



New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership



Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities



Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership (TAP) for Transition at Cornell University

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Disclaimer

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Today's Facilitators

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the purpose of testing accommodations
- Define testing accommodations
- Understand their role in supporting a student with their testing accommodations
- Recognize that instructional accommodations used in the classroom should be aligned with the testing accommodations provided during assessment

Materials



- Testing Accommodations Manual
- Testing Accommodations Checklist
- Action Plan: “To-Do” List for Testing Accommodations
- Suggestions for Involving Students in Selecting and Implementing Accommodations
- Test Your Knowledge Quiz—Hot Topics
- Student Refusal—Parent Resource

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities



Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.



Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.



Specially-Designed Instruction

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.



Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.



Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.



Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

Do Now...



On a sticky note:



1. Identify one testing accommodation that you frequently recommend on an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
2. On the flip side of the sticky note, identify “why” you recommend the testing accommodation. Note student needs or characteristics that justify the accommodation requested.
3. Record any questions you may have regarding Testing Accommodations.

Section One

Federal and State Requirements for Testing Accommodations



Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education



§200.4(d)(2)(vi)

The IEP shall provide a statement of any individual testing accommodations to be used consistently by the student in the recommended educational program and in the administration of districtwide assessments of student achievement and, in accordance with department policy, State assessments of student achievement that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student.

Section Two

Learn About Testing Accommodations

Equal opportunity

- To participate
- To demonstrate knowledge/ability

Promote access to examinations

Based on student's individual needs



Definition of Testing Accommodations

Testing accommodations remove obstacles to the test-taking process that are presented by the disability **without reducing expectations for learning.**

Equality vs. Equity

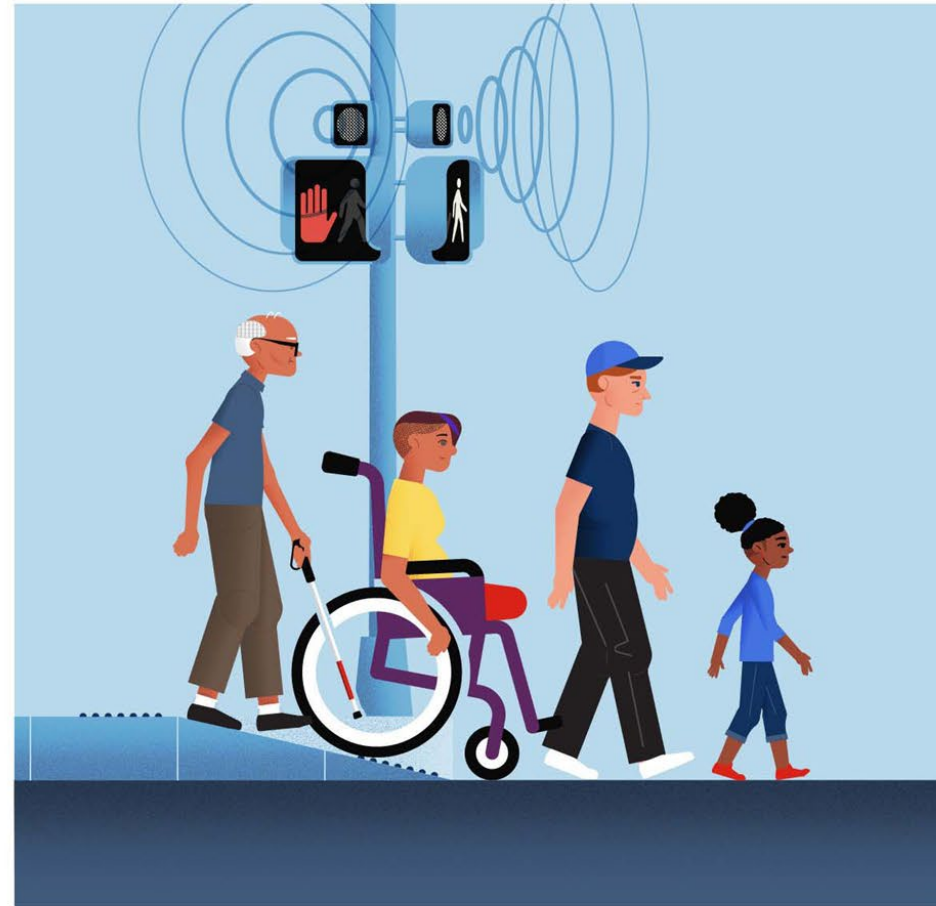
EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



Definition of Testing Modifications

- Changes made to the testing process or to the content of the assessment itself that **may change, lower, or reduce learning expectations**.
- Modifications may also alter the underlying construct of the assessment.

Examples of Testing Modifications

Examples of testing modifications that reduce expectations for learning and affect the construct of the test include:

- Simplification, clarification, or explanation of test questions/items
- Use of spell-checking devices on a test of the student's spelling skills
- Use of a calculator on a test of the student's computational skills

Accommodation vs. Modification



Categories of Testing Accommodations



- Flexibility in scheduling/timing



- Flexibility in the location/setting used for the administration of assessments



- Changes in the method of presentation



- Changes in the method of response

Flexible Scheduling/Timing



- Extended time
- Testing duration/frequent breaks
- Multiple-day administration



Factors to Consider When Recommending Extended Time



- Timing accommodations may be needed in conjunction with other testing accommodations (e.g., tests read; scribe; special equipment to record responses).



- Student characteristics requiring extended time
 - Slow cognitive processing or work rate
 - Limited physical stamina



Flexible Location/Setting



- Individually in separate location
- Small group in separate location
- Special lighting
- Adaptive or special equipment
- Special acoustics
- Minimal distractions

Method of Presentation: Revised Test Format



- Braille or large print
- Increase spacing
- Increase size, shape, or location of space for answers
- Reduce number of test items per page
- Increase size of answer bubbles
- Arrange items in vertical format with answer bubble next to choice

Method of Presentation: Revised Testing Directions



- Directions read to student
- Directions reread for each page of questions
- Language in directions simplified
- Verbs in directions underlined or highlighted
- Cues (e.g., arrows and stop signs) on answer form
- Additional examples provided

Method of Presentation: Use of Aids or Assistive Technology Devices



- Papers secured to work area with tape/magnets
- Visual magnification devices (specify type)
- Auditory amplification devices (specify type, e.g., frequency modulation [FM] system, headset)
- Audio-recorded version
- Computer-Based Test (including talking word processor)
- Masks or markers to maintain place

