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# ACCOMMODATIONS

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## Assisting Students with Disabilities

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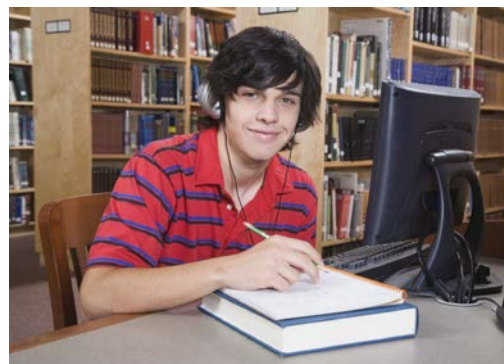
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## Assisting Students with Disabilities



Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
Florida Department of Education  
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## INTRODUCTION

This manual updates *Accommodations: Assisting Students with Disabilities*, published by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) in 2010, and is intended to help teachers and parents make decisions about accommodations for students with disabilities. Four categories of accommodations are identified along with numerous examples. Strategies to help teachers and students implement and monitor the impact of accommodations for classroom instruction and assessment are presented. The appendices provide a quick reference guide and resources on statewide testing accommodations.

The document was written by Dr. Marty Beech through the Problem Solving/Response to Intervention (PS/Rtl) Technology and Learning Connections, Florida's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) projects, University of South Florida. Guidance was provided by David Davis, PS/Rtl Technology and Learning Connections; staff in Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), FDOE; the State Advisory Committee for Exceptional Student Education; and BEESS district partners.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Accommodations—A Key to Success**

Accommodations are changes that are made in how the student accesses information and demonstrates performance (Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(a), Florida Administrative Code [F.A.C.]).

Accommodations are important for students with disabilities. Students use accommodations to increase, maintain or improve academic performance. For example, students who have a visual impairment may use braille instructional materials or audiobooks. Students who use wheelchairs may need a ramp or elevator to move independently in a building.

Accommodations can be provided in four areas:

- Presentation—how students receive information,
- Responding—how students show what they know,
- Setting—how the environment is made accessible for instruction and assessment, and
- Scheduling—how time demands and schedules may be adjusted.

The state of Florida has adopted rigorous educational standards, known as Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, to ensure students become college, career and life ready. Together, these standards define the core content of the general education curriculum. Accommodations assist in making grade-level standards accessible to students with disabilities. Students are taught knowledge and skills specified in the standards in kindergarten through Grade 12. Some students with significant cognitive disabilities require modifications to achieve grade-level standards. These students may learn alternate achievement standards, known as access points. Access points reflect the core intent of the standards at reduced levels of complexity.

In Florida, all students, including students with disabilities, have the opportunity to work toward grade-level academic standards or access points, as appropriate, and graduate from high school with a standard diploma. Students may use accommodations during instruction and assessment, if they need them. The goals for learning in school do not have to change because students use accommodations. Accommodations can help students with disabilities be able to meet the same requirements as students without disabilities.

Statewide assessments measure how students have been taught and have mastered the knowledge and skills required in the academic standards. In Florida, statewide assessments include the statewide standardized assessments (English Language Arts and mathematics); the statewide science assessment; the statewide standardized alternate assessments (language arts, mathematics, science and social studies); and

## CHAPTER ONE: Accommodations—A Key to Success

end-of-course (EOC) assessments for selected high school courses. Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners 2.0 (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) assessments measure the English proficiency of ELLs beginning in kindergarten and Grades 1-12. Alternate ACCESS 2.0 is an assessment for students who are ELLs in Grades 1-12 and have a significant cognitive disability.

All public school students participate in the statewide assessment program. Students with disabilities and students who are ELLs may have accommodations for statewide assessments. Generally, students use the same kinds of accommodations for classroom instruction and statewide assessments (FDOE, 2015, March 20); **however, a student may use other accommodations for classroom instruction even if they are not available on statewide assessments. Parents must be notified and give written consent for their child to use such accommodations in the classroom.** Parents must acknowledge in writing that they understand the possible impact or future consequences. A list of online resources for statewide student assessment accommodations is provided in [Appendix A](#).

### Federal and State Requirements

Florida's accountability system supports the requirements of federal law regarding participation of all students, including students with disabilities, in standards-based instruction and assessment. The Every Student Succeeds Act, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), was passed in December 2015. ESEA ensures that the education system will prepare every child to graduate from high school ready for college and careers (United States Department of Education, 2015, December 2).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) governs services provided for students with disabilities. Each eligible student has an individual educational plan (IEP) that documents the services the student needs. Both laws (ESEA and IDEA) require students with disabilities to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum. The laws include provisions for accommodations for instructional activities and statewide assessments. Students with a significant cognitive disability may work on access points and participate in the statewide standardized alternate assessments. The annual goals on the IEP must be aligned with grade-level standards (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2015, November 16).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that prohibits disability-based discrimination of students enrolled in public schools. When a student is disabled under Section 504 and in need of services and accommodations, the Section 504 team will develop a Section 504 plan. The Section 504 plan identifies the services and accommodations necessary for a student to access instruction and may include accommodations in the classroom and for local and state assessments.



## CHAPTER ONE: Accommodations—A Key to Success

The state of Florida ensures students with disabilities the right to a free appropriate public education and exceptional student education (ESE) services (section [s.] 1003.571, Florida Statutes [F.S.], and Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.). The requirements for the state assessment program and accommodations for students with disabilities and students who are ELLs are included in s. 1008.22(3)(a)-(c), F.S.

### **Eligibility for Accommodations**

Any student with a disability who has been evaluated and determined to have a disability under IDEA or Section 504 may have accommodations. The student's needs for accommodations are documented in an IEP or Section 504 plan.

A student who is eligible for ESE services under IDEA is identified by one or more disability. The following Florida administrative rules define the disabilities and describe eligibility criteria:

- Specific Learning Disability—[Rule 6A-6.03018, F.A.C.](#)
- Intellectual Disability—[Rule 6A-6.03011, F.A.C.](#)
- Emotional/Behavioral Disability—[Rule 6A-6.03016, F.A.C.](#)
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing—[Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C.](#)
- Visual Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.03014, F.A.C.](#)
- Dual Sensory Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.03022, F.A.C.](#)
- Orthopedic Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.030151, F.A.C.](#)
- Other Health Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.030152, F.A.C.](#)
- Traumatic Brain Injury—[Rule 6A-6.030153, F.A.C.](#)
- Speech Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.03012, F.A.C.](#)
- Language Impairment—[Rule 6A-6.030121, F.A.C.](#)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder—[Rule 6A-6.03023, F.A.C.](#)
- Developmental Delay, Ages 3-5 Years—[Rule 6A-6.03027, F.A.C.](#)

Under Section 504, an individual with a disability is defined as any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working (Rule 6A-19.001, F.A.C.). A student with a temporary disability, such as a broken arm, may need accommodations for a limited time. A Section 504 plan should be developed for students to receive accommodations in the classroom and, if necessary, on statewide assessments. The plan describes the educational impact of the student's disability and the accommodations and services the student needs to access education and other school activities in the least restrictive environment (BEES, 2011).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Selecting, Using and Evaluating Accommodations**

Teachers, parents and students are part of the IEP or 504 team that uses the problem-solving process to make decisions about instructional supports. A teacher gives a pencil grip to a student who has trouble grasping a pencil. Parents notice that their child will finish homework assignments more quickly when there are no distractions. A student who struggles to read the textbook finds that when a teacher explains the information, the student is able to understand the lesson.

Accommodations are supports that students with disabilities need and are documented in their IEP or Section 504 plan. Accommodations fit within broader frameworks that support access and progress of all students in the general education curriculum and in all tiers of instruction within an MTSS (Florida Problem Solving/Response to Intervention Project, 2015). The frameworks include universal design for learning (UDL) (Center for Applied Special Technology, 2011) and differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2014). Schools and classrooms should make accessible materials and instructional scaffolding readily available for all students. They use a problem-solving process to make decisions about accommodations and supports for individual students. (For more information about UDL and differentiated instruction, see [Chapter Three](#).)

Students with disabilities may need accommodations to make progress in the general curriculum and to function in daily life; however, selecting the same accommodation for all students with a particular disability is not appropriate. Similarly, accommodations that are unnecessary can have a negative impact on a student's performance. The accommodation should be based on the learning and behavior characteristics of the student's needs that result from the disability (Beech, 2015; BEESS, 2011).

When developing an IEP, the team must determine how the disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. The IEP includes a description of the impact of the student's disability in present-level statements or other appropriate sections. For prekindergarten students, the IEP describes how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities (Beech, 2015). A Section 504 plan describes the characteristics of the student's disability and the accommodations and services the student needs (BEESS, 2011).

IEP teams must also consider each student's need for assistive technology (AT) devices and services. An AT device is a piece of equipment or product used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. AT services are provided to help with the selection, acquisition or use of an AT device (FDOE, 2013, August 21). The IEP team assists the student in selecting, acquiring, using and evaluating the effectiveness of AT over time.

## CHAPTER TWO: Selecting, Using and Evaluating Accommodations

The following questions can help the IEP or Section 504 team select, implement and evaluate accommodations, based on the problem-solving process used in an MTSS to guide decisions about services and supports. The questions are adapted from *Developing Quality Individual Educational Plans* (Beech, 2015).

1. What instructional and assessment tasks are difficult for the student to do independently? Are these difficulties documented in the student's individual plan?
2. Why are these tasks difficult for the student?
3. What accommodations will allow the student to access information and demonstrate performance of the tasks?
4. How will the team evaluate the effectiveness of the accommodations?

This chapter provides an explanation of each question with examples that illustrate the problem-solving process.

### **1. What instructional and assessment tasks are difficult for the student to do independently? Are these difficulties documented in the student's individual plan?**

The planning team begins by identifying tasks the student has to perform independently in the general curriculum. Instructional and assessment activities involve many kinds of tasks. For example, tasks may involve reading to obtain information, writing answers to open-ended questions, solving math problems, following directions, working independently and collaborating with a group.

The student may have difficulty with specific tasks in academic, developmental and functional areas. In Florida, these areas are described in the domains that can be used to organize present-level statements and annual goals in IEPs. The descriptors provide examples of the student's needs in terms of specific skills, competencies and abilities. The table below lists the domains and subheadings with examples of descriptors from *Developing Quality Individual Educational Plans* (Beech, 2015).

#### **Domains**

##### **Curriculum and Learning Environment**

Task-Related Behavior: Effort, attention, participation, follow routines

Cognitive Processing: Apply knowledge, solve problems, sensory capabilities

Strategic Learning: Plan, organize, manage, self-monitor, note taking, test preparation

Higher Thought Processes: Clarify, estimate, analyze, evaluate, predict, deduce

Career/Employment: Workplace skills, attitudes and behavior, manage resources

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<b>Communication</b> Initiate communication, converse, use vocabulary, speech fluency, articulation
<b>Independent Functioning</b> Daily Living and Self-Care Skills: Personal care routines, safety, money management Recreation/Leisure: Community participation, activities with families and friends Physical Development: Gross motor skills, motor planning, fine motor skills
<b>Social or Emotional Behavior</b> Personal Adjustment: Self-awareness, self-determination, coping skills Interpersonal Relationships: Peer and adult interaction, turn-taking, respect

The team uses current information about the student's achievement and abilities to identify concerns within these domains. The data may come from diagnostic or formative assessments, progress monitoring and classroom work samples, as well as observational and anecdotal records. Once concerns are identified, the team focuses on the specific tasks that are difficult for the student. The following examples describe difficulties students may have with tasks used in instruction and assessment.

