are required for some students with visual impairments and/or print disabilities. IEP teams need to utilize appropriate learning media assessments to determine optimal print size for sustained reading tasks. The PSSA standard enlarged print test is 18 point type. PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> tests may not be enlarged locally since this might alter the standardization of test administration and/or might be a source of security breach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlarged print test editions for the PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> tests must be ordered from DRC. Orders are placed online during the enrollment window. Contact DRC @ 1-800-451-7849 for orders outside of online ordering window.</li> <li>• Districts should contact PDE @ 1-717-787-4234 if a student requires larger than 18 point type for the passages on the reading test.</li> <li>• <b>Graphics test items do not appear enlarged on the enlarged print test form. This is to retain the accurate measurement and scale properties of test items. Graphics can be enlarged through magnification at the time of testing.</b></li> </ul>			
<p><b>Magnification Devices</b></p> <p>Some students with visual impairments and/or print disabilities read regular print materials and enlarge the print by using magnification devices. These include eyeglass-mounted magnifiers and free standing or handheld magnifiers. Some students also use Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to enlarge print and display printed material with various image enhancements on a screen. Students with visual impairments may use electronic magnification or enlarged print.</p>			
<p><b>Screen Magnification Software</b></p> <p>Some students use enlarged computer monitors and/or computers with screen enlargement programs or computer operating system accessibility options. These software programs must be compatible with large-scale (standardized) assessment requirements (all functions that may compromise the integrity of the test must be able to be turned off). <i>Refer to Electronic Reader on page 31.</i></p>			









<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>VISUAL PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Ethics/ Security</b></p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p><b>Sign Language</b></p> <p>Sign language interpreters may be required for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Sometimes an interpreter is only needed or allowed to sign instructions. Interpreters need to be able to accurately translate in the student’s preferred mode of communication (e.g., American Sign Language, Pidgin Sign English, and Manually Coded English).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For list of PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone paper/pencil tests allowed to be interpreted, refer to <i>Human Reader</i>, page 28.</li> <li>• Chapter 14 mandates that all interpreters in educational settings must either have a national interpreting certification and be registered with the state OR have a score of 3.5 or above (out of 5) on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA).</li> <li>• Interpreters must not paraphrase, clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance with the meaning of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items.</li> <li>• All passages and test items must be signed exactly as written, except when doing so would reveal an answer to a test question. If a sign visually defines the concept being tested (e.g., the sign for parallel lines shows what “parallel” means), it must be finger spelled. Interpreters may not provide assistance to the student regarding the meaning of words, intent of any test questions, or responses to test items.</li> <li>• Graphic materials may be described but should also be available in print formats.</li> <li>• If not administered one-on-one, no more than 5 students may be grouped together.</li> <li>• All students in small group must be given the same test Form number.</li> <li>• Student test booklets may not be opened or reviewed by students prior to testing.</li> <li>• Interpreters may have access to the test form up to 3 days prior to administration to aid them in preparation for translating the assessment. Interpreters may only access the test in a secure setting; the assessment may <u>not</u> leave the building (any notes necessary to administering the test must not leave the building); interpreters <u>must</u> sign a Confidentiality Agreement. Refer to sample form in Appendices.</li> </ul>			

<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>AUDITORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p><b>Ethics/ Security</b></p>	<p><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p><b>Human Reader</b></p> <p>Mathematics and science PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone paper/pencil tests only: a qualified person may be provided to read orally to students who are unable to decode text visually. 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. Readers need to be familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the content. This is especially important for high school mathematics and science. Readers should be provided to students on an individual basis. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. Due to limited resources it might be necessary to read to a small (not more than 5) group of students.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>All PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing directions.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Mathematics PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone Algebra &amp; Geometry paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing test items/questions.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Reading PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone Literature paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing test items/questions.</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Writing PSSA and Keystone English Composition paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing writing essay prompts.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing writing passages and multiple-choice items.</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Science PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone Biology &amp; Chemistry pencil/paper tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading aloud or signing test items/questions.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		








<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>AUDITORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA and PSSA-M</b></p>	
<p><b>Audio recording</b></p> <p>The availability of a prerecorded audio version of the mathematics and science PSSA tests replaces the previous audio version accommodation that required an LEA to do the recording. Individual recording of the PSSA or PSSA-M test(s) is NOT ALLOWABLE. <b>Audio CD versions are NOT available for the Keystone Exams, however, speech synthesis IS available for the <a href="#">online version</a> of the Keystone Exams.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio versions (of tests and other written materials) need to be supplemented with a print or braille version of the text so a student can have access to complicated graphic material.</li> <li>• Audio CDs must be returned to test contractor along with test booklets.</li> <li>• Digital recording and listening devices must be completely and permanently deleted of all test material.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Audio Version (MUST have prior approval by PDE)</u></b></p> <p>Computer literacy is essential for audio CD use. Audio version CD allows students to listen to text or listen and read text simultaneously. Students can choose to listen to text multiple times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test security may not be violated.</li> </ul> <p>Use of this accommodation is intended for those students with a severe disability that precludes them from accessing instructional and testing materials through typical means such as the hard copy test booklet.</p> <p><b>Requirements for use of audio version CD:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The student uses an audio version routinely during classroom instruction and assessment in this <u>subject</u> (both before and after the test is administered)</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The student is severely limited or prevented from participating in statewide tests without the use of this accommodation (i.e. student is not simply performing below grade-level expectations);</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The use of an audio version is documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <p>PDE MUST approve the use of the audio version CD PRIOR to test window. Use the information in Appendix A to contact PDE.</p> <p>ALL audio versions of the Math and Science PSSA tests MUST be ordered through Data Recognition Corporation (DRC). PSSA-M, PSSA Spanish translation, and <b>Keystone</b> audio CD versions are not available for <b>2011</b>.</p>		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
			

<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>AUDITORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p>Standard</p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p>All PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recording directions.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>All PSSA, PSSA-M, Keystone, paper/pencil tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recording test items/questions</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Mathematics PSSA test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audio CD version of test items/questions.</li> <li>Online version of Keystone Algebra and Geometry tests with speech synthesis</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Science PSSA test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audio CD version of test items/questions.</li> <li>Online version of Keystone Biology and Chemistry tests with speech synthesis</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Assistive Listening Devices</b></p> <p>Some students may require audio amplification devices in addition to hearing aids to increase clarity. A teacher may use an amplification system when working with students in classroom situations that contain a great deal of ambient noise.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Whisper Phone</b></p> <p>Some students might perform better when they can read and think out loud, e.g. use of a whisper phone.</p>	<p>✓</p>		

<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>MULTI-SENSORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
<p><b>Electronic Readers</b></p> <p><b>A. <u>Screen Reader (MUST have prior approval by PDE)</u></b></p> <p>Screen reader software is a computer application that converts text on a computer screen to synthesized speech or braille (read with an auxiliary braille display). Computer literacy is essential for electronic screen reader use. Screen reader software allows students to listen to text, read refreshable braille, or listen and read refreshable braille simultaneously. Students can choose to listen to text multiple times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test security may not be violated.</li> </ul> <p>Use of this accommodation is intended for those students with a severe disability that precludes them from accessing instructional and testing materials through typical means such as the hard copy test booklet. This assistive technology is often used by students with blindness or students with very low vision.</p> <p><b>Requirements for use of screen or text reader:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. The student uses an electronic reader routinely during classroom instruction and assessment in this <u>subject</u> (both before and after the test is administered)</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The student is severely limited or prevented from participating in statewide tests without the use of this accommodation (i.e. student is not simply performing below grade-level expectations);</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. The use of an electronic reader is documented in the student’s IEP or 504 plan.</li> </ol> <p>AND</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. PDE MUST approve the computer application and all program functions PRIOR to PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> test window. Use the information in Appendix A to contact PDE.</li> </ol>		<p><b>Ethics/ Security</b></p>	<p><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p>Saving electronic version to a computer hard drive or other device beyond the testing window.</p>			
<p>Test coordinators must ensure that no paper or electronic copies of the state assessment exist beyond the testing window.</p>			
<p>Speech function used to read the reading or <b>Literature</b> test.</p>			
<p>Speech function used to read Section One of the writing or <b>English Composition</b> test.</p>			

