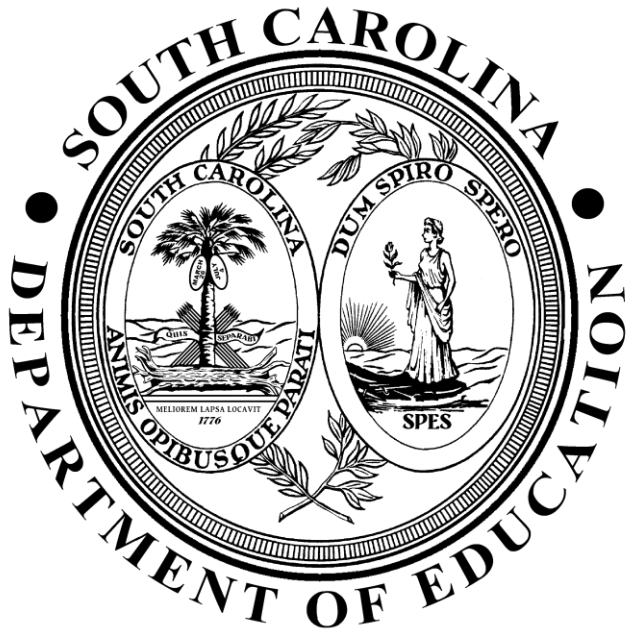


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ELLEN E. WEAVER
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



Guidance for IEP and 504 Plan Teams:

**Determining Accommodation Administration on
End-of- Course Examination Program Statewide
Assessments**

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Guidance for IEP and 504 Plan Teams: Determining Accommodations for Use During the Administration of End-of-Course Program (EOCEP)

Introduction

This document is provided to assist individualized education program (IEP) and section 504 teams in making decisions regarding whether accommodations on the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) statewide assessments are appropriate for an individual student.

The IEP or 504 Accommodations Plan team is responsible for determining the allowable accommodations a student needs to *access* statewide assessments. The intent of using the accommodation is to allow a student to demonstrate what they can do. Accommodations are not intended to provide a student an advantage in taking the assessment (i.e., selecting an accommodation for the intent of boosting a student's test score); just because an accommodation is allowable does not mean the student needs it to access the assessment.

The IEP or 504 teams must exercise caution in selecting accommodations for students to use on statewide assessments. An accommodation should not be used on statewide assessments if it has not been used by the student during instruction and classroom assessments. Giving a student an accommodation that has not been used consistently prior to an assessment may put the student at a disadvantage. When a student is assessed using an unfamiliar accommodation the result may not be an accurate depiction of what the student knows or can do.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that State and Local Educational Agency (LEA) guidelines instruct IEP or 504 Plan teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate a score (34 CFR § 300.160_(b)(2)(ii)). Non-standard accommodations interfere with the constructs that an assessment is measuring and yield invalid results. A non-standard accommodation will not give an accurate picture of what a student knows and can do in relation to the standards being assessed.

An accommodation does not reduce learning expectations. It meets specific instructional and assessment needs of a student with disabilities and allows educators to measure and know that the student's work is valid. The IEP and 504 teams should use the following guidelines when deciding whether a student who is participating in the EOCEP needs specific accommodations.

Definition of Accommodations

Setting:

The EOCEP should be administered in a setting appropriate to the student's individual needs.

Preferential Seating

The need for preferential seating is defined by the IEP/504 team. Preferential seating should be in the daily instructional/assessment accommodations portion of the student's IEP or 504 plan so that the Test Administrator (TA) knows what is expected.

Considerations: The IEP or 504 team determines if this is necessary during standardized testing based on the purpose of the accommodation during instruction. The student may need to sit closest to the point of instruction and/or sit away from distractions. This kind of accommodation can be considered if the student needs behavioral or visual/hearing support.

Small Group

There is not a standardized number of students that determines a *small group*. The student's needs as defined in the IEP or 504 Plan guide that decision. Small group for a statewide assessment administration occurs in a separate testing location. It is not at a separate table within or in a different part/section of the testing room. These would be examples of the *preferential seating* accommodation and not *small group*.

Considerations: The size of the small-group administration is consistent with the group size that has been established and provided during routine classroom assessments.

Individual Administration

The student's needs should be defined clearly in the IEP or 504 Plan. *Individual Administration*, for a statewide assessment administration, is not at a separate table within or in a different part of the room. Individual Administration is defined as one-on-one administration with a TA in a quiet, separate room. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information.

Considerations: An accommodation may require an individual administration of the assessment. The presentation of this accommodation may be, for example, read aloud to self, or a result of a special circumstance request. The student may require an atmosphere that is non-disruptive to complete the test. There are other situations where the student's behavior can create unnecessary distractions or a negative testing environment for other students. This accommodation should be consistent with the way the student is utilized for routine assessments and listed in their daily instructional accommodations portion of the IEP or 504 Plan.

Timing:

The EOCEP assessments are not timed tests. Timing accommodation includes extended breaks. Extended breaks may occur in the testing room with no contact between students or outside of the testing room with contact between students as long as contact is monitored for test security purposes. The duration of the extended break is consistent with the length of time used during routine classroom assessment as documented in the IEP.

Extended Breaks

Extended breaks are breaks that are longer than what is permitted for nondisabled students. For

example, if district policy allows all students a fifteen-minute break between test sections. Any other time extension would be determined by the IEP or 504 Plan team.

Considerations: During breaks test security must be maintained. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information about test security.

Scheduling:

The student may take portions of the EOCEP over several days, as long as all testing is completed by the last day of make-up testing. Students must begin testing on the regularly scheduled testing date and may not go back to previously completed sections of the test. Scheduling includes afternoon administration, multiple testing sessions and/or multiple testing days.

