

Handbook for the Participation Guidelines

Guidance and Tools for the Selection, Administration, & Evaluation of Accommodations and Other Student Supports



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Handbook for the Participation Guidelines

How to Select, Administer and Evaluate the Use of Student Supports

This guidance was created to complement the regulations found in the *Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition*.

This handbook provides guidance and tools for school district officials, administrators, teachers, and other educators responsible for making decisions about the participation of students with disabilities and English learners in instruction and assessments.

This document contains three main sections.

- 1. Five step process for the selection, administration, and evaluation on the use of student supports.**
- 2. Guidance and clarification on Alaska’s mandated assessments.**
- 3. Appendices with tables, templates, and additional resources.**

This handbook includes information from the following documents:

[Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition](https://education.alaska.gov/tls/assessments/accommodations/ParticipationGuidelines.pdf)
(education.alaska.gov/tls/assessments/accommodations/ParticipationGuidelines.pdf)

[Accessibility Manual for the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment, 2021-22](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Accessibility_Manual.pdf)
(dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Accessibility_Manual.pdf)

[Alaska Science Assessment Test Coordinator’s Manual, Spring 2022](#)

[AK STAR Test Coordinator Manual, Spring 2022](#)

State of Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Special Education Handbook, January 2015
(available on request by contacting the SPED team at sped@alaska.gov)

SECTION I

The Five-Step Process for Selecting, Administering and Evaluating the Use of Student Supports

This guidance presents a five-step process for all educators to use in selecting, administering, and evaluating the effectiveness of the use of instructional and assessment accommodations.

The guidance in this handbook applies to English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) who participate in large-scale content assessments and the instruction they receive. This manual focuses on student supports, particularly accommodations, for assessments; although instructional accommodations are discussed, complete guidelines for using instructional accommodations are not provided. However, it is essential that all accommodations used in instruction are provided, if allowed, on assessments. Conversely, if an accommodation is to be used on an assessment it must be used regularly, and with success, in daily classroom instruction.

The five steps in this section are:

1. Expect all students to achieve grade-level academic content standards.
2. Understand student supports for instruction and assessment.
3. Select student supports for instruction and assessment of individual students.
4. Administer student supports during instruction and assessment.
5. Evaluate and improve the use of student supports.

When addressing supports for students with disabilities and ELs, the following definitions apply:

Students with disabilities are students eligible to receive services identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504. Students with a transitory impairment may also be eligible to receive services or accommodations for assessment.

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based on disability. The 504 plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. However, these students do not require specialized instruction.

Definition of an English Learner as noted in 4 AAC 34.090(a)

(2) “English Learner” means an individual

(A) who is between 3 and 21 years old;

(B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;

(C) who falls into one or more of the following categories of individuals:

(i) an individual not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;

(ii) an American Indian, Alaska Native, or native resident of the outlying areas, who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or

(iii) an individual who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant;

(D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the

(i) ability to obtain an achievement level that meets standards, as described in 4 AAC 06.739, on the state assessment in English language arts, mathematics, and science under 4 AAC 06.737;

(ii) ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

(iii) opportunity to participate fully in society;

The five-step process in this handbook is based on the work of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students (SCASS and ASES).

STEP 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards

Academic content standards provide educational targets outlining what students are expected 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.

All students 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. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities and education plans for students who are English learners (ELs) are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for “learning how to learn”)
3. Appropriate student supports are provided to help students access grade-level content

For students with disabilities or ELs, accommodations are provided during instruction and assessments to increase accessibility to grade-level content. To accomplish this goal:

- Every IEP, 504 and EL team member must be familiar with the Alaska English Language Arts and Math Standards adopted in 2012
- Every IEP, 504 and EL team member must know where to locate resources for the implementation of standards
- General education, special education and EL teachers must collaborate to design and implement instructional programs that meet the needs of students

Federal and state education statutes and regulations mandate that all ELs receive quality instruction for learning both English and grade-level academic content and participate in statewide assessments that measure students’ English language and academic progress. These include Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 2015 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA).

See [Appendix C](#) of this handbook for more information on regulations regarding the participation of ELs and students with disabilities in assessments.

STEP 2: Understand Student Supports for Instruction and Assessment

The Alaska Statewide Student Assessment System is built on a foundation of accessibility for all students, including students with disabilities and ELs. The validity of the assessment results depends upon all students having appropriate supports.

Universal Design

Universal design principles address policies and practices that are intended to improve access to learning and assessments for all students. They are important to the development and review of assessments in order to remove barriers that bar students with disabilities from demonstrating skills, abilities, and knowledge. When universal design techniques are employed, educators can gain a more accurate understanding of what students know and can do. Universal design is applied from the beginning of test development through the implementation of assessments. Universally designed general assessments may reduce the need for accommodations and alternate assessments; however, universal design cannot eliminate the need for accommodations and alternate assessments.

As assessments become more consistently administered on computers, accommodations and universal design considerations may change. Traditionally, we have thought of universal design as coming first, and accommodations being applied during testing. With current technology, we can build some accommodations into the design of the test itself. Some of these features may be accommodations (available to students with disabilities and ELs) and others may be ‘Universal Tools’ (available to all students). Some students with disabilities and ELs will have a need for accommodations beyond those that can be built into the computer-based test engine.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes in practices and procedures that provide equitable access to grade level content during instruction and assessment. When used in assessment, accommodations do not alter the validity of the assessment, score interpretation, reliability, or security of the assessment. Accommodations are intended to reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s disability or to reduce language barriers to access content; they do not reduce learning expectations.

Accommodations ensure that educators, as well as students and parents, have a valid measure of what students with disabilities and ELs know and can do. Accommodations use begins in the classroom. In addition, ELs and students with disabilities with IEPs or 504 plans may be provided with assessment accommodations. Accommodations must be made available to students with disabilities on an IEP or 504 Plan, students with transitory impairments, and EL students as documented in student files.

The accommodations provided to a student should generally be the same for classroom instruction and for assessments. 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 such as the AK STAR and Alaska Science assessments. For example, providing spell-check for classroom assessments may be appropriate; providing spell-check on the AK STAR English language arts assessment would change what the test items are measuring and would compromise the validity of the test.

Modifications

Modifications refer to practices that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations; they meet specific instruction and assessment needs of students and allow educators to know that measures of a student’s work are valid. While modifications may be appropriate for instruction, they are not recommended for any assessment.

Educators must read the test administration manuals that define modifications for that assessment.

Examples of modifications may include:

- Requiring a student to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages, or problems)

- Reducing assignments and assessments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems or items
- Revising assignments or 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)
- Using a student support that invalidates the intended construct
- Giving a student hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests

Accommodation	Modification (Not Allowed for Assessments)
Text-to-speech for math or science assessment	Text-to-speech for reading passages in English language arts test
Clarification of test directions	Clarification of test items

Providing modifications to students during classroom instruction and classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunities to learn critical content. Providing a student with a modification during a standardized assessment will invalidate that assessment. When a test is invalidated, the student does not receive a score, which may have consequences for school or district accountability measures.

Determining if a Student Support is a Modification or Accommodation

The IEP, 504, or EL team must determine if a student support is an appropriate accommodation for standardized assessments or if it is a modification.

The following steps will assist teams in making this determination.

1. Is the support listed the Participation Guidelines tables of allowed accommodations or in the table of annotated accommodations ([Appendix A](#))?

If it is not in either table, the IEP team or 504 team addresses the following questions.

Threshold questions:

2. Would the support help the student demonstrate proficiency by reducing the effect of the disability on the student's performance?
3. Would the student use the support in the classroom, including during regular classroom assessments?

If the answer to either 2 or 3 is no, then the support is probably not a reasonable or appropriate accommodation for the assessment.

If the answer to both is yes, then the next step is to determine whether the support is an accommodation or a modification by answering the following questions:

4. Does the support impede the measuring of the skill that is being tested? *This question is often difficult to answer, and the following questions might help:*
 - a. Would the support give the student an unfair advantage over a student who has the same proficiency level, but who is not eligible to use the support?
 - b. Does any research support the conclusion that this support does not alter the ability of the test to measure the student's skill level?
5. Would use of the support cause a breach of test security?
Before rejecting a student support for security reasons, an IEP or 504 team member or other school or district official should consult with the department. In special cases, security can be bolstered to accommodate special needs.
6. Would use of the support make it impossible to score the test?
Before rejecting a support because it changes or alters the test answer sheet, an IEP or 504 team member or other school or district official should consult with the department.

If the answer to questions 4, 5, or 6 is yes, then the support is a modification, and will result in an assessment invalidation.

If the answers to questions 4, 5, or 6 are no, then the student support is an allowable accommodation, and it may be used on assessments. This is particularly true if research supports the use of the accommodation.

Districts, schools, and IEP, 504, and EL teams may consult with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) at any time when considering new adaptations, particularly when the support is requested by a parent. In general, most IEP or 504 teams will be able to resolve issues regarding the proper use of uncommon student supports. Sometimes, however, a district might determine that the support is a modification while the parent thinks it is an accommodation. If that happens, the parent may request that the district consult with DEED before reaching its decision. DEED will issue a non-binding advisory opinion on whether the requested change is an accommodation or a modification.

If a parent requests a student support that is declined by the IEP or 504 team, the district should advise the parent of parental appeal/due process rights, including the right to administrative complaint or mediation. If possible, the district should provide notice to the parent in a timely manner, enabling the parent to appeal the decision before the test.

STEP 3: Select and Document Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment

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, English language proficiency and/or present level of academic achievement and functional performance in relation to local and state academic standards. To ensure students with disabilities and ELs are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every IEP or EL team member must be knowledgeable about the state and district academic content standards and assessments.

The EL or IEP team should choose accommodations based on an individual student's needs and considering his or her instructional goals and objectives. See [Appendix A](#) for the Table of Annotated Accommodations.

Not all instructional accommodations are appropriate for assessments; some may be un-allowed on standardized assessments. For example, the use of a calculator as an instructional tool may be appropriate as an accommodation for some students. However, this is not allowed for use on all portions of the AK STAR mathematics assessment. It is important to plan time for students to practice other, allowed, accommodations prior to the assessment. Research shows that an unfamiliar test accommodation given to a student with a disability may negatively impact performance. Accordingly, an IEP or 504 team should be cautious about adding an accommodation shortly before an assessment. In general, a good practice is to make sure an accommodation has been used in the student's regular or special education classes for instruction and classroom assessments for at least three months or 90 days before testing. This will ensure that the student has experience with the accommodation and that the accommodation is appropriate for the student.

Students should use an accommodation regularly and with success prior to using it on an assessment. When a student is taking assessments in a technology-based setting, be sure that the student knows how to use the accommodation when it is provided as part of the test engine.

Selecting Accommodations

Student characteristics

Selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment is the role of a student's IEP or 504 Plan team. Accommodations should be chosen based on the individual student's characteristics and the student's need for the accommodation. After considering the student's individual characteristics, the IEP or 504 Plan team should identify inclusion needs that require accommodations. When these accommodations are used according to plan, the student should be able to validly demonstrate what he or she knows and can do in instructional settings and on assessments.

Questions an IEP or 504 Plan team can ask to help identify inclusion needs and match accommodations to those needs:

- What are the student's learning strengths and areas of further improvement?
- How do the student's learning needs affect the achievement of grade-level content standards?
- What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade-level content standards?
- What accommodations will increase the student's access to instruction and assessment by addressing the student's learning needs and reducing the effect of the student's disability?
- What accommodations does the student regularly use during instruction and assessments?
- What were the results of assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used?
- What is the student's perception of how well an accommodation worked?
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations?
- What difficulties did the student experience when using accommodations?
- What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and specialists about how the accommodation worked?
- Should the student continue to use an accommodation, are changes needed, or should the use of the accommodation be discontinued?

Of the accommodations that match the student’s needs, consider:

- The student’s willingness to learn to use the accommodation
- Opportunities to learn how to use the accommodation in classroom settings
- Conditions for use on state assessments

Individual test characteristics

After considering student characteristics, it is important to look at the task students are being asked to do on the various state and district assessments. Questions to guide accommodations selection include:

- What are the characteristics of the test my student needs to take?
- Are the test tasks similar to classroom assessment tasks or does the student have the opportunity to practice similar tasks prior to testing?
- Does the student use an accommodation for a classroom task that is allowed for similar tasks on the state or district tests?
- Are there other barriers that could be removed by using an accommodation that is not already offered or used by the student?

IEP team considerations for accommodations for students with disabilities

To ensure that students with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction, every IEP team member needs to be familiar with state policies. The team should consider:

- Student characteristics and needs
- Instructional tasks expected of students to demonstrate proficiency in grade-level content in state standards
- Consistency between accommodations documented in the standards-based IEP that is used for classroom instruction and those used on assessments

Team members should ask, “Does the student really need the accommodation?” A student may not be receiving an accommodation he or she really needs or may be receiving too many. Research indicates that more is not necessarily better, and that providing students with accommodations that are not truly needed may have a negative impact on performance. The better approach is to focus on a student’s identified needs within the general education curriculum.