<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>MULTISENSORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p><b>Ethics/ Security</b></p>	<p><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p><b>Electronic Readers <i>continued</i></b></p> <p><b>B. <u>Text Reader, e.g. scan and read program (MUST have prior approval by PDE)</u></b></p> <p>An electronic text reader application may be used with the PDF version of the PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> tests so that students may access the printed text by enlarging, masking, inverting the contrast or using adaptive keyboard, mouse, and/or pointer. An IEP or 504 Team must first determine this accommodation is absolutely necessary in order for the student to participate in the PSSA, PSSA-M, and <b>Keystone paper/pencil tests</b>. Computer literacy is essential for electronic application use. In order to preserve the validity and reliability of the assessment, the program must not modify the test; the Team must be familiar with how the computer program works in translating standardized assessments. Some programs do not have the capability to produce an exact replica of the scanned item. Student must be severely limited or prevented from performing the skill without this accommodation, i.e. not simply performing below grade-level expectations. Examples include students with low vision or multiple disabilities.</p> <p><b>Requirements for use of text reader: see above, p. 31</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers must be marked and/or transcribed in the test booklet and/or answer sheet.</li> <li>• Test security procedures must be followed, documented, and provided to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.</li> </ul> <p>Grammar, spelling, word prediction with topic specific dictionary, internet, thesaurus, dictionary and all other functions and stored files that might cue the student in any way must be disabled and password protected. <i>Refer to the Handbook for Assessment Coordinators.</i></p>			
<p>Storing computer files containing the <b>downloaded</b> test document beyond the testing window.</p>			
<p>Enabling speech synthesizer function for the reading <b>or Literature</b> tests.</p>			
<p>Speech function used to read the reading <b>or Literature</b> tests.</p>			
<p>Speech function used to read Section One of the writing <b>or English Composition</b> tests.</p>			



<p>TABLE 1 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>MULTISENSORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p>Standard</p>	<p>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Visual Cues</b></p> <p>Teachers should keep their faces visible to the class when speaking, distribute printed material before speaking, repeat questions asked by other students, and summarize classroom discussion.</p>			
<p><u>Students</u> may use highlighters, underlining, colored stickers, colored overlay, reading windows, and reading guides throughout the assessment.</p>			
<p><u>Test administrators</u> may use highlighters, underlining, and colored stickers <b>ONLY in the procedural assessment directions</b>, e.g. <b>“GO ON”, “STOP”, “Turn to page 00 of your answer booklet. Complete question 00.”</b></p>			
<p><u>Test administrators</u> may <b>NOT</b> use highlighters, underlining, and colored stickers on assessment directions associated with test items, e.g. <b>“Read the following passage about wild ponies. Then answer questions 1–10” or “Use the figure below to answer question 00.”</b></p>			
<p>Picture icons, posters, reminders, steps, procedures or other materials that might cue students may not be used or displayed during PSSA, PSSA-M, or <b>Keystone</b> tests.</p>			

## **TABLE 2: Response Accommodations**

### **WHAT ARE RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS?**

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.










### **WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS?**








Response accommodations can benefit students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities (including difficulties with memory, sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization).

**Note: The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes that if an accommodation categorized as *Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil* has been used, the circumstances surrounding its use will determine whether security has been violated and/or the action was unethical.**

**TABLE 2: RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone (paper/pencil)	
		Ethics/ Security	Invalidates score
<p><b>Manual Braille Writer</b></p> <p>A <b>Perkins Brailier</b> is a simple machine, a “braille typewriter”, used to write braille. It typically has a braille keyboard used for typing tactile text.</p> <p><b>Stylus and slate</b> are still used today. Users compare a stylus and slate to handwriting, while using a Perkins Brailier is more like typewriting.</p> <p>Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</p>	✓		
<p><b>Electronic Braille Writer, Note-Taking Devices and Adapted PDAs</b></p> <p>Students may use an electronic braille writer or note-taking device. This device may integrate modern computer technology and might have multiple applications which support embossing, reading, file storage, and audio support of all operations.</p> <p>A regular PC keyboard can be connected to the device to produce contracted or uncontracted braille and a printer can be connected to produce a print translation of braille output.</p> <p>Portable note-taking devices are small, lightweight devices equipped with a braille or typewriter-style keyboard for input and synthetic speech for voice output. Some note-taking devices also contain a braille display (between 18 and 40 characters) for output. Note-taking devices are tools for recording notes in school, at home, or at work. They can also be used to read books in text and DAISY formats, to complete worksheets and tests created in other applications. Files prepared on these devices can be shared with a computer, printed, or embossed. They often have additional features such as a calculator and a calendar function. PDAs have the ability to connect to the internet or a network using either wireless or high speed cable connection. They have full e-mail and web browsing capabilities. When these models are connected to a PC, files can be exchanged or information can be sent from the PDA to a braille embosser or to an ink printer. When linked to a computer using a screen reader, note-taking devices equipped with a braille display can act as a braille output device.</p> <p>Student responses must be transcribed into a regular scannable test booklet. (<i>See page 37 for explanation of transcribe.</i>)</p> <p>NOTE: If the Note-Taking Device is connected to a computer, guidelines for use of an Electronic Reader apply.</p> <p><i>Refer to Electronic Readers, page 31.</i></p>	✓		
<p>Use of spell/grammar checker, word prediction functions with topic specific dictionary, internet functions, stored files and other supports.</p>		✓	✓

<p>TABLE 2 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Scribe</b></p> <p>A scribe is someone who writes down what a student <u>dictates</u> by an augmentative and alternative communication device, pointing, sign language, or speech. Much skill is involved in being a scribe, skill that requires extensive practice. A scribe may not edit or alter student work in any way and must record word for word exactly what the student has <u>dictated</u>. Scribes should request clarification from the student and must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. Individuals who serve as a scribe need to carefully prepare to assure they know the vocabulary involved and understand the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The role of the scribe is to write only what is <u>dictated</u>, no more and no less.</p> <p>The scribe records student responses directly into PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> test booklet.</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student must respond to open-ended test items in test booklet in English (or transcribe their own written/keyed, non-English responses) in order to receive a score.</li> </ul>			
<p>Mathematics PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Algebra &amp; Geometry paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribing multiple-choice and open-ended responses.</li> </ul>			
<p>Reading PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Literature paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribing multiple-choice and open-ended responses.</li> </ul>			
<p>Writing PSSA and <b>Keystone English Composition paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribing responses to writing essay prompts by test administrator. <i>See Unique Accommodations p. 56.</i></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student scribes own recorded response.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribing multiple-choice responses.</li> </ul>			
<p>Science PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Biology &amp; Chemistry pencil/paper</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scribing multiple-choice and open-ended responses.</li> </ul>			

<p>TABLE 2 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p><b>Ethics/Security</b></p>	<p><b>Invalidates score</b></p>
<p><b>Transcribe</b></p> <p>Transcribing is copying the student’s written, typed, and/or keyed response into the standard test booklet by the test administrator. The role of the transcriber is to write only what the student has responded by keyboarding or writing, no more and no less.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student responses must be transcribed word-for-word including all errors.</li> <li>• Student responses not recorded into the standard test booklet will not be scored.</li> <li>• All original student copies and portable recording devices must be returned to the test coordinator with testing materials. All electronic files must be permanently deleted and verified by test coordinator.</li> </ul> <p>Transcriptions must take place in a secure environment and, whenever possible, under the direction of the school assessment coordinator.</p>			
<p>Transcribing illegible handwriting for reading, math, writing, and science test questions/items.</p>			
<p>Transcribing student typed response into PSSA, PSSA-M and Keystone paper/pencil test booklet.</p>			
<p><b>Augmentative Communication Device</b></p> <p>A student with severe communication difficulty may use an electronic device or low-tech system such as a picture/word board designed to support or augment communication. This option allows a student who is not an independent oral communicator to convey information regarding class work and assessments. Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</p>			
<p>Use of spell/grammar checker, word prediction with topic specific dictionary functions, internet functions, stored files, and other supports.</p>			
<p><b>Responding in Test Booklet</b></p> <p>This accommodation allows a student to write directly in a test booklet rather than on an answer sheet (e.g., scannable “bubble” sheet). Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</p>			