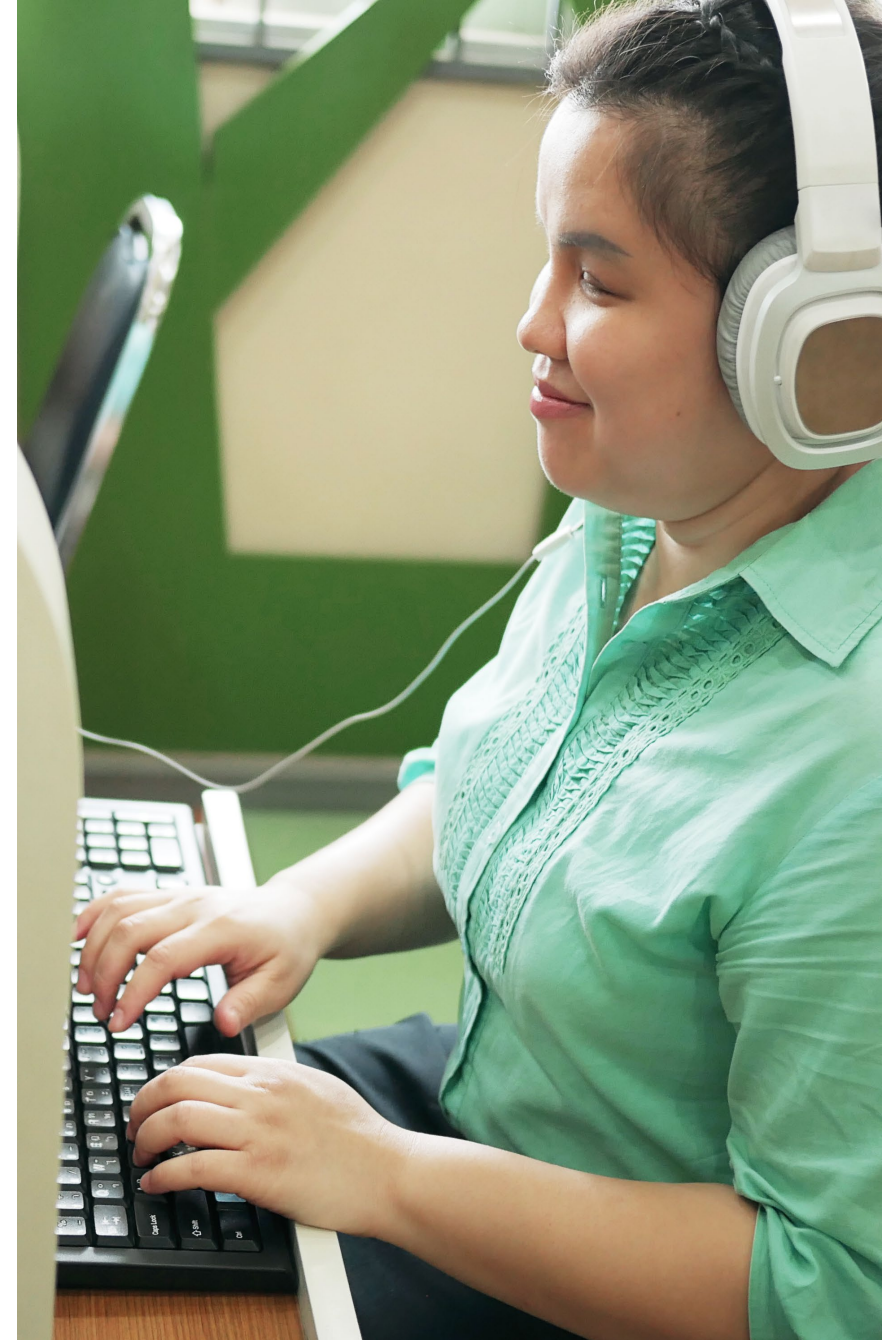
Method of Response

Need for equipment or assistance to record responses:

- Adaptive writing equipment
- Word processor or speech-to-text software
- Calculator
- Spell-check device
- Point to responses
- Record answers
- Use of scribe



Computer-Based Testing (CBT)