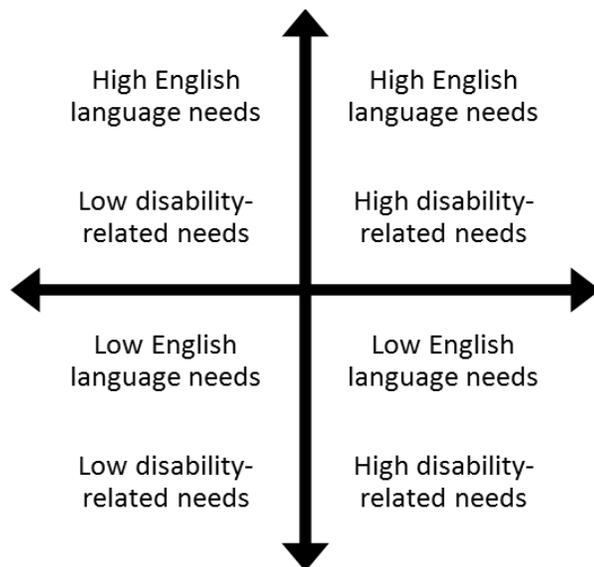
EL team considerations for instructional accommodations

It is recommended that schools develop a plan for each EL student to facilitate access to grade-level instruction using a team approach. School staff should make every effort to involve parents and the student (when appropriate) in the development and review of the plan. Here are some considerations when developing a plan:

- Student demographic information
- EL student identification
- Student level of academic achievement on summative and formative assessments
- Student instructional program
- Teacher Observation Checklist

EL and IEP team considerations for instructional accommodations for ELs with disabilities

To ensure that ELs with disabilities are engaged in standards-based instruction, the EL/IEP or EL/504 Plan Team members should consider the intensity of language- and disability-related needs of each student (Figure 1). Accommodation decisions should be individualized based on the particular language- and disability-related challenges faced by ELs with disabilities. Students with high English language needs and low disability-related needs will require more language-based accommodations while their counterparts with high disability-related needs and low English language needs will require more accommodations that remove disability-related barriers. At the same time, students with high English language needs and high disability-related needs will benefit from more intensive language- and disability-related accommodations while students with low English language needs and low disability-related needs will require fewer accommodations that alleviate linguistic and disability-related instructional challenges. *Figure 1. English language-and disability-related needs affecting accommodation decisions*



This approach of accounting for varying English language- and disability-related needs for ELs with disabilities was developed to reinforce the idea that students in each of the four sections will require different instructional support. Moreover, variability within each section should be taken into account and students’ individualized needs should be addressed on an individual basis. This approach also aims to reiterate that educators should fully account for the complexity of both language and disability implications during the instruction and assessment of ELs with disabilities.

Documenting Accommodations

Documenting accommodations on IEPs for students with disabilities

Determining appropriate accommodations is part of the IEP process. The student’s Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) is a federal requirement under 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)]. This document is helpful in determining appropriate accommodations.

Depending on 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 nondisabled 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 districtwide assessments.

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 Section 504 students 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. [29 U.S.C. Sec. 794]

Examples of students who may receive assessment accommodations based on their 504 accommodations plan include students with the following conditions:

- Allergies or asthma
- Attention difficulties
- Communicable diseases (e.g., hepatitis)
- Drug or alcohol addictions (as long as the student is not currently using illegal drugs)
- Environmental illnesses
- Temporary disabilities from accidents which may require short-term hospitalization or homebound recovery

Documentation of accommodations should be recorded in the “Section 504 Accommodation Plan Development” part of the 504 Plan.

Documenting accommodations on a student’s EL plan

The EL team must document all instructional and assessment accommodations the student is to receive on the student’s EL file or plan. It is recommended that accommodations be transferred to an individual and/or group tracking form, such as the EL Tool 2 found in [Appendix B](#) of this handbook. Refer to Form 05-22-028

Accommodations for Students Identified as English Learners Documentation Form located on the [DEED Forms page](#) (education.alaska.gov/forms) or in [Appendix C](#) of this handbook for details on accommodations for ELs.

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. 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 that students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach adolescence and the desire for independence increases. Students need opportunities to learn which accommodations are most helpful for them, and how to make certain those accommodations are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school.

IEP teams must also consider long-term student goals. For example, as students with disabilities begin to make postsecondary choices, these may factor into the nature of accommodation choices and availabilities open to them. The IEP team may want to discuss whether or how this affects decisions about accommodations for assessments.

STEP 4: Administer Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment

Planning for Accommodations During Instruction

It is essential for educators who work with students who use accommodations to periodically plan together. This ensures that core instruction and additional interventions are aligned, and accommodations are chosen based on student need and evaluated for success.

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments.

As states move to providing assessments on technology-based platforms, IEP teams must take care to ensure that students have opportunities to become familiar with the technological aspects of the assessment process. In addition to taking practice tests using the same testing platform, it is also important for educators to provide opportunities for all students to use technology for learning.

Planning for Accommodations During Assessment

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 addressed. Members of the IEP team, most often special education teachers, are given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating, and providing assessment accommodations for students who may need them. It is essential for IEP team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accommodations. The building test coordinator, under the direction of the district test coordinator, works with individual teachers or teams to plan for accommodations on test days. All test administrators must be fully trained on the appropriate use of the accommodations allowed for the students in their testing session(s).

Accommodations that are uncommon, have not been used before, and/or are not included in the DEED-provided tables, should be approved by the district test coordinator (or designee) prior to use in standardized assessment. If the district test coordinator needs assistance determining if the accommodation is appropriate for the student and/or assessment, please contact the DEED Assessments Administrator.

Prior to the day of a test, be certain test administrators know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. Test administrators providing accommodations such as scribing student responses must adhere to specific guidelines so that student scores are valid. The test administration and accessibility manuals for each assessment will provide specific guidance on proper administration of accommodations.

Current designs of technology-based testing platforms may allow for accommodations to be provided on the testing platform itself. Through the process of creating a student profile, an IEP team may be able to program the test to provide certain accommodations, like colored backgrounds, text-to-speech, and sign interpretation. Providing these accommodations through the testing platform can guarantee that the provision of accommodations is standardized from student to student and district to district. However, it is important to monitor the provision of accommodations on test day to ensure that accommodations are delivered and the technology is working.

Administering Assessments and Accommodations

State statutes and regulations specify practices to ensure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. All staff involved in test administration must read, be trained on, and follow these policies: standardization, ethical testing practices, and test security.

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 reliable 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.

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.** Unethical practices

include, but are not limited to, allowing a student to answer fewer questions, changing the content by paraphrasing, or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses, or giving clues in any way. All unethical practices are subject to investigation and adjudication by the Professional Teaching Practices Commission [[4 AAC 06.765](#)(e)].

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers; it is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. In order to ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone, and return all materials as instructed.

The following test security regulations apply to all required assessments in the Alaska Statewide Student Assessment System ([4 AAC 06.710](#)):

1. [4 AAC 06.761. Test administration](#)
 - (a) Unless an assessment is specifically exempted, or the department has approved in writing a different process, a district shall administer the statewide assessments described in [4 AAC 06.710](#) in conformance with the requirements of this section.
 - (b) A district shall administer an assessment under this section only in a school test center designated by each district. Each school test center must be secure, free of disruptions, have an established seating arrangement, and be well lighted. Only designated district staff may be in the test center rooms at the time of testing students.
 - (c) Each district shall designate an employee of the district as the district test coordinator. In districts with two or more school test centers, the district shall designate an on-site building test coordinator for each center. The district test coordinator or building test coordinator shall assign as many test administrators to each school test center as necessary to ensure adequate supervision or monitoring of students taking the assessment. Each test coordinator, building test coordinator, and test administrator must execute an agreement, on a form provided by the department, affirming that the test procedures of the department and test publisher will be followed.
2. [4 AAC 06.765. Test security; consequences of breach](#)
 - (a) All test questions on standards-based tests provided for in 4 AAC 06.737, the alternate assessment taken under 4 AAC 06.775, and the English language proficiency assessments provided for in 4 AAC 34.055 are confidential and may be disclosed only as provided in this section.
 - (b) Test questions may be disclosed to
 - 1) a student on the date and at the time specified by the commissioner, to the extent necessary to administer the test
 - 2) testing personnel in the course of fulfilling their duties
 - 3) a department official as required for the performance of that official's duties; and
 - 4) a test administrator if necessary to fulfill duties under [4 AAC 06.775](#) regarding the delivery of accommodations.
 - (c) School and district personnel responsible for test administration shall
 - 1) inventory and track secure materials from the time the materials arrive at the school or district office until the time the materials are returned to the test publisher;
 - 2) securely store secure materials before distribution to school test centers and after their return;
 - 3) control distribution of tests to and from school test centers;
 - 4) control the storage, distribution, administration, and collection of secure materials;
 - 5) ensure that no test or test question is copied in any manner, whether on paper or by electronic means.
 - (d) School personnel at a school test center shall
 - 1) label the tests according to test administration directions before testing;
 - 2) inventory and track test materials from the time the materials arrive at the school until the time the materials are returned to the district;
 - 3) securely store tests before and after each testing session;
 - 4) control distribution of tests within the school test center;

- 5) ensure that no test or test question is copied, reproduced, or paraphrased in any manner by an examinee or anyone else;
 - 6) ensure that examinees use only those reference materials allowed by the test publisher's testing procedures;
 - 7) ensure that no individual receives a copy of the test, or learns of a specific test question or item, before the test date and time set by the commissioner under 4 AAC 06.765(b), unless knowledge of the question or item is necessary for delivery of accommodations under [4 AAC 06.775](#);
 - 8) ensure that examinees do not exchange information during a test, except when the test procedure so specifies;
 - 9) ensure that an examinee's answer is not altered after testing is completed;
 - 10) ensure that no examinee is assisted in responding to or review of specific test questions or items before, during, or after a test session.
- (e) A teacher holding a certificate issued under [4 AAC 12](#) who breaches security as described in this section is subject to investigation and adjudication by the Professional Teaching Practices Commission.
- (f) School and district personnel responsible for test administration shall
- 1) annually execute an agreement, on a form provided by the department, affirming that they will follow the test procedures required under this section;
 - 2) provide training in test procedures to all district staff involved in testing as directed by the department, and ensure that staff complete the training;
 - 3) ensure that all district staff involved in testing read and follow all testing procedures and manuals published by the test publisher, unless instructed otherwise by the department.
- (g) All school and district personnel shall maintain the security and confidentiality of electronic test data files, individual student reports, and other testing reports designated as secure.
- (h) District personnel in charge of testing shall immediately report any breach of test security to the department. If a student's IEP requires a modification that violates test security under this section, the modification will be provided only if it does not affect test security for any students other than the student who requires the modification. A modification that violates test security under this section results in an invalid assessment and the assessment will not be scored.

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 Alaska's testing policies. School personnel report irregularities and breaches to the district test coordinator. District test coordinators report to DEED. If an investigation is warranted, it is the responsibility of the district test coordinator to gather required evidence and submit it to DEED.

STEP 5: Evaluate and Improve Accommodations Use

Accommodations must be selected on the basis of the individual student's needs and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment. Collecting and analyzing data on the use and effectiveness of accommodations is necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students in state and district assessments. Data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may reveal questionable patterns of accommodations use, as well as support the continued use of some accommodations or the rethinking of others.

Examination of the data may also indicate areas in which the educators serving the students need additional training and support. 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. Data may include:

- Observations conducted during test administration
- Interviews with test administrators
- Talking with students after testing sessions (helpful to guide the formative evaluation process at both the school and student levels)

Accommodation information can be analyzed in different ways. Questions to guide data analysis at the district, school, and student levels, include:

- How many students are receiving accommodations?
- What types of accommodations are provided, and are some used more than others?
- Are students receiving accommodations as documented in their IEPs and 504 plans?
- How often are they used in instruction?
- Are there procedures in place to ensure that test administrators adhere to directions for the implementation of accommodations in assessments?
- Are there procedures in place to ensure test administration procedures are not compromised with the provision of accommodations?
- What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation worked?
- What are the perceptions of teachers and others about how the accommodation appears to be working?
- What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations (and for which accommodations)?
- How often do students refuse an accommodation during testing?
 - Is there a pattern in the age of the student and/or the type of accommodation?
- 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 using accommodations that were not effective?

The IEP and/or EL team, and administrators at the school and district level (e.g., principal, special education director) should be involved in collecting and analyzing this information. It is critical to stress that evaluation of accommodations use is not the responsibility of just one individual. After the information is analyzed, the team can make adjustments in the systems in place for training students and staff and for improved implementation of accommodations.

SECTION II

Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR)

AK STAR is designed to measure a student's understanding of the skills and concepts outlined in Alaska's standards. The *Alaska English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards* are specific rigorous expectations for growth in students' skills across grades.

The Alaska English Language Arts (ELA) standards demonstrate the expectation that students' skills will build across grades in reading and analyzing a variety of complex texts, writing with clarity for different purposes, and presenting and evaluating ideas and evidence. The ELA standards are designed to help students develop a logical progression of fluency, analysis, and application, moving toward college and career readiness.

The Alaska mathematics standards have the expectation that students' skills will grow across grades in mathematics content as well as mathematical practices. The mathematics standards are designed to help students develop a logical progression of mathematical fluency, conceptual understanding, and real-world application.

For more information about AK STAR visit the [AK STAR webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar).

For more information about the design, structure, and administration of the AK STAR, please refer to the following websites and manuals:

- [DEED Assessments Homepage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments) (education.alaska.gov/assessments)
- AK STAR Test Coordinator's Manual (specific to year of administration and available on the [AK STAR Test Administration webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration))
- AK STAR Test Administration Directions (specific to year of administration and available on the [AK STAR Test Administration webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration))

The AK STAR assessment is delivered to most students via a computer-based system called the NWEA State Solutions Secure Browser. The secure browser has embedded tools designed to improve students' ability to provide the evidence needed to show mastery of the standards. Embedded tools and accommodations are those that are provided within the test engine. For example, a highlighter tool or a line guide. Non-embedded tools and accommodations are also available to students. Non-embedded tools and accommodations are those that are outside of the technology. For example, graph paper or special seating. The test administrator provides non-embedded tools and accommodations to students. Test Administrators also provide all tools and accommodations to students who take paper-based assessments.

There are two categories of student supports for the AK STAR assessment: Universal Tools and accommodations. All educators should be familiar with all the supports available to ensure that students learn how to use them and practice using them prior to the spring summative assessment.

Universal Tools for the AK STAR Assessments

Universal Tools are supports or preferences that are available to all students taking the paper-based or computer-based AK STAR assessments. Universal Tools are available at all times, and their use is based on student choice, need, and preference. These tools do not alter the test “construct” (what the test is measuring) or change the reliability or validity of the assessment results. Universal Tools do not change score interpretation. Universal Tools for the computer-based assessment do not need to be activated or added to the student’s record; they are automatically available to the student. Universal Tools for the paper-based assessment are provided by the test administrator.

Universal Tools

Available to all students. Embedded within the testing system and/or provided by test administrator. For additional test administration resources on universal tools, refer to the *Test Administration Directions* located on the [AK STAR Test Administration webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar/test-administration).