<p>TABLE 2 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Enlarged print</b></p> <p>Students who have difficulty with the motor task of writing may benefit from the use of enlarged print versions that allow larger spaces to write responses. Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</p> <p>A standard enlarged print test is 18 point type. PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b> tests may not be enlarged locally since this might alter the standardization of test administration and/or might be a source of security breach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enlarged print test editions must be ordered from DRC. Orders are placed online during Enrollment Verification Window. Contact DRC @ 1-800-451-7849 (PSSA) or 1-888-551-6935 (<b>Keystones</b>) for orders outside of online ordering window.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Word Processor</b></p> <p>A student types on a portable word processor or computer. This option may increase a student’s independence and reduce the need for a trained scribe. Research has found that students who complete better work on computers than by handwriting are students who are very familiar with computers and have good keyboarding skills. Assistive technology that can be used for word processing includes customized keyboards, mouth or head stick or other pointing devices, “sticky-keys”, or other operating system features that allow one handed typing or reduction of repeated keys, alternate keyboard methods such as use of on-screen keyboards, and alternate input such as adapted mouse, or trackball. Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Use of spell/grammar checker, word prediction with topic specific dictionary functions, internet functions, stored files, and other supports.</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p><b>Audio Recorder</b></p> <p>A student uses a tape/CD/Electronic recorder (with NO speech recognition) to record test responses rather than writing on paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student responses must be transcribed into regular scannable test booklet.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Writing PSSA and <b>English Composition Keystone</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test administrator scribes student’s recorded response to <u>writing prompt</u> essay.</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Student transcribes <u>own</u> recorded response to <u>writing prompt</u> essay.</b></li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Whisper Phone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Student reads or thinks aloud as he/she records own response(s).</b></li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		

<p>TABLE 2 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Speech to Text (MUST have prior approval by PDE)</b></p> <p>Use of this accommodation is intended for those students with a severe disability that precludes them from producing written responses to instructional/testing items using other acceptable means. Examples include students with weak and/or limited motor ability. Speech-to-text conversion or speech recognition allows students to use their voices as input devices. Speech recognition may be used to dictate text into the computer or to give commands to the computer (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, or saving work). Test administrator must transcribe dictated responses into regular test booklet.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Speech recognition software used to respond to <u>any open-ended questions</u> with <u>topic specific dictionary</u> word prediction function enabled (this may cue response).</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Speech recognition software used to respond to writing essay prompts. Word prediction function may cue student’s response.</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>Mathematics PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Algebra &amp; Geometry paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictating multiple-choice and open-ended responses (with word prediction with topic specific dictionary disabled).</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Reading PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Literature paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictating multiple-choice and open-ended responses (with word prediction with topic specific dictionary disabled).</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Writing PSSA and <b>Keystone English Composition paper/pencil</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictating writing essay prompts.</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictating multiple-choice responses.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Science PSSA, PSSA-M and <b>Keystone Biology &amp; Chemistry pencil/paper</b> tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictating multiple-choice and open-ended responses (with word prediction <b>with topic specific dictionary</b> disabled).</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Monitor Test Response</b></p> <p>Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet. Students who are able to use bubbled answer sheets may benefit from having an adult simply monitor the placement of their responses to ensure they are actually responding to the intended question.</p>	<p>✓</p>		

<p>TABLE 2 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>MATERIALS OR DEVICES USED TO SOLVE PROBLEMS OR ORGANIZE RESPONSES</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Calculation Devices</b></p> <p>If a student’s disability affects mathematics calculation but not reasoning, a calculator, number line, or Cranmer abacus may be used. It is important to determine whether the use of a calculation device is a matter of convenience or a necessary accommodation. It is important to know the goal of instruction and assessment before making decisions about the use of calculation devices. For example, if students are learning subtraction with regrouping, using a calculator would not give a student an opportunity to show regrouping. On the other hand, if students are learning problem solving skills that include subtraction (e.g., bargain shopping for items with a better value), the use of a calculation device may be a valid accommodation. Calculators may be adapted with large keys or voice output (talking calculators).</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Use of a calculator on non-calculator section of test.</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>A Cranmer abacus may be useful for students when mathematics problems are to be calculated without a calculator. The abacus functions as paper and pencil for students with visual impairments.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Use of a number line.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p>Use of enlarged print and/or tactile ruler for students with low vision.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Other Manipulative</b></p> <p>Use of any manipulative other than described in these guidelines during the PSSA, PSSA-M and Keystone tests. <i>See Unique Accommodations p. 56.</i></p>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p><b>Visual Organizers</b></p> <p><u>Students</u> may use graph paper, large-squared paper, scratch paper, highlighters, underlining, colored stickers, colored overlay, reading windows, and reading guides throughout the assessment.</p>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Graphic Organizers</b></p> <p>Graphic organizers help students arrange information into patterns in order to organize their work and stay focused on the content. Graphic organizers are especially helpful for writing reports and essays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of pre-printed graphic organizer for the PSSA, PSSA-M and Keystone tests.</li> </ul>		<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may create their own graphic organizer on the scratch paper at the time of testing.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		



## **TABLE 3: Setting Accommodations**

### **WHAT ARE SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS?**

Setting accommodations change the location in which a student receives instruction or participates in an assessment, or the conditions of an instructional or assessment setting. Students may be allowed to sit in a different location than the majority of students in order to reduce distractions to themselves or others, or to increase physical access or access to special equipment. A student with low vision may bring appropriate task lighting to the test situation. Some students may need changes in the conditions of an instructional setting. Every instructional and assessment setting should have good lighting and ventilation, with a comfortable room temperature, and be as free as possible from noise, traffic, and other interruptions. Chairs should be comfortable and tables set at an appropriate height with sufficient room for materials. Staff should check that all needed materials and equipment are available and in good condition.

### **WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS?**

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.

**TABLE 3: SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

DESCRIPTION OF SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone (paper/pencil)	
		Ethics/ Security	Invalidates score
<p><b>Reduce Distractions to the Student</b></p> <p>A setting accommodation to reduce distractions would allow a student to do individual work or take tests in a different location, usually in a place with few or no other students. Changes may also be made to a student’s location within a room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, a student who is easily distracted may not want to sit near windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners.</li> <li>• Sitting near the teacher’s desk or in the front of a classroom may be helpful for some students.</li> <li>• Physically enclosed classrooms (classrooms with four walls) may be more appropriate than open classrooms,</li> <li>• Study carrels might be helpful for students who are easily distracted.</li> <li>• Students with low vision may prefer to sit in the part of a room that has the best light.</li> <li>• Some students concentrate best while wearing noise buffers such as earphones, earplugs, or headphones.</li> </ul>	✓		
<p><b>Reduce Distractions to Other Students</b></p> <p>Some students use accommodations that may distract other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, some students need a reader or scribe.</li> <li>• In addition, some students might perform better when they can read and think out loud or make noises that distract other students.</li> <li>• Distractions to other students are reduced by using these accommodations in individual settings.</li> </ul>	✓		
<p><b>Small Group</b></p> <p>A small group setting allows a student to take the test in a different location usually in a place with few or no other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than 5 in a group for students who need the <u>entire</u> test read aloud.</li> <li>• Approximately 8-12 in a group is typical for reasons such as distractibility and partial read alouds.</li> </ul>	✓		