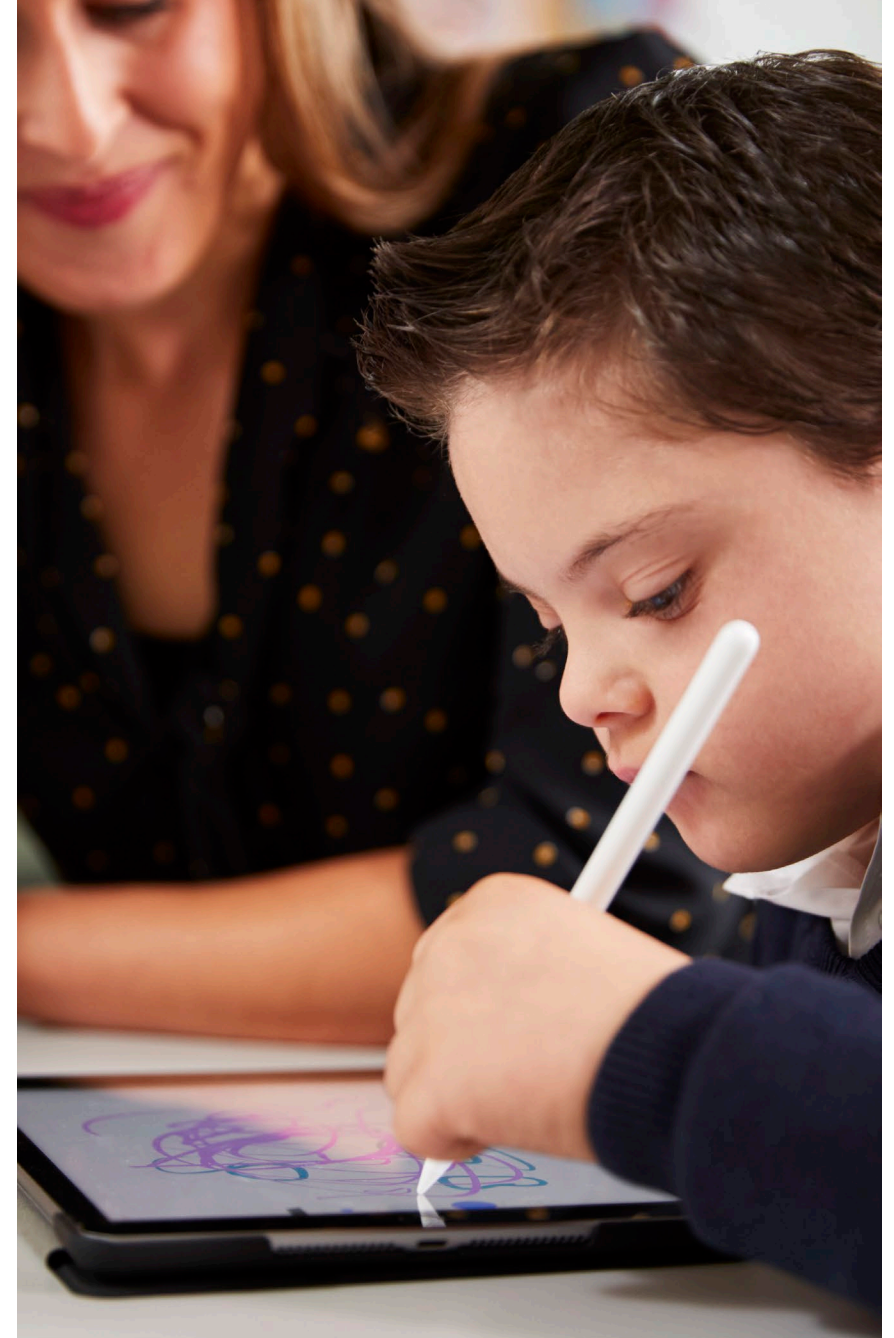
CBT Tools and Accommodations Features

NYS Office of Assessment provides additional information on:

- [CBT Tools and Accommodations](#)
- [New York State Alternate Assessment \(NYSAA\)](#)
- [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\)](#)
- [Test Manuals](#)

CBT and NYSAA: Testing Accommodations

- 6 Steps to Customize DLM Supports, p.21
- Table 3: Accessible Supports, p.24
- Supports Allowed and Not Allowed, pp. 29-30
- Appendix C: DLM Access Worksheet/ IEP Teams, pp. 75-76



CBT Tools and Accommodations

Features



CBT Tools

- Tools generally available to all test takers to access the online test materials
- May be selected by any student during testing
 - Zoom
 - Bookmark
 - Note (Notepad)
 - Highlighter
 - Answer eliminator
 - Line reader
 - Color Choices
- It is not necessary for a CBT tool that is available to all test takers to be identified as a testing accommodation on a student's IEP.

CBT Tools and Accommodations

Features (continued)

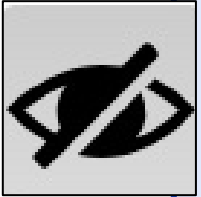


CBT Accommodations Features

- Answer masking
- Speech-to-text
- Text-to-speech
- Read Aloud (by human)

Must be listed as testing accommodations in the student's IEP.

Accommodations



Answer Masking is an embedded accommodation that allows for the responses to be shaded so the responses do not distract the focus of the student from the question.



(English Language Arts only)
Speech-to-text transcribes a spoken response as an alternative to typing. The text can then be edited. A microphone is necessary.



Text-to-Speech (online only) is an embedded accommodation that reads all student directions, passages, questions, and the answer choices for multiple-choice questions through the device's speaker. Because of this, headsets are recommended when using this accommodation.



Read Aloud (by human) is a combination of an online and human-delivered accommodation. A human reads the test, in its entirety, to the student from a paper test, and the student enters the responses on the computer, except where otherwise indicated within the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

Comparing Text-to-Speech

Text Read (paper only)	Read Aloud (by human)	Text-to-Speech (online only)
A human reads the test to the student from a paper test.	A human reads the test to the student from a paper test.	The computer reads the test to the student from the computer screen.
The student tests on paper and enters responses on paper.	The student tests on computer and enters responses on computer.	The student tests on computer and enters responses on computer.
This is a classroom-only accommodation and the student is marked as “Tested on Paper” in the Nextera Administration System when in a CBT class.	This is a combination of an online and human-delivered accommodation.	This is an online-only accommodation (the student has headphones while testing on computer).

Informed Appropriate Recommendations:

Consider the Tests Required

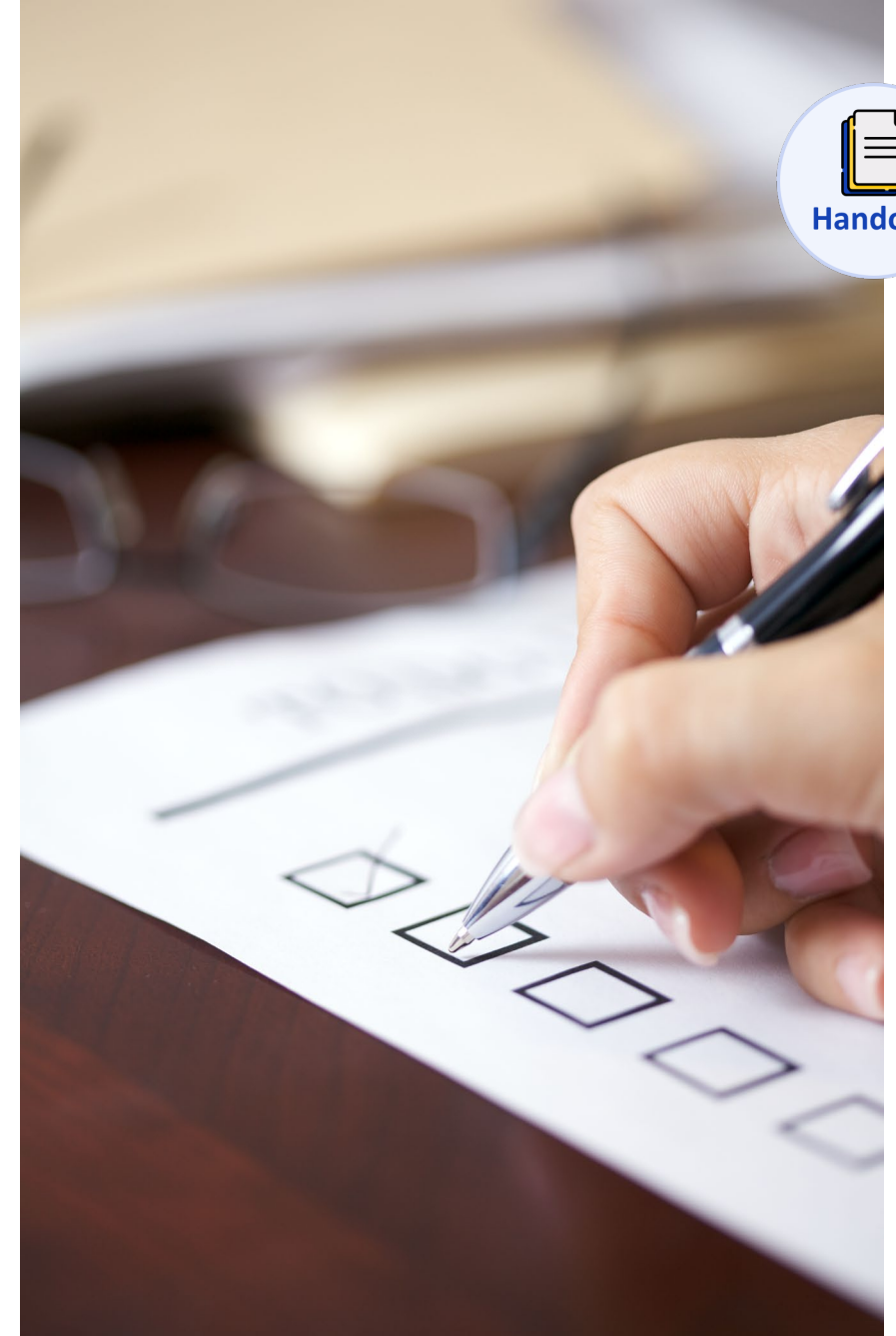
- Know the content—standard/skills measured
- Who—the grade/level being tested
- How test is administered—duration
- When—schedule
- Presentation format—paper, computer, performance-based
- Response format—multiple choice, short answer, essay
- Test score informs additional supports

