

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities  
A Teacher's Guide**

CSE Technical Report 508

Ann M. Mastergeorge  
Judy N. Miyoshi  
CRESST/University of California, Los Angeles

August 1999

National Center for Research on Evaluation,  
Standards, and Student Testing  
Center for the Study of Evaluation  
Graduate School of Education and Information Studies  
University of California, Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, California 90095-1522  
(310) 206-1532

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank Mary Dingle and Kristen Robertson for their contributions to the content of the guidebook, and the LAUSD Division of Special Education for their contributions on IEP Guidelines. We would also like to thank Teri Herl for the design and layout of the guidebook, and Tina Smith for the layout and copy editing of the guidebook.

**ACCOMMODATIONS  
FOR  
STUDENTS  
WITH  
DISABILITIES**

**A**

**TEACHER'S  
GUIDE**

**SECTION**

**LEGISLATION FOR INCLUSION ..... 1**

**IEP GUIDELINES ..... 2**

- GENERAL GUIDELINES
- LAUSD GUIDELINES

**THE ALIGNMENT OF  
INSTRUCTION AND TESTING ..... 3**

**CATEGORIES OF CLASSROOM  
& TEST ACCOMMODATIONS ..... 4**

**APPENDICES ..... 5**

- GLOSSARY OF TERMS
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- RESOURCES
- STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

(TO BE REPRODUCED FOR CLASSROOM USE)

# THE PURPOSE

of this guidebook is to provide teachers with important information and practical tools to implement the use of accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. As teachers know, accommodation use should be aligned with classroom instruction, classroom testing and large-scale assessment. This is a task easier said than done. This guidebook has been designed to do just that: to make the task of using accommodations easier for teachers to implement.

The guidebook is divided into sections that are practical for teachers. **Section one** describes the legislation that has been passed and amended to require all students with disabilities to receive accommodations and be included in large-scale testing. **Section two** is a summary of general IEP guidelines and LAUSD IEP guidelines. **Section three** depicts the alignment between the IEP, classroom instruction, and accommodations in large-scale testing. These links are necessary in order to align the curriculum with standards, and to provide learning opportunities in the classroom. These opportunities provide accommodations for students with disabilities in their everyday classroom routines. **Section four** provides a list of the categories of classroom and test accommodations. This list is also in a poster format to provide easy access to the types of classroom and testing accommodations. **Section five** includes appendices with a glossary of terms, frequently asked questions, classroom resources for teachers (related to accommodations), and pages that can be reproduced. For example, instructional accommodation pages may be reproduced and used to track the number, kind, and usefulness of classroom accommodations.

As a part of the educational reform movement, increasing the participation of students with disabilities in large-scale testing will provide accountability for student assessment outcomes. It is clear that these outcomes will have consequences for both standards and the curriculum as well as what is expected of students in the classroom. Links from students' I.E.P.'s to classroom instruction and to testing will become routine events and, most important, students with disabilities will no longer be invisible in large-scale assessments.

# THE IMPACT

## LEGISLATION IN THE CLASSROOM

An issue of increasing concern in testing accountability is the inclusion of students with disabilities in national and state assessments. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that accommodations are to be made for individuals with disabilities. While these laws did not specifically address the issue of assessments, more recent legislation, such as the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (IDEA) reauthorization (1997) directly speaks to the issue.

• *20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Sec. 1412 (a) (17): "...children with disabilities are included in general State and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary." This section also requires the state or local educational agency to develop "...guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in State and district-wide assessment programs..." and to develop and begin conducting those alternate assessments no later than July 1, 2000.*

• *Sec. 1414 (d) (v) (II): IDEA '97 requires that the IEP contain a statement of why the assessment was not appropriate for the pupil and what alternate assessment will be provided.*

• *Sec. 1414 (d) (v) (I): IDEA '97 requires that the IEP include a statement of any individual modifications or accommodations in the administration of State or district-wide assessments or any part of such assessments that are needed in order for the student to participate.*