<p>TABLE 3 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Separate Setting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A student who uses a computer for word processing might need to complete assignments and take tests in a computer lab.</li> <li>• A student who uses enlarged print materials may need to sit at a table rather than at a desk with a small surface area.</li> <li>• Another student might benefit from a standing work station.</li> <li>• Another student might benefit from a chair ball to reduce fidgeting.</li> <li>• A student might benefit from testing outside of regular classroom to reduce anxiety.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Hospital/home Setting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements should be made to allow for the testing of a student who is a patient in a hospital or who is confined to the home during the testing period.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		
<p><b>Change Location to Increase Physical Access or to Use Special Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For example, a student who uses a wheelchair with a specially designed tabletop and assistive technology may not have adequate space in an auditorium with theater seating.</li> <li>• Other students may need equipment that requires specific locations for learning and assessment.</li> <li>• Keep aisles clear, and close doors and cupboards to increase access for students with visual or physical disabilities.</li> <li>• Provide space for a guide dog, and explain to other students that the dog is working and should be ignored.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>		

**Note: The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes that if an accommodation categorized as *Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil* has been used, the circumstances surrounding its use will determine whether security has been violated and/or the action was unethical.**

## **TABLE 4: Timing and Scheduling Accommodations**

### **WHAT ARE TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS?**

Timing and scheduling accommodations change the allowable length of time to complete assignments, assessments, and activities, and may also change the way the time is organized. Timing accommodations give students the time and the breaks they need to complete activities, assignments, and assessments. Other changes may include the particular time of day, day of the week, or number of days over which a particular activity, assignment, or assessment takes place.

### **WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS?**






Timing and 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), or to use other accommodations or equipment (e.g., assistive technology, audiotape, scribe).

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.

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.

**TABLE 4: TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS**

DESCRIPTION OF TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS	Standard	Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone (paper/pencil)	
		Ethics/ Security	Invalidates score
<p><b>Extended Time</b></p> <p>Extended time refers to an extension of the regularly scheduled test session time. This is a regular, planned accommodation for the student.</p> <p>Extended time may require a student’s IEP team to determine a fairly specific amount of extra time to complete assignments, projects, and assessments. Since the PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone paper/pencil are <u>untimed</u> (students may have more than the recommended time if needed) tests, a standard extension may look different. For example, in testing group that contains both students with and without an IEP, the entire testing group might require a reasonable amount of extra minutes beyond the scheduled allowance. This situation is not considered extended time. However, a student that requires more time to finish a section beyond the extra minutes described above is bubbled as needing extended time. Typically, the teacher knows the student well enough to determine whether he/she will require extended time beyond what the regular classroom usually allows and makes this arrangement prior to testing.</p> <p>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 assignments, assessments, and activities. Most decisions can and should be made prior to the administration of the tests to accommodate student/s needs and to lessen disruption.</p>	✓		
<p><b>Student-requested Extended Time</b></p> <p>This situation refers to a student who needs more time than the rest of the regular testing group and may need to move to the extended time area (or remain longer than other students in the testing area) in order to complete the test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes students who request extended time end up not needing it because of the reduction in anxiety of simply knowing that plenty of time is available.</li> <li>• Students should only be granted extended time for as long as they are working productively. Students who have too much time may lose interest and motivation to do their best work.</li> </ul>	✓		
<p>The PSSA, PSSA-M and Keystone paper/pencil are not timed tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must have sufficient time to complete a section prior to end of the school day</li> <li>• Students may not revisit a section of the test on subsequent days</li> <li>• Test sections must be administered in sequence</li> <li>• Students may request extended time beyond the regular test time as long as they are working productively</li> </ul>	✓		

<p>TABLE 4 <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>DESCRIPTION OF TIMING AND SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>Standard</b></p>	<p><b>Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone (paper/pencil)</b></p>	
		<p>Ethics/ Security</p>	<p>Invalidates score</p>
<p><b>Multiple test sessions or Frequent Breaks</b></p> <p>This refers to frequent breaks within a regularly scheduled test session. Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals or after completion of assignments, tests, or activities. The PSSA and PSSA-M test booklets are divided into sections to accommodate scheduling and/or breaks between sections of a test. <b>The Keystone Exams are divided into separate (independent) modules.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheduled breaks give students opportunities to move around the room.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students require frequent breaks within a test section, e.g. every 15 minutes. Sometimes a student is allowed to take individual breaks when needed. Students must be monitored during all breaks.</li> </ul>			
<p>Students break and discuss the test items during the extended time <b>for a particular section or module.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For example, students may not break <b>(during a section or module)</b> for lunch in the cafeteria with their peers. Lunch should be provided in a secure, monitored area.</li> </ul> <p>To avoid violations, students must be monitored during any break to ensure test security. If the length of a break is predetermined, a timer might be used to signal the end of the break.</p>			
<p><b>Change Schedule</b></p> <p>This refers to a student who is not able to follow the planned test schedule for that class and/or building. The most common example is when a high school schedules the PSSA and PSSA-M test to be administered over 3 days with 2 sections per day. For some students with disabilities, an individual schedule, i.e. 1 section per day, over 6 days is needed to complete the test.</p> <p>If possible, schedule assessments at the time of day when a student is most likely to demonstrate peak performance. Although a school may schedule more than one test section per day, some students may need to complete the test over multiple days—completing a section each day. This is usually done to reduce fatigue.</p>			

**Note: The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes that if an accommodation categorized as *Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil* has been used, the circumstances surrounding its use will determine whether security has been violated and/or the action was unethical.**

## **Overview of Table 5, 6, and 7: Tips for Choosing and Administering Accommodations**

### **TABLE 5: EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS BASED ON STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

Student characteristics are important to consider when choosing accommodations for large-scale assessments. Often, the same accommodations are chosen for students with certain characteristics, e.g. students with low vision usually need some form of magnification in order to access the test. Table 5 summarizes the most common, but not all, accommodations categorized by student characteristic.

### **TABLE 6: DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN SELECTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

The process of planning how and when a student will use an accommodation on large-scale assessments should not be rushed. Table 6 gives some helpful Do's and Don'ts when selecting and documenting on a student's IEP or 504 Plan the accommodations a student needs to access the assessment.

### **TABLE 7: GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

Not only is it important for students to learn how to use an accommodation, it is also important for the test administrator to understand the recommended steps in administering accommodations during the assessment. Table 7 describes standard practices to maintain the validity of the student's score when implementing accommodations on large-scale assessments. Not all accommodations are listed. Individual strengths and weaknesses may dictate further steps (**with approval from PDE**) needed in order to properly administer the accommodation during the testing sessions.

**TABLE 5: 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>• Enlarged print</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Nemeth Braille code</li> <li>• Tactile graphics</li> <li>• Human reader</li> <li>• Audio recorder</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Enlarged print or braille notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Talking materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlarged print</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Nemeth Braille code</li> <li>• Tactile graphics</li> <li>• Human reader</li> <li>• Audio recorder</li> <li>• Screen reader (<i>per Guidelines</i>) with PDE approval prior to PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; Keystone paper/pencil</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 Braille Writer</li> <li>• Speak into audio 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 (<i>per Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor (<i>per Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Type on Braille Writer, note-taking device</li> <li>• Speak into audio recorder</li> <li>• Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, Cranmer abacus)</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>
Timing and Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended Time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended Time</li> </ul>



TABLE 5 *continued*

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

Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Visual cues</li> <li>• Written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Videotape and descriptive video</li> <li>• Provide advance 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> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Repeat questions and responses from classmates regarding directions and procedures</li> <li>• Give interpreter instructional materials in advance</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 (multiple-choice only)</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>• Use visual organizers</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers created by the student</li> </ul>

<p>TABLE 5 <i>continued</i>  <i>for Deaf &amp; HH</i></p> <p><b>Category</b></p>	<p><b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b></p>	<p><b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b></p>
<p>Setting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</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>

TABLE 5 <i>continued</i>		
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WEAK MANUAL DEXTERITY; DIFFICULTY WITH PENCIL; DIFFICULTY TYPING ON STANDARD KEYBOARD		
Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
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>Speak into audio recorder</li> <li>Use thick 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 (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>Type on or speak to word processor (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>Speak into audio recorder (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>Use thick pencil or pencil grip</li> </ul>
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: COMMUNICATION DISORDER		
Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic reader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic reader (per <i>Guidelines</i>) with PDE approval prior to PSSA, PSSA-M &amp; <b>Keystone paper/pencil</b></li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Augmentative communication device</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Augmentative communication device (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> </ul>
STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY DECODING		
Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Audio recording</li> <li>Whisper phone</li> <li>Electronic reader</li> <li>Videotape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>Whisper phone</li> <li>Audio CD (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</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>