Sections One and Two Questions



Reflection #1: What's Going on Your "To-Do" List?

- "I" time—reflect on the topics we covered.
- Note any specific "to-do" items on your action plan.



Section Three

Recommending Appropriate Testing Accommodations

- Student Characteristics
- School-age
- Preschool
- Access, Knowledge, Accurate Measure



Roles and Responsibilities

of Individuals Involved in Decision-Making and Implementation

- Committee on Special Education (CSE) or 504 Committee
 - Student
 - Parents
 - General Education Teacher
 - Special Education Teacher
 - Other required CSE members
- School Principals

Things to Know When Making Decisions

- Know the student
- Know the instructional accommodations provided to the student
- Know the types of testing accommodations
- Know the purpose and requirements of the tests

Considerations in Making Decisions

Recommend testing accommodations that will:

- Provide access to assessment program
- Enable students to demonstrate skills and knowledge
- Provide an accurate measure of the standards being assessed

More is better, right?

Well...

not necessarily!



Testing Accommodations

Questions to Consider to Guide Decision-Making

- Is the student able to meaningfully participate in the standard administration?
- In order to participate, does the student need accommodations in any of the following aspects of test administration:
 - Scheduling/timing
 - Location/setting
 - Presentation
 - Response
- To what extent does the student's disability impede demonstration of knowledge required by the test?

Questions to Consider to Guide Decision-Making (continued)

- What instructional accommodations, if any, are provided to the student in the classroom?
- What accommodation(s) focus on removing the obstacles to equitable participation that are a result of the student's disability?
- What accommodation(s) facilitate participation that enable the student to be as independent as possible?
- Will the accommodation(s) reduce learning expectations or change what the test is intended to measure?



Instructional Accommodations Alignment to Testing Accommodations

Instructional and Testing Accommodation Alignment



What does it mean to align testing accommodations with instructional accommodations?



Align Testing Accommodations with Instructional Accommodations

Instructional accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Extended time to complete assignments
- Adaptive furniture or small-group instruction
- Alternative formats, decreased length of assignments and/or fewer assignments, breaking assignment into smaller parts and presenting information in a variety of ways
- Use of word processing software on a computer device or providing answers orally rather than written

Testing Accommodations Example

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS (TO BE COMPLETED FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN ONLY IF THERE IS AN ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR NONDISABLED PRESCHOOL CHILDREN):		
INDIVIDUAL TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS, SPECIFIC TO THE STUDENT'S DISABILITY AND NEEDS, TO BE USED CONSISTENTLY BY THE STUDENT IN THE RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF DISTRICT-WIDE ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEPARTMENT POLICY, STATE ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT		
TESTING ACCOMMODATION	CONDITIONS*	IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**
<input type="checkbox"/> NONE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Extended time <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Separate location/setting <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Tests read	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. For tests requiring extended written responses (more than 4 sentences) <input type="checkbox"/> 2. All tests <input type="checkbox"/> 3. All tests	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Double time <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Small group (less than 5 students)—quiet with minimal visual distractions <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Text-to-speech software

*Conditions – Test Characteristics: Describe the type, length, purpose of the test upon which the use of testing accommodations is conditioned, if applicable.

**Implementation Recommendations: Identify the amount of extended time, type of setting, etc., specific to the testing accommodations, if applicable.

Documenting Testing Accommodations

- Document on IEP
- Document in clear manner
- Can indicate conditions or types of tests
- Cannot say “as appropriate,” “when necessary,” or “when asked for”
- Cannot indicate in a test-specific manner

Students Who Incur Disabilities Shortly Before Testing

Principal's Responsibility

- Onset of a short-term or long-term disability
- Does not apply to a student in process of evaluation for special education
- Limited accommodations:
 - Extended time
 - Separate location
 - Answers recorded in any manner
 - Test read—vision impairment