• *C.A.C. Title 5, Sec. 852 (b): "Eligible pupils in special education programs or pupils subject to Section 504 (U.S. Code, Title 29, Section 794) plans under federal law shall be tested but appropriate adaptations or accommodations may be made including, but not limited to, large print, Braille, extended time, or the use of a reader or scribe. The reading section of any test shall not be read, interpreted, or translated to any pupil."*

• *A.B. 265: provides policy direction for including all students in the assessment of academic achievement and the establishment of academic and performance standards for all students in California's public schools.*

• *20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Sec. 1413 (a) (6): requires school districts to include students with disabilities in their district-wide assessment programs and report their results to the state education agency.*

# THE IMPACT

## LEGISLATION IN THE CLASSROOM

The reauthorization of IDEA, in 1997, includes an emphasis on participation in the general education curriculum by students with disabilities, as well as the *expanded role of the general education teacher* in the IEP process.

The IEP must *address the participation, as well as provide an explanation of any non-participation* in general education activities by special education students.

This emphasis includes the requirement of participation in state and district assessments by students with disabilities. If the student does not participate in the state and district assessment, a *statement of why participation is not appropriate and how the student will be assessed must be included in the IEP*. A small percentage (less than 2%) of students with severe cognitive disabilities and severe multiple disabilities will participate in alternate assessments. *The reasons for participation in alternate assessments must be documented on the students IEP*.

Accommodations and modifications are permitted for these students, but they should be *aligned with the student's IEP or 504 plan*.

The reauthorization of IDEA also includes reporting requirements. Since July 1998, the *number of students with disabilities being assessed must be reported as well as the performance of these students in the general education assessment*. By July 2000, the performance of students being assessed in an alternate format must also be reported.

# GENERAL IEP GUIDELINES

Excerpted from *IDEA: Strengthening Special Education & General Education Linkages. Summer 1998. The Special Edge, 11 (3), 8-9.*

## IEP PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

Each IEP must include a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP Team determines that the child will not participate in a particular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement that documents (1) why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and (2) how the child will be assessed.

## IEP COMPONENTS

The term “individualized education program” means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with IDEA (1997) and that includes information regarding:

- (1) Presents levels of educational performance
- (2) Annual goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives
- (3) Special education and related services
- (4) Explanation of non-participation in general education
- (5) Participation in district-wide and state-wide assessments
- (6) Dates, frequency, location, and duration of all special education services
- (7) Transition services
- (8) Measuring and reporting student progress

## ELEMENTS OF THE IEP EMPHASIZING GENERAL EDUCATION INVOLVEMENT

- (1) Present levels of educational performance must state how the child’s disability affects involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
- (2) Annual goals, including benchmarks/objectives, must be related to helping the child be involved and progress in the general curriculum.
- (3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services for the child, and program modifications or supports for school personnel, that will be provided for the child to:
  - (a) Advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals
  - (b) Be involved and progress in general curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other non-academic activities
  - (c) Be educated and participate with disabled and non-disabled children
- (4) An explanation of the extent, if any, the child will not participate in the general education environment.

# GENERAL IEP GUIDELINES

*(Continued)*

## THE IEP TEAM

- (1) The **parent**
- (2) A child's **general education teacher** (if the child is, or may be, in the general education environment)
- (3) **At least one special education teacher** or, when appropriate, a special education provider
- (4) A **representative of the school district** who:
  - (a) Is qualified to provide or supervise the provisions of special education
  - (b) Knows about the general curriculum
  - (c) Knows about available district resources
- (5) An **individual who can interpret the instructional evaluation results**
- (6) Other **individuals who have special expertise** regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate
- (7) The **student with a disability when appropriate**

## EXPANDED ROLE OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER

As a required participant on the IEP team, general educators may:

- (1) Help develop, review, and, as appropriate, revise the IEP
- (2) Determine appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the student
- (3) Determine supplementary aids and services and program modifications for the student
- (4) Determine school personnel support to help the child progress in the general curriculum

# LAUSD IEP GUIDELINES

The IEP team shall determine how each student will participate in state and district-wide assessments.