Universal Tools embedded within the computer-based assessment

UNIVERSAL TOOL	DESCRIPTION OR USE
Calculators	Student has access to basic, scientific, or graphing calculator, depending on grade level and test. See <i>Test Administration Directions</i> and <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i> for specific information.
Clear	Removes all marks you have made to the test question.
Color	Changes the background color behind text, graphics, and response areas.
Eliminator	The Answer Eliminator is used as a test-taking strategy to cross out answer choices with the response still visible.
Formulas Table	Shows mathematic formulas relevant to the assessment. Available for students in grades 5-9. Mathematics formula tables are available within the computer-based or can be printed and provided to students. All formula tables are available on the AK STAR Test Administration webpage .
Glossary	Certain words or phrases in the item are underlined with dots and information about that word or phrase will pop-up when selected. These words and phrases are part of the assessment content and do not provide extra context towards the answer.
Guideline	A straight edge line used to follow along with each line of text or to help student track items.
Highlighter	Student may use a highlighter to mark important words or numbers.
Magnification	Magnify up to 3x the text or images on student screen for better viewing.
UNIVERSAL TOOL	DESCRIPTION OR USE

Masking	Masking portions of the test to direct attention to uncovered items.
Notepad	Student can use Notepad to take notes on each test question.
Pencil / Drawing Tool	Students can use Pencil to make marks on the screen.
Protractor	Students can use a protractor to measure angles in an item.
Ruler	Student can use Customary Ruler and Metric Ruler to measure images on the screen.
Sticky Notes	Creates and places a note (or multiple notes) on the screen in which a student can type a short message. Up to 15 notes can be placed on the screen.

Non-embedded Universal Tools (provided by test administrator):

UNIVERSAL TOOL	DESCRIPTION OR USE
Headphones	Student may wear noise blocking headphones to screen out extraneous sounds. This does not include music devices.
Scratch/Graph paper	Scratch or graph paper must be securely destroyed after assessment session.

Calculator Availability on the AK STAR Mathematics Assessment

The following text is from the [Alaska Statewide Summative Assessment Calculator Policy](#).

Students taking the computer-based assessments have access to a calculator appropriate for the grade level and content within the test platform. Students taking the computer-based assessments cannot use handheld calculators in lieu of the calculators within the test engine; only the calculators embedded within the test engine are allowed during the computer-based assessments. The specific type of calculator depends on grade level, as shown in the tables below.

Mathematics

The Alaska Mathematics standards were developed with a strong focus on building foundational skills and fluency in arithmetic, specifically in kindergarten through grade 5. Arithmetic is a foundational skill that requires fluency as well as the building of conceptual understanding, which is a precursor for algebraic concepts. The standards were developed to help students gain a deeper understanding of mathematics and to use a variety of strategies to come to mathematical solutions. The mathematics standards focus on the students' ability to demonstrate fluency, calculators are NOT allowed for grades 3, 4, and 5 on the AK STAR mathematics assessment *even if the student has an accommodation to use a calculator on other assessments or in their daily work*.

Calculators are allowed in the second section of the mathematics assessment in grades 6 through 8. Calculators are allowed for both parts of the mathematics assessment in grade 9.

The specific type of calculator depends on grade level, as shown in the table below. Calculator and non-calculator items are separated by parts of the test to prevent students from using the tool inappropriately. Use of a calculator during a part of the assessment where calculators are not allowed will result in an invalidation.

Calculator Use by Grade Level for the AK STAR Mathematics Assessments

Grades	Scientific	Graphing
Grades 3, 4, and 5	Not available	Not available
Grades 6-8 (part 2 only)	Available	Not available
Grade 9 (all parts)	Available	Available

Guidance for Handheld Calculator Accommodation or Print-on-Demand (POD) Accommodation

Students who require a paper-based assessment as an accommodation will be accommodated using the print-on-demand (POD) format. This accommodation allows paper copies of the test to be printed locally and provided to the student. Students who use the POD format for the mathematics or science assessments must be provided with a handheld calculator, the type of which depends on the student's grade level and content area, see the table below. Students who have the documented accommodation to use a handheld calculator instead of the calculator embedded in the test engine will be provided the appropriate calculator following the table below.

Remember, only students who have the documented accommodation of a handheld calculator are allowed to use handheld calculators when taking computer-based assessments.

Handheld Calculator Use by Grade Level for the AK STAR Mathematics Assessments

Grades	Calculator to provide
Grades 3, 4, and 5	None
Grades 6, 7, and 8 (part 2 only)	Scientific
Grade 9 (all parts)	Graphing

Accommodations for the AK STAR Assessments

Accommodations are practices and procedures that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments to students with disabilities and ELs. Accommodations do not alter the validity of the assessment, score interpretation, reliability, or security of the assessment. Accommodations must be made available to students with disabilities with an IEP or 504 plan, students with transitory impairments, and ELs, as documented in student plans.

If an adaptation not listed below is being considered for a student, follow the guidance in the section [“Determining if an Adaptation is a Modification or Accommodation”](#) of this handbook to determine if the adaptation would be allowed as an accommodation. The table below provides a non-exhaustive list of allowable accommodations for students with disabilities, as documented in a student’s IEP or 504 Plan. Accommodations may be embedded within the testing system and/or provided by the test administrator.

Embedded Accommodations for AK STAR

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
American Sign Language videos	Students may play a signed video of the text in questions and answer choices. Reading passages will not be signed to the student.
Print on Demand (POD)	If a student requires a paper-based assessment as an accommodation, districts may use the Print on Demand (POD) accommodation to print a paper copy of the assessment. Student answers must be transcribed by the test administrator into the test engine when student is finished.
Text-to-Speech (TTS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Answer choices • Directions 	Allows students to start, stop or replay computer audio of the text associated with some of the content on the screen. TTS does NOT read the passages associated with the ELA reading items. See the Text-to-Speech Guidance section in this Handbook for more information.

Text-to-Speech (TTS) Guidance

A student who needs a TTS accommodation is one whose ability to convey knowledge of the subject/content area is **severely limited by his/her inability to read the assessment materials**. The student cannot or would not be successful in the classroom without the read-aloud accommodation. To use the TTS accommodation on the state assessment, **the student must have the read-aloud accommodation provided in the classroom on a regular basis** (i.e., as an on-going practice for both classroom instruction and classroom assessments/tests). Neither English learners nor students who receive Title I or special education services automatically qualify for the TTS accommodation.

It is the local district’s responsibility to quantify on a “regular” basis for classroom instruction and assessments/tests.

TTS is available for the AK STAR assessments as an accommodation for students with disabilities or ELs as documented in the student’s plan. TTS allows students to start, stop, or replay computer audio of the text associated with some of the content on the screen. The TTS does not read the passages associated with the items. This accommodation requires activation in the AK STAR Administration Portal for an individual student.

Non-Embedded Accommodations for AK STAR

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Adaptive devices, equipment, and furniture	Some adaptive devices may require individual assessment administration as well as a scribe to type responses verbatim into the test engine. Transcription procedures are detailed in the AK STAR Test Administration Directions available on the AK STAR Test Administration webpage.
Additional time	Student may take additional time to complete assessments as needed beyond the time typically scheduled for all students.
Alternative responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • oral response • signing • pointing • recorded response • use of a word processor 	A scribe may type responses verbatim into the test engine for the student. For use of a word processor, other programs on the computer must be disabled and spelling, grammar check, and other features turned off.
Auditory amplification device	Assistive listening devices help amplify sounds, especially with background noise.
Braille	Students may require Braille version of the paper-based assessment. Available in Unified English Braille (UEB) and Nemeth for the math assessment items.
Clarification of test directions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student requests clarification • student restates directions 	A test administrator may provide clarification of assessment directions. This does not apply to assessment questions or answer choices. A separate location for testing is recommended if the accommodation may be disruptive to others.
Flexible scheduling	Students may split a test “part” over multiple days.

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Frequent breaks	Students may take breaks as needed.
Graphic organizers	Student can be provided with a blank (no text) graphic organizer template such as a flow chart or story web.
Handheld Calculator	As a documented accommodation, students may use a handheld calculator instead of the calculator provided within the test engine. Handheld calculators may only be used on portions of the test where calculators are allowed.
Human read aloud	A test administrator reads aloud the English language arts, mathematics, and science assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Answer choices Reading of reading passages is not allowed. The human read aloud accommodation requires individual assessment administration.
Individual administration	Students may have the test administered individually in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.
Large Print	If the Magnification feature is not sufficient, students may need large print. District may print student test using Print on Demand (POD) accommodation and have the student use an external magnification device. Enlarged copies are not recommended.
Math manipulatives	Student use of physical objects for math items. Multiplication tables and number lines may be used on select sections of the math content assessment where calculators are allowed. See <i>Test Administration Directions</i> and the <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i> . For some examples of allowable math manipulatives, refer to Appendix A of this handbook.
Re-reading, test directions, if requested.	In individual or small-group assessment administrations, a test administrator may re-read test directions, if asked by the student.
Signing to student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • test directions • math items • ELA questions & answer choices 	Interpreters must read and sign a Test Security Agreement and may not provide additional information to student, such as drawing pictures. Reading passages may not be signed to the student. This invalidates the assessment. This accommodation requires individual assessment administration.
Small group administration	Students may have the test administered in a small group in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.
Specific test administrator	For students who need a familiar test administrator.

SECTION III

Alaska Science Assessment

The Alaska Science Assessments is designed to measure a student’s understanding of the skills and concepts outlined in Alaska’s science standards. The *K-12 Science Standards for Alaska* are specific rigorous expectations for growth in students’ skills across grades.

For more information about the Alaska Science Assessment, visit the [Alaska Science Assessment webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/science) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/science).

For more information about the design, structure, and administration of the Alaska Science Assessments, please refer to the following manuals:

- Alaska Science Assessment Test Coordinator’s Manual (specific to year of administration and available on the [Alaska Science Assessment Test Administration webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/science/test-administration) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/science/test-administration))
- Alaska Science Assessment Test Administration Directions (specific to year of administration and available on the [Alaska Science Assessment webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/science) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/science))

The Alaska Science Assessment is delivered to most students via a computer-based system called DRC INSIGHT. The test engine has embedded tools designed to improve students’ ability to provide the evidence needed to show mastery of the standards. Embedded tools and accommodations are those that are provided within the test engine. For example, a highlighter tool or a line guide. Non-embedded tools and accommodations are also available to students. Non-embedded tools and accommodations are those that are outside of the technology. For example, graph paper or special seating. The test administrator provides non-embedded tools and accommodations to students. Test Administrators also provide all tools and accommodations to students who take paper-based assessments.

There are two categories of student supports for the Alaska Science Assessment: Universal Tools and accommodations. All educators should be familiar with all the supports available to ensure that students learn how to use them and practice using them prior to the spring summative assessment.

Universal Tools for the Alaska Science Assessment

Universal Tools are supports or preferences that are available to all students taking the Alaska Science Assessment. Universal Tools are available at all times, and their use is based on student choice, need, and preference. These tools do not alter the test “construct” (what the test is measuring) or change the reliability or validity of the assessment results. Universal Tools do not change score interpretation. Universal Tools for the computer-based assessment do not need to be activated or added to the student’s record; they are automatically available to the student.

Embedded Universal Tools

Available to all students. Embedded within the testing system and/or provided by test administrator. For additional test administration resources on universal tools, refer to the *Test Administration Directions* located on the [Alaska Science Test Administration webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/science/test-administration) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/science/test-administration).

UNIVERSAL TOOL	DESCRIPTION OR USE
Calculators	Available only on select sections on the math content assessment. See <i>Test Administration Directions</i> and <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i> for specific information.
Color Overlay	Changes the background color behind text, graphics, and response areas.
Color Contrast / Reverse Contrast	Student may choose from options to changes background color and text.
Cross-off	Student may cross out/eliminate a multiple-choice answer selection(s).
Highlighter	Student may use a highlighter to highlight desired assessment questions or selections.
Line Guide / Place Markers	A straight edge line used to follow along with each line of text or to help student track items.
Magnification	Magnify text or images for better viewing.
Masking	Masking portions of the test to direct attention to uncovered items.

Non-embedded Universal Tools (provided by test administrator):

UNIVERSAL TOOL	DESCRIPTION OR USE
Headphones	Student may wear noise blocking headphones to screen out extraneous sounds. This does not include music devices.
Scratch/Graph paper	Scratch or graph paper must be securely destroyed after assessment session.

Calculator Availability on the Alaska Science Assessment

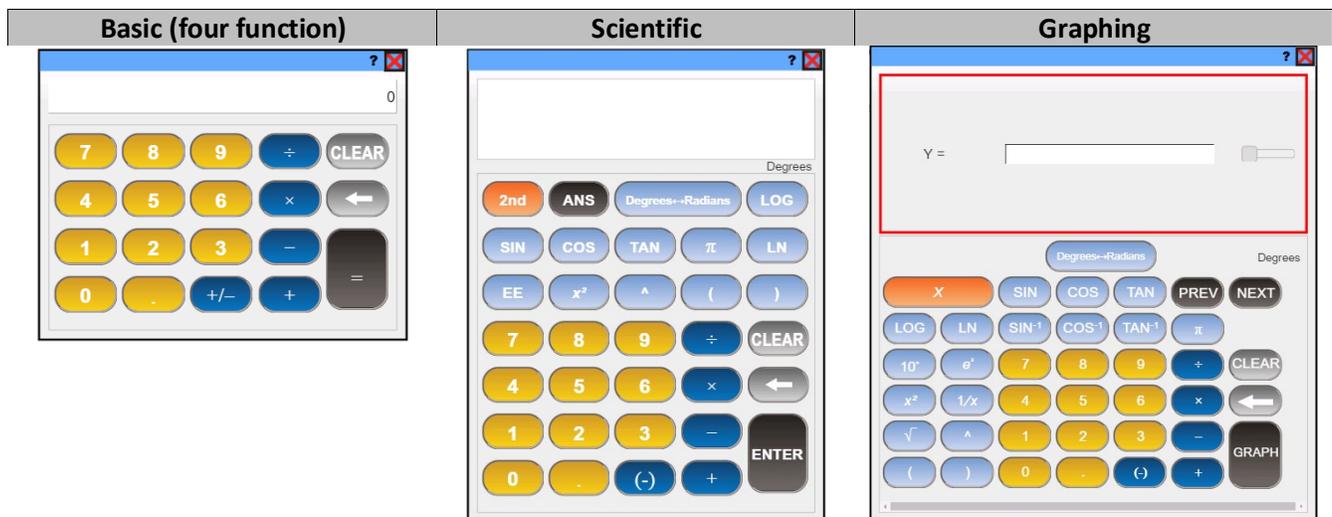
The following text is from the [Alaska Statewide Summative Assessment Calculator Policy](#).