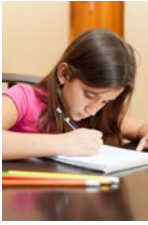
- Domain: Social and Emotional Behavior—Attention and Task Persistence  
Task: Complete assignments and assessments in class  
Marquez is easily distracted by extraneous noises. He has difficulty maintaining attention and effort and completes only 50 percent of his assignments.
- Domain: Curriculum and Learning Environment—Reading and Sensory Capabilities  
Task: Read standard print materials  
Linda has a type of visual impairment known as low vision. Based on the learning media assessment conducted one month ago, she most efficiently accesses print materials by using a nonelectric 4x dome magnifier to enlarge text for activities that involve reading.
- Domain: Curriculum and Learning Environment—Mathematics Problem Solving and Analyzing  
Task: Solve mathematical word problems  
Madison answers 75 percent of math word problems incorrectly. She has trouble determining which information is needed to solve the problem and often uses the wrong operation to calculate the answer.

- Domains: Communication and Curriculum and Learning Environment—Mode of Communication and Sensory Capabilities

Task: Hear what the teacher is saying

Leandre has a substantial hearing loss and is proficient in the use of American Sign Language for communication. He requires a sign language interpreter during the school day for all activities involving verbal and auditory language.

### Consider this Example



The IEP team identifies written expression in the Curriculum and Learning domain as a concern for Meghan, a fifth-grade student who is not performing on grade level. The team looks at more detailed information to identify specific tasks involving writing that are difficult for Meghan. Based on data from interim assessments and work samples from language arts and social studies classes, Meghan has difficulty with writing tasks that require her to organize details, ideas or events in the final product. Her responses to open-ended questions on social studies tests are also unorganized and generally include irrelevant and incorrect information.

## 2. Why are these tasks difficult for the student?

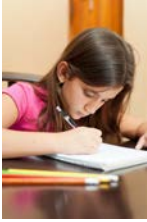
The team needs to figure out why these tasks are difficult for the student. They will look for barriers that may affect performance. Each task is considered separately.

**Analyze Expected Task Performance**—First, the team determines what the task requires and what the student is expected to do. They analyze grade-level standards along with developmental and behavioral expectations to identify the components of the task. They also determine if relevant abilities, such as communication, cognitive, physical, sensory or social/emotional abilities, are involved in performance of the task (Zabala, 2010).

**Review Current Task Performance**—Next, the team reviews how the student currently performs each component and relevant ability of the task. By comparing the requirements of the task with what the student currently can do, the team identifies gaps that can be addressed by instruction and accommodations.

The team also determines if conditions in the learning environment are a support or a barrier to student performance. The student may have strengths that can be used to support effort and motivation. Barriers may be present because the student has difficulty using standard classroom materials or tools even with accommodations or AT. The student may not be using the accommodations effectively or may need different accommodations.

### Consider this Example



The IEP team finds that Meghan has difficulty with writing tasks that involve organizing information.

**Analyze Expected Task Performance:** The team reviews the fifth-grade English Language Arts standard for writing persuasive text that requires that students create an organizational structure.

Grade-Level Standard: LAFS.5.W.1.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose.
- b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).
- d. Provide concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

Meghan has to create organizational structures in other kinds of writing tasks in addition to persuasive writing pieces. For example, she is required to manage the sequence of events in stories, link ideas and categories in informative reports, discuss time periods in history, and answer essay questions on tests.

**Review Current Task Performance:** Interim assessments and work samples reveal that Meghan always provides an introduction and conclusion in persuasive writing pieces; however, she never uses an organizational structure or linking words to show how details or reasons are related. Her responses to essay questions on social studies tests are not organized and often include irrelevant and incorrect information. In terms of relevant abilities, Meghan can use handwriting or a word processor, and she is able to express an opinion in writing. She also stays on task and completes her assignments in the allotted time. Meghan does not currently use any accommodations for writing. The following chart summarizes the analysis of Meghan's difficult task.

#### Analysis of a Difficult Task

<b>Student:</b> Meghan	<b>Grade Level:</b> 5	<b>Accommodations:</b> None
<b>Domain:</b> Curriculum and Learning Environment		
<b>Task:</b> Organize information in writing assignments and tests		

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<b>Academic Skill/Behavior Expectations</b>	<b>Student Difficulties</b>
Introduce topic and state opinion	
Support a point of view with reasons and information (create organizational structure)	Includes irrelevant and incorrect information Does not use organizational structure
Logically order reasons	Lists reasons, no logical order
Provide conclusion related to opinion	
<b>Abilities</b>	
Use written language to express opinion	
Use words, phrases, clauses to link ideas	Does not include linking words
Produce written language	
Maintain effort and attention	
Complete task on time	

### **3. What accommodations will allow the student to access the information and demonstrate performance of the tasks?**

The team can identify several accommodations and should not feel restricted to a single strategy or device. By considering multiple options, the team can select the most effective accommodation rather than the most popular. The team should make sure the accommodation matches the student’s abilities and needs. The student will need to learn how and when to use the accommodation in a satisfactory time frame (Zabala, Bowser, & Korsten, n.d.).

When thinking about possible accommodations for a student, the planning team should also consider any tools, strategies and supports that have been effective for the student in the classroom. They can be documented as accommodations to ensure that the student has access in all educational environments.

In many documents that address accommodations, including this one, examples of accommodations are grouped by categories: Presentation, Response, Setting and Scheduling. The team can use these examples to identify possible accommodations. More information about each category is provided in [Chapter Four](#) and [Appendix B](#).

## Accommodations and Modifications Defined

In Florida, modifications are defined as “changes in what a student is expected to learn, and may include changes to content, requirements, and expected level of mastery” (Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(z), F.A.C.).

Changes that modify the requirements of the standard and lower expectations can limit academic progress of the student. The following are examples of changes that modify the requirements of a standard:

- Requiring a student to learn fewer objectives (i.e., learning anything less than the full standard),
- Reducing the level of complexity of assignments and assessments, and
- Using an accessibility support that invalidates the intended construct or standard (what the task is designed to measure, e.g., using a spell checker for a spelling assignment).

Accommodations should not reduce learning expectations. In Florida, accommodations are defined as “changes that are made in how the student accesses information and demonstrates performance” (Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(a), F.A.C.).

## Narrowing the Decision

After the planning team has considered a number of possible accommodations, they can help the student select the specific accommodation. The team can use the following criteria and questions to consider the potential impact of the accommodation:

**Necessary**—Does the student require the accommodation to perform the task?

- Reduces or eliminates the impact of the student’s disability
- Increases the student’s ability to access information and demonstrate performance

**Supports Independence**—Can the student perform the task more independently with the accommodation?

- Easy to use—the least complex alternative
- Supports continued skill development and promotes self-sufficiency

**Generalizable**—Can the student use the accommodation for similar tasks?

- Use for other tasks
- Use in different settings

**Acceptable**—Does the student feel the accommodation will be helpful?

- Willing to use the accommodation
- Prefers the specific accommodation over others that are also effective



## CHAPTER TWO: Selecting, Using and Evaluating Accommodations

Students must be included in the decision-making process. Their preferences and willingness are important factors in selecting accommodations. Students may be unwilling to use an accommodation because it makes them feel different from their peers. They are also likely to abandon an accommodation when teachers and family members do not support its use.

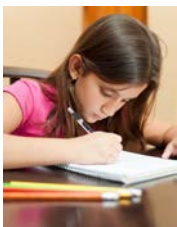
### Documenting Accommodations

Decisions about accommodations are documented on the IEP. The IEP form typically has separate sections for instructional accommodations and assessment accommodations. If a particular accommodation is not included in the preprinted list, the team can add a brief description. The location, anticipated initiation, duration and frequency of classroom accommodations must be included on the IEP (Beech, 2015).

A Section 504 plan should include a description of the accommodations and services the student needs. It may also indicate how, where and by whom the services and accommodations will be provided (BEESS, 2011).

A student with a disability can use an accommodation in the classroom even if it is not yet documented on the IEP or Section 504 plan. Accommodations are sometimes provided on a trial basis. The teacher offers coaching and monitoring to gather data and evaluate the impact of the accommodation. Once the accommodation has been determined to be effective, the student's plan can be amended. Accommodations used on statewide assessments must be documented on the student's IEP or Section 504 plan (FDOE, 2017b, pp. 3, 4 and 12).

### Consider this Example



The IEP team brainstormed the following possible accommodations for Meghan to help with writing tasks that involve organizing information:

- Outlining form for planning,
- Template or graphic organizer for planning, and
- Cue card with linking words or organizational structures.

With the assistance of her IEP team, Meghan decided she wanted to use a graphic organizer that has different organizational structures for planning and a cue card to help her remember linking words and phrases. The team felt that an outlining form would not provide enough support for Meghan.

The team also discussed the fact that Meghan may not be able to use these accommodations when she takes the statewide standardized assessment English Language Arts writing component. Meghan's parents were informed of this at the meeting and signed a written consent agreeing to her use of the accommodation in the classroom. The team made sure that Meghan would have opportunities to practice without the accommodation during classroom work and learn how to draw a graphic

organizer on the blank planning sheet that all students receive for the writing assessment.

#### **4. How will the team know if the accommodation is effective?**

Now it is time for the planning team to develop an action plan to guide the use and evaluation of the accommodation. The action plan involves the following components:

**1. Identify the specific accommodation, the environments and time period.**

If the student is using an accommodation for the first time, the impact should be carefully monitored at the outset.

**2. Determine what instruction and support the student needs to be able to use the accommodation effectively.**

- Who will provide or acquire the materials or devices? Who is responsible for initial set up and maintenance?
- What information, instruction and coaching does the student need to be able to use the accommodation?
- What information and training will teachers, parents and others need to support the student?

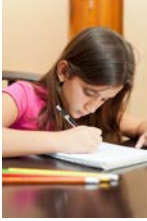
**3. Determine how the impact of the accommodation will be evaluated.**

The team will identify indicators (e.g., task completion, accuracy, productivity, rate and independence) that reflect how effectively the accommodation is used. In addition, the team should measure the impact on student performance on the targeted task. Progress toward grade-level standards can be measured using grades, progress monitoring and other assessment data. If student performance is not improving, the team will need to determine whether to continue, change or remove the accommodation (Reed, Bowser & Korsten, 2002). For any accommodation, it is important to determine the following:

- Does the student actually use the accommodation during instruction and assessment independently or with prompting?
- What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations are used, versus when they are not used? If the student did not achieve the expected level of performance, was it because of a lack of instruction, not using the accommodation, or was the accommodation ineffective?
- What difficulties does the student encounter when using the accommodations? Does using the accommodation make the student feel uncomfortable?

- How does the student feel about how well the accommodation worked (Adapted from Shyyan et al., 2016, August, p. 38)?

### Consider this Example



Meghan and her ESE teacher developed an action plan with her teachers in language arts and social studies for her new accommodations.

