

Accommodations Guidelines

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



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

for

Students **without** IEPs or 504 Plans

Revised 1/20/2011

Accommodations Guidelines

All accommodations that are available for students without IEPs or 504 Plans on the general PSSA are also available for the PSSA-M and Keystone paper/pencil exams.

CHANGES IN TEST ENVIRONMENT	
Time	<p>Scheduled extended time Typically test coordinators schedule the tests using the given approximate administration times. Some students may need more than the scheduled time to complete a section of the test. The test coordinator may assign these students to a separate testing area in order to extend the amount of allotted time so that students may finish the test without having to rush. The PSSA, PSSA-M, and Keystone Exams are not timed tests. However, any overnight extensions are not allowed.</p> <p>Student-requested extended time Students can request extended time at any time during the assessment process as long as they are working productively.</p>
Place	<p>Classroom adaptations Preferential seating arrangements may help students concentrate or feel more comfortable.</p> <p>Adaptive/special furniture (e.g., study carrel, table space for large print assessment materials) may be helpful for students.</p> <p>Testing in a separate room To reduce distraction, a student may need to be tested in a room separate from the larger group.</p> <p>Hospital/home testing Arrangements should be made to allow for the testing of a student who is a patient in a hospital setting during the testing period.</p> <p>Arrangements should also be made to allow for the testing of a student who is confined to the home during the testing period.</p>

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CHANGES IN TEST ENVIRONMENT	
Grouping	<i>Small group testing</i> Some students may require a testing environment with fewer students. Other students may require testing in a setting separate from all other students.
Other	Other accommodations, not listed here, may be available and appropriate for the student, as long as the accommodations do not compromise the integrity of the assessment. Contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Assessment & Accountability if you have any questions.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES/SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS	
Word processor or typewriter	<p>A few students might require a word processor or keyboard as part of their regular classroom accommodations, e.g., a student whose handwriting is so illegible that it cannot be scored.</p> <p>For those students, use of a word processor or keyboard is an appropriate and acceptable accommodation for the tests.</p> <p>Schools must determine which students will need this accommodation and plan accordingly so that the equipment is available during the testing period.</p> <p><u>Spell checker, grammar checker, autocorrect, and other supports must be turned off.</u> Students may use the typing function only.</p> <p>A test administrator must <u>transcribe</u> the student's responses into the regular scannable test/answer booklet.</p> <p>A test administrator must <u>not</u> alter student answers under any circumstances.</p>

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ASSISTIVE DEVICES/SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS	
Reference materials	The only reference material allowed is a copy of the original formula sheet and general scoring guidelines provided in the Handbook for Assessment Coordinators, and posted on the PDE Assessment website and on the SAS website.
Paper, reading windows and highlighters	<p>Special paper such as graph paper, large lined, or widely spaced paper may be used. Highlighters, place markers, graph paper, and reading windows are also allowable. Reading windows, also called “window frames” (paper guide with a hole cut out), are used to help students focus.</p> <p>In addition, students may use scratch paper, but any markings on the scratch paper will not be scored. Responses must be transcribed onto the PSSA and/or Keystone answer booklet or the PSSA-M test booklet.</p>

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OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Student marks in test booklet

Students may mark answers in the test booklet. **Responses must be transcribed onto the PSSA or Keystone answer booklet or the PSSA-M test booklet.**

In grade 3 students respond directly in the PSSA Test Booklet. They may use highlighters in the test booklet but must be very careful to:

- avoid highlighting the bubbles,
- avoid highlighting in the open-ended response areas,
- and avoid highlighting the black marks along the edges of the paper.

If a highlighter mark strays over the answer bubble, the item cannot be scored correctly.

Only pencil may be used to fill in bubbles.

If a student marks the incorrect answer, there must be a complete removal of that marking or it will be scored as incorrect with two answers.

Accommodations Guidelines

Dictation to a test administrator (Scribe)

A few students may normally dictate their answers to a scribe as part of their regular classroom accommodations, e.g.:

- a student whose handwriting is so illegible it cannot be scored
- a student with a broken arm.

For those students, use of a scribe is an appropriate and acceptable accommodation for the PSSA **and PSSA-M Mathematics, Reading, and Science and the Keystone Algebra, Literature, and Biology Exams.**

School personnel must determine which students need this accommodation and plan accordingly so that the scribe is available during the testing period.

Dictation is not allowed on the PSSA Writing test **or the Keystone English Composition Exam.** The administrator may transcribe illegible handwriting or a student-typed response. A test administrator must transcribe the student's responses into his/her PSSA **or Keystone** Test/Answer Booklet.

They must not alter student answers under any circumstances.

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Reading aloud	<p>Procedural directions for all assessments may be read aloud.</p> <p>Multiple-choice questions and answer choices and the associated passage on the PSSA Writing test or Keystone English Composition Exam may <u>not</u> be read to students.</p> <p>Test administrators are not allowed to read any portion, multiple-choice and open-ended, of the Reading assessment, including the introductory text box at the beginning of each passage.</p> <p>Questions and answer choices may be read aloud for the PSSA, PSSA-M Mathematics and Science and Keystone Algebra and Biology only for the small number of individual students who might need this accommodation.</p> <p>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.</p>
Providing visual cues	<p>A test administrator may not mark or use stickers on assessment materials. <u>Students</u> may use visual cues throughout the assessment.</p>
Simplifying procedural directions	<p>The test administrator may simplify, repeat, read the procedural directions in English or the native language, and have students explain procedural directions aloud to confirm understanding. The test administrator may not read directions associated with test items such as, “Read the following passage about wild ponies. Then answer questions 1–10” or “Use the figure below to answer question 00.”</p>

Accommodations Guidelines

Accommodations NOT Allowed

The following are examples of accommodations that are NOT allowable and are NOT appropriate for the PSSA, **PSSA-M**, or **Keystone Exam**:

1. Helping students answer items, such as:
 - Helping the student eliminate some multiple-choice items
 - Pointing to key phrases in test questions for students
 - Pointing to correct answers on the assessment
 - Giving correct answers after the student becomes frustrated
 - Having formulas (other than the provided formula sheet) or number lines on the wall or board
 - Using a highlighter to prompt students on the assessment portion of the test—in the questions, answer choices or text
 - Having a word wall, vocabulary words and definitions in the testing area
2. Providing time adaptations that compromise the testing setting, such as:
 - Giving students a lunch break in the middle of a test section
 - Giving students an unsupervised break in the middle of a section
 - Letting a student finish a section the next day
3. Allowing accommodations that are specifically prohibited, such as:
 - Reading aloud any portion of the Reading **or Literature** tests
 - Reading or translating all or part of the test to ELLs in their native language except as described in the document, *Accommodations for ELLS*
 - Giving a student a calculator for the entire Mathematics assessment
 - Using a scribe or audio recorder for the prompt portions of the Writing **or English Composition tests**
 - Reading aloud the multiple-choice and passage portion of the Writing **or English Composition tests**
 - Giving students reference materials for any PSSA **or Keystone test**
4. Failing to maintain required test security, such as:
 - Sending the PSSA or **Keystone** home with a parent for a hospitalized or homebound student
 - Sending the PSSA or **Keystone** home with a parent for a student who receives instruction in the home