The IEP team should consider:

- (1) Whether the student participates in the general curriculum or an alternative curriculum.
- (2) What, if any, types of instructional accommodations have been provided the student in the classroom.
- (3) Whether the same accommodations during instruction are necessary and appropriate for the student to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the district-wide or state assessment.
- (4) What, if any, additional accommodations are necessary and appropriate in the administration of district-wide or state assessments.
- (5) If the student is unable to participate in the assessment even with accommodations, why not?



# THE ALIGNMENT

## A STUDENT'S IEP, INSTRUCTION & TESTING

Education reforms have been designed with the intent to improve educational outcomes for all students. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA) has raised the standards for students with disabilities by requiring that these students have access to the general education curriculum. Additionally, students with disabilities are required to be included in state and district assessment programs with appropriate accommodations.

However, it is important to note that there are three types of test takers when considering students with disabilities:

- (1) A student with a disability who does not require instructional and/or testing accommodations.
- (2) A student with a disability who requires both instructional and testing accommodations.
- (3) A student with a disability so severe that s/he requires an alternate assessment, as specified in the student's IEP.

The majority of students with disabilities need both instructional and testing accommodations. IDEA now requires IEP teams to include a statement of individual modifications and accommodations that these students need to participate in state- and district-wide assessments.

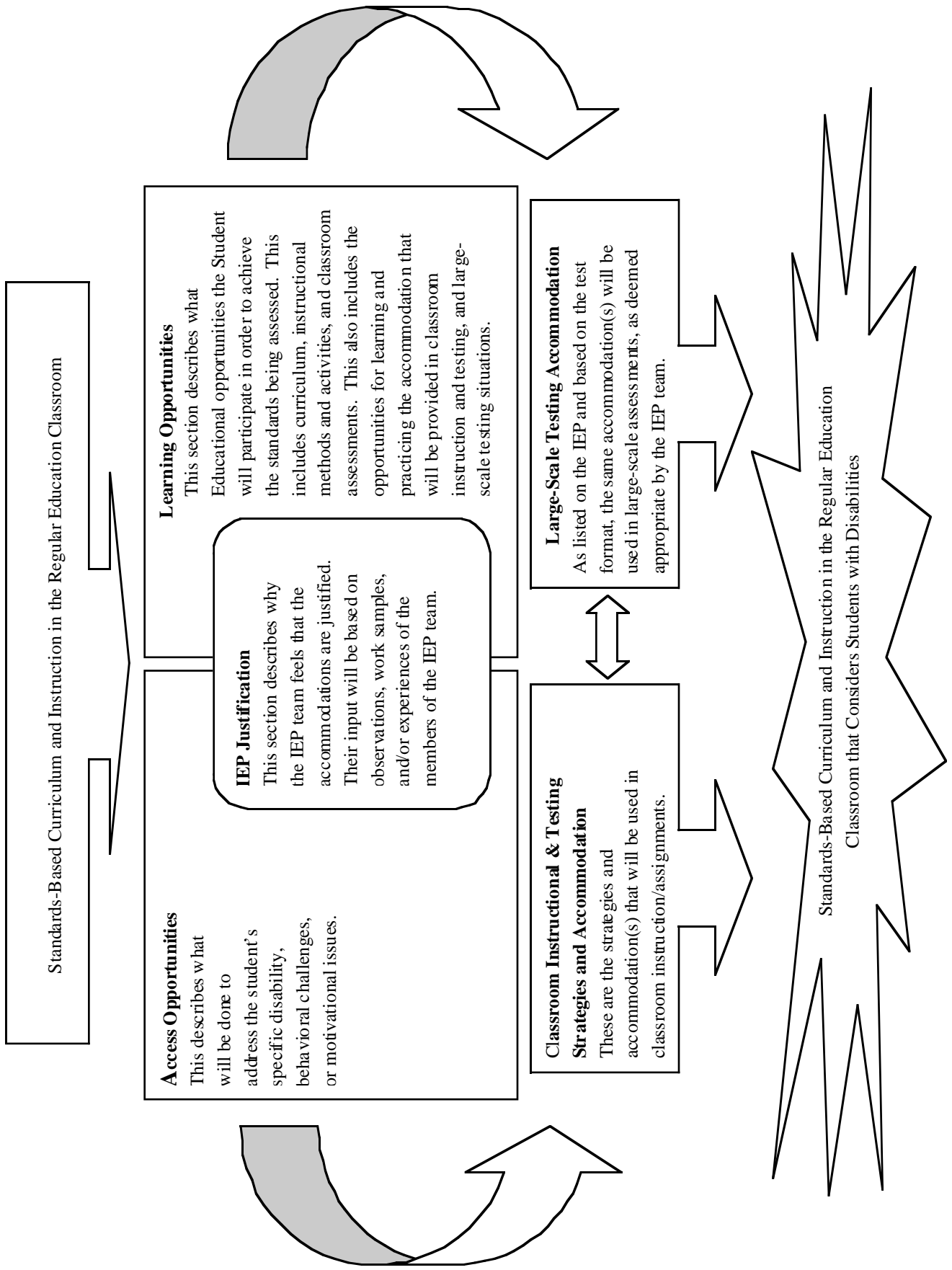
The curriculum-IEP-instruction-assessment link in **Figure 1** provides the process for aligning standards - based curriculum and instruction in the general education classroom with the needs of students with disabilities.

### ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES

Access opportunities provide access to learning opportunities. Initially, for some students learning isn't really the barrier. It may be something more fundamental that reduces the benefits of learning opportunities. These barriers might be the student's disability, attention to tasks, or communication skills. Maybe it's poor attendance or a lack of "tool skills." These barriers need to be addressed before considering how to help the student benefit from learning opportunities. Access opportunities get students "into the classroom" so they can begin working toward achieving standards.

Examples of access opportunities include the following:

- Supports and services for behavior, language, communication, vision and hearing needs
- Classroom Support-aides and tutors
- Remedial instruction
- Counseling
- Behavioral planning
- Transportation
- Assistive technology
- Home, School, interagency collaboration



**Figure 1** (General Education Curriculum-IEP-Instruction-Assessment Link)

# THE ALIGNMENT

## INSTRUCTION & TESTING

### LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Learning opportunities are the curriculum, instructional method and activities, and assessments which enable students to achieve standards. Students may need accommodations, supports, or individualized instruction so that they can benefit from the learning opportunities. Examples of learning opportunities include the following:

- Classroom instruction and assessment aligned with standards
- Accommodations and modifications aligned with IEP
- Student Learning Strategies
- Instructional Strategies
- Organizational Strategies
- Curriculum Modifications and Adaptations

Source. Resource Book: Implementing IDEA '98. Second Annual Special Education IDEA Conference. Oct. 5, 1998. Los Angeles, CA. [Southwest SELPA.]

### INSTRUCTIONAL AND TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Instructional and Testing Accommodations are changes in instructional and testing materials or procedures that enable the students with a disability to participate in an assessment in a way that allows abilities to be assessed rather than disabilities (Thurlow, 1997). Accommodations include a variety of alterations in timing, setting in which the test is taken, or scheduling, response format, and presentation format. **These alterations do not substantially change the level, content or performance criteria of assessments.**

*(See fold-out in section four or appendix for a list of instructional and testing accommodations.)*

### WHO MAKES ACCOMMODATION DECISIONS?

Many states have written guidelines to indicate which accommodations are acceptable for use during specific assessments, and some districts have their own guidelines. The guidelines provide information about the kinds of accommodations that are allowed. When making accommodations it must be determined whether the accommodation can be used for the specific assessment; if there are alternative accommodations allowed; and what is the scoring procedure if an accommodation is used. Additionally, IEP team members should be provided with information on why students need specific accommodations, as well as a list of possible accommodations. This information should be provided by those people most familiar with the assessment, as well as those most familiar with the student (i.e., the student, the parent and the rest of the IEP team).

Table 1 lists the test accommodations that have been approved by LAUSD.