**Learn How to Use the Accommodations:** The ESE teacher will teach Meghan how to use the graphic organizer and cue card with linking words to plan writing tasks that include an organizational structure. Meghan will practice using the accommodations in her ESE class until she is successful and comfortable using them on her own. Her ESE teacher thought this might take three weeks.

**Use the Accommodations in One Class:** Meghan will then use the accommodations in her language arts class. For the first two assignments, her language arts teacher will remind Meghan to use the graphic organizer and cue card. After that, Meghan will be responsible for recognizing when she needs the accommodations. She will use laminated copies of the organizer and cue cards stored in the classroom. When Meghan can independently use the accommodations to create persuasive essays that meet grade-level standards, she will begin to use the accommodations in social studies class.

**Use the Accommodations in a Second Class:** The ESE teacher and language arts teacher agreed to confer with Meghan's social studies teacher. They will share tips on how to help Meghan use the accommodations in class. Meghan will store the laminated copies of the graphic organizer and cue cards in her backpack so she can use them in both classes. Meghan also asked the social studies teacher to remind her when to use these accommodations for the first three weeks because she feels uncertain that she will recognize which assignments and assessments involve organizing content.

**Evaluation Plan:** To determine the effectiveness and impact of the accommodations, Meghan and her teachers agreed to collect data using the questions on the form below each time she has a writing task. All three teachers and Meghan agreed to complete the form. They will review the outcomes each week for nine weeks.

### Accommodation Evaluation Form

<b>Student:</b> Meghan	
<b>Class:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Describe the writing task that requires an organizational structure.	
How did Meghan know when to use the graphic organizer and cue card? Pr: Prompted    Ind: Independently	Pr Ind
Did Meghan use the graphic organizer and cue card effectively to plan her writing?	Y N
Did the writing include: Evidence of an organizational structure?	Y N
Logically ordered details or reasons?	Y N
Linking words that described the relationship?	Y N
Overall, did the writing meet the expectations of the assignment or assessment?	Y N
Did the accommodations help Meghan complete the task successfully?	Y N
Assignment or Assessment Grade and Comments:	

### More on Involving Students

When considering accommodations, it is important that the student actively participate on the planning team. The student can provide important insights into accommodations he needs and is willing to use. This can avoid problems that arise when a student refuses to use a particular accommodation because it makes him feel uncomfortable.

Involving students in planning their educational programs is not new. Since 1997, students with disabilities who will be 14 years or older must be invited to participate in their IEP meetings; however, it is not necessary to wait until age 14 to involve students in planning. Students need to become knowledgeable about their own disability and feel comfortable discussing how it affects tasks they are asked to do in the school, home or community. As students mature and gain more understanding, they will be better able to make decisions about their own needs and goals.

The more involved students are in the selection process, the more likely they are to use the selected accessibility supports (accommodations), especially as they reach adolescence. Their desire to be more independent increases as well. Self-advocacy skills become critical here. Students need opportunities to learn which accessibility supports are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make certain those supports are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school. For instance, students with significant cognitive disabilities, many of whom do not have sophisticated expressive communication systems, can show teachers whether they prefer

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certain supports. It is important to not limit the option of student feedback and student self-advocacy for those who cannot communicate those preferences easily (Shyyan et al., 2016, August, p. 29).

Schools can provide a range of supports and opportunities to ensure that students are ready to enter postsecondary settings with the ability to independently select, acquire and use accommodations and assistive technologies. Examples of supports include the following:

- Elementary school: Provide a range of academic choices where students can choose how they engage with instructional activities. This may include options in content formats (e.g., text, audio and video), options in work product (e.g., handwriting, typing on a computer and drawing pictures), and options in engagement (e.g., topic selection).
- Middle school: Provide explicit problem-solving strategies so students can analyze their learning support needs, make decisions on choosing accommodations and evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions.
- High school: Give responsibility of selecting, using and evaluating accommodations to students with teachers or parents monitoring and providing feedback as needed. At this point, students should be using the independent self-determination skills that they will need in postsecondary settings.

### **Accommodations for Postsecondary Education and Careers**

When students with disabilities leave the kindergarten through Grade 12 system, they will have to make their own decisions about accommodations. This is part of the process of self-determination. Students who are effective at self-determination understand how their disability affects them. They can describe their own strengths and weaknesses. As adults, students need to be able to think about things that are hard for them to accomplish and identify accommodations they need to be successful (Bowser & Reed, 2007).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensure persons with disabilities the right to **reasonable accommodations**. As adults, they must decide if they want to tell appropriate personnel in a postsecondary institution or workplace about their disability. They must request the accommodations they need and provide documentation that shows that the accommodations are necessary; however, adults are not required to disclose their disability unless they want accommodations.

The ADA defines reasonable accommodations as “any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions.” Examples include the following:

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- Sitting on a stool instead of standing at a work station for long periods of time;
- Flexible work hours or breaks that do not impair essential functions of the job;
- Alternative formats for written material, such as audio recording or color-coded instructions; and
- Noise or distraction reduction strategies (Pacer Center, n.d.).

## CHAPTER THREE

### Integrating Accommodations with Instruction

Every day, teachers work hard to provide effective educational programs for the students in their classes. They must provide instruction that meets the needs of all students, including students with disabilities. Teachers need to identify the accommodations and decide how they will be used in instruction and assessment. In addition, they must monitor the impact of the accommodations.

#### Identifying Accommodations

Forms used for IEPs or 504 plans vary in the way information about accommodations is documented. Accommodations may be listed separately for classroom instruction and statewide assessments or referenced in other parts of the IEP or 504 plan. A sample from the Classroom/Instructional Accommodations section of the IEP included in Portal for Exceptional Education Resources (PEER) is provided next. PEER is used in the majority of Florida districts to develop and track ESE processes required by federal law and state statutes (BEES, 2016).

#### Classroom/Instructional Accommodations

<p>These guiding questions are intended to be part of a systematic process for selecting, implementing and evaluating accommodations. Be sure to check the accommodations the student is currently using.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What instructional and assessment tasks are difficult for the student to do independently? Are these difficulties documented in the present-level statement?</li> <li>2. Why are these tasks difficult for the student?</li> <li>3. What accommodations will allow the student to access the information and demonstrate performance of the tasks?</li> <li>4. How will the IEP team know if the accommodation is effective?</li> </ol> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The IEP team has considered the guiding questions prior to the selection of the accommodations.</p>				
Presentation	Initiation Date	Duration Date	Frequency	Location
<input type="checkbox"/> Signed presentation of directions				
<input type="checkbox"/> Signed presentation of items and answer choices				
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral presentation of directions				
<input type="checkbox"/> Oral presentation of items and answer choices				

## CHAPTER THREE: Integrating Accommodations with Instruction

Eligible students with disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may have a Section 504 plan that documents their needs and accommodations. An excerpt from the form in the *District Implementation Guide for Section 504: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (BEES, 2011, p. 139) is provided as follows:

Matching of Need and Accommodations. Please use the following tool to ensure that each of the student's needs identified in the evaluation are addressed in the accommodation plan. (Attach additional pages where necessary.)	
Each student need identified by the evaluation	Accommodation(s) designed to address the need
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

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After reviewing IEPs and Section 504 plans, teachers are urged to confer with the students, teachers, parents and other staff. They can provide additional guidance about the students' learning needs and describe how accommodations were provided in the past. As students become more skilled in self-advocacy, they will be able to take on more responsibility to initiate conversations about their need for accommodations.

### Planning for Classroom Accommodations

When planning instruction, teachers think about what all of their students are expected to learn and the activities they will use. Many teachers find it helpful to keep a simple list with the names of the students and their accommodations in lesson plan books. This becomes an easy reference when they plan their instruction each week.

#### Sample Accommodations List

<b>Maria</b> —Sign language interpreter for all instruction and assessment activities; sign language-to-English dictionary and thesaurus; graphic organizers to plan reports and essays
<b>Alex</b> —Concrete and visual representations of mathematical concepts and processes; biweekly collaborative planning with fifth grade mathematics teacher and ESE specialist
<b>Jerez</b> —Behavioral monitoring to maintain acceptable interactions with peers during free time between classes; small-group (five to six students) instruction for writing



## CHAPTER THREE: Integrating Accommodations with Instruction

Teachers can check the accommodations list when they are planning instruction to see what they will need to provide for individual students. They can also write a reminder in their lesson plans so they have enough time to prepare. Teachers may need to locate specialized materials or equipment or create cue cards; however, many accommodations only require that teachers remember to prompt the student.

### **Implementing Accommodations**

Teachers may find that they have to take additional steps to make sure students with disabilities can use their accommodations effectively. The student may need orientation and instruction on how to use a new accommodation. The student may also need to be reminded when to use the accommodation. The student will gain independence as the student becomes more proficient and comfortable with the accommodation. At times, a student may require the development and use of a structured behavioral support plan to encourage the use of some accommodations.

Maria, Alex and Jerez's teacher will refer to the aforementioned Accommodations List when planning instruction. He will ask the ESE department about arrangements for the sign language interpreter and sign language-to-English dictionary. He will create graphic organizers for Maria and set up biweekly meetings with the ESE specialist to discuss Alex's progress. He will ask the mathematics teacher to provide the visual and concrete materials for Alex. The teacher must also make sure that Jerez has small-group instruction for writing and his interactions are monitored during free time. This preparation will help to ensure that Maria, Alex and Jerez can participate fully in class.

### **Universal Design for Learning**

The goal of education in the 21st century is not simply mastery of content knowledge or use of new technologies. Education should help turn novice learners into expert learners—individuals who want to learn, who know how to learn strategically, and who, in their own highly individual and flexible ways, are well prepared for a lifetime of learning. The UDL helps educators meet this goal by providing a framework for understanding how to create curricula that meets the needs of all learners from the start (Center for Applied Special Technology [CAST], 2011, p. 4).

Three principles are followed in UDL for the design of curriculum, instruction and assessment:

- Provide multiple means of engagement,
- Provide multiple means of representation, and
- Provide multiple means of action and expression.

## CHAPTER THREE: Integrating Accommodations with Instruction

These principles align well with the purpose and intent of accommodations. A UDL classroom includes a variety of instructional materials, tools and equipment available for all students. Multiple means of representation (i.e., flexible formats, e.g., print, digital text, auditory and video formats); expression (i.e., flexible modes of response, e.g., writing, speaking and drawing); and engagement (i.e., flexible schedule and structure and options for sequencing and organizing) are provided as a regular part of curriculum and instruction. Curricula created using UDL principles are intentionally designed to meet the needs of all students. This includes students who are gifted and talented, students who have disabilities, and students with different abilities, backgrounds and motivations (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2013).

In a UDL classroom, all students have options, not just students with disabilities. One of the critical outcomes of a UDL classroom is that all students will learn how to self-accommodate and determine what supports or scaffolding they need for instruction. Planning for the expected variability of students includes providing options for engagement, representation, and action and expression. Choice and flexibility are key elements of UDL; however, this does not mean that students always have choices in all areas of instruction. Students need opportunities to learn in ways in which they have strengths, and they need to improve in areas in which they are less strong.