Section Three Questions



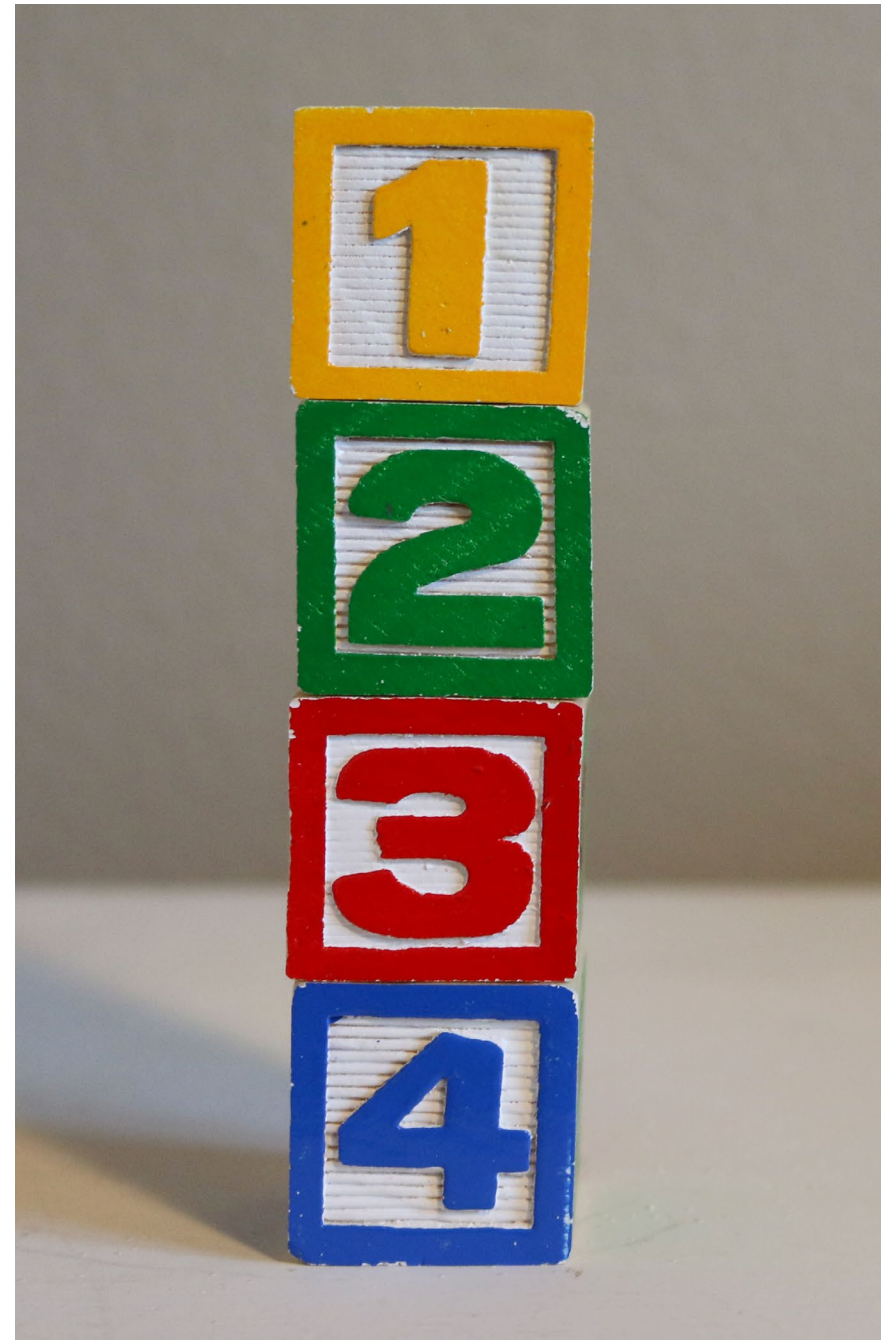
Section Four

Implementing Testing Accommodations



Planning and Preparation

- Scheduling of tests and qualified individuals (proctors)
- Preparing testing materials—changes in test formats
- Consideration of State assessments—request for specific changes to state assessments
- CBT platforms



Schools Must Ensure Proper Preparation

- Copies of IEP are provided to teachers, service providers, and others responsible for implementing the IEP.
- Each individual is informed of the implementation responsibilities.



Training and Professional Development

Staff development should:

- Communicate State policy, guidelines, and procedures.
- Provide decision-makers with the tools necessary to make appropriate individualized decisions about students.
- Provide the tools necessary to correctly implement testing accommodations.

Implementation of Testing Accommodations

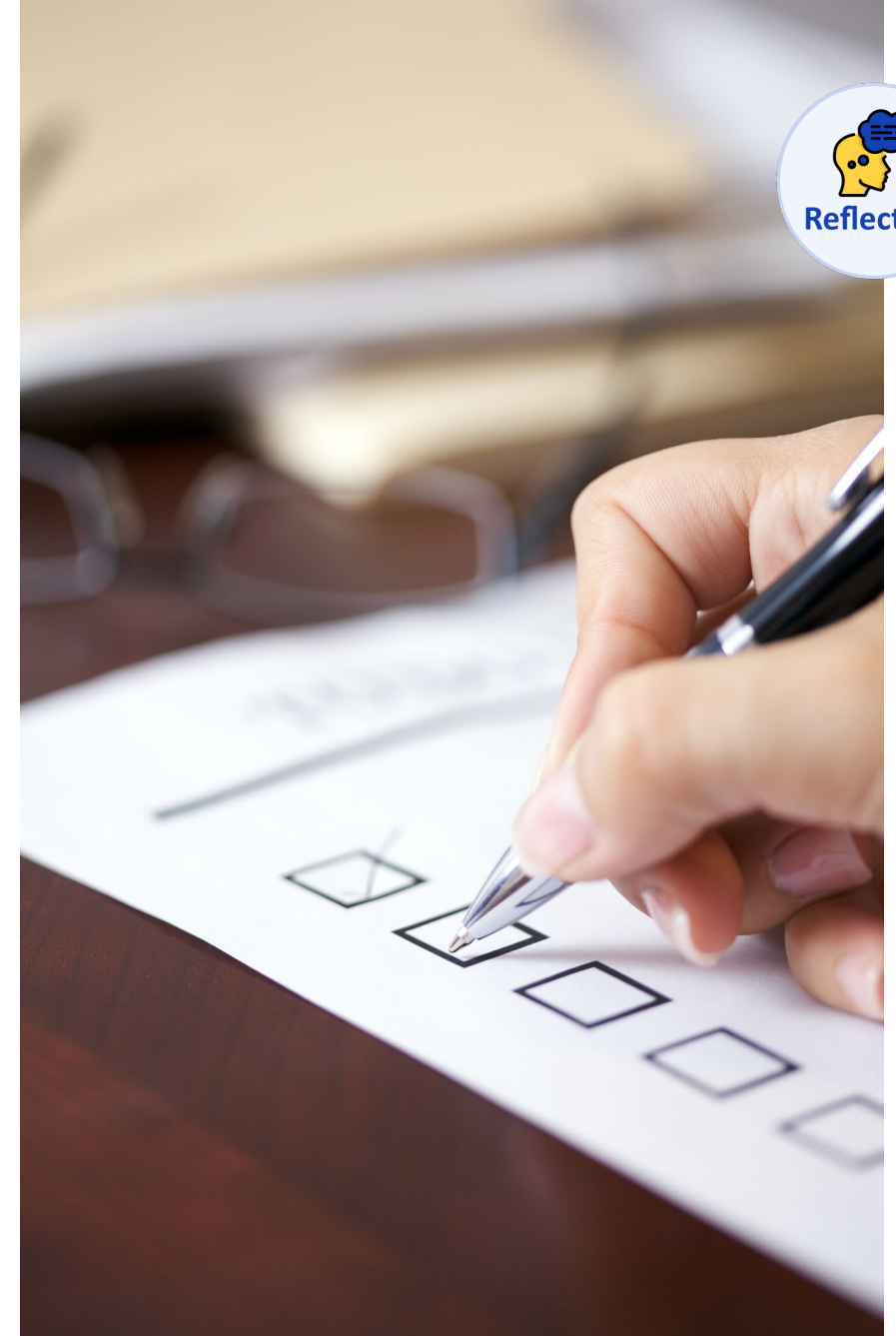
- Should not be provided for the first time during a State examination.
- Must be provided across all placement settings—not restricted to traditional school year.
- Certain accommodations may invalidate diagnostic screening and testing—the evaluator can use their discretion in this determination.
- Student may refuse.

