

# Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

## A Resource Document



**Testing/Assessment accommodations** provide students with disabilities access to state assessments and a way to show their knowledge and skill on academic content. Accommodations are designed to reduce or eliminate the effect of the student's disability without changing expectations or providing the student with an unfair advantage over her peers with or without disabilities.

**Assessment accommodations** are changes to **how the assessment is administered**, i.e., how the test is presented or how the student responds to the test. Accommodations **DO NOT** change the content of the test or the meaning of scores. They cannot alter, explain, simplify, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or question. They cannot provide prompts or hint at the correct answer. Accommodations must be related to the student's disability and her individual needs related to test-taking.

For more information on testing accommodations see the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) [Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations](#).

### VDOE Principles for TESTING Accommodations

- Accommodations should enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessments to better show their knowledge and skills.
- Accommodations must be based upon individual student need and not upon the category of disability, level of instruction, or program setting.
- Accommodations must be justified and documented in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Accommodations should be aligned with and part of daily instruction (*this means that if an accommodation is not used as part of your child's regular instructional program it should not be used during testing*).
- Accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during the administration of a state assessment.
- Accommodations should foster and aid independence for students, not create dependence.
- Only accommodations listed in the [Virginia SOL Test Implementation Manuals](#) or approved by the Virginia Department of Education through the *Special Assessment Accommodation Request* process may be used on tests that are a part of the Virginia Assessment Program.

### VDOE Approved Testing Accommodations

The following are currently approved testing accommodations. There are instances in which additional accommodations can be approved by special request. If you believe that your child needs a different type of testing accommodations, ask your IEP team about the **Special Assessment Accommodation** request process. These requests must be individually approved and are processed on a case by case basis.

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<b>Timing/Scheduling Accommodations</b> <i>Adjust the scheduling of the test</i>	<b>Setting Accommodations</b> <i>Adjust the place in which testing occurs</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple test sessions</li> <li>• Time of day</li> <li>• Order of tests</li> <li>• Planned breaks during tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test location</li> <li>• Adaptive or special furniture</li> <li>• Special lighting</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation Accommodations</b> <i>Adjust the presentation of test material and/or directions</i>	<b>Response Accommodations</b> <i>Adjust the way in which students respond to or answer test questions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written directions accompanying oral instruction</li> <li>• Specific verbal prompts</li> <li>• Visual aids</li> <li>• Amplification equipment</li> <li>• Noise-dampening equipment</li> <li>• Large print test</li> <li>• Braille test</li> <li>• Read aloud test</li> <li>• Audio test</li> <li>• Interpreting/transliterating testing directions</li> <li>• Interpreting/transliterating the test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlarged copy of the answer document</li> <li>• Communication board or choice cards</li> <li>• Examiner records responses</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Word processor or word processor with speech-to-text</li> <li>• Augmentative communication device</li> <li>• Word prediction software</li> <li>• Spelling aids</li> <li>• English dictionary</li> <li>• Dictation using a recording device</li> <li>• Dictation to a scribe</li> <li>• Read back student response</li> <li>• Calculator and arithmetic tools</li> <li>• Calculator with additional capabilities</li> <li>• Math aids</li> <li>• Dry erase board</li> <li>• Additional writing implements</li> </ul>

For more specific descriptions of what these test accommodations mean and how they can be used to help your child, you can click on the VDOE Guidelines documents below. Note that this information is routinely updated by VDOE, so check back often.

[Guidelines for Administering the Read-Aloud Accommodation for Standards of Learning Assessments](#) (Word) – Updated April 12, 2021

[Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Math Aids – Accommodation Code 19](#) (Word) – Updated January 27, 2020

[Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Assistive Technology Accommodations](#) (PDF) – effective beginning Fall, 2017

[Calculator Accommodation Criteria Form](#) (Word) – Updated June 2022