

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS):

### Oral Administration

#### **For which tests is oral administration a standard accommodation?**

Oral administration is an accommodation that is provided to students who need the entire test, including the directions, questions, and most answer choices read aloud. Oral administration is a standard testing accommodation for all subject areas in grades 5 through 8 of the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) test, the End-Of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP), and the High School Assessment Program (HSAP).

Oral administration is a standard testing accommodation for all subject areas except PASS English language arts (May exam) in grades 3 and 4. In grades 3 and 4, oral administration of the PASS ELA (May exam) is a non-standard testing accommodation. Oral administration of the PASS Writing test (March exam) is a standard testing accommodation for all grades.

#### **Why is the oral administration of the English language arts (ELA) test considered a non-standard testing accommodation in grades 3 and 4 on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS)?**

Since the reading standards assessed in grades 3 and 4 include constructs that are impacted by this accommodation, oral administration of the PASS ELA in these grade levels results in invalid scores. Because oral administration for grades 3 and 4 is a non-valid administration, it may impact school and district accountability.

#### **Which students should be considered for oral administration of ELA?**

Oral administration of ELA on any state assessment should only be considered for the very few students, grades 5-12, who are truly non-readers and cannot access the grade-level content through reading due to difficulty in decoding. The characteristics of a non-reader include an inability to read written text, decode on a functional level, or read environmental print despite having received extensive evidenced-based reading instruction. One example of a non-reader would be an eighth-grade student whose reading ability significantly interferes with his or her access to the grade-level text; however, when information is presented orally to the student, he or she demonstrates adequate comprehension.

Oral administration should be provided as a testing accommodation only when it is required to provide access to the assessment for a student with a disability, not simply in an effort to assist the student to perform better.

#### **How does an IEP team determine if a student is a non-reader and requires an oral administration of the English language arts (ELA) test?**

Oral administration should only be considered as an assessment accommodation after a thorough review of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance, using all available data, and with input from all members of the IEP team. The impact of oral administration as an instructional accommodation should also be reviewed prior to determining its relevance on statewide testing.

The IEP team should have evidence to support that a student comprehends grade-level content when it is presented orally, but cannot access grade-level content through independent reading, due to difficulty with decoding even after repeated and varied instruction in reading.

There must be evidence that:

- the student has received instruction in reading; and
- even with repeated and varied attempts, he or she still cannot access the assessment without oral administration ; and
- the IEP team has reviewed, as part of this decision, results of classroom assessments, grades, and performance with specific reading programs.

Documentation that should be available to the IEP team includes the following:

- results of evidence-based interventions;
- evidence of differentiation of instruction, such as small group and one-on-one instruction in the classroom setting;
- evidence that oral administration has been used effectively in classroom assessment (e.g., significant change in scores from assessments conducted with oral administration from those in which the student read the assessment independently);
- the student's reading level, as measured through a text reading assessment. (The reading level must be from an evidence-based assessment that determines text reading level as well as contains comprehension questions. The highest text level a student can read with 90% accuracy must be documented.);
- past performance on state assessments;
- routine use of textbooks on tape/CD; and
- routine use of oral administration of classroom materials, assignments, and assessments that provides auditory access to grade-level material. (Oral administration assistance may be provided through a human reader or assistive technology.)

When every effort has been made to teach a student to read, and the student is still unable to read written text but can comprehend auditory presentation of material, then oral administration may be appropriate to consider. It is important to keep in mind that many students with disabilities progress more slowly and may still be learning to read in the third and fourth grade and may not have had access to repeated and varied instruction in reading.

### **Does oral administration of any assessment have to be provided to students individually?**

It depends; oral administration may be provided to students on an individual basis or to multiple students when using an *Oral Administration Script*. Oral administration can also be administered using CDs. Students using a CD should be comfortable using digital technology. Students who receive oral administration using the CD may receive their oral administration of instructional materials through a variety of media. Typically a student who used oral administration regularly would be familiar with digital delivery of materials through Learning Ally, books on tape/CD, or text reading software. When assessments are administered using a CD, the student must have individual access to a computer, but the assessment may take place in a computer lab with other students who are also using the CD administration. Detailed information about oral administration policies and procedures are provided in Appendix C of the *Test Administration Manual (TAM)* for each statewide assessment program.