Technology and flexible digital content are important aspects of the materials used to implement UDL; however, technology and flexible content do not define UDL. Technology and materials must be accompanied by established goals and standards for learning with flexible means of achieving them. Teachers can use different methods to engage all learners. They can use assessments that enable students to show what they know and are able to do, rather than just reaffirm what they cannot do.

The *UDL Guidelines, Version 2.0* (CAST, 2011) includes recommendations and procedures that make the applications of the principles more concrete and useful. Following these guidelines, teachers can reduce barriers and optimize levels of challenge and support to meet the needs of all learners, including students with disabilities. The following description provides examples of how teachers can employ UDL guidelines when planning instruction (Zabala, J. S., personal communication, October 14, 2015).

### Provide Multiple Means of Engagement—the “Why” of Learning

Students differ in ways they can be motivated or engaged in learning. Optimizing individual choice and autonomy can help students increase self-determination, self-esteem and their feelings of connections to what they are learning. Students may not be able to choose the learning objective or standard, but they can make choices about how to reach that objective, the context or situation for achieving the objective, or the tools or supports that they will use for information gathering or production.

## CHAPTER THREE: Integrating Accommodations with Instruction

Options for self-regulation can help students strategically control or adapt their own emotional reactions and motivation. Promoting positive expectations and beliefs, sometimes called “mindset,” can enhance the personal knowledge that each student has about what is motivating. Setting personal goals, establishing sequences and timelines for activities, and participating in self-reflection activities will support the student in achieving the learning objectives.

Coaches, mentors or even simple checklists can be offered to support the students. Students may need to learn how to manage external events that may distract their efforts or produce anxiety. They can learn to deal with frustration, seek emotional support and learn to use effective coping skills to overcome difficult situations.

### Provide Multiple Means of Representation—the “What” of Learning

Alternate forms of representation of content are provided so that all students may gain essential information. For example, the novel, *Robinson Crusoe*, is available in print of varying sizes, digital text, auditory (i.e., read aloud), as a movie and in versions written at different levels of readability. Students have opportunities to choose the format (e.g., print, audio, visual, tactile or concrete objects) for obtaining information and may use multiple formats depending upon the specific instructional tasks, environmental factors, and teacher and student preference.

Supports for word recognition are also provided. For example, text-to-speech or a screen reader can be used with digital text. Individual words or phrases may be defined or read aloud just by clicking on the word. A student may annotate text using an embedded notepad or by writing in the margins of the page.

### Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression—the “How” of Learning

Depending upon the activity, students may choose to write, speak, draw or use some other method to express what they have learned and what they still need to learn. For example, students may be able to express themselves more effectively using speech or sign language than writing.

Students may need supports for action and expression to strategically plan, organize and produce the desired products. This might be in the form of simple graphic organizers or planning forms or following articulated steps of the writing process. In addition, technology can be used to support the creation of the products. Students may also choose to use different types of writing implements or electronic tools for writing or creating graphic images.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

Teachers follow the principles of differentiated instruction to be responsive to the important ways that learners differ. “There is no patented formula for creating a differentiated classroom. Rather effective differentiation is governed by a philosophy, a set of principles, and some pivotal instructional practices” (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 25).

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Many teachers find that the accommodations they provide for students with disabilities can help other students. For example, a teacher may prepare a study guide for a student with a disability who needs support for reading comprehension. The teacher can make the same study guide available to other students. The following table illustrates the three components of differentiated instruction:

<b>Three Pillars of Effective Differentiation*</b>		
<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Principles</b>	<b>Practices</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regarding diversity as normal and valuable</li><li>• Seeing every learner's potential for academic success</li><li>• Accepting responsibility for maximizing each learner's progress</li><li>• Recognizing and removing barriers that deny many learners equal access to excellence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating environments that are catalysts for learning</li><li>• Building on a foundation of a quality curriculum</li><li>• Using assessments to inform teaching and learning</li><li>• Tailoring instruction to assessment-indicated student needs</li><li>• Leading and managing a flexible classroom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning proactively to address student readiness, interest and learning profile</li><li>• Basing instructional approaches on student needs and the nature of the content</li><li>• Teaching with a growth mindset</li><li>• Assigning respectful tasks</li><li>• Using flexible grouping</li></ul>

\*Adapted from *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners*, 2nd Ed. (p. 25), by C. A. Tomlinson, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

When differentiated instruction is combined with the practices and principles of UDL, teachers can respond more effectively to the challenges of their classroom profile of students (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, n.d.). Teachers who apply these frameworks will be better able to meet the diverse needs of students, including those who need accommodations.

### **Curriculum Modifications**

In many instances, accommodations are all that a student with a disability needs to be successful in the classroom; however, teachers may find that some students with disabilities are unable to meet grade-level standards. These students may need more intensive instruction. Students with a significant cognitive disability may be unable to meet grade-level standards even with accommodations. Such students may require changes to what they are expected to learn. The IEP team may decide that a student

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with a significant cognitive disability requires intensive, direct instruction for learning and needs to be instructed on the access points of the state standards. Access points are alternate Florida Standards that reflect modified learning expectations. Parents must give their written consent for their child to be instructed in a curriculum based on the access points and to participate in the statewide standardized alternate assessments as stated in Rule 6A-6.0331(10)(b), F.A.C.; however, this option does not apply to students with disabilities who have a Section 504 plan.

If a teacher thinks that a student with a disability will not be able to achieve grade-level standards, even with accommodations, the following steps are recommended:

1. Check the student's IEP to see if the student has a significant cognitive disability and is working on access points.
2. Consult with the student's ESE teacher or other personnel in the school to find out if curriculum modifications are appropriate for this student.
3. If the student is not working on access points, teachers are encouraged to engage in systematic problem solving with the team to intensify the instruction or intervention to meet the student's needs.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating Accommodations**

The value of any accommodation should be measured in terms of its impact on the performance and attitude of the student with a disability. Some guiding questions to consider when reflecting on the impact of an accommodation include the following:

- Does the student regularly use the accommodation?
- Can the student participate fully in the activity with the accommodation?
- Can the student master the learning objectives with the accommodation?
- Did the accommodation help the student feel a part of the class?

If the answers to the questions are "Yes," then the accommodation is working. If the answer to any question is "No," then troubleshooting is needed to find out why. A different type of accommodation may be needed.

For some students, certain accommodations will always be necessary to be able to perform required tasks, such as using braille materials for reading; however, accommodations can provide a step toward independence as students continue to learn and develop and a student may become less dependent on the accommodations and more reliant on her own abilities. Teachers must continually monitor the student's skill development as well as the use and impact of the accommodations.

### **Collaboration and Support**

Collaboration is essential when providing accommodations for students with disabilities. Teachers who are open to input and ideas will find success when working with others on

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behalf of students with disabilities. When problems arise, they are not afraid to ask other teachers or parents for assistance. They often find that others have similar problems and are eager to share successful solutions.

Many individuals share responsibility for the students' educational program. Some schools hire ESE teachers to provide services in general education classrooms. Other schools schedule common planning periods or institute professional learning communities so that ESE and general education teachers can work together. Staff in counseling, school health, speech and language, and occupational and physical therapies can also provide support.

A student's IEP may describe the need for support for school personnel or staff. This support may include professional development activities to develop knowledge and skills to help the student. Support may also include consultant services, collaborative teaching, or assistance from a paraprofessional or teacher's aide. The purpose of collaboration or consultation is to ensure that the educators and parents, if appropriate, confer on a regular basis and keep informed about the student's progress and needs. The collaboration addresses problem solving, identifying needed resources, and monitoring the effectiveness and impact of the instructional program and accommodations. Documentation of the process and outcomes of collaboration must be maintained.

### **Summary**

Accommodations play an important role in meeting the needs of students with disabilities in preparing them to be career, college and life ready. Teachers are responsible for providing accommodations to students with disabilities, and students are responsible for using accommodations and making their best effort in instruction and assessment activities. To have the greatest impact, the student's use of accommodations must be continually monitored and supported through data analysis, intentional planning, implementation and evaluation of effectiveness.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Types of Accommodations

Accommodations are a key component of effective educational programs for students with disabilities. Many students with disabilities need only small changes in the way they are instructed and assessed to participate successfully in general education classes. In this chapter, accommodations are organized into four categories:

- Presentation—how students receive information,
- Responding—how students show what they know,
- Setting—how the environment is made accessible for instruction and assessment, and
- Scheduling—how time demands and schedules may be adjusted.

A general description of the types of accommodations is provided for each category along with examples. The examples do not represent all possible accommodations. Students with disabilities may need accommodations that are unique and novel and have been shown to help them learn and demonstrate competence. Such accommodations are to be provided for the student and documented on their IEP or Section 504 plan. For example, a student who is easily agitated may use a music app for calming, focusing and self-regulating. This accommodation should be described on the student's individual plan.

Information about accommodations for statewide assessments is available for the statewide standardized assessments, English Language Arts and mathematics; statewide science assessment; EOC assessments; and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. Please consult individual test administration manuals for more details. For students who participate in alternate assessments, the statewide standardized alternate assessment manual includes information about allowable adjustments to the standard method of administration. Links to test administration manuals, technical assistance papers and guidance documents are included in [Appendix A](#).

#### **Presentation Accommodations**

Presentation accommodations make it possible for students to access information for instruction and assessment. Students with disabilities may require materials in specialized presentation formats if they are unable to see or read textbooks or hear the teacher. Students may need presentation supports to facilitate their ability to read, observe and listen in the classroom.

#### **Specialized Presentation Formats**

Specialized presentation formats are described as visual, tactile, audio and multisensory formats based on the way information is displayed or presented (National Center on Accessible Educational Materials, 2015). Examples include restructured print, braille,

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large print, digital text (or e-text), audio, graphic-enhanced or symbolated text, captioned videos, images, tactile graphics, and manipulatives (FDOE, 2017, May 19).

Students with disabilities who cannot read standard print effectively may require accessible instructional materials. Instructional materials may consist of hardback or softback textbooks, electronic content, consumables, learning laboratories, manipulatives, electronic media, and computer courseware or software (FDOE, 2017, May 19). The IEP team determines the student's need for accessible instructional materials, the format of such materials and necessary accommodations.

The format of instructional materials provided to the student should be based on needs based on evaluations of how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the mastery of Florida Standards. These needs are documented on the student's IEP. The identification of appropriate instructional materials involves a review of the student's language and reading levels, assessment of the organization or structure of the content, and consideration of the way the information is presented (e.g., visual, auditory or tactile) (FDOE, 2017, May 19).

A functional vision and learning media assessment is required every three years for students with a visual impairment to evaluate how the student accesses, or may need to learn to access, printed information. Objective data are gathered on reading skills, preferred format or mode for reading, and other ways the student gathers information, such as by listening. A learning media assessment is sometimes used with other students to assist in determining the effectiveness of possible accommodations related to learning media.

Districts have flexibility in acquiring accessible materials for their students (ss. 1003.4203 and 1006.38(15), F.S.). Through the bid process, districts can require that publishers make flexible digital versions, or they may reproduce instructional materials in the format needed by the student with a disability (FDOE, 2017, May 19). Districts are also required to identify district-level digital resource managers (e.g., local assistive technology specialist [LATS], regional-LATS, teachers of the visually impaired), who can assist in acquiring accessible instructional materials for students.