Section Four Questions



Reflection #2: What's Going on Your "To-Do" List?

- "I" time—reflect on the topics we covered.
- Note any specific "to-do" items on your action plan.



Appendices



Appendix A



Test Your Knowledge!
Review the “Quiz—Hot Topics”
questions!

Test Your Knowledge!



With a partner:

- Use a writing utensil and the “Test Your Knowledge Quiz—Hot Topics.”
- Review the “Hot Topic” questions posted around the room.
- Answer each question with “Yes” or “No” based on your knowledge of testing accommodations.

Appendix A: Hot Topics



Appendix B: Do's and Don'ts



- Review the “Do’s”—identify 3 specific points that are evident in your current practice.
- Review the “Don’ts”—identify 1–2 practices you need to address or change in your district.
- Share your observations.



Appendix C: Student Characteristics



- Review the test accommodation and student characteristics you identified on your sticky note during the "Do Now" Activity.
- Compare to the chart.
- Note any other accommodations or possible effect on test-taking.

Appendices D and E: Special Populations



Appendices A–E Questions



Appendix F: “Tests Read”

- Recommendation for students with disabilities that limit their ability to decode print.
- Low-incidence accommodation.
- Documentation supporting the accommodation.
- Decision-making tool.



Appendix F

Determining the Appropriateness of “Tests Read”

There is documentation of:

- The student’s current reading skills.
- IEP goals related to reading development.
- Explicit and systematic reading instruction and outcomes.
- Research-based reading intervention(s) included in supplementary aids and/or services provided to the student to support reading instruction.
- Consideration is given to whether the student’s difficulty in reading is a result of cultural and/or linguistic differences.

Appendix F

Documentation on IEP (p. iii)

SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION

*Testing conditions appropriate for a student with a disability that severely limits or precludes the ability to decode print who **would** receive the “tests read” accommodation on the Grades 3-8 ELA Assessments or Reading Section of the NYSESLAT:*

Testing Accommodations	Testing Conditions	Implementation Specifications
Tests Read	For all State and local tests, including tests of reading comprehension	Text-to-speech software may be used to provide this accommodation

Testing Accommodations	Testing Conditions	Implementation Specifications
Tests Read	For all State and local tests	Human reader

*Testing conditions appropriate for a student with a disability that moderately impacts the ability to decode print who **would not** receive the “tests read” accommodation on the Grades 3-8 ELA Assessments or Reading Section of the NYSESLAT:*

Testing Accommodations	Testing Conditions	Implementation Specifications
Tests Read	For all State and local tests, except tests of reading comprehension	Text-to-speech software may be used to provide this accommodation

Appendix F

Decision-Making Tool



- Review each of the questions.
- Describe the data or evidence needed.
- Identify the source of the evidence needed.
- What additional considerations may apply?

Student:			Date:	
Persons Involved in Decision-Making:				
Questions	YES	NO	N/A	Comments/Evidence
Is there evaluative information indicating that, even after explicit and systematic reading instruction, the student's disability precludes or severely limits the student's ability to decode print?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the student been provided systematic, explicit, research-based reading intervention(s) to improve decoding skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is blind or visually impaired, is he or she learning to read braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is blind or visually impaired, has it been determined that his or her disability precludes or severely limits the ability to access and/or develop proficiency in braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is deaf or hard of hearing, is there evidence demonstrating that the student's disability precludes or severely limits his or her ability to decode printed text (possibly due to other co-occurring disabilities or long-term language deprivation in early childhood)?*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there evidence that the student's access to and/or performance on print-based tasks improves when information is presented to the student in auditory formats (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the student use read-aloud accommodations during instruction and/or classroom testing (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the student provided instructional materials in auditory formats?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the student provided input to inform specific recommendations related to the "tests read" testing accommodation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there additional considerations for recommending "tests read" for this student, specific to his or her unique disability-related needs? If so, explain in the space below:				

*If the answer to this question is "YES", and the student also understands sign language, the CSE may consider recommending a sign language interpreter to translate text if appropriate to the needs and skills of the student.

Check the recommendation that is most appropriate in meeting the needs of this student:

- ☐ "Tests read" is not an appropriate testing accommodation for this student.**
- ☐ "Tests read" should be recommended for this student on State and local tests, except tests of reading comprehension.**
- ☐ "Tests read" should be recommended for this student on all State and local tests, including tests of reading comprehension.

**These recommendations indicate that the Grades 3-8 ELA Assessments will not be read to the student.

Appendix F

Procedures for Administering

Human Reader



Computer-Based Testing



Audio Playback



Appendix F

Procedures for Administering (continued)

- Read in a neutral tone without intonation or emphasis.
- Read word for word without clarification or explanation.
- Review text booklet—up to one hour prior.



Appendix F

Let's Practice Reading Aloud: Math Question

1.) Jasmin wrote the number sentence below.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} < 856$$

Which number belongs on the line to make the number sentence true?