Students taking the computer-based assessments have access to a calculator appropriate for the grade level and content within the test platform. Students taking the computer-based assessments cannot use handheld calculators in lieu of the calculators within the test engine; only the calculators embedded within the test engine are allowed during the computer-based assessments. The specific type of calculator depends on grade level, as shown in the tables below.

Science

According to the K-12 Science Standards for Alaska, adopted in 2019, students are expected to use mathematics to represent physical variables and their relationships, and to make quantitative predictions. Mathematics is a tool that is key to understanding science and classroom instruction should enhance all of science through the use of quality mathematical and computational thinking. Therefore, specific types of calculators are allowable on the Alaska Science Assessment according to the grade level chart below.

GRADES	BASIC(FOUR FUNCTION)	SCIENTIFIC	GRAPHING
Grade 5 (all parts)	Available	Not available	Not available
Grade 8 (all parts)	Available	Not available	Not available
Grade 10 (all parts)	Available	Available	Available



Guidance for Handheld Calculator Accommodation or Print-on-Demand (POD) Accommodation

Students who require a paper-based assessment as an accommodation will be accommodated using the print-on-demand (POD) format. This accommodation allows paper copies of the test to be printed locally and provided to the student. Students who use the POD format for the mathematics or science assessments must be provided with a handheld calculator, the type of which depends on the student’s grade level and content area, see the table below. Students who have the documented accommodation to use a handheld calculator instead of the calculator embedded in the test engine will be provided the appropriate calculator following the table below.

Remember, only students who have the documented accommodation of a handheld calculator are allowed to use handheld calculators when taking computer-based assessments.

Handheld Calculator Use by Grade Level for the Alaska Science Assessment

Grades	Calculator to provide
Grades 5 and 8	Basic (four-function)
Grade 10	Graphing

Accommodations for the Alaska Science Assessment

Accommodations are practices and procedures that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments to students with disabilities and ELs. Accommodations do not alter the validity of the assessment, score interpretation, reliability, or security of the assessment. Accommodations must be made available to students with disabilities with an IEP or 504 plan, students with transitory impairments, and ELs, as documented in student plans.

If an adaptation not listed below is being considered for a student, follow the guidance in the section [“Determining if an Adaptation is a Modification or Accommodation”](#) to determine if the adaptation would be allowed as an accommodation. The table below provides a non-exhaustive list of allowable accommodations for students with disabilities, as documented in a student’s IEP or 504 Plan. Accommodations may be embedded within the testing system and/or provided by the test administrator.

Embedded Accommodations for the Alaska Science Assessment

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Large Print	Students may require larger text and graphics. If the Magnification tool is not sufficient, large print materials can be ordered through the test vendor.
Print on Demand (POD)	If a student requires a paper-based assessment as an accommodation, districts may use the Print on Demand (POD) accommodation to print a paper copy of the assessment. Student answers must be transcribed by the test administrator into the test engine when student is finished.
Text-to-Speech (TTS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Answer choices • Directions 	Allows students to start, stop or replay computer audio of the text associated with some of the content on the screen. See the Text-to-Speech Guidance section in this Handbook for more information.

Text-to-Speech (TTS) Guidance

A student who needs a TTS accommodation is one whose ability to convey knowledge of the subject/content area is **severely limited by his/her inability to read the assessment materials**. The student cannot or would not be successful in the classroom without the read-aloud accommodation. To use the TTS accommodation on the state assessment, **the student must have the read-aloud accommodation provided in the classroom on a regular basis** (i.e., as an on-going practice for both classroom instruction and classroom assessments/tests). Neither English learners nor students who receive Title I or special education services automatically qualify for the TTS accommodation.

It is the local district’s responsibility to quantify on a “regular” basis for classroom instruction and assessments/tests.

TTS is available for the Alaska Science Assessment as an accommodation for students with disabilities or ELs as documented in the student’s plan. TTS allows students to start, stop, or replay computer audio of the text associated with some of the content on the screen. The TTS does not read the passages associated with the items. This accommodation requires activation in the DRC INSIGHT Portal for an individual student.

Non-Embedded Accommodations for the Alaska Science Assessment

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Adaptive devices, equipment, and furniture	Some adaptive devices may require individual test administration as well as a scribe to type responses verbatim into the test engine. Scribe procedures are detailed in Appendix C of this Handbook.
Additional time	Student may take additional time to complete assessments as needed beyond the time typically scheduled for all students.
Allowing alternative responses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • oral response • signing • pointing • recorded response • use of a word processor 	A scribe may type responses verbatim into the test engine for the student. For use of a word processor, other programs on the computer must be disabled and spelling, grammar check, and other features turned off. Scribe procedures are detailed in Appendix C of this Handbook.
Auditory amplification device	Assistive listening devices help amplify sounds, especially with background noise.
Braille	Students may require braille version of the paper-based assessment. Available in Unified English Braille (UEB). Braille materials must be ordered from the test vendor and require transcription into the test engine following student assessment. Transcription procedures can be found in the <i>Test Administration Directions</i> available on the Alaska Science Test Administration webpage.
Clarification of test directions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student requests clarification • student restates directions 	A test administrator may provide clarification of assessment directions. This does not apply to assessment questions or answer choices. A separate location for testing is recommended if the accommodation may be disruptive to others.
Flexible scheduling	Students may split a test “part” over multiple days.
Frequent breaks	Students may take breaks as needed.
Graphic organizers	Student can be provided with a blank (no text) graphic organizer template such as a flow chart or story web.

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Handheld Calculator	<p>As a documented accommodation, students may use a handheld calculator instead of the calculator provided within the test engine.</p> <p>Handheld calculators may only be used on portions of the test where calculators are allowed.</p>
Human read aloud	<p>A test administrator reads aloud the assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Answer choices <p>The human read aloud accommodation requires individual assessment administration.</p>
Individual administration	<p>Students may have the test administered individually in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.</p>
Large Print	<p>Students may require larger text and graphics. If the magnification tool is not sufficient, large print materials can be ordered through the test vendor.</p>
Re-reading test directions, if requested.	<p>In individual or small-group assessment administrations, a test administrator may re-read test directions, if asked by the student.</p>
Signing to student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • test directions • science items 	<p>Interpreters must read and sign a Test Security Agreement and may not provide additional information to student, such as drawing pictures.</p> <p>This accommodation requires individual assessment administration.</p>
Small group administration	<p>Students may have the test administered in a small group in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.</p>
Specific test administrator	<p>For students who need a familiar test administrator.</p>

SECTION IV Accommodations for English Learners

All students identified as English learners (ELs) must participate in statewide academic assessments. Only **currently identified ELs may receive EL accommodations**. The EL accommodations listed below are the only allowed accommodations for ELs for the AK STAR and Alaska Science assessments.

Teams of people (teachers, administrators, etc.) who know the educational needs of the EL should make decisions concerning appropriate EL accommodations to be used during statewide content assessments. Teams should include, when available, a teacher or administrator who has specialized training or experience with the instruction of English learners. With a close link between assessment and instruction, the accommodations provided for the assessment should reflect those provided in classroom instruction and assessment. Research shows ELs gain in language acquisition yearly; therefore, accommodations should be reviewed accordingly to reflect growth. Once a decision is made, it is essential to document the accommodations in the student’s file [[4 AAC 06.776\(b\)](#)]. A sample documentation form for EL accommodations is available on the [DEED forms webpage](#) (education.alaska.gov/forms).

Refer to the tools within this handbook for guidance on selection accommodations

The accommodations listed below are the only allowable accommodations for ELs for content assessments.

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
Administering the assessment individually or in a small group in a separate location	Students who need additional assistance that may be disruptive to others must take the assessment in a separate location.
Clarification of test directions in English or the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student requests clarification • student restates directions 	Clarification should not provide additional directions or examples.
Human Read Aloud	<p>A test administrator reads aloud the English language arts, mathematics, and science assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions • Answer choices <p>Reading of reading passages is not allowed.</p> <p>The human read aloud accommodation requires individual assessment administration.</p>
Text-to-Speech (TTS) for English language arts (ELA), math, and science	<p>Allows students to start, stop, or replay computer audio of the test associated with the content on the screen for all content areas.</p> <p>Text-to-Speech does NOT read the passages associated with ELA reading items.</p>
Use of a specific test administrator	For students who need a familiar test administrator.

Accommodation	Accommodation Description or Use
In English or the native language provide written version of written/oral assessment directions	Written version of assessment directions must be verbatim of what is provided in the scripts in the <i>Test Administration Directions</i> . Copies of written assessment directions can be obtained by contacting the DEED Assessments Team.
Read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions in English or the native language	Translation should be an exact translation, as much as possible; additional clarifying ideas or examples are not allowed.
Provide a published word-to-word bilingual dictionary	Published document must provide word-for-word equivalents in English and native language that are suitable for standardized assessment. Dictionaries that include pictures or word definitions are not allowed. Electronic dictionaries are not allowed.
Provide the native-language word for an unknown word in an assessment item when requested by student	Translation should not include additional words, ideas, or examples. Not allowed for reading passages.
Allow the student to respond orally to constructed-response items in English for math or science items	Requires a scribe to transcribe verbatim into a test booklet or answer document. Not allowed for English language arts items.

Note: EL students with disabilities may be given EL-responsive accommodations as well as accommodations that are afforded all students with disabilities, according to documented student need.

SECTION V

DLM Alternate Assessment – ELA, Math, & Science

The Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment System is designed to measure the English language arts, math, and science skills and knowledge of students with significant cognitive disabilities. The assessment measures student performance on the essential elements, which are aligned to the Alaska’s standards but decreased in breadth and complexity.

DLM provides accessibility by design and is guided by the core beliefs that all students should have access to challenging, grade-level content and all educators should adhere to the highest levels of integrity in providing instruction and administering assessments based on this challenging content.

Links to materials referenced in this section:

- [DLM Accessibility Manual](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Accessibility_Manual.pdf)
(dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Accessibility_Manual.pdf)
- [DLM Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Test_Administration_Manual_YE.pdf)
(dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Test_Administration_Manual_YE.pdf)
- First Contact Survey: (See Appendix B of [DLM Test Administration Manual](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Test_Administration_Manual_YE.pdf))
- [Educator Portal User Guide](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Educator_Portal_User_Guide.pdf)
(dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/Manuals_Blueprints/Educator_Portal_User_Guide.pdf)
- [Alaska’s DLM webpage](https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/alaska) (dynamiclearningmaps.org/alaska)

Having accessible content is essential. DLM has integrated accessible content, technology and a personal learning profile to ensure that every student is successful. DLM has integrated accessible content by developing various testlet levels, attending carefully to vocabulary, identifying multiple and alternate pathways to each essential element, tagging items based on their accessibility supports, and following item-writing guidelines based on universal design.

Universal design for learning (UDL) is a scientifically valid framework for guiding education practice. It provides flexibility in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, as well as in the ways students are engaged. It reduces barriers in instruction, and provides appropriate challenges, accommodations, and supports. Universal design also maintains high achievement expectations for all students. DLM applied universal design because it is a framework that is critical to allowing students with significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge of academic content standards.

The Kite® Suite is the technology used to administer the DLM alternate assessment. It offers a special user interface that enhances the assessment experience for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The Kite® Suite enhances accessibility using information provided in Educator Portal by educators when they complete both a Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile and a First Contact (FC) survey for each student. Information from the PNP and the FC survey are combined by the system and allows the system to customize each student’s experience and determine which test form and linkage level to deliver and must be completed prior to administering the assessment.

The purpose of the FC survey is to allow the Kite® Suite to initially route the student to a first testlet that provides an appropriate balance of accessibility and challenge for the student. The test is adaptive because based on the student’s performance on the first and subsequent testlets, the DLM system will route the student to the next appropriate testlet level. The FC survey is a survey of learner characteristics and includes communication, academic skills, and attention. Detailed information about this survey is found in the *DLM Test Administration Manual (TAM)* and a list of survey questions is located in the appendix of the TAM.

The specific role of the Personal Needs and Preferences (PNP) Profile is to select the appropriate accessibility supports and supports to offer in the system, and thus to tailor each student’s experience based on individual needs. The PNP can be completed any time before testing begins. It can also be changed as a student’s needs change. Once updated, the changes appear the next time the student is logged in to the Kite® Suite.

The access supports in the PNP are listed in four categories:

- Display enhancements
- Language & braille
- Audio & environment support
- Other supports

Instructions on how to complete the PNP are located in the [Educator Portal User Guide](#). Further information on the accessibility supports is discussed below in Step 2 – Learn About the Accessibility Supports and what DLM Alternate Assessment Provides.

The following six-step process is taken from the DLM Accessibility Manual. To view the manual and this section in its entirety, please visit [Alaska’s DLM webpage](#).