Primary resources for accessible instructional materials include digital, audio or Hypertext Markup Language books from the publishers; printed materials scanned into digital format; and online libraries. The Florida Electronic Library provides free public access to licensed online resources and virtual reference works (<http://www.flelibrary.org/>). The following additional resources are available in Florida:

- **Bookshare** provides accessible materials at no cost to eligible students; however, the materials may be purchased for students who are not eligible. Available formats include braille-ready format and Digital Accessible Information System (known as DAISY) books. A no-cost text reader developed by Don Johnston, Inc., is available. Qualifications are found at <https://www.bookshare.org/cms/bookshare-me/who-qualifies>.



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- **Learning Ally** produces Florida-adopted audio books, including narrated books; provides training for eligible district staff, students and parents; and offers school memberships. Eligibility requirements are found at <http://www.learningally.org>.
- The **National Instructional Materials Access Center** provides instructional materials in specialized formats (e.g., braille, large print, digital text and audio) at no cost. The Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (FIMC-VI) and the district digital rights manager can assist teachers with registering students and obtaining files. Eligibility requirements are available at <http://www.fimcvi.org/nimas-florida/>.
- **Described and Captioned Media Program** is a no-cost loan library for described and captioned media funded by the United States Department of Education. Eligibility requirements are included at <https://dcmp.org>.

### Visual Formats

Students who may use visual formats include those who have a visual impairment and require enlarged print; students who are deaf or hard of hearing and use sign language; and students who have a print disability, including dyslexia.

**Large-print** text must be clear, with high contrast between the color of the print and the background color. The FIMC-VI assists districts with obtaining large-print materials for use in Florida's schools (FIMC-VI, n.d.). Regular print materials can be enlarged through photocopying or magnification. Text size can also be enlarged for most digital text.

**Color contrast** options provide different color combinations for background and text based on individual student needs and preferences. Color contrast options are often available for digital materials. Paper-based materials can use different colored paper and ink or tinted transparent overlays to provide options for contrast between background and text.

**Signed presentation** may be required for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and need assistance understanding printed material, especially when learning to read. In testing situations, signed presentation may be provided for directions, items and answer choices. The interpreter must use the same method of sign language as the student, such as American Sign Language, manually coded English or total communication.

**Video recordings** present stories or information as movies, giving students a visual and auditory way to access information. Videos should be **closed-captioned** with the dialogue displayed in text at the bottom of the screen. **Descriptive video** adds a verbal description of key visual elements, such as actions, gestures, facial expressions and scene changes to help individuals follow the story.

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**Closed captioning** or **American Sign Language videos** may be provided for text presented in an auditory format. Apps may be used on the computer, tablet or smartphone that provide closed captioning or American Sign Language translation for speech.

### **Tactile Formats**

Tactile materials provide information in a raised format accessed through touch. Students who have a visual impairment may use tactile formats.

**Braille** represents text using a raised-dot code read by touch with the fingertips. The current braille code for the United States has been designated as Unified English Braille (UEB). Students who were instructed in the old braille code, English Braille American Edition, should receive instruction in the new code.

**Refreshable braille displays** create temporary print-to-braille transformations. Braille characters are displayed on a flexible membrane by a series of movable pins. Refreshable braille displays are read one line of text at a time, which can affect the amount of time a person needs to read text.

**Nemeth braille code** conveys mathematical and scientific expressions in a tactile format. Nemeth code uses the same set of braille cells as literary braille; however, most cells have new meanings to express technical symbols (Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, n.d.b.). The new braille code (UEB) also has mathematical symbols.

**Tactile graphic images** are provided in a raised format. Tactile images and symbols represent the content and concepts of graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams and illustrations). A tactile graphic is not a straight reproduction of the print graphic. It does not include symbols expected by visual readers, such as color and artistic embellishment.

**Tools and equipment** may have braille or tactile symbols. For example, calculators, clocks and rulers are available with braille or raised numerical symbols.

**Haptics or haptic feedback** may involve the use of touch in a user interface design of a computer, tablet or smartphone. Vibrations are activated to denote that a touchscreen button has been pressed. Other forms of haptic feedback can be provided by a resistive force in a joystick or input device (Mobile Burn, 2013). Some students may need other types of devices, such as a refreshable haptic display (Copeland, 2011, January).

**Real objects** may be used instead of printed images. For example, students may use real coins instead of a printed image. Students also may use real objects as a means of communication.

### **Auditory Formats**

Students who are unable to read text may require presentation in an oral or auditory format. This may include students who have a visual impairment, as well as students who have a print disability.

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A person can **read the text aloud** to the student. The reader should read to an individual student, not a group of students. The student can ask the reader to slow down or repeat text. When reading mathematics and science content, the reader gives the correct name or description of symbols and graphics. In testing situations, directions, test items and answer choices may be presented orally. Test items may not be reworded, summarized or simplified. The reader should use an even inflection so that auditory cues are not provided to the answers (Shyyan et al., 2016, August).

**Recorded books and texts** are produced as digital files. Audio files should be accompanied by a print or braille version of the text, particularly if graphic information is included. Classroom materials may be purchased in audio format. Instructions, assignments and lectures may be recorded in the classroom.

A **screen reader** uses text-to-speech software to convert digital text into synthesized voice output for text displayed on a screen (American Foundation for the Blind, 2017c). The screen reader generally allows customization of voice, speech, volume and speed. Specialized software can support mathematical language, such as graphs and formulas, e.g., Math Talk or Scientific Notebook interfaces with Dragon Naturally Speaking and speech-to-text software (<http://metroplexvoice.com>).

Equipment with **auditory output** includes talking clocks, calculators, scales, thermometers, voltmeters and timers. Light probes and special adapters are available that transform visual and digital signals into audio outputs.

### **Paper-Based Presentation Options for Computer and Online Programs**

Many instructional materials and assessments are available as computer-based programs with embedded accommodations, such as text-to-speech and masking. A student with a disability who is unable to access the instructional materials or assessment because a necessary accommodation is not available on the computer may use paper-based materials (FDOE, 2017a,b). Materials may be provided in regular print, large print and braille; with one item or fewer items per page and increased spacing between items. Students may also use other accommodations to support their use of paper-based materials (see Supports for Visual Enhancement in the following subsection).

### **Presentation Supports**

Presentation supports facilitate a student's use of standard print, graphic materials or spoken language when reading or listening to explanations and discussions.

#### **Supports for Visual Enhancement**

Students who have difficulty with visual acuity, visual perception or attention span may benefit from tools and techniques that help focus their attention.

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**Magnification equipment** enlarges printed material or objects. Students may use eyeglass-mounted magnifiers, free-standing or handheld electronic or nonelectronic magnifiers, and magnifying bars. Computers, tablets and smartphones generally have display enlargement (zoom) or screen magnification software. Special lenses can be attached to smartphones and tablets to assist in magnification. Video magnifiers or closed circuit television (CCTV) systems use a stand-mounted or handheld video camera to display a magnified image onto a video monitor, television screen or computer monitor (American Foundation for the Blind, 2017a).

**Reduced glare or direct lighting** increases the visibility of print material.

**Minimized visual distraction** helps students who have difficulty directing attention. Materials should be provided with simple backgrounds, predictable visual layout, and separate displays of text and graphics.

**Colored transparencies or overlays** may enhance contrast and reduce glare to increase legibility of printed materials. **Colored transparent filters** can also be placed over a computer screen if embedded optional digital contrast filters are not enabled or available. A student may use glasses with specially colored lenses for this purpose.

**Visual cues** with color, bold type or highlighting direct a student's attention to selected elements of printed materials.

A **straightedge, blank card or card with a cutout window** can be used to isolate one or more lines of text at a time. Cards can also be used to mask or cover portions of an assignment. The cards help direct visual attention and may improve tracking and reading speed. The cards serve the same purpose as the **masking** tool embedded in computer programs. The tool allows the user to temporarily cover portions of the screen to direct attention to an uncovered item.

**Positioning tools** can be used to place reading materials at the proper distance and position for reading. Examples include a special tilt-top desk, slant board, book stand or paper holder.

**Materials and workbooks can be secured to the work area** so they do not move around unnecessarily. A rubber mat can be placed on top of the desk or clamps, and large binder clips or removable tape can be used to anchor materials.

### **Supports for Word Recognition**

Students who have difficulty with word recognition and decoding may need presentation supports to help them increase fluency and gain information from printed text.

**Leveled books** use sentences and vocabulary that are less complex than grade-level materials. It is important to make sure that the content addresses grade-level standards.

**Digital text** allows flexible output for alternate presentation formats (e.g., enlarged print, highlighting, multiple contrast options, auditory or braille). Digital text can display

## CHAPTER FOUR: Types of Accommodations

structural (e.g., header and sidebar) and semantic (e.g., summary, key questions and vocabulary) elements using electronic tags.

**Portable scanning devices** read individual words aloud with a definition to help students increase word recognition proficiency. Examples include a reading pen, handheld scanning translator, and electronic dictionary or thesaurus.

**Personal word lists** help students recognize and remember words they encounter in text.

**Repeated reading** helps students increase word recognition and fluency. The student reads passages aloud multiple times, and the teacher, peer or others give help with unknown words and feedback (Schumm, 1999).

### **Supports for Comprehension**

Students who have difficulty with reading comprehension may need presentation supports. Supports may help students with limited vocabulary and background knowledge or difficulty with verbal reasoning and abstract concepts. Supports for comprehension can help students identify, understand and integrate ideas presented in text.

**Preview of important vocabulary or key points** in the text helps students anticipate topics and related content.

**Advance organizers** involve a preview of the objectives, topics and subtopics, questions, or the chapter summary. They help students understand and retain information.

**Highlighting or color coding** is used to draw attention to vocabulary and key ideas in text. Some text comes with key words and phrases already highlighted for emphasis. Students can learn to identify key words and mark paper-based materials with an erasable highlighter or sticky notes. Students can also highlight digital materials electronically.

**Annotating** text helps students think about what is important as they read. Students write notes about main ideas, details and summary statements. Sticky notes can be placed on the pages. Many e-books or digital files have a note or comment feature where annotations can be recorded (Office of Academic Support, 2016).

**Study guides** help students focus attention on important content and encourage active processing of meaning. Examples include structured note-taking forms, outlines, story maps and graphic organizers.

**Hands-on activities, pictures and diagrams** help students understand abstract concepts and complex information.

## Supports for Listening

Students with disabilities may need supports for listening because they have difficulty maintaining attention, understanding how ideas are related and remembering information.

**Advance organizers** can increase understanding and retention of information when provided before presentations or lectures. They may include an overview of the content, description of activities and expectations, new vocabulary, or explanation of connections with previous lessons or background knowledge.

**Explicit cues** can help students identify the topic, main ideas and supporting details, or the steps or key components in a process. Verbal or visual cues emphasize what is important for students to remember and understand.

**Active student involvement** is facilitated through the use of questions, response cards, small-group interaction and discussion. Cooperative learning techniques, such as think/pair/share or jigsaw, are also effective for active student involvement.