- (A) 862
- (B) 914
- (C) 891
- (D) 789

Appendix F

Let's Practice Reading Aloud: Earth Science Question

2.) 13 Eurypterid fossils are abundant in the Bertie dolostone, a sedimentary rock layer found in western New York State. The presence of both the eurypterids and the dolostone indicates that, during the formation of this rock layer, this region of New York State was

- (1) covered by evaporating shallow seas
- (2) uplifted and eroded
- (3) buried beneath lava flows
- (4) intensely metamorphosed

Appendix F Questions





Reflection #3: What's Going on Your "To-Do" List?

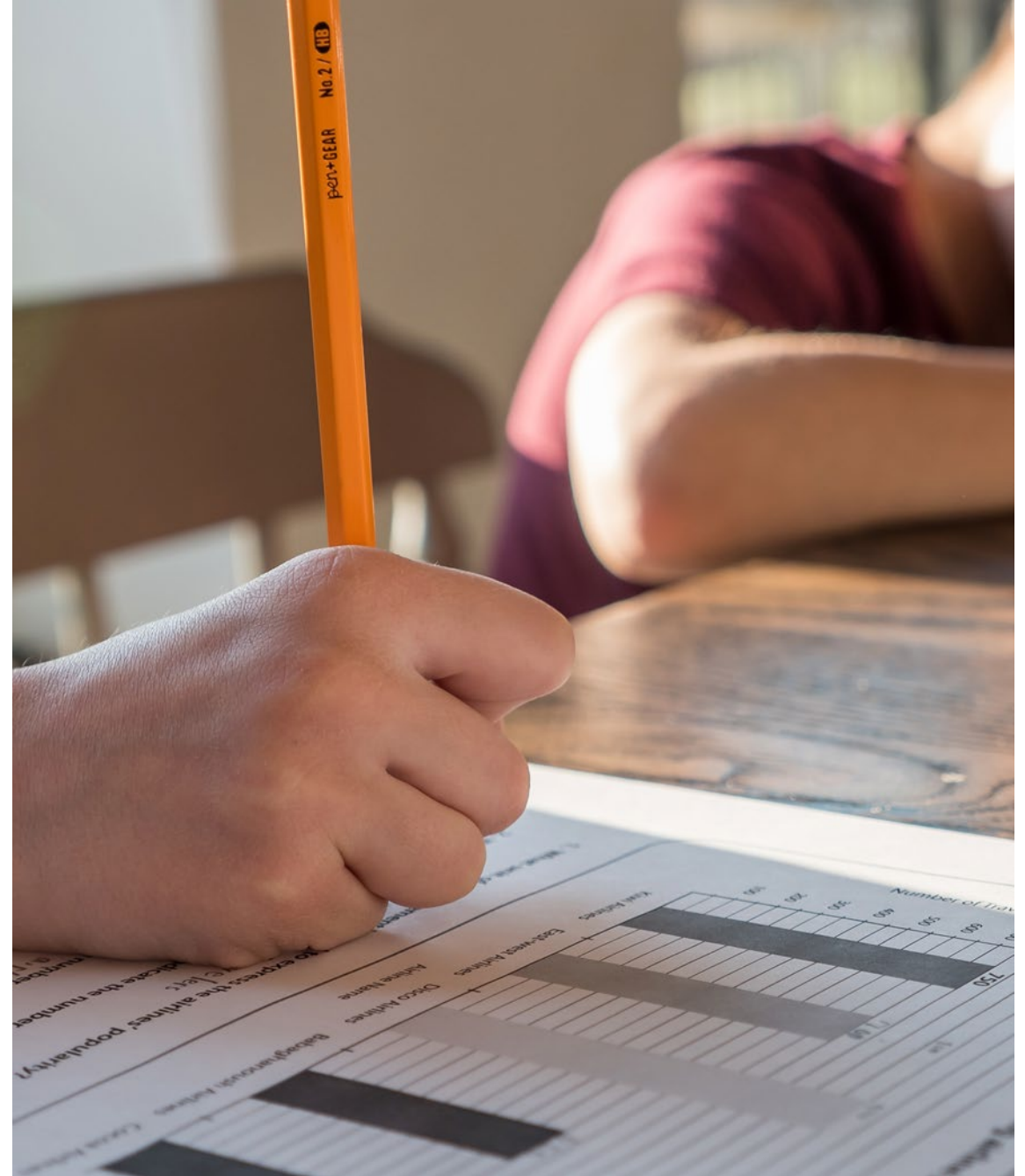


- “I” time—reflect on the topics we covered.
- Note any specific “to-do” items on your action plan.

Appendix G:

“Use of Scribe”

- Recommendation—How and When
- Accommodations needed?
- Who scribes?
- Procedures



Why Scribing?

Appendix G

When the writing task is the primary barrier to learning, scribing will allow students with physical and cognitive difficulties to:

- Focus more on content and less on writing mechanics
- Demonstrate knowledge
- Reduce frustration

Appendix G

The Scribe

A Scribe Is:

- A recorder of what the student dictates.
- Trained and qualified.
- Familiar with the scribing procedures and tests including knowledge of the vocabulary used in the test.
- Used throughout the school year as per the IEP.

A Scribe Is NOT:

- A note taker.
- Unfamiliar to the student.
- Used for the first time during State or districtwide assessments.

Appendix G

What Makes a Good Scribe?

- Experience and training
- Writing speed
- Legibility
- Accuracy
- Interpersonal skills
- Subject familiarity



Appendix G

Alternatives for Scribing

- Assistive technology—word processor, tablet, etc.
- Record student responses
- Speech-to-text software

Promote student independence!



Important Points

Appendix G

- Scribe word-for-word
- Scribe can capitalize the first word of a sentence and put a period at the end
- Student should provide other punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphs
- Student doesn't have to spell words
- Mathematics: Scribe numbers, signs, and place values
- Student should review and correct what was scribed

Appendix G

Examination Preparations Using a Scribe

- Prepare glossary of subject terms and jargon to help scribe with spelling.
- Student and scribe should know the scribing conditions (allowed vs. not allowed).
- Copies of test should be available to both student and scribe.
- Prior to exam day, procedures and preparation for the provision of a scribe need to occur.

Appendix G

Procedures for the Use of Scribe

Procedures to be used to implement the testing accommodation “Use of Scribe” on both written and mathematics tests.



Appendix G

Practice Time!



Pick a partner—paper and pencil required.

Writing prompts:

1. Student: In 2–3 sentences, respond to the question provided...
2. Scribe: Follow the directions/guidance provided...

Reverse roles, repeat activity!