Six-Step Process to Customize DLM Accessibility Supports for Students

This section presents a six-step process for IEP teams, general and special education educators, test administrators, and district-level assessment staff to use in the selection, administration, and evaluation of the accessibility supports used in Student Portal by students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Step 1: Include Eligible Students in the DLM Alternate Assessment

Step 2: Learn About the Accessibility Supports and what DLM Alternate Assessment Provides

Step 3: Discuss and Select Appropriate Supports: Considerations for IEP teams

Step 4: Selecting and Viewing Supports in the KITE system

Step 5: Prepare for the Assessment: Using the Chosen Accessibility Supports

Step 6: Evaluate the Accessibility Supports Used After the Assessment

SECTION VI

English Language Proficiency Assessments: ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS

Links to materials referenced in this section:

- [WIDA ACCESS for ELLs & Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Assessment](https://wida.wisc.edu/assess) (wida.wisc.edu/assess)
- [WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement](https://wida.wisc.edu/resources/accessibility-and-accommodations-supplement) (wida.wisc.edu/resources/accessibility-and-accommodations-supplement)
- [Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition](#)
- [WIDA's website](https://wida.wisc.edu) (wida.wisc.edu)
- [WIDA Alternate ACCESS webpage](https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access) (wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access)

Students in kindergarten through grade 12 who are currently identified as English learners (ELs) must be assessed annually to monitor their progress in acquiring academic English. Alaska uses WIDA's ACCESS for ELLs assessment as its English language proficiency assessment. This assessment is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards. Alaska adopted the 2007 WIDA ELD Standards in 2011 ([4 AAC 04.155](#)). ACCESS for ELLs is used to assess the proficiency levels of English learners' receptive and productive skills in English in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ACCESS for ELLs focuses on the progress and proficiency levels of academic language rather than content area knowledge and skills; therefore, some accommodations that might be appropriate for the classroom or content area tests should not be used with the ELP assessment as they will invalidate the test. ACCESS for ELLs is available for grades 1-12 in online and paper-based versions. Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs is available in a paper-based version only. Assessment administration information is available on the [WIDA website](#).

The following information is an excerpt from the WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement. *To view the manual in its entirety, please visit [WIDA's website](#).*

Administrative Considerations

Individualized administration procedures give educators the flexibility they need to provide optimal testing conditions. These considerations can be extended to any test taker and, in most cases, must be facilitated by the test administrator. Critically, the administrative considerations described in this document do not change what the test measures or the way you can interpret and use scores.

For a list of allowable administration considerations, please refer to WIDA's Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement or the Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition.

Universal Tools

Universal tools are always available to all test takers. They are embedded in the online test platform as digital features. Test administrators provide physical versions of universal tools to students taking the paper-format test. Help students determine when a tool is both appropriate and useful. Tools can reinforce a student's ability to demonstrate their language skills, but only if the student is comfortable using the tool. As you prepare students for testing, help them make connections between the tools they use in the classroom and the universal tools that will be available to them during testing. Give students opportunities to practice using available tools on sample items or tasks similar to testing.

Universal tools do not need to be pre-selected for online testing in WIDA AMS, WIDA's test management platform.

For a list of the universal tools, please refer to WIDA's Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement or the Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition.

Accommodations

Accommodations on ACCESS assessments are intended only for students with disabilities as documented in an IEP or 504 Plan. Accommodations decisions are made by a student’s educational support team (IEP, 504, or Title II of the ADA). They should never be assigned unilaterally by an individual educator outside of the IEP process. In very rare cases, accommodations are assigned for students who do not have IEPs or 504 Plans. For example, an accommodation could address a short-term barrier associated with an unforeseeable circumstance, such as a student with a fractured hand who needs a scribe or a student recovering from illness or injury who needs to test in a non-school location. Check with your state department of education before assigning accommodations in these rare situations.

Accommodations are changes to test materials or testing procedures. They do not change what the test measures. Accommodations increase equitable access and help students overcome the effects of a disability. In other words, they allow students to show their knowledge, skills, and abilities without making the test easier. Accommodations do not affect validity or reliability, so they do not change how you can interpret and use scores. Select accommodations carefully. The goal is not to offer every student every possible support, but rather to offer specific accommodations as necessary to ensure students can participate in testing meaningfully and appropriately. Keep in mind that it may be appropriate to offer different accommodations for different language domain tests. Assign accommodations based on a student’s actual need as it relates to a particular domain, not simply due to the nature or type of disability.

Accommodations vary slightly on the online and paper formats of the assessments. Some students with disabilities may need accommodations presented in an alternate format. For example, some students may need to have accommodations delivered by a test administrator rather than the online test platform. Keep in mind that it may be appropriate to provide an alternative format to these students.

Consider these questions as you assign accommodations:

- Does the student use an accommodation regularly in the classroom? If not, consider carefully whether an accommodation is truly needed for testing. Accommodations should not be provided for the first time in a testing situation. Students should be given opportunities to practice the accommodation prior to the assessment.
- Does the accommodation address the student’s need? Accommodations do not reduce expectations or compensate for a lack of knowledge, skills, or prior instruction. The sole purpose of an accommodation is to ensure that a disability does not prevent a demonstration of English language proficiency. “More is better” is not the right approach. Providing unnecessary accommodations can negatively impact student performance.
- Is the accommodation appropriate for ELP testing? Some accommodations that are typically available to English learners taking a content test are not acceptable supports on an ELP assessment. Student support teams must never offer an accommodation that would invalidate the ELP assessment.

The team making accommodations decisions and planning testing for a student with documented disabilities should be multidisciplinary and collaborative. It should include individuals with expertise in second language acquisition. It is helpful to include those who understand how to differentiate between limited English proficiency and a disability. Document testing arrangements, including accommodations, in the student’s records.

All physical materials necessary for accommodation—such as braille materials, assistive technology, or manipulatives—must be identified in advance. Student support teams must work closely with test coordinators to ensure that all appropriate materials are ordered if necessary and available for testing. Support teams must work closely with test administrators to ensure that all planned accommodations are provided as intended.

For a list of the allowable accommodations, please see the Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments, 2022 Edition. For more details on the allowable accommodations, please refer to WIDA’s Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement.

Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Exclusions

The Alternate ELP assessment is an assessment of English learners (EL) for students in grades 1 -12 who are formally identified as an English learner and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in ACCESS for ELLs. An Alternate ELP assessment is not available for kindergarten. The checklist below provides criteria for student participation in the Alternate ACCESS assessment. If any response to the criteria below is No, the student must participate in ACCESS for ELLs.

Yes/No	Alternate English Language Proficiency assessment criteria
	The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is currently identified as an English Learner (EL). The student meets the eligibility criteria for special education related to the areas of, but not limited to, cognitive impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, or multiple disabilities.
	The IEP indicates that the student demonstrates deficits in adaptive behavior/skills that adversely impacts the student’s educational performance and prevents completion of the standard academic curricula. Curricular objectives written for the student are less complex, making the regular ELP assessment, even with accommodations inappropriate for the student.
	The IEP indicates that the student requires extensive, frequent, individualized instruction in multiple settings to acquire, maintain, generalize and demonstrate performance of skills, including English language skills.
	The accommodations or modifications needed by the student to participate in the regular ELP assessment would compromise the validity of the test.
	For students in test grades 3 – 8 and high school, the student is identified in the student’s IEP as eligible to take the Alaska Alternate Assessment.
	The decision to participate in the Alternate ELP assessment is not based solely on language, social, cultural, or economic differences or excessive or extended absences.
	The decision to place the student on the Alternate ELP assessment is not being made for program administration reasons, such as the student is expected to perform poorly on the regular ELP assessment; the student displays disruptive behaviors or experiences emotional duress during testing.

Alaska Policy for Administration of the Alternate ELP Assessment

It is recommended that districts designate a contact person to oversee the alternate ELP assessment and to work closely with special education staff to meet the testing needs of these students. It is recommended that the educator that the student is most familiar with be the one to administer the alternate ELP assessment. Test administrators must be certified online annually to administer this assessment. Online training is available on the [WIDA Alternate ACCESS webpage](#).

The alternate ELP assessment is designed only for current ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. The IEP team will determine if the student will take the alternate or regular ELP assessment. When making this determination, the following must be considered:

- For students in grades 3-9, student must also be taking the alternate assessment (DLM) instead of AK STAR and the Alaska Science Assessment.
- For students in grades 1, 2, 11 & 12 who do not take AK STAR or the Alaska Science Assessment, the IEP team makes the decision about the alternate ELP assessment using the checklist above.
- The alternate ELP assessment does not address Proficiency levels 4, 5, or 6, therefore, a student cannot exit EL status as ‘Proficient’ on this assessment.

SECTION VII

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national assessment of a representative sampling of America's students in grades 4, 8, and 12 conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. Only students who participate in the alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities (Dynamic Learning Maps) will be automatically excluded from any NAEP assessment. All other students with disabilities should participate in NAEP with or without NAEP allowed accommodations.

NAEP strives to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the educational progress of all students. Thus, the NAEP sample includes students who have been identified as having physical, emotional, or developmental disabilities; or who have had limited exposure to the English language. NAEP's goal is to include as many students with disabilities and/or English Learners as possible; therefore, NAEP's advice to schools is, when in doubt, include the student.

NAEP has specific accommodations for students with disabilities or who are English learners (ELs). The allowed accommodations and requirements for administration of NAEP are determined by NCES and the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) and information about them is provided to the schools prior to the NAEP assessment. NAEP accommodations for each assessment year are typically finalized in late fall prior to the assessment year.

The Department of Education & Early Development expects that most ELs will be included on the NAEP. Only ELs who have been enrolled in United States schools for less than 1 full academic year before the NAEP assessment may be excluded from any NAEP assessment. All other ELs should participate in NAEP with or without NAEP allowed accommodations.

NAEP is administered by a federally contracted assessment team that receives extensive training to ensure consistent administration across the nation. School personnel may be asked to assist with some accommodations, such as signing questions for students.

School personnel with the best knowledge of the student's accommodation needs should use the guidance provided by NAEP to decide if the student should be included in the NAEP assessment and the accommodations needed.

The information regarding accommodations for NAEP can be found on the [DEED NAEP webpage](https://education.alaska.gov/assessments/naep) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/naep). If you have questions about the NAEP accommodations, please contact the Alaska NAEP State Coordinator at 907-465-8729.

Appendix A

Annotated Table of Accommodations

All accommodations must be documented in the student’s IEP, 504 or EL plan; this is even true for those accommodations that are “Universal Tools” in the computer- or paper-based assessment and provided to all students. Documenting the student’s need for the accommodation ensures that it will be provided both during instruction and on all assessments. For example, highlighters are Universal Tools for both the AK STAR and Alaska Science assessments. Even though it is a Universal Tool, if a student needs to use a highlighter to lessen the effect of their disability, the student’s IEP should list the use of a highlighter as an accommodation for use in the classroom and on all assessments.

Accommodations that are marked as **Not Allowed** for ELs are not considered accommodations for this population because they do not provide linguistic support. Alternately, accommodations that are marked as **Not Allowed** for SWDs are not considered accommodations for this population because they do not decrease the effect of a student’s learning difference.

All accommodations listed in this table must be documented in the student’s IEP/504 or EL plan.

Abbreviations:

SWDs = students with a disability

EL = English Learner

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Adaptive devices, equipment, and/or furniture</u> Intent: allows the student to focus on content without physical distraction.	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	Some adaptive devices may require individual test administration as well as a scribe to type responses verbatim into test engine. Refer to the scribe procedures in Appendix C of this Handbook or in the Test Administration Directions.
<u>Additional time</u>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	Student may take additional time to complete assessments as needed beyond the time typically scheduled for all students.

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Allowing alternative responses:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral response • Signing • Pointing • Recorded response • Use of word processor 	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Scribe will enter student responses verbatim into test engine.</p> <p>Use of a word processor must have other programs disabled and spelling, grammar check and other features turned off.</p> <p>Refer to the scribe procedures in Appendix C of this Handbook or in the Test Administration Directions.</p>
<u>America Sign Language videos</u>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	<p>Students may play a signed video of the text in questions and answer choices.</p> <p>Reading passages will not be signed to the student.</p>
<u>Auditory amplification device:</u> assistive listening devices that help amplify sounds, especially when background noise is present. <p>Intent: 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>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Use headphones or test in a separate room since auditory devices will distract other students.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<p><u>Braille</u> edition provided by test contractor</p> <p>Intent: to provide students who are blind or have a visual impairment an additional source of receiving content.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Braille test materials are available for both AK STAR and the Alaska Science Assessment and require ordering from the respective test vendor.</p> <p>Available in Unified English Braille (UEB) and Nemeth for the math assessment items.</p>
<p><u>Calculator</u></p> <p>Intent: to assist students with non-computational test items.</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Embedded	<p>Both AK STAR and the Alaska Science assessments provide embedded calculators as Universal Tools that are available only for designated portions of the test.</p> <p>For more information, please view the <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i>.</p>
<p><u>Clarification of test directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student restates clarification • student restates directions <p>Intent: to accurately understand, some students need to have test directions simplified.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>A test administrator may provide clarification of assessment directions.</p> <p>This does not apply to assessment questions or answer choices.</p> <p>A separate location for testing is recommended if the accommodation may be disruptive to others.</p> <p>For ELs: This accommodation can be provided in English or the student’s native language.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Color Overlay</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Color)	✓	Both	<p>Changes the background color behind text, graphics, and response areas.</p> <p>Changes the background color of the test. The default color is white; the color choices are green, blue, orange, pink, and yellow.</p> <p>For any print on demand assessments, students may use a color overlay sheet.</p>
<u>Color</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	Shows a variety of color contrasting options for students to choose during the test.
<u>Color Contrast / Reverse Contrast</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Color)	✓	Embedded	Embedded in the computer-based Alaska Science Assessment. There are seven color combination options available.
<u>Cross-off</u> - allows the student to place a line through an answer choice that is not desired. Intent: allows the student to focus on likely answers. Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Eliminator)	✓	Embedded	<p>Embedded in the computer-based Alaska Science Assessment.</p> <p>For the print on demand version of the Alaska Science Assessment, a student may use a pencil to cross out unwanted answer choices.</p> <p>Transcription procedures must be followed as outlined in the <i>Alaska Science Test Administration Directions</i>.</p>
<u>Dictionary</u> : Provide a published word-to-word bilingual dictionary Intent: provide equivalent of an English word in native language to remove a language barrier.	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>For ELs only – Published document must provide word-to-word equivalents in English and native language and be suitable for standardized assessment.</p> <p>Dictionaries must not contain definitions or pictures. Electronic dictionaries are not allowed.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Eliminator</u> Intent: allows the student to focus on likely answers. Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A (see Cross-off)	Embedded	Student may cross out/eliminate answer choices. For the print on demand version of the AK STAR Assessments, a student may use a pencil to cross out unwanted answer choices.
<u>Flexible Scheduling</u> Students may split a test “part” over multiple days.	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	The computer-based Alaska Science Assessment requires district staff to unlock any assessment part not finished in one day. Binder clips must be used for the Print on Demand version of the assessments to secure items completed the prior day.
<u>Formulas Table</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A (see Reference Sheet)	Both	Shows mathematic formulas relevant to the assessment. Available for grades 5-9 for the mathematics assessment. Formulas table is embedded in the assessment but can also be printed and provided to students.
<u>Frequent breaks</u> Intent: assists students who need extra breaks during a test session.	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	The AK STAR and Alaska Science assessments has a pause feature that allows up to 20 minutes of non-activity before the assessment closes. For the print on demand assessments, booklets should be closed during breaks.