**Repetition of information** by paraphrasing and summarizing facilitates student recall and understanding.

**Note-taking assistance** may include a copy of the presentation slides, an outline of the lecture or a predesigned graphic organizer. Students can also learn to take notes using a two-column, note-taking format or concept mapping. If a student is unable to take notes independently, a copy of the notes from the teacher or peer may be provided. A student may also record class lectures using an audio recorder (Levy, 2006, August).

**Amplification systems**, such as frequency modulation systems, enhance the teacher's voice output when working with students in the classroom. The teacher's voice is transmitted from a lavalier or handheld microphone through classroom speakers. This is sometimes known as a class soundfield system or small public address system (Teach Logic, n.d.).

## Supports for Following Directions

Teachers give directions many ways, such as orally, in writing, or by demonstrating and modeling. Students with disabilities who have difficulty understanding or remembering may need supports to follow instructions.

**Signals or prompts** help to obtain the student's attention when the teacher gives directions. The student may need an auditory cue, such as a change in tone of voice, or a visual or tactile cue.

**Self-instruction and self-questions** help students focus on positive attributions for success and task progress (e.g., "Read the directions first," "Take my time," and "Did I check my answer?").

A **copy of directions** from the textbook, assessment or other instructional material can be given to the student.

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**Directions can be repeated or clarified** for students, or students may paraphrase instructions.

**Sample problems and tasks** can be used to show students what to do. Explicit explanations of the model or expected behavior may be helpful.

**Simplified or graphic directions with pictures or diagrams** are used with students who cannot follow verbal or written instructions. Picture or icons illustrate each step.

The teacher uses **monitoring** to determine when the student needs help to follow instructions and get started.

**Verbal encouragement** helps the student stay on task (e.g., “Keep working” and “Answer every question”).

**Uncluttered and clearly organized materials** make it easy for students to know where to start and how to proceed.

**Visual cues**, such as color coding, icons or numbering each step of directions, help students understand tasks and expectations.

### **Response Accommodations**

Students typically respond to classroom tasks by speaking, writing, drawing or other means of expression. Response accommodations may enable students to use different ways to complete assignments, tests and activities.

#### **Alternate Response Modes**

Students with disabilities unable to respond in standard ways may need to use an alternate response mode. This may include students who have sensory or language impairments, as well as students who have motor impairments that result in difficulty with handwriting or speaking.

A **scribe** writes down or records what a student dictates, whether through speech, sign language, a communication system or device, or by pointing. The scribe may not edit or change the student’s words or ideas; however, the student can review and edit what the scribe has written (Shyyan et al., 2016, August).

A **word processor or computer** may be used by a student who has difficulty with handwriting. A student may use an AT device, such as touch screen, trackball, mouth stick or head wand, pointing devices, or alternative keyboards for typing. Speech-to-text conversion or voice recognition software can be used to dictate text or give commands to the computer. In some testing situations, the spelling and grammar check feature must be turned off (Shyyan et al., 2016, August).

**Word prediction software** provides a list of choices based on words previously typed. The predictions are based on spelling, syntax, and frequent and recent use. This enables students to use proper spelling, grammar and vocabulary with fewer keystrokes (DO-IT Center, 2015, August 24).

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A **braillewriter (brailier)** has a six-key braille keyboard for producing hard-copy braille.

**Portable note-taking devices** are small, lightweight devices equipped with a braille or standard keyboard for input. Some devices have additional features, such as a calculator and calendar, and can be connected to the Internet or personal computer to exchange files or print. Applications can record audio notes and allow the user to enter written notes with a keyboard on smartphones and tablets (Kendrick, 2011, July; American Foundation for the Blind, 2017b).

**Voice recorders** copy speech electronically. Voice recorders are often included in apps used in smartphones, tablets or computers.

**Voice recognition software** converts speech to text, so the student can use voice to dictate text and give commands to the computer.

**Sign language** is used for communication, primarily by students who are deaf or hard of hearing. American Sign Language, manually coded English and finger spelling are different types of sign language. Some students combine sign language with voice (total communication). Students may need an interpreter when they communicate with persons who do not know sign language.

**Cued speech** is a visual mode of communication in which mouth movements of speech combine with “cues” made by placement and movement of the speaker’s hands to make the sounds (phonemes) of traditional spoken languages look different. Cued speech (language) transliterators are professionals that facilitate communication between individuals who use spoken language and those who use cued speech. They may convey everything that is said as well as sounds in the environment (Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center and Boston Children’s Hospital, 2015; National Cued Speech Association™, 2017).

**Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)** includes all forms of communication, except oral speech, that are used to express thoughts and ideas. The forms include facial expressions, gestures, symbols, pictures and writing. Aided communication methods range from paper and pencil to communication boards. Electronic devices produce voice output, written output or both. Individuals may rely on AAC to supplement or replace their own speech (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2017a).

### **Response Supports**

Students use response supports to facilitate their use of standard methods for expression. Written expression involves language conveyed by text. Oral expression involves language conveyed by speaking.

### **Supports for Handwriting**

Students with disabilities who write illegibly may have problems with letter formation, letter size, letter and word spacing, and writing on or between the lines. Difficulties may



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result from poor postural control, fine motor impairments, visual impairments, visual perception or attention difficulties. Teachers are encouraged to consult with the local AT specialist when selecting tools or equipment. The occupational therapist can also determine the need for specialized furniture or adapted tools.

**Pencils, markers or crayons** of different diameters, pencils with softer lead and softer crayons may be used by students who have difficulty grasping or controlling writing implements. Mechanical pencils and nonabrasive erasers help students who use excessive pressure when writing (Rein, 1997/2001). High-contrast writing tools, such as markers, felt-tipped pens and soft-lead pencils, help students with visual impairments read their own writing.

**Pencil or pen grips** enlarge or adapt the shape of standard writing tools to correctly position the fingers and hand when writing. They include triangular or pear-shaped grips and grips with indentations for fingers (Rein, 1997/2001).

**Finger spacers** help students use proper spacing between letters and words. Spacers can be purchased or made out of cardboard or plastic. Some spacers feature an arrow for directionality and a window for tracking when reading (Rein, 1997/2001).

**Handwriting guides** or templates help students stay within a defined writing space. The student lays the guide on top of a regular sheet of paper with a cutout area for writing that exposes the space between the lines (Rein, 1997/2001).

**Alphabet strips** provide a model for students to guide letter formation in manuscript or cursive style.

**Specialized writing paper** provides prompts or visual cues to guide handwriting. The paper may have wider lines, colored or shaded areas between the lines, colored lines or raised lines as tactile cues. Students may also write on every other line on a sheet of lined paper. Gridded paper can be used to help students organize numbers for mathematics computation, allowing one digit per cell (Rein, 1997/2001).

**Visual cues** can be added to standard writing paper, such as highlighting the left margin or drawing lines for margins. A paper can be divided into sections by drawing lines, folding or covering parts of the text.

**Paper stabilizers** position paper at an appropriate place on the desk and keep it from moving. Removable tape also can be used to hold paper in place. Nonslip mats or rubberized netting will stabilize a binder or clipboard (Rein, 1997/2001).

**Slant boards** hold a paper at an optimum angle for writing. A slant board can be made with an empty three-ring binder.

**Physical support or positioning** may be needed to stabilize students who have a physical impairment. Students with limited mobility may also need assistance manipulating instructional materials, objects and equipment.

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**Periodic checks by the teacher** may be used to be sure the student is responding to the task as instructed.

The student may **respond directly on a consumable worksheet**. As an alternative, the student can use erasable markers on clear sheets of acetate overlaying the text. The student may need two copies of a worksheet—one for a draft and one for the final copy.

### **Supports for Written Expression**

Students with disabilities may have difficulty planning and drafting writing because they have insufficient understanding of text structure, topics or audience. Some students have difficulty with linguistic knowledge, including spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure and mechanics (i.e., grammar, punctuation and capitalization).

**Dictionaries and thesauruses** can assist the student with word choice when writing. Some devices include electronic or talking dictionaries that check spelling and grammar usage as well as word meaning. An ELL student may require native language translation dictionaries.

**Strategies, templates, checklists and grammar rules** can be printed on personal cue cards or posted in the classroom as quick reference guides.

An **individualized spelling list** or a personal dictionary of frequently used vocabulary may help the student with word choice when writing.

**Spelling and grammar check** features are available in word processing programs. Talking spelling and grammar devices allow the student to enter an approximate spelling or usage of the word and then see and hear the correct version.

**Graphic organizers and outlining** help students identify or create a structure for organizing information in patterns or diagrams. Students can use paper-based graphic organizers or software for planning reports, essays and content maps.

### **Supports for Oral Expression**

Students with disabilities who have difficulty using spoken language may need accommodations to get their message across.

**Increased wait time** may provide students the opportunity to think about what they want to say and how they will say it. Teachers and peers should not interrupt or speak for students.

**Use of visual images** can help students convey their spoken message through pictures, drawings or other graphics.

### **Supports for Mathematics**

Some students have difficulty with mathematical tasks. They may struggle with mathematical symbols, how to solve problems or apply abstract concepts. Some students with disabilities require concrete materials or visual representations as an accommodation.

## CHAPTER FOUR: Types of Accommodations

**Calculation devices** may be needed by students whose disabilities affect calculation, but not mathematics reasoning. Devices include the calculator, abacus, geoboard or special software (Math Windows® and Graphic Aid for Mathematics).

It is important to determine whether the use of a calculation device is a matter of convenience or a necessary accommodation. For example, if students are learning how to subtract, a calculator does not show the steps for regrouping. On the other hand, if students are learning problem-solving skills that involve subtraction (e.g., shopping for items), a calculation device may be appropriate. Adapted calculators are available with large keys or voice output (talking calculators) for students with visual impairments. In testing situations, calculator use may be limited for certain items or grade levels.

**Tactile tools and materials** may be used by students with visual impairments. They include raised line or braille-embossed number line, tactile graphic forms, geoboard, manipulatives for counting and number systems, tactile and braille rulers and protractors, and clocks with braille numerals (Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, n.d.a). Students may use a light box to assist with the identification of objects. The use of raised lines or rough surfaces on materials can provide tactile feedback to help students identify the image or object.

**A chart of math facts** may be used by students who are not fluent with basic math facts. In testing situations, students may not allowed to use fact charts.

**Concrete materials and manipulatives** are used by students to represent mathematical concepts and procedures. Some materials may be created by three-dimensional printers.

**Visual representations** display simple and complex mathematical concepts and procedures using visuals, such as diagrams, flowcharts and computer animations.

**Specialized mathematical image descriptions** may be needed by students to increase accessibility of instructional materials that include graphs, math diagrams, geometric figures, and equations and expressions. Some software programs can translate mathematical formulas into speech (Diagram Center, n.d.).

**Planning guides** with a list of steps or flowchart can help students recall what to do when solving math problems.

**Special paper**, including gridded or graph paper, can help students line up digits for computation.

### Setting Accommodations

Setting accommodations involve changes in the location or conditions of the educational environment. Accommodations can address accessibility issues, behavior and attention, and organization of space and materials. Students who use accommodations that distract other students, such as a reader or scribe, may also need setting accommodations.

## **Physical Accessibility**

Accessibility refers to the design of products, services and environments to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Students may need an accessible location, specific room conditions or special equipment as a result of their disability.