Afternoon Administration, Multiple Testing Sessions and/or Multiple Testing Days

Estimate the duration of each testing session for the student. This should be based on IEP or 504 Plan documentation of the time a student typically works on a task.

If it is determined that the student requires testing over several days, divide the test into “sections” according to the time allotted for each test session. For paper tests, each “section” should end with the last question on an odd-numbered page so that the student is not able to see test questions for the next section.

A student testing over multiple days must complete the text-dependent writing item within the day in which testing began. Please refer to the TAM for additional information regarding the writing portion of the test. During each testing session, the student may work only on test questions for that section. The student may not go back to work on any section from a previous session. For a student testing online over multiple days, the student’s test must be unlocked each day. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information about unlocking tests.

Considerations: Scheduling requires the team to be familiar with the school schedule and if it is appropriate for the student based on daily classroom assessment performance. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information.

Presentation:

The student may require that the test be presented in a different manner, such as the use of a customized format of the test.

Reading Aloud to Self

A student may read the test questions aloud to themselves. This accommodation requires individual administration of the test.

Considerations: *Read aloud to self* is an accommodation that allows a student to independently read the assessment content audibly to themselves at their own pace before selecting their answers (Elbaum et al., 2004; Fuchs et al., 2000; Overton, 2013). Use of this accommodation will require

individual administration.

Oral Administration

The student may test individually or in a general setting, as determined by the IEP/504 Plan. If students are testing in a small-group situation in the general setting, each student must have their own testing device and a set of headphones. All other requirements are embedded function of the online software. Oral administration should not be used on statewide assessments if the accommodation or a similar accommodation (i.e.) human reader vs. text-to- speech) has not been used by the student during daily instruction and classroom assessments.

An *Oral/Signed Administration Script* is available for students who test on paper, not an online administration. The *Oral/ Signed Administration Script* (OAS/SAS) provides the directions to TAs regarding the appropriate way to read or sign the test questions, passages, and answer choices to the student.

Considerations: Decisions for accommodation use need to be based on providing access to the content in the subject area. *Oral/Signed Administration* on the English 2 EOCEP should not be provided based solely on a student reading below grade level. Reading below grade level does not indicate that a student needs an oral administration. The decision to add oral administration is a data-based decision made by the IEP/504 plan. The team needs to review what the student uses *daily* in instruction and routine assessments and what the student needs in order to access the grade level material. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information.

Response Options:

The student may require an alternative method of responding to a test question.

Nonverbal Indication of Responses

A student may indicate their responses nonverbally to the TA (e.g., by pointing or by using a personal communication device).

Considerations: This procedure requires individual administration. A monitor must be present during the administration, or a video recording must be made of the entire administration. The equipment used for the video recording must be school- or district-owned. (No personal video recording devices (e.g., cell phone, tablet, laptop) can be used for the administration.)

Dictation of Responses

In an individual setting, a student dictates their answers to the TA verbally or through the use of a personal communication device that does not include spell-check, grammar-check, or word prediction programs.

Considerations: It is required that at least two adults be present during the entire session: the TA

and a monitor. Dictation to a scribe for a writing item has very specific steps that must be followed. Read and understand the steps prior to choosing this as an accommodation. The dictation procedures must be the same kind of responding the student is using during daily assessment. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information.

Braille Response Options

A student may use a Braillewriter, slate and stylus, or electronic braille note-taking device to answer test items. Refreshable Braille is currently available for the spring administration of English 2.

Considerations: A TA will transfer the student's responses to the online test. A monitor must be present to verify that the student's responses were recorded accurately. Please refer to the EOCEP TAM for additional information.

Paper Administration

The assessment is given on paper and not online.

Considerations: This is related to the student's disability and not the student's preferences. An example of a student who would need paper administration is a student with a seizure disorder who cannot access the test online because extended screen time in front of a computer is contraindicated for their medical condition. There must be evidence in the student's IEP or 504 that they are not able to take the test online and not receive any routine instruction or assessments using a computer.

Information/Data Considerations

The IEP or 504 team collects and reviews relevant data from the student's records and other sources during the decision-making process. For example, in the case of reviewing data for oral administration, it should be examined over time with multiple and/or variety pieces of data. Considerations include student's processing speed, working memory, and listening comprehension or receptive language skills.

Data that is reviewed can be from sources such as psychological evaluation reports, cognitive ability tests, achievement assessments, language assessments, district-wide assessments, individual reading assessments. Classroom observations, progress monitoring, accommodation usage logs from classroom and statewide assessments, and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) and goals in IEPs or 504 plan can be reviewed to make decisions. In addition, the type, duration, and intensity of their current services should be considered as well.

Finally, it is important for students to understand their disability and learn self-advocacy. It may be new and sometimes difficult for a student to speak about their learning preferences in the presence of authority figures. Teachers and other IEP or 504 team members play a key role when a student is allowed to advocate for themselves. The adults can help with selecting, using, and evaluating the accommodation. The student's confidence level increases, and they may be more willing to verbalize what supports are most helpful.

When a student is involved in the conversation of their own plan and selection process, the more likely the accommodation will be used. This is especially true as a student reaches adolescence, and the student has gained more independence. The student should be given opportunities to learn which kind of support is needed and how to ensure that the support is available and provided in and out of the classroom. However, if a student does not wish to use an accommodation during the test, it is to be documented that the accommodation was offered, but the student refused. The student should have many opportunities to use the support during daily instruction and assessments, as well as practicing with the End of Course Assessment Online Training Tools (OTT).

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