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Glossary</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	Certain words or phrases in the item are underlined with dots and information about that word or phrase will pop-up when selected. No assistance or advantage is provided to students from the information provided in the pop-up.
<u>Graph paper or scratch paper</u> Intent: to help line up math digits to perform operations. Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Both	Graph paper and scratch paper must be securely destroyed after the assessment session. Graph paper is available as an embedded tool in the AK STAR math assessments.
<u>Graphic organizers:</u> Students may be provided a blank (no text) graphic organizer template such as a flow chart or story web. Intent: organizational tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	Graphic organizers must be created by the student.
<u>Guideline</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A (see Line Guide)	Embedded	A straight edge line used to follow along with each line of text or to help student track items. Student may use a device, such as an unmarked ruler for the print on demand version of the assessments.
<u>Handheld Calculator</u>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	As a documented accommodation, students may use a handheld calculator instead of the calculator provided within the test engine.

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
						<p>Handheld calculators may only be used on portions of the test where calculators are allowed.</p> <p>For more information, please review the <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i>.</p>
<p><u>Headphones</u></p> <p>Intent: help students to focus by screening out extraneous sounds.</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Noise cancelling headphones may be worn.</p> <p>The use of external or student-provided music devices is not allowed.</p>
<p><u>Help Videos</u></p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	<p>Help videos are available within the secure test engine and show students how to respond to item types and use tools.</p>
<p><u>Helpful verbs</u> from the test <u>directions</u> written on the board or a piece of paper</p> <p>Intent: help students understand what they are to do on the test.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>This accommodation refers to directions only. It does not apply to test items.</p> <p>Students must test in a separate room if other students without this accommodation can view the words.</p>
<p><u>Highlighter</u></p> <p>Intent: allows important information to stand out.</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Both	

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<p><u>Human read aloud</u></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>A test administrator may read aloud the ELA, mathematics, and science assessments. This includes the questions and answer choices.</p> <p>The human read aloud accommodation can only be provided if the student’s plan specifically identifies “human read aloud” in all other cases, the appropriate accommodation is Text-to-Speech.</p> <p>Reading of the reading passages is not allowed.</p> <p>The human read aloud accommodation requires individual assessment administration.</p>
<p><u>Individual administration</u></p> <p>Student may have the test administered individually in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.</p> <p>Intent: distractions for an individual student can be reduced by altering the location in which an individual student interacts with instructional materials or test content. For students who are easily distracted by the presence of other students, an alternate location accommodation allows the student to work individually.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>When providing a different location within the classroom or a different room, care must be taken to ensure that security of testing materials is maintained.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<p><u>Large Print Paper Booklets</u></p> <p>Intent: provide students with a visual impairment an additional source of receiving content.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Magnification)	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Large print forms are available for the Alaska Science Assessment. Font is enlarged to 150% and is printed on 11 x 17-inch size paper. Large print forms require advance ordering.</p> <p>For AK STAR, if the magnification in the computer-based assessment is not sufficient, districts may print a paper test via the Print on Demand functionality and allow the student to use an external magnification device. Making enlarged copies is not recommended.</p>
<p><u>Large Print</u></p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Magnification)	✓	Embedded	<p>For the Alaska Science Assessment, the test engine will fully scale for students who test on larger monitors. The screen will maintain the correct aspect ratio for all test content with no distortion.</p>
<p><u>Line Guide</u></p> <p>A straight edge line used to follow along with each line of text or to help student track items.</p> <p>Intent: allows the student to follow their reading path more easily.</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A (see Guideline)	✓	Both	<p>Embedded tool on the Alaska Science Assessment.</p> <p>Student may use a device, such as an unmarked ruler for the print on demand version of the assessments.</p>
<p><u>Magnification</u>: enlarging text or images on the screen</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Embedded	<p>Scrolling may be required when the level of magnification is increased and the entire item can no longer be seen on the screen. This will vary due to the level of magnification, the amount of text in the item, and the size of the screen.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
						<p>Magnification allows student to enlarge text on the screen.</p> <p>For Alaska Science: 1.5 x or 2.0 x For AK STAR: up to 3 x</p> <p>For AK STAR, if the magnification in the computer-based assessment is not sufficient, districts may print a paper test via the Print on Demand functionality and allow the student to use an external magnification device. Making enlarged copies is not recommended.</p> <p>For Alaska Science, large print paper booklets are available for ordering. See Large Print Paper Booklets.</p>
<p><u>Masking</u></p> <p>Intent: limits visual distraction.</p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	N/A	✓	Both	<p>Masking is an embedded tool in the computer-based Alaska Science Assessment.</p> <p>For the print on demand version of the assessments, a student may use a blank piece of paper for the purposes of masking.</p>
<p><u>Math manipulatives:</u> student use of physical objects for math items, such as fraction circles.</p> <p>Intent: a physical aid for problem solving.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Non-embedded	<p>Manipulatives must be unmarked.</p> <p>Examples of acceptable math manipulatives are: fraction blocks, color tiles, sorting blocks, abacus, base-ten blocks, geometric shapes.</p> <p>Multiplication tables and number lines may be used on select sections of the math content assessment where calculators are allowed. See <i>AK STAR Test Administration Directions</i> and <i>Assessment Calculator Policy</i>.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Native language word</u> provided for an unknown word in an assessment item when requested by student. Intent: support ELs linguistically.	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	For ELs only - This is for occasional/individual words, not phrases or strings of words. Must be requested by student. Not allowed for reading passages.
<u>Notepad</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	Student can use Notepad to take notes on each test question.
<u>Pencil / Drawing Tool</u> Universal Tool	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	Students can use Pencil to make marks on the screen.
<u>Preferential seating</u> Intent: student may need to sit in a particular area of the room to receive support or focus.	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	
<u>Print on Demand (POD)</u>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Embedded	If a student requires a paper-based assessment as an accommodation, districts may use the Print on Demand (POD) accommodation to print a paper copy of the assessment. Student answers must be transcribed by district staff into the test engine when student is finished. For transcription procedures, please review the <i>Test Administration Directions</i> . After transcription, paper materials must be securely destroyed.

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<p><u>Re-reading</u>, test directions, if requested</p> <p>Intent: to support students who need assistance with understanding directions.</p> <p>For ELs: This accommodation can be provided in English or the student’s native language.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Provided by the test administrator; this accommodation can be provided to a single student who is testing in a large group setting unless it is disruptive to other testers.</p> <p>ELs only – translation should be an exact translation, as much as possible; additional clarifying ideas or examples are not allowed.</p> <p>Test directions for all assessments are read aloud to all students by the test administrator. However, the test administrator re-reading the test directions to students after testing has begun is an accommodation and should only be provided to those students with documentation in their IEP/504.</p>
<p><u>Respond orally in English</u> to constructed response items for math, and/or science test.</p> <p>Intent: to support ELs linguistically.</p>	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>For ELs only – requires a scribe to transcribe verbatim into the test engine or test booklet.</p> <p>Not allowed for English language arts items.</p>
<p><u>Ruler</u></p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	N/A	Embedded	<p>Student can use Customary Ruler and Metric Ruler to measure images on the screen.</p>
<p><u>Scribe for transcription of student’s responses</u> into test engine.</p> <p>Intent: this allows the student with difficulties in language processing or motor deficits to focus on expressing their thoughts and ideas more effectively.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>All scribing must be verbatim into the test engine.</p> <p>Scribes must follow scribe procedures outlined in this Handbook and in the <i>Test Administration Directions</i>.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<u>Secure papers</u> to work area with tape or magnets	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	Only for print on demand versions of the assessments.
<u>Signing</u> to student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test directions • Math items • Science items • ELA question & answer choices <p>Intent: remove barrier for students with hearing disability.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Interpreters must sign a Test Security Agreement and may not provide additional information to student, such as drawing pictures of math problems.</p> <p>Reading passages may not be signed to the student. This invalidates the assessment.</p>
<u>Small group administration</u> <p>Intent: for students who are easily distracted by the presence of other students, an alternate location accommodation allows the student to work individually or in small groups.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>Students may have the test administered in a small group in a separate location and/or at a different time than their peers.</p> <p>The size of the small group will depend on student need.</p> <p>When providing a different location within the classroom or a different room, care must be taken to ensure that security of testing materials is maintained.</p>
<u>Special acoustics, lighting, or furniture</u> <p>Intent: students with physical disabilities may need specific adjustments to their environment.</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Non-embedded	May require individual or small group administration.
<u>Specific test administrator:</u> for students who need a familiar	✓	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
<p>test administrator or test administrator.</p> <p>Intent: for SWDs, to decrease the effect of an emotional disability or emotional reaction on test taking. To increase the likelihood that accommodations provided to the student directly from the test administrator are understood.</p> <p>For ELs, to provide familiarity in the form of a test administrator that the student knows and works with often.</p>						
<p><u>Sticky Note</u></p> <p>Universal Tool</p>	✓	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	Embedded	Creates and places a note (or multiple notes) on the screen in which a student can type a short message for reference later.
<p><u>Text-to-Speech (TTS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Directions • Questions • Answer choices 	✓	✓	✓	✓	Embedded	<p>TTS is a computer-voice screen reader. Allows students to start, stop, replay, and adjust volume for audio of the test associated with the content on the screen.</p> <p>Requires headphones.</p> <p>Does not read passages associated with ELA items</p>
<p>English or the native language: provide written version of written/oral test directions</p>	NOT ALLOWED	✓	✓	✓	Non-embedded	<p>ELs only – written version of test directions must be verbatim of what is provided in the test administration directions.</p>

Description & Intent	SWDs	ELs	AK STAR	Alaska Science	Embedded or Non-Embedded	Assessment Use
Intent: to assure students understand directions and expectations.						

Appendix B

Tools for Educators

This section provides templates for optional tools for planning, documenting, and evaluating the use of accommodations.

1. Do's and Don'ts When Selecting Accommodations
2. Accommodations Used in the Classroom
3. Logistics Planning Checklist
4. Teacher Observation Checklist for EL Students
5. Accommodations from the Student's Perspective
6. Parent Input for Accommodations
7. Assessment Accommodations Plan
8. After Test Accommodations Questions
9. Accommodations for Students Identified as English Learners
10. Accommodations for Students with a 504 Plan

Tool 1

Do's and Don'ts When Selecting Accommodations

Do ... make accommodations decisions based on individualized needs.

Don't ... make accommodations decisions based on whatever is easiest to do.

Do ... select accommodations that reduce the effect of the disability to access instruction and demonstrate learning.

Don't ... select accommodations that are unrelated to documented student learning needs or are intended to give students an unfair advantage.

Do ... be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodations on the IEP or 504 plan.

Don't ... use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP or 504 plan.

Do ... be familiar with the types of accommodations that can be used as both instructional and assessment accommodations.

Don't ... assume that all instructional accommodations are appropriate for use on all assessments.

Do ... be specific about the where, when, who, and how of providing accommodations.

Don't ... simply indicate an accommodation will be provided "as appropriate" or "as necessary."

Do ... refer to state accommodations policies and understand implications of selections.

Don't ... check every accommodation possible on a checklist.

Do ... evaluate accommodations used by the student.

Don't ... assume the same accommodations remain appropriate year after year.

Do ... get input about accommodations from teachers, parents, and students, and use it to make decisions at IEP team or 504 planning committee meetings.

Don't ... make decisions about instructional and assessment accommodations alone.

Do ... provide accommodations for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction.

Don't ... provide an assessment accommodation for the first time on the day of a test.

Do ... select accommodations based on specific individual needs in each content area.

Don't ... assume certain accommodations, such as extra time, are appropriate for every student in every content area.

Tool 2

Accommodations Used in the Classroom

Tracking aspects of how a student uses an accommodation in the classroom informs decision making on assessment accommodations.

Student _____ Date _____

Accommodations provided to student:	Is it noted in student's IEP?	For what task(s) is it used (e.g., task type, content, standard)?	How often does the student choose to use the accommodation for the task?	Is the student need for it fixed or changing? What are the influencing factors?	Does the student use it alone or with assistance (e.g., para-educator, peers)?	Notes (e.g., does one accommodation seem more effective used with another on a task?).

Adapted from *Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment*.

Tool 3

Logistics Planning Checklist

Directions: This checklist can be used in the planning and implementation of assessment accommodations for all students. Use the checklist by indicating Y (Yes), N (No), or NA (Not Applicable).

Accommodations Throughout the Academic Year	Y	N	NA
Accommodations are documented on students' IEP or 504 plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students use accommodations regularly and with success in classroom instruction and assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The effectiveness of the accommodations is regularly evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparation for Test Day			
Special test editions are ordered for individual students based on need (e.g., audio tape, Braille, large print).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test administrators/proctors receive a list of accommodation needs for students they will supervise (list comes from master accommodations plan/database).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult supervision is arranged, and test administrators receive training for the type of accommodations they will be providing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trained readers, scribes, and sign language interpreters are arranged for individual students (with substitutes available).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special equipment is arranged and checked for correct operation (e.g., tape recorder, word processor).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accommodations on the Day of the Test			
Provision of accommodations is recorded by test administrator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substitute providers of accommodations are available as needed (e.g., interpreters, readers, scribes).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student use of accommodation is documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consideration after the Day of the Test			
Responses are transferred to scannable answer documents or test booklets for students using special equipment and adapted test forms and response documents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students who take make-up tests receive needed accommodations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effectiveness of accommodations administration and use is evaluated by test administrators and students, and plans are made for improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tool 4

Teacher Observation Checklist on EL Student Accommodation Needs

Teams can use this checklist to determine if the accommodation offers the EL student appropriate linguistic scaffolding.