**Physical access** to the educational setting requires a barrier-free environment. Students should be able to access all parts of the building, including classrooms, restrooms, cafeteria, media center and school grounds. Many buildings are made accessible because they are equipped with nonslip surfaces, guide rails, ramps, elevators and automatic doors.

**Accessible workstations** include adjustable desks and tables for students who use mobility aids, such as a wheelchair. Adaptive furniture and equipment also include seating systems, standers, gait trainers, walkers, positioning devices and other types of supports, special surfaces and matting, and ergonomic equipment (Job Accommodations Network [JAN], n.d.a).

**Preferential seating** involves locating a student's desk so the student can see or hear the teacher and complete assignments. The specific location will depend on the needs of the student and the typical activities used in the classroom.

**Special lighting** or light filters may be needed by a student with eye strain or fatigue. A natural light source or alternative lighting may be required (JAN, n.d.b).

**Acoustical treatments** diminish background noise and distractions in the classroom. Window treatments, rugs or carpets, and soft materials on the walls can reduce noise. Noisy equipment, including light fixtures, should be turned off when not in use (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2017b, 2017c).

**Assignments and assessments administered in a familiar place or by a familiar person** may be needed for instruction and testing.

## **Supports for Behavior and Attention**

Students with disabilities who have difficulty maintaining attention and effort may need accommodations. Students may require positive behavioral supports or a specialized behavior management system that includes monitoring of behavior in school with regular reports to the parents. Accommodations can be included in the student's behavior plan.

**Class rules and expectations** must be enforced systematically and consistently. Rules should be clearly defined and articulated to the student and may be integrated with the individual behavior plan.

**Regular procedures and predictable routines** for beginning and ending classes can be implemented.

**Alternative activities** can be used during unstructured time. The student needs to know how to access and perform the activities.

## CHAPTER FOUR: Types of Accommodations

**Reduced sources of distractions** can help students concentrate. The student should be seated away from windows, heating or cooling vents, doors, resource areas, and other disruptions. An enclosed study carrel or sound absorption panel will block out distractions.

**Preferential seating** can be used to position the student's desk away from busy parts of the classroom or closer to the teacher.

**Noise buffers** can reduce auditory distractions and help the student concentrate and maintain focus. Examples include headphones, earphones and earplugs, white noise (environmental sound machines), and approved music.

**Small-group or other special grouping arrangements** may be required for students who need additional personal attention and support. Some students need assistance on tasks, small-group instruction or tutoring. An aide can help the student if the teacher is not available. The size of the group (teacher-to-pupil ratio) must be specified in the description of the accommodation.

**Individual settings** may be needed if the student cannot work in a group. Some students learn better when they can read and think aloud. Other students have difficulty controlling behaviors that may distract other students.

**Increased or decreased opportunity for movement** may be provided for students. Some students may need to move in the classroom without disrupting other students. Other students may need to be kept from wandering.

### **Organization of Space and Materials**

Students with disabilities may have trouble managing their own space and materials in the classroom. Some do not complete tasks because they cannot find the resources they need.

**Compartmentalized containers** can be used to keep personal materials organized in the student's desk or locker. Bookends, plastic containers, and bags or folders may be used.

**Diagrams** that show how to organize books and materials can be posted inside the locker for reference.

**Checklists** of materials needed for each class can be stored in the student's locker or binder.

**Binders** with color-coded dividers or folders can keep materials for each subject separate. They can help students organize their assignments and handouts.

A **limited amount of materials** can be given to the student at a time.

**Access to learning resources** and instructional materials outside of class can be provided. A student may keep a copy at home and another copy at school.

## **Scheduling Accommodations**

Scheduling accommodations involve changes in how time is allocated, scheduled and managed. Students may need scheduling accommodations to address issues related to effort, rate of performance, attention, and their own ability to monitor and manage time.

### **Time Allocation**

Changes in the amount of time or the way the time is organized for activities can be provided as an accommodation. Some students do better when not under the pressure of a strict schedule. Others need more time because they read and process information slowly. Students may also need extended time to use certain accommodations, such as AT, braille and dictation.

**Extended time** can be provided for assignments and assessments. The amount of additional time should be determined on a case-by-case basis. Unlimited time is not feasible.

**Breaks** may be given during tasks. A timer can signal the end of the break.

**Schedule adjustments** allow activities to be scheduled at a particular time or day of the week or for a number of days. The performance of students with health-related impairments can vary because of medications or diminishing energy levels.

### **Time Management**

Complex tasks can be difficult for students who struggle to work on more than one thing at a time. Students may forget instructions and get tasks confused because they are easily distracted. They may give up easily and not go back and check their work.

**Established timelines and predictable routines** provide structure to the school day and help the student know what to expect.

**Separating tasks into parts** gives the student a manageable way to complete lengthy assignments.

**Timelines** can be used to help the student keep track of progress.

**Checklists** of individual responsibilities can help the student know what is expected.

**Assignment planners or visual schedules** identify subjects, assignments and timelines. The student may record important information and dates in a journal, assignment planner, homework log or calendar.

**Electronic devices** with alarms or signals can be used to remind the student of important dates and meetings. A timer is used to define work periods.

## **Accommodations Not Allowed for Statewide Testing**

Some accommodations are not allowed on statewide assessments. When a student uses an accommodation that is not allowed, the test results may be declared invalid (FDOE, 2017a; 2017b). Examples include the following:

- Oral presentation by a test administrator or text-to-speech for passages in statewide standardized assessments reading and writing items,
- Signed presentation for passages in statewide standardized assessments reading and writing items,
- Use of devices to check spelling or grammar,
- Use of a calculator for computation in grades 3-6 statewide standardized assessments in mathematics,
- Use of multiplication charts or tables,
- Use of manipulative materials except when approved for use with braille materials,
- Use of assistive devices that violate the purpose of the test, and
- Unlimited time to complete a test session.

Students with disabilities may have any accommodations they need for instruction, even if the accommodation is not available on statewide assessments. If a nonallowed accommodation is recommended for instruction, parents must be notified and give signed consent for its use in the classroom. Parents must acknowledge in writing that they understand the possible impact and consequences of using a nonallowed accommodation.

### **Unique Accommodations**

Students with disabilities may require unique accommodations for statewide assessments that require changes to existing test materials, presentation or administration guidelines. The unique accommodation must be regularly used by the student for classroom instruction and must not threaten the security of the assessment or negate the validity of the assessment. District-level staff must review accommodation requests before they are sent to FDOE. The Commissioner of Education or designee must approve each request for a unique accommodation in advance and prior to its use. Written requests for unique accommodations must be submitted using the *Unique Accommodations Request Form* provided by FDOE. The request must include a copy of the student's IEP or Section 504 plan along with signatures of the district exceptional education director and the district assessment coordinator or district alternate assessment coordinator. Such requests must be submitted each year that the student needs the unique accommodation (BEESS, 2015; FDOE, 2017b).

## CHAPTER FOUR: Types of Accommodations

### **Summary**

There are many ways to support students with disabilities in the classroom. The IEP or Section 504 plan team decides which accommodations the student needs.

A quick reference guide with a list of the accommodations matched to the effect of the disability or learning difficulty is included in [Appendix B](#).



**APPENDIX A**  
**Online Resources—Accommodations for**  
**Statewide Student Assessments**

## Online Resources—Accommodations for Statewide Student Assessments

This list provides links to FDOE websites that inform educators and parents about educational standards, statewide testing requirements and accommodations for students with disabilities, and related Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

### Manuals and Papers

BEESS Publications and Presentations

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/presentations-pubs/index.shtml>

Technical Assistance Papers

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/technical-assistance-papers-memos-note.shtml>

### Websites and Information

Florida Standards Assessments (English Language Arts and Mathematics)

<http://www.fsassessments.org>

Statewide Science Assessment

<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/science.shtml>

Florida End-of-Course Assessments

<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/end-of-course-eoc-assessments/index.shtml>

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners 2.0 (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0) and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/access-for-ells.shtml>

Florida Standards Alternate Assessment

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/fl-alternate-assessment.shtml>

Technical Assistance Paper, DPS: 2015-16, Waiver of Statewide, Standardized Assessment Results for Students with Disabilities

<https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7321/dps-2015-16.pdf>

Technical Assistance Paper, DPS: 2014-208, Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities

<https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7301/dps-2014-208.pdf>

## Appendix A: Online Resources

*Florida Standards Assessments Spring/Summer 2017 Computer-Based Test Administration Manual: Grades 8-10/Retake ELA Writing, Grades 4-10/Retake ELA Reading, Grades 3-8 Mathematics, End-of-Course Assessments.*

<http://fsassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SPSU17-FL-CBT-TAM-508.pdf>

*Florida Standards Assessments Test Administrator User Guide 2017-2018*

[http://fsassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/FSA\\_TA\\_UserGuide\\_2017-18\\_FINAL\\_082317.pdf](http://fsassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/FSA_TA_UserGuide_2017-18_FINAL_082317.pdf)

*Accommodations for Florida's Statewide Student Assessments (2015)*

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/statewideassessmentaccommodations.pdf>

### **Florida Statutes and Administrative Rules**

#### **Florida Statutes**

<http://www.leq.state.fl.us/Statutes/>

#### **State Board of Education Rules (Florida Administrative Code)**

<http://www.fldoe.org/rules>

#### **Students with Disabilities**

[Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.](#), Provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities

[Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.](#), General Education Intervention Procedures, Evaluation, Determination of Eligibility, Reevaluation and the Provision of Exceptional Student Education Services

[Rule 6A-19.001, F.A.C.](#), Scope, Coverage and Definitions

#### **Educational Standards**

[Section 1003.41, F.S.](#), Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

[Section 1003.4282, F.S.](#), Requirements for a standard high school diploma

[Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C.](#), Student Performance Standards

[Rule 6A-1.09963, F.A.C.](#), High School Graduation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

#### **Assessment and Accommodations**

[Section 1008.212, F.S.](#), Students with disabilities; extraordinary exemption

[Section 1008.22, F.S.](#), Student assessment program for public schools

[Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C.](#), Statewide, Standardized Program Requirements

[Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C.](#), Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities

[Rule 6A-6.09091, F.A.C.](#), Accommodations of the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for English Language Learners

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide**

This quick reference guide provides examples of the effects of a disability and related accommodations. It is not a comprehensive list of all possible effects of a disability and accommodations. A student may require unique and novel accommodations to learn and demonstrate performance. A student may use accommodations not included in this guide as long as the IEP or Section 504 plan team determines that the student needs them. The value of any accommodation is ultimately measured in terms of its impact on the performance of the student in the classroom.