Appendix G Questions





Reflection #4: What's Going on Your "To-Do" List?



- “I” time—reflect on the topics we covered.
- Note any specific “to-do” items on your action plan.

Appendix H

Multiple-Day Administration

- Consideration
- Documentation
- Procedures

Appendix I

Student Refusal



- Explain reasons for test accommodation.
- Administer test without accommodation.
- Document the incident.
- Indicate any accommodations used by student.
- Notify the parents.
- Consider additional counseling or a review of the IEP.

Appendix J

Allowable Testing Accommodations

Reference tool on what specific testing accommodations are permissible on New York State (NYS) tests.



Quality Indicators for Testing Accommodations



Quality Indicators

Testing accommodations are:

- Recommended by individuals who know the strengths and needs of the student, including parents (and the student, as appropriate) as active participants in decision-making who understand the purpose of testing accommodations.
- Aligned to the instructional accommodations currently used during classroom instruction.
- Determined student by student, based on the unique needs and individual learning characteristics of the student.

Quality Indicators (continued)

Testing accommodations are:

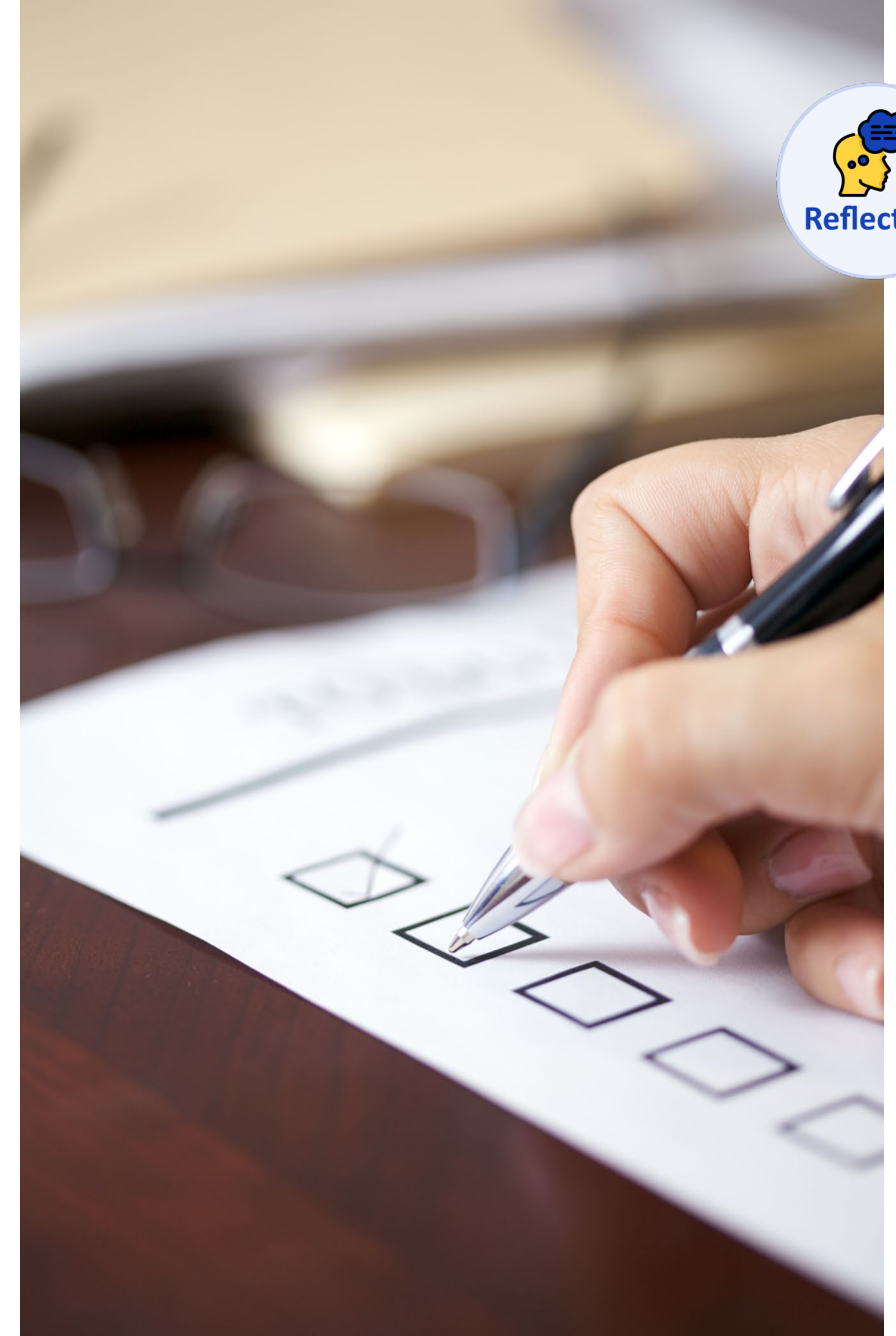
- Consistently provided in the classroom, prior to State or district-wide assessments.
- Determined systematically using a standard set of questions or variables to consider in making decisions.
- Documented in the IEP.
- Reviewed annually and at reevaluation by the CSE.

Appendix H-J Questions



Reflection #5: What's Going on Your "To-Do" List?

- "I" time—reflect on the topics we covered.
- Note any specific "to-do" items on your action plan.



Reflection and Action Planning



- What are your biggest takeaways from this session?
- What additional questions do you have?
- How are you going to use this information?

Testing Accommodations Guidance

[Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Changes in Allowable Testing Accommodations on the Grades 3–8 New York State English Language Arts Assessments](#)

[Accommodations for Testing](#)

Information and Resources for CBT

[School Administrator's Manuals—NYS Office of Assessment](#)

[NYSAA Test Administration Resources](#)

[Grades 3–8 Test Manuals](#)

[NYSED website for CBT](#)

[Quick CBT links](#)

[Nextera Administration System Guidance for NYS Assessments](#)

[New York Question Sampler](#)

General NYS Resources

[NYS Education Department—Special Education](#)

[NYS Office of Special Education Partnership](#)

[NYS Office of Assessment](#)

[NYS Office of Special Education Quality Assurance \(SEQA\)](#)

Contact Us

TAP for Transition

Jessica Elliott, Director

TAPtransition@cornell.edu



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education

Educational Partnership

Technical Assistance Partnership
for Transition

This training was provided by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Transition at Cornell University. The OSE Educational Partnership is funded by the New York State Education Department Office of Special Education.