TABLE 5 *continued*

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY WITH SPELLING**

Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
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 audio recorder</li> <li>• Use spelling and grammar assistive devices (e.g., electronic spelling device, spell check on computer)</li> <li>• Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Speak into audio recorder (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> </ul>

TABLE 5 <i>continued</i>		
<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>• Calculation devices</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>• Calculation devices (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Visual organizers</li> <li>• Graphic organizers created by the student</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</li> <li>• Speak into audio recorder</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages</li> <li>• Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Use of computer via alternate access method for allowable word processor accommodations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor(per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Speak into audio recorder (per <i>Guidelines</i>)</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages</li> <li>• Use of computer via alternate access method for allowable word processor accommodations</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>
Timing and 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>

TABLE 5 *continued*

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

Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use books on tape or recorded books to help focus on text</li> <li>• Use whisper phone to help focus on text</li> <li>• Give short and simple directions with examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use whisper phone to help focus on text</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write in test booklet</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> <li>• Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write in test booklet</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 created by student</li> <li>• Highlight key words in directions</li> <li>• Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding</li> <li>• Use graph paper to keep numbers in proper columns</li> </ul>
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit in front of room</li> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Use chair ball to reduce fidgeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit in front of room</li> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Use chair ball to reduce fidgeting</li> </ul>
Timing and Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use short segment texts</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>• Cue student to begin working and stay on task</li> <li>• Change testing schedule</li> </ul>

**TABLE 6: Do's and Don'ts When Selecting Accommodations**

<b>Do...</b> make accommodation decisions based on individualized needs.	<b>Don't...</b> make accommodations decisions based on whatever is easiest to do (e.g., preferential seating).
<b>Do...</b> select accommodations that reduce the effect of the disability to access instruction and demonstrate learning.	<b>Don't...</b> select accommodations unrelated to documented student learning needs or are intended to give students an unfair advantage.
<b>Do...</b> be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP or 504 plans.	<b>Don't...</b> use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP or 504 plans.
<b>Do...</b> be familiar with the types of accommodations that can be used as both instructional and assessment accommodations.	<b>Don't...</b> assume that all instructional accommodations are appropriate for use on assessments.
<b>Do...</b> be specific about the "Where, When, Who, and How" of providing accommodations.	<b>Don't...</b> simply indicate an accommodation will be provided "as appropriate" or "as necessary."
<b>Do...</b> refer to state accommodations policies (as described in the <i>Accommodations Guidelines</i> document) and understand implications of selections.	<b>Don't...</b> check every accommodation possible on a checklist simply to be "safe."
<b>Do...</b> evaluate accommodations used by the student.	<b>Don't...</b> assume the same accommodations remain appropriate year after year.
<b>Do...</b> get input about accommodations from teachers, parents, and students, and use it to make decisions at IEP team or 504 planning committee meetings.	<b>Don't...</b> make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations alone.
<b>Do...</b> provide accommodations for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction.	<b>Don't...</b> provide an assessment accommodation for the first time on the day of a test.
<b>Do...</b> select accommodations based on specific individual needs in each content area.	<b>Don't...</b> assume certain accommodations, such as extra time, are appropriate for every student in every content area.

## TABLE 7: Guidelines for Administering Specific Accommodations

### UNIQUE ACCOMMODATIONS

Unique accommodations may be requested for a very few students who would not otherwise be able to access the test material. Examples of unique circumstances include:

- a student with a significant motor, communication, or other disability that disallows the student's manual response for the compositional writing essay
- a student with a severe health-related disability that prevents the completion of a test section in one day

Because such an accommodation might alter the test item content, IEP teams need to be aware that the test results must be interpreted with caution. PDE *must* be consulted regarding any unique accommodation at the Bureau of Assessment & Accountability 717-787-4234 or the Bureau of Special Education 717-783-2311.

### 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. Test readers should be prepared to answer questions about item format, scoring rules, and timing. 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.

#### Small Group

It is permissible to read aloud test item(s), as requested by the student, on the math and science PSSA tests, and the writing essay prompts on the writing PSSA test. However, teachers should work closely with special education students to identify those students who need the most intensive intervention of having the entire test read aloud by the test administrator. These are the students (no more than 5 in the group) who may need the same form of the test read aloud to them by the test administrator. Keep in mind that reading aloud the entire test to a group of students may artificially pace the students. Some students may be reluctant to ask the test administrator to slow down or repeat the question in a group setting.



### **De-spiraling guidelines**

De-spiraling, or distributing the test booklets out of sequenced order, is not allowed for the PSSA tests. This practice interferes with valid and reliable test data. It is very important that all students be represented on all 9 different forms of the PSSA test. Otherwise, a particular group (e.g. students with an IEP) may be under-represented on field test data.

It is also important to remember that de-spiraling could precipitate a test security breach.

### **Exception to de-spiraling guidelines**

However, there may be certain circumstances that would permit the test coordinator (NOT the test administrator) to de-spiral a limited number of booklets. De-spiraling the test forms is a special exception that must be documented and may NOT be done by the test administra-  
tor (i.e. the classroom teacher). Only test coordinators are permitted to de-spiral any test booklets. De-spiraling is only appropriate when the entire test must be read aloud, and only in a small group (no more than 5 students) setting. An example of such an exception would be:

- A high number of students at the same grade level in one building who require the read aloud accommodation for the entire math and/or science test(s). For example, School A has 8 students in grade 6 who have the read-aloud accommodation for the entire test documented in the IEP, and the students receive this accommodation (small group, entire test read aloud) on a regular basis for math and/or or science assessments.
- The building does not have enough one-on-one test administrators to accommodate these students.
- The test coordinator may make the decision to de-spiral 2 different forms of the test, and group these 8 students into 2 small groups of 4, with one test administrator per group who may read aloud the entire test to the small group.

Some circumstances that do NOT warrant de-spiraling:

- To accommodate students who need some test items read aloud
- To accommodate a teacher's "regular" testing practice of reading all math and/or science test questions to the whole class

This exception to the rule is intended to assist those buildings that may have an unusually high number of students with an IEP who require the entire math and/or science test to be read aloud. PDE recognizes that this unusual circumstance may cause a hardship on both

students and test administrators if these students all had a different form of the test that needed to be read aloud. Therefore, if you have this situation in your building this year, you may follow the above guidelines and/or call PDE for more clarification.

### **Enlarged print**

If a student needs an enlarged print test edition, be certain it is ordered in a timely manner that allows it to be available for the test. After a student finishes an enlarged print edition of a test, the test administrator needs to transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet.

### **Braille**

If a student needs a braille test edition, be certain it is ordered in a timely manner that allows it to be available on the day of testing. 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, someone needs to transcribe the student's answers verbatim onto a standard answer sheet or response form.

### **Sign Language Interpreter**

A student's teacher should not be the interpreter in a testing situation unless a qualified second person is present to monitor for quality and fairness. If allowed to sign test items and prompts (mathematics and science tests only), interpreters must not clarify, elaborate, paraphrase, or provide assistance with the meaning of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items. Graphic materials may be described but should also be available in print format. Interpreter services need to be arranged prior to test day.

### **Audiotape or Compact Disk**

Test administrators need to monitor student movement through audio versions to make certain the student maintains the appropriate place in the test and the audio version is playing properly. Test administrators should spot check audio formats before use to be certain everything is working properly.

## **RESPONSE ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **Writing in Test Booklet**

Allow the student to write in the test booklet instead of on an answer sheet. This accommodation allows the test taker to indicate responses directly in the test booklet and have someone else transfer the answers to the answer sheet after the student has completed the test.