Indicate **Y** (yes), **Y/S*** (Yes with support), **N** (Not at this time), or **DK/NA** (Don't know or not applicable).

*Y/S is an important category because it helps track the *emergence* of content knowledge and skills

Direct Linguistic Support: Oral Accommodations

Questions to Ask	Y	Y/S	N	DK/NA	Corresponding accommodation(s) that may be appropriate:
1. Is the student able to read and understand directions in English?					In English: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide written version of written/oral test directions • read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions • read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions • clarify/explain test directions
2. Can the student follow oral directions in English from an adult or recorded?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide written version of written/oral test directions • read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions • read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions • clarify/explain test directions
3. Does the student need directions in English repeated frequently?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide written version of written/oral test directions
4. Is the student able to read and understand directions in the native language?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide written version of written/oral test directions
5. Can the student follow oral directions in the native language from an adult or audiotape?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions
6. Does the student need directions in the native language repeated frequently?					In the native language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions • read aloud and/or repeat embedded test directions • clarify/explain test directions

Questions to Ask	Y	Y/S	N	DK/ NA	Corresponding accommodation(s) that may be appropriate:
7. Does the student need all the text read to him/her or just selected words?					Use text-to-speech in computer-based assessments or provide test contractor CD
8. Does the student have low/poor English 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?					Use text-to-speech in computer-based assessments or provide test contractor CD.
9. Does the student need/request native language support for individual words?					Provide the native language word for an unknown word in a test question or prompt, when requested by student. Provide commercial word-to-word bilingual dictionary.
10. Does the student need support in writing down his/her spoken English?					Allow the student to respond orally in English to constructed response items for ELA, math, and/or science test(s); scribe response verbatim in English. This accommodation is only for a small percentage of students. Scribes must follow scribe procedures.

Direct Linguistic Support: Written Accommodations

Questions to Ask	Y	Y/S	N	DK/ NA	Corresponding accommodation(s) that may be appropriate:
11. Has the student used a bilingual word-to-word dictionary during classroom instruction or assessments or with homework assignments?					Provide a commercial word to word bilingual dictionary.
12. Does the student receive scribing support?					Allow the student to respond orally to constructed response items in English for ELA, math, and/or science test(s); scribe response verbatim in English. This accommodation is only for a small number of students.
13. Does the student come from a low-literacy background and require the use of a recorder when responding to homework assignments?					

Indirect Linguistic Support

Questions to ask	Y	Y/S	N	DK/NA	Corresponding Accommodation(s)
14. Does the provision of extra time ensure the student can complete classroom assignments?					Provide extended time
15. Does the student use other accommodations or equipment that require more time to complete test items (e.g., scribe, use of bilingual dictionary, etc.)?					Provide extended time
16. Can the student work continuously for the length of time allocated for standard test administration?					Provide scheduled breaks as needed during testing
17. Do others easily distract the student and/or does he/she have difficulty remaining on task?					Provide scheduled breaks as needed during testing

Use the following questions as a guide for the next steps you might plan:

- What accommodation(s) should be used regularly by the student during classroom instruction and assessment?
- How will you document the results for assignments and assessments when accommodation(s) are used (or not used)?
- How will you evaluate the student's experience and preferences for offered accommodations?

Tool 5

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 may 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. What are 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.

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.

Tool 6

Questions Parents Should Ask About Accommodations in Instruction and Assessments

About Instruction

- What accommodations does my child need to access and reach academic standards?
- What are my child's preferences for specific accommodations?
- Is the need for each accommodation documented in my child's IEP or 504 plan?
- Are there accommodations being used at home that could be used in instruction to help my child access and learn content or help in performing certain academic tasks?
- Are the accommodations my child is receiving in instruction meant to be a temporary support? If yes, what is the plan to help determine when to phase out or discontinue the use of a certain accommodation?
- How are the staff members who work with my child providing accommodations (across regular, special education, or other staff)?

About Assessment

- What are the tests my child needs to take, what do they measure (e.g., regular or alternate academic standards), and for what purpose is each given?
- If an accommodation used in instruction is not allowed on a test, is there another option to support the student that is allowed? If yes, has it been documented and tried in instruction first? If no, how is my child being prepared to work without the accommodation before the test?
- Are the accommodations allowed on state tests also provided for other tests?
- Can my child participate in part of an assessment with or without accommodations?
- Are there consequences for allowing certain changes to how my child participates in a test? How will my child's test scores count?
- Do consequences of accommodations vary by type of test?
- If my child is not taking the general assessment, is it because the test is "too hard" or because the accommodation needed is not allowed on the assessment?

Adapted from *Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment*. Questions are based in part on questions and content from NCLD's *Parent Advocacy Brief NCLB: Determining Appropriate Assessment Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, and Testing Students With Disabilities: Practical Strategies for Complying With District and State Requirements, 2nd ed.* (2003), by Martha Thurlow, Judy Elliott, and James Ysseldyke.

Tool 7

Assessment Accommodations Plan for an Individual Student

Student Information

Name: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Name of Assessment: _____

Case Information

Special Education Teacher: _____

School Year: _____

Building/School: _____

General Education Teacher: _____

Room assignment for assessment: _____

Test administrator: _____

Assessment accommodation to be provided	Notes regarding appropriate delivery of accommodation

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

Tool 8

After-Test Accommodations Questions

Use this form after a test to interview a student about the provided accommodation(s): whether it was used, whether it was useful, and whether it should be used again. Also note any adjustments or difficulties experienced.

Student _____ Date _____

Assessment _____

List accommodations in IEP	Was the accommodation used?	Was the accommodation useful?	Were there any difficulties with the accommodation? Are adjustments needed?	Should the accommodation be used again?

Adapted from *Minnesota Manual for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in Instruction and Assessment*.

Tool 9

Accommodations for Students Identified as English Learners Individual Student Documentation Form

All students identified as English Learners (ELs) must participate in statewide Content assessment (English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and science). Accommodations are allowed for ELs when testing for academic content knowledge and skills, but not when testing for English language proficiency.

A district shall appoint a team that includes if practicable, a teacher with experience in teaching students with limited English proficiency to determine the necessary accommodations for students with limited English proficiency under the department's *Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments*. The team shall document the accommodation decision and may not provide a modification. [[4 AAC 06.776\(b\)](#)]

Student's Legal Name:	District or State ID Number:	Student Grade:
Meeting Date:	District & School:	

Statewide and District Assessments:

The student will:

- Participate in statewide and district assessments **without** accommodations.
- Participate in statewide and district assessments with the following accommodations

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Please refer to the *Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments*, for further information on allowable accommodations for required state assessments. The Participation Guidelines and corresponding handbook are available on the [DEED Accommodations webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/accommodations) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/accommodations).

Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) and Alaska Science Assessment Allowable Accommodations for English Learners

1. Test Directions

Read aloud, in English or in native language, the test directions. This includes directions that are read aloud to all students by test administrators and/or clarification of test directions embedded within the assessment. Test directions do not include test items or prompts.

- Provide written version of written/oral test directions.
- Read aloud and/or repeat written and/or oral test directions.
- Clarify/explain test directions if requested by the student.

2. Test Items

Test items include: test questions and answer choices.

- Provide a commercial word-to-word bilingual dictionary that does NOT contain pictures or definitions. Electronic dictionaries are not allowed.
- Provide the native language word for an unknown word in an assessment item, when requested by the student. **(Not allowed for reading passages)**

- Allow the student to respond orally to constructed response items in English for math, and/or science test(s). **(Not allowed for ELA).** *This accommodation requires thoughtful consideration and will only apply to select students for standardized state assessments.*

3. Location

- Administering the test individually or in a small group in a separate location.
- Using a specific test administrator.

4. Read Aloud Accommodations

Accommodations embedded within the computer-based assessments and selected in the test administration portal by a district employee with appropriate portal permissions.

- Text-to-Speech for MATH
- Text-to-Speech for ELA
- Text-to-Speech for SCIENCE
- Human read aloud for ELA
- Human read aloud for MATH
- Human read aloud for SCIENCE

*note: Text-to-Speech required unless student’s EL plan specifies “human” read aloud. Includes test questions and answer choices. **(Read aloud of reading passages is not allowed.)**

Signature and Date of Participants in Attendance at EL Meeting

Parent:

Classroom Teacher:

EL Teacher:

District Representative:

Tool 10

Accommodations for Students with a 504 Plan Individual Student Documentation Form

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based on disability. The 504 plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. However, these students do not require specialized instruction.

Student's Legal Name:	District or State ID Number:	Student Grade:
Meeting Date:	District & School:	

Statewide and District Assessments:

The student will:

- Participate in statewide and district assessments without accommodations.
- Participate in statewide and district assessments with the following accommodations

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Please refer to the *Participation Guidelines for Inclusion of Alaska Students in State Assessments* for further information on allowable accommodations for required state assessments. The Participation Guidelines and corresponding Handbook are available on the [DEED Accommodations webpage](http://education.alaska.gov/assessments/accommodations) (education.alaska.gov/assessments/accommodations).

Accommodations to be provided by the Test Administrator:

Accommodations embedded in the computer-based assessment:

- Text to Speech for MATH
- Text to Speech for ELA
- Text to Speech for SCIENCE

Signature and Date of Participants in Attendance at Meeting

Parent: _____

Classroom Teacher: _____

Resource Teacher: _____

District Representative: _____

Appendix C

Scribe Procedures

A scribe is a qualified person who writes down student responses communicated by an assistive communication device, pointing, interpretation or transliteration (e.g., American Sign Language, signed English, cued speech), or speech.

Qualifications for the Scribe

The scribe must be a current employee of the school district.

The scribe must be trained in test administration and sign a Test Security Agreement.

The scribe must follow all required scribe processes and procedures outlined in this section (also available in the *AK STAR Test Administration Directions* and *Alaska Science Test Administration Directions*).

It is preferable for the scribe to be a familiar person, such as the teacher or the paraprofessional who is typically responsible for scribing during regular instruction. If the scribe is new to the student, give them time to work together during instruction prior to the assessment day.

For students who are deaf, the scribe must be fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) or signed English.

The District Test Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that scribes understand all the qualifications listed above.

Process for Scribe Accommodation

Before the administration of the assessment, the assigned Building Test Coordinator should provide the scribe a copy of the *Test Administration Directions* so the scribe can become familiar with the directions and format of the assessment.

A scribe may only administer the scribe accommodation to one student at a time during an assessment session. This accommodation must be administered so that other students are not able to hear the accommodated student's response.

For computer-based assessments, the scribe must enter student responses directly into the test engine as the student would. For paper-based assessments, the scribe must handwrite the student's responses into a test booklet or answer document.

On the assessment, the student will dictate sentences or paragraphs in the same manner used during instruction. The scribe should have the student proofread the dictation and the scribe may also read it aloud at the student's request. The student may dictate changes to the scribe, and the scribe will make those changes exactly as dictated by the student. Students may proofread to add punctuation and may change any capitalization or spelling they wish, even if it is incorrect.

- The scribe may not question or correct student choices.
- The scribe may ask the student to restate (or sign) words or parts, as needed.
- The student is responsible for punctuation and may indicate punctuation in several ways.
 - The student may punctuate during dictation. For example, when stating the sentence "The dog ran" the student will say, "The dog ran period."
 - The student may dictate more than one sentence at a time and add punctuation afterwards when given the scribed sentences to proofread.
- The scribe may automatically capitalize in these cases:
 - The scribe should capitalize the first letter in the beginning of a sentence if the student has indicated punctuation ending the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, "The cat ran period. The cat jumped period." The scribe would write, "The cat ran. The cat jumped."
- The scribe should capitalize the first word in any paragraph.

- The scribe should capitalize the first letter in the beginning of a sentence if the student has indicated punctuation ending the previous sentence. For example, if the student said “The cat ran period. The cat jumped period. The scribe would write “The cat ran. The cat jumped.”
- The student must specify capitalization in these cases:
 - The student must specify to capitalize the first letter in the beginning of a sentence if the student has not indicated punctuation ending the previous sentence. For example, if the student said, “The cat ran the cat jumped.” The scribe would write, “The cat ran the cat jumped.”
 - The student must specify to capitalize other words (e.g., proper nouns, acronyms, etc.)
- The scribe must produce legible text when handwriting student responses.
- The scribe session may be recorded for accuracy.
- The scribe must sign and date the inside cover of the standard test booklet when the content assessment is complete.
- Providing the scribe accommodation, like all accommodations, should be documented according to local procedures (i.e., assessment log).
- For clarification, please contact the DEED Assessment Administrator.

Additional Parameters

The following are a list of **acceptable** parameters:

1. The scribe may ask “Are you finished?” or “Is there anything you want to insert or delete?”
2. The scribe may respond to procedural questions asked by the student, such as, “Do I have to use the entire space to answer the question?” In this case the scribe can indicate “no.”

The following are **unacceptable** parameters:

1. The scribe cannot give the student specific directions (e.g., “First, set the equations equal to one another” or “Make sure that the equation is set equal to zero”).
2. The scribe cannot tell the student if the selected answer is correct or incorrect.
3. The scribe cannot answer the student’s questions related to the content (e.g., “Is this the right way to set up the problem?” or “Can you tell me what this word means?”).
4. The scribe cannot alert the student to mistakes made during the assessment.
5. The scribe cannot prompt the student in any way that would result in a better response or essay.
6. The scribe cannot influence the student’s response in any way.

There are special considerations when scribing for a student using ASL or cued speech:

- When ASL is being used during scribing, the scribe may ask clarifying questions regarding the use of classifiers.
- The scribe will make conceptual translations from ASL to English.
- The scribe will write exactly what is said.
 - Probing or clarifying questions are not allowed.
 - Classifiers are permitted for students using ASL. Classifiers give descriptive information about a noun or verb such as: location, kind of action, size, shape, and manner.