## Presentation Accommodations

<b>Specialized Presentation Formats</b>	
<b>Effect of Disability</b>	<b>Accommodations</b>
<b>Visual Formats</b>	
Unable to see regular print, needs enlargement	<p>Large-print, paper-based materials</p> <p>Enlarged text on computer-based programs</p>
Difficulty understanding language in printed text, uses sign language or cued speech	<p>Signed presentation of directions or text information (may accompany text for beginning readers)</p> <p>Signed presentation of items and answer choices</p> <p>English-to-sign language or sign language-to-English dictionary; sign picture, word, synonyms and index only; no definitions (students who use sign language as their primary means of communication)</p> <p>Cued speech transliterator to assist communication</p>
Unable to hear and understand oral language	<p>Video recording with closed captioning and descriptive video</p> <p>Audio recording with closed captioning or American Sign Language video</p>
Unable to use computer-based or online programs	Paper-based materials (e.g., regular print, large print, braille materials or one-item-per-page documents)
<b>Tactile Formats</b>	
Unable to see print, uses tactile formats (for students who have a visual impairment)	<p>Braille materials or documents</p> <p>Refreshable braille display</p> <p>Nemeth Braille Code</p> <p>Tactile graphic image</p> <p>Real coins or objects</p> <p>Light box</p> <p>Raised number line</p> <p>Braille ruler</p> <p>Enhanced tactile feedback (haptics)</p>

Appendix B: Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Auditory Formats</b>	
Unable to see print or recognize or decode printed words, uses auditory format	Oral presentation of directions and text information Oral presentation of items and answer choices Read aloud by a person Recorded books and text recordings Screen-reader software—text-to-speech Equipment with auditory output Auditory recording and playback devices
<b>Presentation Formats</b>	
<b>Visual Enhancement</b>	
Difficulty seeing standard print, needs enlargement	Magnification equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Computer and tablet screen magnification (zoom)</li> <li>• Video magnifier</li> </ul>
Difficulty seeing print	Enlarged font on computer-based materials Large-print, paper-based materials Reading passage booklet (paper based) Color contrast (background and font) for paper- and computer-based materials Visual cues (e.g., colors, highlighting and bold text) Reduced glare or direct lighting Minimized visual distraction using masking or other strategies Colored transparencies or overlays or eyeglasses with colored lens One-item-per-page document Fewer items per page Increased space between items Verbal description of images or reading descriptive text provided (students with a visual impairment)

Appendix B: Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Visual Enhancement (continued)</b>	
Loses place while reading	Blank card to mark place Card with cutout window to direct attention Portions of assignment masked or covered to direct attention to uncovered item Straight edge to enhance visual attention to text
Unable to hold print materials open  Difficulty reading on flat surface	Positioning tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tilt-top desk</li> <li>• Slant board</li> <li>• Book stand</li> <li>• Page holder</li> </ul> Materials or workbooks secured to work area
<b>Word Recognition</b>	
Difficulty with decoding  Difficulty with high-frequency sight words  Difficulty with structural analysis (e.g., affixes, root words)  Inability to read fluently	Leveled books  Digital text (tagged electronically) with audio feedback or word meanings  Portable scanning device, reading pen  Personal word list  Repeated readings

Appendix B: Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Comprehension</b>	
<p>Limited knowledge of vocabulary meaning</p> <p>Insufficient background knowledge or experience</p>	<p>Preview of vocabulary or key points</p> <p>Advance organizer</p> <p>Highlighting or color coding to mark key words or phrases</p> <p>Digital text (tagged electronically) with word meanings</p> <p>Hands-on activity, picture or diagram</p>
<p>Difficulty identifying main idea and supporting details</p> <p>Difficulty understanding text structure</p> <p>Difficulty making inferences and drawing conclusions</p>	<p>Advance organizer</p> <p>Highlighting or color coding of main ideas and details</p> <p>Annotating text</p> <p>Digital text (tagged electronically) with structural clues (e.g., header and sidebar) and summary, outline or key questions</p> <p>Study guide</p> <p>Hands-on activity, picture or diagram</p>
<b>Listening</b>	
<p>Difficulty understanding information presented orally</p> <p>Difficulty maintaining attention</p>	<p>Advance organizer</p> <p>Explicit verbal or visual cues</p>
<p>Difficulty remembering information presented orally</p>	<p>Active involvement</p> <p>Repetition and clarification of important information</p> <p>Note-taking assistance</p>
<p>Unable to hear spoken language clearly; students who use sign language or cued speech may periodically need assistance</p>	<p>Assistive listening devices</p> <p>Audio amplification devices (personal or classroom)</p> <p>Live captioning or sign language videos or apps</p> <p>Sign language interpreter</p> <p>Cued speech transliterator</p> <p>See also: Setting accommodations for sensory limitations</p>



Appendix B: Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Following Directions</b>	
<p>Difficulty remembering steps and procedures</p> <p>Difficulty understanding what is expected</p> <p>Lack of attention to detail</p> <p>Impulsive, easily distracted</p>	<p>Directions repeated or clarified</p> <p>Signal or prompt to gain attention</p> <p>Self-instruction and self-questions</p> <p>Directions with pictures or diagrams</p> <p>Simplified or graphic directions</p> <p>Copy of directions provided to student</p> <p>Opportunity to demonstrate understanding of directions (repeat or paraphrase)</p> <p>Sample problems and tasks</p> <p>Verbal encouragement (e.g., “Keep working” and “Be sure to answer every question”)</p> <p>Uncluttered and clearly organized material</p> <p>Visual cues</p> <p>Highlighting or color coding to mark key phrases or words in directions</p>

## Response Accommodations

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Alternate Response Modes</b>	
<p>Unable to respond by handwriting</p> <p>Speed of writing is too slow to keep pace with language and expression of ideas</p>	<p>Scribe to record written, signed or verbal responses</p> <p>Word processor or computer</p> <p>Word prediction software</p> <p>Braille responses</p> <p>Portable note-taking device</p> <p>Voice recorder</p> <p>Voice recognition software—speech-to-text</p>
<p>Difficulty with expressive language</p>	<p>Sign language</p> <p>English-to-sign language or sign language-to-English dictionary; sign picture, word, synonyms and index only; no definitions (students who use sign language as their primary means of communication)</p> <p>Augmentative and alternative communication device, such as communication board</p>
<p>Unable to use keyboard</p>	<p>Mouse, specialized keyboard or AT</p> <p>Computer switch, pointing device or other communication device</p> <p>Assistive devices to access computer-based programs (e.g., mouth stick and head wand)</p>

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<b>Response Supports</b>	
<b>Effect of Disability</b>	<b>Accommodations</b>
<b>Handwriting</b>	
Lack of coordination, weakness Inadequate pencil grasp Use of excessive pressure when writing Illegible handwriting	Pencil, marker or crayon of different diameters High-contrast writing tool Mechanical pencil Nonabrasive eraser Pencil or pen grip (e.g., triangular, pear-shaped and grip with finger indentations)
Errors in letter and word formation or spacing Visual perceptual or spatial-orientation difficulties Illegible handwriting	Finger spacer Handwriting guide Alphabet strip Specialized writing paper (e.g., colored or raised lines and gridded paper) Visual cues on paper (e.g., stop, start and margins)
Weak postural control	Paper stabilizer Slant board Physical support or positioning
Difficulty copying work Slow production Low productivity	Periodic check by teacher to be sure student is responding to task as directed Responses recorded directly on worksheet or test booklet Word prediction software

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Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Written Expression</b>	
Weak expressive language skills Limited vocabulary Difficulties with syntax Expresses ideas orally but cannot convert into written language	Thesaurus or dictionary Word prediction software
Inconsistent use of capitalization and punctuation Missing or inappropriate grammar	Word processor with grammar check Checklist, cue card or reference card for editing Strategy or procedure for editing
Inconsistent spelling, phonetic spelling Insufficient memory for frequently used words Insufficient knowledge of common spelling words	Word processor with spell check Individualized spelling list Electronic dictionary with spell check Dictionary or thesaurus
Difficulty organizing information Difficulty identifying ideas for writing	Outlining techniques Checklists Strategies, templates and graphic organizers
<b>Oral Expression</b>	
Difficulty articulating speech Difficulty finding words Difficulty with syntax Difficulty with pragmatics	Increased wait time Use of visuals

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Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Mathematics</b>	
<p>Difficulty with computation fluency</p>	<p>Calculation devices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math Windows® (for students with a visual impairment)</li> <li>• Abacus (for students with a visual impairment)</li> <li>• Adapted calculator</li> </ul> <p>Tactile tools and materials</p> <p>Raised number line</p> <p>Chart of math facts</p> <p>Concrete materials and manipulatives</p>
<p>Difficulty with procedural skills or problem solving</p>	<p>Planning guides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graphic organizer</li> <li>• Flowchart</li> <li>• T-chart</li> </ul> <p>Special paper (e.g., gridded paper or guide to organize computation)</p>
<p>Difficulty with conceptual knowledge or application</p>	<p>Concrete models and manipulatives, including three-dimensional printed materials</p> <p>Visual representations</p> <p>Graphic aid for mathematics or geoboard (for students with a visual impairment)</p> <p>Enhancements that provide tactile feedback (haptics)</p> <p>Specialized image descriptions for mathematics</p>

## Setting Accommodations

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Physical Accessibility</b>	
Lack of mobility Unable to open doors or climb stairs	Physical access (e.g., ramps, nonslip surfaces, guide rails, automatic doors and elevators)
Difficulty using standard furniture and equipment because of motor impairments	Accessible workstation Adaptive or special furniture
Sensory limitations (vision or hearing)	Specialized lighting Devices or treatments to control glare (e.g., tinted lenses, soft surfaces and window blinds) Acoustical treatment or special room to block extraneous sounds Classroom soundfield system (small public sound address system) Preferential seating Other adaptations to the learning environment (specify)
Needs that can only be met in a specialized setting	Familiar place With a familiar person who has been appropriately trained
<b>Behavior and Attention</b>	
Lack of self-control	Class rules and expectations Regular procedures Alternative activities and choices Individual setting (i.e., one-on-one) Small-group setting Increased opportunity for movement Decreased opportunity for movement

Appendix B: Accommodations—Quick Reference Guide

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Behavior and Attention (continued)</b>	
<p>Unable to concentrate</p> <p>Difficulty maintaining attention</p>	<p>Reduced stimuli and sources of distraction</p> <p>Preferential seating</p> <p>Noise buffer</p> <p>White noise (e.g., sound machines and approved music)</p> <p>Individual setting</p> <p>Small-group setting</p>
<b>Organization of Space and Materials</b>	
<p>Difficulty organizing work space, personal space, textbooks and materials</p> <p>Insufficient attention to details</p>	<p>Compartmentalized storage container</p> <p>Diagram for storage of materials</p> <p>Checklist of required materials and tools</p> <p>Binders and folders (e.g., color-coded and tactile labels)</p> <p>Limited amount of materials available to student</p> <p>Access to materials outside of class</p>

## Scheduling Accommodations

Effect of Disability	Accommodations
<b>Time Allocation</b>	
<p>Works slowly</p> <p>Use of accommodation that requires more time</p> <p>Medical condition slows effort</p>	<p>Extended time (specify task and time)</p> <p>Breaks</p> <p>Schedule adjustments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferred time of day</li> <li>• Preferred day of week</li> </ul>
<b>Time Management</b>	
<p>Short attention span</p> <p>Difficulty staying on task until completion</p> <p>Easily distracted</p> <p>Completes assignments quickly but inaccurately</p>	<p>Predictable routines and procedures</p> <p>Established timelines</p> <p>Assignments over several brief sessions</p> <p>Time limits for assignments</p>
<p>Difficulty remembering what to do</p>	<p>Visual schedule</p> <p>Checklist of individual responsibilities</p> <p>Assignment planner</p> <p>Electronic device with alarms or cues</p>



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