## **Dictation to Scribe**

Scribes may be provided for the Math, Reading, and Science PSSA, PSSA-M, and **Keystone Algebra, Geometry, Literature, Biology, and Chemistry** tests only. Students with verified disabilities that significantly impact the area of written expression or a physical disability that impedes motor process or writing may dictate responses to a scribe (NOT for the compositional response of Writing PSSA or **English Composition Keystone** tests). 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. Scribes must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written. *See Unique Accommodations p. 56.*

## **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 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.

### **Test Administrators/Proctors**

Some students may feel less anxious in a particular setting outside of the regular classroom. It must be noted that a test administrator may not coach, or provide feedback (e.g., answer any questions pertaining to the content of the test, review rough drafts, or give any kind of feedback including indicating to students any items that need a second look) during or after completion of the test. This prohibition applies to a Personal Care Aide (PCA), Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS), or any other one-on-one aide who is assigned to a student during the administration of the PSSA. A PCA or TSS is *not* a test administrator and may not interact with test materials in any way whatsoever.

## **TIMING AND 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.

Since the PSSA, PSSA-M and **Keystone paper/pencil** are untimed tests, decisions must be made prior to testing that take into consideration the student's typical test-taking time requirements. For example, if the student typically remains with the regular test population during assessments, it might not be necessary to provide extended time beyond which the regular test population receives. However, it is imperative that each student's profile is given close consideration when determining the amount of extended time required and to provide that student with extended time beyond the regular untimed test situation.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: CONTACT INFORMATION

Data Recognition Corp. (DRC)  
Customer Service  
1-800-451-7849 (PSSA)  
**1-888-551-6935 (Keystones)**

PASA Project  
University of Pittsburgh  
5168 Wesley W. Posvar Hall  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
(412) 648-7363

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Assessment and Accountability  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
717-787-4234 or 717-705-2343

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
333 Market Street  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
717-783-2311

### REQUEST FOR APPROVAL

**To apply for the use of any electronic/screen reader, audio CD, or any other accommodation not listed in the guidelines, an LEA must make a request to PDE no less than 8 weeks in advance of the testing window:**

1. Contact the Division of Assessment by emailing [00testing@psupen.psu.edu](mailto:00testing@psupen.psu.edu)
2. Or call the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability @ 717-787-4234 or 717-705-2343
3. Or call the Bureau of Special Education @ 717-783-2311
4. Initial email or phone call should include the child's enrolled grade, IEP accommodation statement, a description of disability, contact phone number and email address.
5. Initial PDE response will request additional information.
6. The LEA will receive final notice if the accommodation(s) is/are approved. The LEA must complete a confidentiality/test security form regarding the accommodation prior to testing.

## APPENDIX B: CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Test security and student confidentiality are of the utmost importance to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and it is the Department's obligation to protect information about tests and students in the assessment process. Such information includes performance tasks, multiple-choice items, scoring rubrics, and student responses used in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment. The nature and quality of an individual student's performance must not be released.

Sign interpreters may review test materials up to three days prior to test administration. Test materials must be reviewed in a secure location supervised by the principal or test coordinator. Materials may not be removed from the secure location. Filing or retaining any notes beyond the testing window or making copies of any kind is strictly prohibited. The principal and/or test coordinator must receive and securely destroy any notes required by the sign interpreter to administer the test.

These assessments rely on the measurement of individual achievement. Any deviation from the assessment procedures outlined in this manual [group work, teacher coaching (e.g. paraphrasing, explaining, giving suggestions about test items), pre-teaching or pre-release of the performance tasks or assessment items, use of old Pennsylvania assessments as preparation tools, etc.] is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security. Any action by a professional employee or commissioned officer that is willfully designed to divulge test questions, falsify student scores or compromise the integrity of the state assessment system will be subject to disciplinary action under sections 1259-1267 of the School Code (24 P.S. Sections 12-1259-12-1267).

We are certain that you share our concern that all items and students' responses be handled in a professional and confidential manner. By signing this agreement, you acknowledge that you have read and understand this Confidentiality Agreement and agree to abide by these requirements.

---

Legal First Name (print)

MI

---

Legal Last Name (print)

---

Title/Address/Telephone

---

Signature

---

Date

---

Signature (principal and/or test coordinator)

---

Date

## APPENDIX C: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document is modeled on the *Accommodations Manual: How To Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities*, developed in collaboration with members of the Professional Development and Communications Study Group of the Assessing Special Education Students (ASES) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS). The State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students (SCASS ASES) addresses the inclusion of students with disabilities in large-scale standards, assessments and accountability systems and the effects of these systems on related educational reform efforts.

Thank you to PaTTAN staff, Intermediate Unit staff, Consultants, NCEO, NAAC, and Pennsylvania teachers, especially the expertise of:

Susan Gill  
Debby Holzapfel  
Cathy Nadberazny  
Marianne Perie  
Carol Price  
Nan Rodgers  
Marlene Schechter  
Mark Steciw

Recognition is given to information contained in testing accommodations documents prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Education.

This document was developed by the Bureau of Accountability and Assessment and the Bureau of Special Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2007.

**Note: The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes that if an accommodation categorized as *Not allowable for PSSA, PSSA-M & Keystone paper/pencil* has been used, the circumstances surrounding its use will determine whether security has been violated and/or the action was unethical.**







## FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL ONLY

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS SECTION This section must be completed for all non-precoded students.

1. **Gender:**
  - Female
  - Male
2. **Race/Ethnicity (indicate only one):**
  - Hispanic of any race
  - American Indian or Alaskan Native (*not Hispanic*)
  - Asian (*not Hispanic*)
  - Black or African American (*not Hispanic*)
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (*not Hispanic*)
  - White (*not Hispanic*)
  - Two or more races (*not Hispanic*)
3. **Student's current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2010 (mark all that apply, if any):**
  - in the school of residence
  - in the district of residence
  - as a Pennsylvania resident
4. **Student's current enrollment status initially started after October 1, 2009, but on or before October 1, 2010 (mark all that apply, if any):**
  - in the school of residence
  - in the district of residence
5. **Mark all of the following that apply, if any:**
  - Student has an IEP (*not Gifted*).
  - Student has exited an IEP program within the past 2 years.
  - Student participates in Title I program.
  - Student receives Migrant Education Program services.
  - Student is classified as economically disadvantaged.
  - Student is home-schooled and assessed at parental request.
  - Student attends this school as part of a foreign exchange program.
6. **Student's English Language Learner (ELL) status is as follows (indicate only one, if any):**
  - ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school after May 7, 2010 (*previous enrollment in Puerto Rico is not considered as enrollment in U.S. schools*).
  - ELL and enrolled in a U.S. school on or before May 7, 2010.
  - Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the first year of monitoring.
  - Exited an ESL/bilingual program and in the second year of monitoring.
  - Former English Language Learner and no longer monitored.
7. **Student is currently in ESL instruction and has the following Title III status (indicate only one, if any):**
  - Title III served
  - Title III not served

BIRTH DATE			
Month	Day	Year	
<input type="radio"/> Jan			
<input type="radio"/> Feb			
<input type="radio"/> Mar	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 0
<input type="radio"/> Apr	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 1
<input type="radio"/> May	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 2
<input type="radio"/> Jun	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 3
<input type="radio"/> Jul	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 4
<input type="radio"/> Aug	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 5
<input type="radio"/> Sep	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 6
<input type="radio"/> Oct	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 7	<input type="radio"/> 7
<input type="radio"/> Nov	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 8	<input type="radio"/> 8
<input type="radio"/> Dec	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input type="radio"/> 9	<input type="radio"/> 9

PAsecureID									
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### OTHER ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- Student is court/agency placed (*not foster care*).  
*Refer to the "Attribution Map" on PDE's website ([www.education.state.pa.us](http://www.education.state.pa.us)) for detailed guidance on determining a student's status as court or agency placed.*
- Student was absent without make-up for one or more sections of Mathematics.
- Student was absent without make-up for one or more sections of Reading.
- Student is enrolled at a non-public school or is home-schooled and receives his/her Mathematics education at a public school.
- Student is enrolled at a non-public school or is home-schooled and receives his/her Reading education at a public school.

## FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL ONLY

**ACCOMMODATIONS SECTION**  
 This section must be completed for assessed students only, if applicable.

**8. Student used the following Presentation Accommodations**  
 (mark all that apply, if any):

- |                       |                       |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Math</b>           | <b>Reading</b>        |  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Braille format   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Large-print format   |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Audio CD format  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Electronic screen reader ( <i>PDE must approve the program and all functions</i> )                                   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Test directions read aloud ( <i>mark only for additional procedures; e.g., multiple times, slower presentation</i> ) |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Test directions signed, interpreted for ELL, or recorded   |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Test items/questions read aloud  |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Test items/questions signed, interpreted for ELL, or recorded  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Amplification device   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Magnification device   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Reading windows; reading guides  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Other ( <i>as indicated in <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u> or approved by PDE</i> )                                 |

**9. Student used the following Setting Accommodations**  
 (mark all that apply, if any):

- |                       |                       |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Math</b>           | <b>Reading</b>        |  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Hospital/home setting  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Tested in separate setting   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Small group testing  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Other ( <i>as indicated in <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u> or approved by PDE</i> ) |

**Student responses from Braille, large-print, or electronic formats MUST be transcribed into this answer booklet.**

**10. Student used the following Response Accommodations**  
 (mark all that apply, if any):

- |                       |                       |   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Math</b>           | <b>Reading</b>        |   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Test administrator marked multiple-choice responses at student's direction  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Test administrator scribed open-ended responses at student's direction  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Test administrator transcribed student responses ( <i>per <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u></i> )                                    |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Qualified interpreter translated, transcribed, and/or scribed ELL student responses ( <i>per <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u></i> ) |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Typewriter, word processor, or computer ( <i>per <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u></i> )   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Braille/Note taker ( <i>per <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u></i> )  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Augmentative communication device   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Audio recording of student responses ( <i>per <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u></i> )  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Electronic screen reader ( <i>PDE must approve the program and all functions</i> )  |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Manipulative ( <i>Cranmer abacus; number line; or as indicated in <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u> or approved by PDE</i> )         |
| <input type="radio"/> | N/A                   | Translation dictionary for ELL student  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Other ( <i>as indicated in <u>Accommodations Guidelines</u> or approved by PDE</i> )  |

**11. Student used the following Timing Accommodations**  
 (mark all that apply, if any):

- |                       |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Math</b>           | <b>Reading</b>        |                                 |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Scheduled extended time         |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Student-requested extended time |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Multiple test sessions          |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Changed test schedule           |

Please refer to the *Accommodations Guidelines* at [www.education.state.pa.us](http://www.education.state.pa.us) for further clarification regarding the use of all accommodations.

LOCAL STUDENT ID									
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

OPTIONAL FIELD
<input type="radio"/> Option 1 <input type="radio"/> Option 2 <input type="radio"/> Option 3 <input type="radio"/> Option 4

SUPPLEMENTAL DATA FIELD												
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9

## APPENDIX E: TEACHER TOOLS

### TEACHER TOOL 1

### ACCESS NEEDS THAT MAY REQUIRE ACCOMMODATIONS

*Directions: Use these questions to identify various types of presentation, response, setting, and timing 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 or Not Applicable).*

	Y	N	DK/ 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 or audiotape?	<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"/>

Reprinted from The Council of Chief State School Officers. "Accommodations Manual How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities." By Sandra J. Thompson, Amanda B. Morse, Michael Sharpe, and Sharon Hall. August 2005. Retrieved January 25, 2008, <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/pdf/AccommodationsManual.pdf>

<b>SETTING ACCOMMODATIONS</b>		<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
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>TIMING AND 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"/>

Reprinted from The Council of Chief State School Officers. "Accommodations Manual How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities." By Sandra J. Thompson, Amanda B. Morse, Michael Sharpe, and Sharon Hall. August 2005. Retrieved January 25, 2008, <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/pdf/AccommodationsManual.pdf>



## 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 can 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

---

Classes

Accommodations

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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.

Reprinted from The Council of Chief State School Officers. "Accommodations Manual How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities." By Sandra J. Thompson, Amanda B. Morse, Michael Sharpe, and Sharon Hall. August 2005. Retrieved January 25, 2008, <http://www.osepideastthatwork.org/toolkit/pdf/AccommodationsManual.pdf>

# TEACHER TOOL 3

## ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS PLAN

Student Information	Case Information
Name: _____	Special Education Teacher: _____
Date of Assessment: _____	School Year: _____
Name of Assessment: _____	Building/School: _____
	General Education Teacher: _____

Assessment accommodations that student needs for this assessment and date arranged:

Accommodations	Date Arranged:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Person responsible for arranging accommodations and due date:

Person Responsible	Due Date:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Room assignment for assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Planners for this process (signatures): \_\_\_\_\_

Scheiber, B., & Talpers, J. (1985). *Campus Access for Learning Disabled Students: A Comprehensive Guide*. Pittsburgh: Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities.

Reprinted from The Council of Chief State School Officers. "Accommodations Manual How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities." By Sandra J. Thompson, Amanda B. Morse, Michael Sharpe, and Sharon Hall. August 2005. Retrieved January 25, 2008, <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/pdf/AccommodationsManual.pdf>

## **APPENDIX F: ASIST**

### **IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments**

---

**GUIDELINES FOR IEP TEAMS:  
Assigning Students with IEPs to State Tests  
(ASIST)**

Developed in Collaboration:

Bureau of Special Education

and

Bureau of Assessment and Accountability

Revised June 2010





## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

---

### **Introduction:**

There are three basic reasons for including all students with disabilities in State assessment and accountability systems. First, it is established law. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Title I of the ESEA each require all students with disabilities to be included in State assessment systems. In addition, the prohibition against exclusion from participation or denial of benefits to, or discrimination against, individuals with disabilities contained in section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act applies to State assessment and accountability systems. ESEA (section 1111(b)(2)) further requires that assessment results for all students (and students in specified subgroups, including students with disabilities) who have been enrolled in a school for a full academic year be used in calculating AYP for the school, and that the assessment results of all students who have been in a local educational agency (LEA) for a full academic year be used in calculating AYP for the LEA and the State.

Second, students with disabilities benefit instructionally from participating in State and district-wide assessments. Including students with disabilities in accountability systems has resulted in parents, teachers and administrators paying more attention to grade-level standards and ensuring that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and have an opportunity to learn grade-level content.

Third, to ensure that appropriate resources are dedicated to helping students with disabilities succeed, appropriate measurement of their achievement needs to be part of the accountability system. By including all students in State accountability systems, schools pay attention to the performance and progress of *all* students; educating students with disabilities becomes a shared responsibility of both general and special education teachers.

### **In Pennsylvania, there are five options for test participation of students with disabilities:**

1. The PSSA
2. The PSSA with accommodations
3. The PSSA-Modified (Reading and Math grades 4-8, 11; Science grades 8, 11)
4. The PSSA-Modified with accommodations (Reading and Math grades 4-8, 11; Science grades 8, 11)
5. The PASA

## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

---

### I. Important considerations:

1. These decisions apply *ONLY* to students with disabilities whose disability requires specially designed instruction. That is, only students with IEPs; *NOT* students with 504 Plans.
2. *MOST* students with IEPs should aim for taking the PSSA with or without accommodations. The alternate assessment options are intended only for *VERY FEW* students with IEPs.
3. The PSSA-M is a *GRADE LEVEL* test. It can be less cognitively complex and shorter than the PSSA; however, students must still perform grade level skills in Math, Reading and Science.
4. Unlike assignment to the PASA, which requires students to take the PASA version of all subject area tests, assignment to the PSSA-M is *SUBJECT SPECIFIC*. For example, IEP teams might decide that a student take the PSSA-M Math test and the PSSA-M Science test with or without accommodations but the student will take the standard PSSA Reading test (with or without accommodations).
5. Recommendations for assessment assignment occur *YEARLY*. The decision about which statewide accountability assessment the student will take rests solely with the IEP team. Students with disabilities must participate in the statewide accountability assessment but assignment to the assessment may change from year to year, based on the student's past performance and IEP team decisions.