Appendix D

References

1. Resources of Interest
2. Eligibility Categories
3. Definition of Section 504
4. Federal and State Law
5. Acronyms

Resources of Interest

[National Clearinghouse on English Language Acquisition](#)

[Office of Civil Rights](#)

[Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, P.L. 108-446. Retrieved November, 2010](#)

Eligibility Categories

This is a listing of ALL of the Alaskan eligibility categories for special education services:

Cognitive Impairment	Visual Impairment
Specific Learning Disability	Speech or Language Impairment
Emotional Disturbance	Other Health Impaired
Deafness	Multiple Disabilities
Hearing Impairment	Early Childhood Developmental Delay
Deaf and Blind	Autism
Orthopedic Impairment	Traumatic Brain Injury

Refer to [4 AAC 52.130](#) for specific details regarding these **general** eligibility notes. [4 AAC 52.130](#) reads (bold added for emphasis);

(a) Repealed 8/22/2001.

(b) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with cognitive impairment, a child must

- (1) **score two or more standard deviations** below the national norm on an individual standardized test of intelligence, and exhibit deficits in adaptive behavior manifested during the developmental period which adversely affect the child's educational performance;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** as cognitively impaired by a psychiatrist, or by a psychologist who is licensed under [AS 08.86](#), certified under 4 AAC [12.355](#), or endorsed under 4 AAC [12.395](#); and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(c) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with a **learning disability**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a specific learning disability as **defined in**
 - (A) [34 CFR 300.8\(c\)\(10\)](#), as revised as of October 13, 2006, and adopted by reference; and
 - (B) [34 CFR 300.309](#), adopted by reference in 4 AAC [52.120](#);
- (2) require special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's education program effective; and
- (3) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) in the manner set out in 34 CFR 300.308, adopted by reference in 4 AAC [52.120](#), as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(d) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with an emotional disturbance, a child must

- (1) be emotionally disturbed as **defined in** [34 CFR 300.8\(c\)\(4\)](#), as revised as of October 13, 2006, and adopted by reference;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** as emotionally disturbed by a psychiatrist, or by a psychologist who is licensed under [AS 08.86](#), certified under 4 AAC [12.355](#), or endorsed under 4 AAC [12.395](#); and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(e) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child who is **deaf**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a hearing impairment that hinders the child's ability to process linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, and that adversely affects educational performance;

- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by a physician or audiologist as deaf; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(f) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with a **hearing impairment**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a hearing impairment, whether **permanent or fluctuating**, that adversely affects educational performance, **but is not** within the meaning of **(e)** of this section;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by a physician or audiologist as hard of hearing; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(g) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child who is **deaf and blind**, a child must

- (1) **exhibit concomitant hearing and visual impairments**, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that the child **cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for deaf or blind** children;
- (2) require special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by an optometrist or ophthalmologist and by a physician or audiologist, as appropriate, as deaf-blind; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(h) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with an **orthopedic impairment**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a **severe orthopedic impairment**, including impairments caused by congenital anomaly, disease, or other causes, **that adversely affects educational performance**;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by a physician as orthopedically impaired; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(i) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with a **visual impairment**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a
 - (A) visual impairment, not primarily perceptual in nature, resulting in measured **acuity of 20/70 or poorer in the better** eye with correction, **or a visual field restriction of 20 degrees as determined by an optometrist or ophthalmologist**, that, even with correction, adversely affects educational performance; or
 - (B) **physical eye condition** that affects visual functioning to the extent that specially designed instruction is needed;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, materials, or methods to make the child's educational program effective as determined by a teacher of children with visual impairment; and
- (3) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2), that includes a certified teacher of children with visual impairment, as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(j) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with a **speech or language impairment**, a child must

- (1) exhibit a communication disorder such as **stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment**, that adversely affects educational performance;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by a physician, a speech-language pathologist, or a speech-language therapist as speech or language impaired; and

- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services;
- (5) repealed 11/28/92.

(k) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with **other health impairments**, a child must

- (1) exhibit **limited strength, vitality, or alertness** due to **chronic or acute health** problems **such as** a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, **fetal alcohol spectrum disorder**, diabetes, or a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, due to **attention deficit disorder** or **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder**; for a child to be eligible, a health impairment must adversely affect that child's educational performance;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** by a **physician** or **advanced practice registered nurse** as having a health impairment described in (1) of this subsection; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.

(l) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with **multiple disabilities**, a child must

- (1) exhibit two or more of the impairments **set out in (b) - (i), (k), (o), and (p)** of this section, the combination of which causes such **severe educational problems** that the child cannot be accommodated in a special education program that is appropriate for only one of the conditions;
- (2) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
- (3) **be diagnosed** as set out in **(b) - (i), (k), (o), and (p)** of this section for each condition; and
- (4) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as requiring special education services that cannot be provided in a program for a single condition set out in (b) - (i), (k), (o), and (p) of this section.

(m) Repealed 8/22/2001.

(n) Except as provided in (q) of this section, to be eligible for special education and related services as a child with early childhood developmental delay, a child who is not less than three nor more than eight years of age must

- (1) either
 - (A) function **at least two standard deviations** below the national norm, **or 25 percent delayed in age equivalency**, in at least one of the following **five areas**:
 - (i) cognitive development;
 - (ii) physical development, which includes fine and gross motor;
 - (iii) speech or language development, which includes expressive and receptive language, articulation, and fluency;
 - (iv) social or emotional development;
 - (v) adaptive-functioning, self-help skills; or
 - (B) function **at least 1.7 standard deviations below the mean, or 20 percent delayed in age equivalency**, in **two or more** of the **five areas** in **(A)(i) - (v)** of this paragraph;
- (2) be **certified by the group** established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education and related services as a child with early childhood developmental delay, as follows:
 - (A) the group must find that the child has learning problems that are **not** primarily the result of **bilingualism, cultural difference, environmental disadvantage, or economic disadvantage**;
 - (B) in evaluating the child, **if** it is clearly **not** appropriate to use **a norm-referenced** instrument, the group shall use another instrument, such as a **criterion-referenced** measure, to document the delay;
 - (C) the group shall base its determination of **the delay** and its detrimental **effect** on the child's daily life and educational performance on qualitative and quantitative measures, including developmental history, basic health history, observation of the child in multiple environments, **and supportive evidence of how the disability adversely affects educational performance**; and
- (3) need special facilities, equipment or methods to make the child's educational program effective.

- (o) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with **autism**, a child must
- (1) exhibit
 - (A) a **developmental disability** significantly **affecting verbal and non-verbal** communication and **social interaction** that adversely **affects educational performance**; this type of developmental disability is **generally evident before the child reaches three** years of age; or
 - (B) other characteristics **often associated** with autism such as engagement in **repetitive activities** and stereotyped **movements**, resistance to environmental **change** or change in daily routines, or unusual responses to **sensory experiences** that **adversely affect educational performance**;
 - (2) **not** have educational performance adversely affected primarily by an **emotional disturbance**, as defined in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(4), adopted by reference in (d)(1) of this section;
 - (3) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make that child's educational program effective;
 - (4) **be diagnosed** as autistic by a **psychiatrist or other physician, an advanced nurse practitioner** authorized to practice under 12 AAC [44.380](#) in pediatrics, family health, or family psychiatric/mental health, and who has in effect a written plan that includes pediatric neurodevelopment in the clinical scope of practice, as required under 12 AAC [44.400](#), or a psychologist licensed under [AS 08.86](#), certified under 4 AAC [12.355](#), or endorsed under 4 AAC [12.395](#); and
 - (5) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.
- (p) To be eligible for special education and related services as a child with **traumatic brain injury**, a child must
- (1) exhibit an acquired **injury to the brain** caused by an **external physical force**, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment or both, that adversely affects educational performance;
 - (2) exhibit **impairments** in one or more areas, **including** cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech caused by open or closed head injuries;
 - (3) **not** have brain injuries that are **congenital or degenerative, or induced by birth trauma**;
 - (4) **require** special facilities, equipment, or methods to make the child's educational program effective;
 - (5) **be diagnosed** by a physician as having a traumatic brain injury; and
 - (6) be certified by the group established under 4 AAC [52.125\(a\)](#) (2) as qualifying for and needing special education services.
- (q) If a district does not use the criteria in (n) of this section to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services, with regard to a child with early childhood developmental delay, the district shall apply the criteria of (b) - (l), (o), or (p) of this section.”

Definition of Section 504

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based upon disability. Section 504 is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statute that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met.

Section 504 states that: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 706(8) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” [29 U.S.C. §794(a), 34 C.F.R. §104.4(a)].

To be covered under Section 504, a student must be “qualified ” (which roughly equates to being between 3 and 22 years of age, depending on the program, as well as state and federal law, and must have a disability) [34 C.F.R. §104.3(k)(2)].

As defined by federal law: “An individual with a disability means any person who: (i) has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity; (ii) has a record of such an impairment; or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment” [34 C.F.R. §104.3(j)(1)].

“Impairment” as used under the Section 504 definition

An impairment as used in Section 504 may include any disability, long-term illness, or various disorder that “substantially” reduces or lessens a student’s ability to access learning in the educational setting because of a learning-, behavior- or health-related condition. [“It should be emphasized that a physical or mental impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of Section 504 unless its severity is such that it results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities” (Appendix A to Part 104, #3)].

Many students have conditions or disorders that are not readily apparent to others. They may include conditions such as specific learning disabilities, diabetes, epilepsy and allergies. Hidden disabilities such as low vision, poor hearing, heart disease or chronic illness may not be obvious, but if they substantially limit that child’s ability to receive an appropriate education as defined by Section 504, they may be considered to have an “impairment” under Section 504 standards. As a result, these students, regardless of their intelligence, will be unable to fully demonstrate their ability or attain educational benefits equal to that of non-disabled students (The Civil Rights of Students with Hidden Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973—Pamphlet). The definition does not set forth a list of specific diseases, conditions or disorders that constitute impairments because of the difficulty of ensuring the comprehensiveness of any such list. While the definition of a disabled person also includes specific limitations on what persons are classified as disabled under the regulations, it also specifies that only physical and mental impairments are included, thus “environmental, cultural and economic disadvantage are not in themselves covered” (Appendix A to Part 104, #3).

Federal and State Laws Requiring Participation by Students with Disabilities

Reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Stronger accountability for educational achievement results is one of the four basic education reform principles contained in ESEA. This law complements the provisions in providing public accountability at the school, district, and state levels for all students with disabilities. ESEA explicitly calls for the participation in such assessments of all students [Sec. 1111(2)(b)(vii)]. (The term “such assessments” refers to a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments.) It also requires that these assessments provide for the reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities—as defined under Section 602(3) of IDEA—necessary to measure the academic achievement of such students relative to challenging state academic content and state student academic achievement standards [Sec. 1111 (2)(b)(vii)].

Regulations regarding inclusion of students with disabilities and English learners in assessment and access to grade level content

One of the basic reform principles of ESEA is stronger accountability for educational achievement 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 ESEA that hold schools accountable for educational results:

Academic content standards (what students should learn) and academic achievement standards (how well students should learn the content) form the basis of state accountability systems.

State assessments are the mechanism for checking whether schools have been successful in students attaining the knowledge and skills defined by the content standards.

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.

ESEA on ELs

Title III of the ESEA mandates that all ELs receive quality instruction for learning both English and grade-level academic content (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). According to ESEA, ELs are required to participate in statewide assessments that measure students’ English language and academic progress.

ESEA requires that states develop standards for English language proficiency in the context of each state’s Academic Content Standards. Schools and districts must ensure ELs’ participation in their state’s accountability system.

The following are other ESEA provisions for ELs:

- All ELs’ English language proficiency must be tested at least once a year;
- all ELs have to take state academic achievement tests in language arts and math, except that EL students who have been in the U.S. for less than one year do not have to take the language arts test for that first year; if available from the state, EL students can take these language arts and math tests in their native languages;
- EL students should be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided reasonable accommodations; (Sec. 1111(b)(2)(G))
- curricula must be demonstrated to be effective; language instruction curricula used to teach EL children are to be tied to scientifically based research and demonstrated to be effective;
- local entities have the flexibility to choose the method of instruction to teach ELs;
- states must establish standards and objectives for raising the level of English proficiency that are derived from the four recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and that are aligned with achievement of the challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards. (Sec. 1111(b)(2)(B)(iii))

Instructional and assessment accommodations, therefore, are incorporated in the instructional process for ELs to facilitate their education and measure their performance adequately by leveling the playing field.

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 districtwide assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include the following: Children with disabilities are included in general state and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary [Sec. 612 (a) (16) (A)]. 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 . . . a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP Team determines that the child will not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and how the child will be assessed [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (V) and VI].

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 provides individuals with disabilities with certain rights and protects individuals with disabilities against discrimination from federally funded programs and activities. Section 504 states the following: No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705(20) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency.

In school settings, 504 legislation guarantees and protects students with disabilities who may not otherwise have an IEP but are still considered individuals with disabilities. The definition of a student with disabilities is much broader under 504 than it is under IDEA. An important part of the 504 plans developed by schools for students with disabilities are often the lists of accommodations that the student can utilize on assessments.

Acronyms

AK STAR – Alaska System of Academic Readiness

AP – Access Profile, student supports that are selected prior to testing (DLM specific)

CBA – Computer-based Assessment

DLM – Dynamic Learning Maps, a system of assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities

DEED – Department of Education & Early Development (Alaska State Department of Education & Early Development)

ELs – English learners

ELP – English language proficiency

ESEA – Elementary and Secondary Education Act

ESSA – Every Student Succeeds Act, a federal act passed in 2015

FC Survey – First Contact Survey, an initial placement survey for the DLM Alternate Assessment

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

IEP – Individualized Education Program, individualized education plans for students with disabilities

NAEP – National Assessment of Educational Progress, a national assessment of a representative sampling of America's students in grades 4, 8, and 12 conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics

NAGB – National Assessment Governing Board, the governing board that makes decisions regarding accommodations for the NAEP assessment

NCES – National Center for Education

PLAAFP – Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, a section within the IEP that documents the student's academic and functional skills and knowledge