### II. Consequences of test assignment decisions:

#### 1. Student Consequences

There are *NO* consequences *for the student* taking an alternate assessment

- a. No consequences with respect to test score/performance level related to taking the test with allowable accommodations
- b. No consequences with respect to high school graduation
- c. No consequences with respect to eligibility for post-secondary education (community college; state college system)
- d. No consequences with respect to grade promotion/retention
- e. No consequences with respect to rewards for proficient or advanced performance on an alternate as opposed to the regular assessment

#### 2. School/ District Consequences

There *ARE* consequences *for the school or district* when IEP teams assign students to an alternate assessment

## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

---

- a. Although there is no limit on the number of students with IEPs who may take the PSSA-M, no more than 2% of the Advanced/Proficient scores in a district grade span used for calculating AYP may come from the modified assessment. If an LEA exceeds the 2% cap, the LEA is provided the opportunity to determine which students will be counted as *not Proficient* for purposes of AYP calculation only.
- b. Although there is no limit on the number of students with IEPs who may take the PASA, no more than 1% of the Advanced/Proficient scores in a district grade span used for calculating AYP may come from the modified assessment. If an LEA exceeds the 1% cap, the LEA is provided the opportunity to determine which students will be counted as *not Proficient* for purposes of AYP calculation only.
- c. Students with IEPs who score in the proficient range on the regular PSSA (with or without accommodations) are counted as *proficient* in the calculation of AYP. This is in addition to the students counted as proficient (up to 3% of students assessed at a grade span) on the alternate assessments. Schools or districts would benefit from assigning a LIMITED number of students to alternate assessments and having as many students with IEPs as possible take and score proficient on the regular PSSA. Over assigning students to alternate assessments may actually result in fewer students who are counted as proficient.

### III. PSSA-M Participation Decision-Making Guidelines

It is important that IEP teams consider the positive impact on students, their families, and their teachers of setting high expectations for achievement. Most students with IEPs should be assigned to take the standard PSSA. In deciding whether a particular student should be assigned to the PSSA-M, the IEP team MUST take into account:

1. Opportunity to Learn Grade Level Content
  - ALL students should have the opportunity to learn grade level academic content. Evidence for opportunity to learn includes:
    - attendance data (the student must have been present for instruction);
    - grade-level standards-aligned IEP goals;
    - instructional accommodations and/or modifications;
    - intensive research-based interventions
2. Academic Achievement and Progress
  - Academic achievement and progress of ALL students should be closely monitored. Students eligible to take the PSSA-M should demonstrate:
    - a disability that precludes grade level proficiency despite intensive intervention/instruction
    - past academic progress that suggests that achieving grade level proficiency within one year is unlikely even with significant growth

## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

---

After thoughtfully reviewing the aforementioned considerations, consequences, and data sources for EACH student with an IEP, IEP teams should sequentially and systematically work through the PSSA-M Participation Decision Framework to recommend the appropriate state test assignment.

## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

### Decision Guidelines for Assignment to PSSA-M

- A student must meet 4 out of 4 criteria in order for an IEP team to recommend participation in the PSSA-Modified Math or PSSA-M Reading.
- If a student does not meet 4 out of 4 criteria for Math or Reading, IEP teams may consider recommending participation in the PSSA with accommodations.
- Given that a student's ability to access grade level science content may be significantly impacted by his/her math or reading ability, IEP teams may consider recommending participation in the PSSA-M Science if the student meets 4 out of 4 criteria for PSSA-M Math or PSSA-M Reading participation.
- Potential Evidence may include what is listed below but is not limited to those listed.

#### Criteria for PSSA-M Math and PSSA-M Reading Participation

Criteria	Guideline	Potential Evidence	Decision-Math		Decision-Reading	
			YES	NO	YES	NO
1. Ineligible for the PASA	Students considered for the PSSA-M <i>do not</i> have significant cognitive disabilities and <i>should not be</i> held to <u>alternate achievement standards</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEP</li> <li>• PASA Guidelines for Participation</li> </ul>				
2. Standards-Aligned Grade Level Instruction	All students considered for the PSSA-M must have a grade level standards-aligned IEP that clearly documents that the student requires significant instructional accommodations and/or modifications to successfully access grade level content	In applicable subject area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards-aligned IEP Goals</li> <li>• SDI documentation</li> <li>• Present levels documentation</li> <li>• Instructional accommodations and modification documentation/evidence</li> </ul>				
3. Persistent academic difficulties	Students considered for the PSSA-M have persistent academic difficulties despite having received intensive research-based interventions	In applicable subject area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress monitoring data (CBM, CBA)</li> <li>• Intervention documentation</li> </ul>				



## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

### Decision Guidelines for Assignment to PSSA-M

<p>4. Lack of academic progress or growth</p>	<p>Students considered for the PSSA-M have established patterns of significantly low performance on multiple valid measures that indicates that <i>even if</i> significant growth occurs, achievement of grade level proficiency is unlikely</p>	<p>In applicable subject area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State level assessment data:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Patterns of Below Basic performance on the PSSA</li> <li>○ PVAAS projection to proficiency of less than 10%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• District/School level assessment data:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Performance well below grade level on a norm-referenced achievement test</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Grade level assessment data                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Well below average performance on progress monitoring or other classroom assessment data</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
---	--	---	--	--	--	--

- Did the student meet 4/4 criteria for participation in the PSSA-M Math?  YES  NO
- Did the student meet 4/4 criteria for participation in the PSSA-M Reading?  YES  NO
- Complete page 4 of the IEP form to indicate resulting assessment assignments.

#### Criteria for PSSA-M Science Participation

- Did the student meet 4/4 criteria for participation in the PSSA-M Math?  YES  NO
  - If YES...
 

Did the review of the guidelines and academic evidence for Math suggest that the student’s math skills negatively impact his/her learning of science content, and he/she should therefore also participate in the PSSA-M Science test?  YES  NO
- Did the student meet 4/4 criteria for participation in the PSSA-M Reading?  YES  NO
  - If YES...
 

Did the review of the guidelines and academic evidence for Reading suggest that the student’s reading skills negatively impact his/her learning of science content, and should he/she therefore also participate in the PSSA-M Science test?  YES  NO
- Complete page 4 of the IEP form to indicate resulting assessment assignment.

#### IV. Participation Guidelines for PASA

The PASA is appropriate for students who have significant cognitive disabilities and who require intensive instruction and extensive support in order to perform and/or participate meaningfully and productively in the everyday activities of integrated school, home, community, and work environments. These students require substantial modifications of the general education curriculum as well as instruction in areas not presently assessed by the PSSA.

The following questions should guide IEP teams in their decision-making regarding the PASA.

1. By September 1 of the school year in which this IEP will be operative, will the student be in grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 11?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

AND

2. Does the student have significant cognitive disabilities?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

AND

3. Does the student require intensive instruction to learn?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

AND

4. Does the student require extensive adaptation and support in order to perform and/or participate meaningfully and productively in the everyday life activities of integrated school, home, community, and work environments?	Yes	No
---	-----	----

AND

5. Does the student require substantial modifications of the general education curriculum?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

AND

6. Does the student's participation in the general education curriculum differ substantially in form and/or substance from that of most other students (i.e., different objectives, materials, or activities)?	Yes	No
--	-----	----

If the answer was “**Yes**” to **all** of these questions, it would be appropriate for the IEP team to consider assigning the student to the **Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA)**. If the answer was “**No**” to any of the above questions, the **PASA** is *not* the appropriate statewide assessment for the student.

## IEP Team Recommendations for Participation in PA State Assessments

---

### Decision Guidelines for Assignment to PASA

#### V. **Contacts**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
333 Market Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
717-783-6913

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Assessment and Accountability  
333 Market Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
717-705-2343

Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)  
Customer Service  
1-800-451-7849

PASA Project  
University of Pittsburgh  
5168 Wesley W. Posvar Hall  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
(412) 648-7363