**TABLE 1**

---

#### TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

---

- **Setting**
  - **Test Directions**
  - **Devices/Supports for Presentation**
  - **Testing Format**
  - **Devices Supports for Response**
-

# A CASE STUDY

A case study has been provided to demonstrate the usefulness of documenting the IEP recommendations to specific accommodations for both classroom and testing environments for Student X. Exemplars of aligning the IEP to standards in the curriculum are described to help teachers visualize the alignment required for validity and accountability.

*Below is a hypothetical case study example of a student's IEP meeting.*

**PARENT:** It takes him twice as long as his brother to complete his homework.

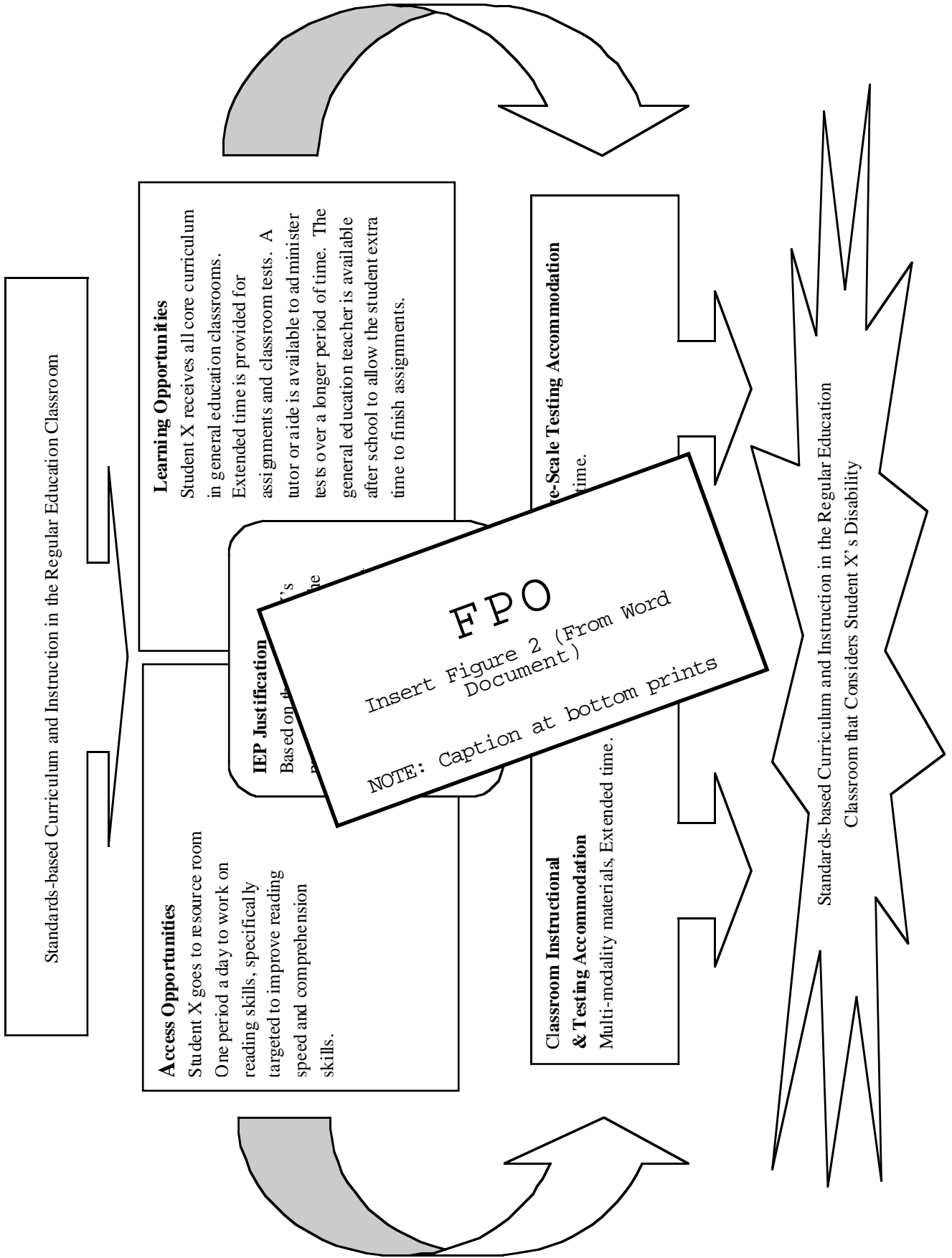
**STUDENT:** It makes me mad when I studied really hard and I do not have time to answer questions that I know the answer to.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER:** It takes him so long to read the questions that the time is up before he gets through the first half of the assignment.

**GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER:** When I allow him to come in after school to finish his work, he gets a much better grade.

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST:** His learning disability is the area of visual processing. It takes him longer to understand what he is reading.

*Based on this information, a General Education Curriculum-IEP-Instruction-Assessment Link is considered for Student X in Figure 2 on the next page.*



**Figure 2** (General Education Curriculum-IEP-Instruction-Assessment Link for Student X)

# ACCOMMODATIONS

## DEFINITIONS

- Accommodations** ..... Alterations in how a test is presented to the test taker or how the test taker responds; includes a variety of alterations in presentation format, response format, setting in which the test is taken, timing or scheduling. The alterations do not substantially change level, content or performance criteria. The changes are made in order to level the playing field, that is, to provide equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known.
- Accountability** ..... A systematic method to assure those inside and outside of the educational system that schools are moving in desired directions. Commonly included elements are goals, indicators of progress toward meeting those goals, analysis of data, reporting procedures, and consequences or sanctions. Consequences or sanctions might include additional or fewer resources, removal of accreditation, provision of professional development training, etc.
- Adaptations** ..... Changes made in an assessment approach, usually to the test format that allows students to participate in the assessment. Adaptations include Braille and large-print versions of test instruments or use of audio cassettes.
- Administer Test Individually** ..... Administer the test individually in separate locations, including private study carrels or in special education classrooms.
- Administer Test In Location With Minimal Distraction** ..... Administer the test individually in a separate quiet location or location in which chance for outside interference (such as books, artwork, window views) is greatly reduced.
- Alignment** ..... In standards-based reform, the concept of connecting educational goals, curriculum, instruction, and assessment so that all are consistent and working toward the same purposes.
- Allow Student To Mark Responses In Booklet Rather Than Answer Sheet** .... Response accommodation which allows students to record answers, use a scribe or make markings in a test booklet as opposed to writing answers on electronic scanning forms. Answers can be recorded by circling responses, identifying appropriate answers with marks, etc.

<b>Appropriate Assessment</b> .....	Discussions of good practice in the appropriate design and use of assessments of student learning that touch upon (1) the need for multiple measures aligned with curriculum content and instruction; (2) a focus on monitoring student growth over time; and (3) opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge in varied ways. For LEP students, relevant issues include: Do the test results accurately reflect a student’s knowledge of the content matter, or do they reflect the student’s limited proficiency with the language and context of the test items? Alternative but equivalent strategies, including, but not limited to extra time, assessment in the primary language or language of instruction, can be used to enable LEP students to express their academic content.
<b>Assessment</b> .....	The process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about individuals, groups, or systems.
<b>Audio Taped Administration Of Sections</b> .....	Special equipment or assistive devices used to administer test that uses recorded voices to give specific test directions or additional assistance.
<b>Auditory Amplification Device, Hearing Aid Or Noise Buffers</b> .....	Special magnification equipment or assistive devices used with students who have sensory disabilities (e.g. hearing impairments) used to increase clarity and/or reduce extraneous noise.
<b>Benchmarks:</b> .....	Grade or age specific examples of performance standards, often actual samples of student work, which indicate expected levels of performance toward meeting content standards.
<b>Calculator, Arithmetic Tables, Spelling Dictionary, Spell Check</b> .....	Use of computational and grammar check devices with students who have processing difficulties that limit ability to arrive at responses.
<b>Checklists</b> .....	Allow student to use checklists and other written note aids during test.
<b>Computerized Testing</b> .....	The computer is used to administer the test, dictate question type and difficulty, and explain test directions. In computerized testing, test items can be administered based on performance of previous items, paper-and-pencil tests can be read to the student and written text can be simultaneously presented in sign language.
<b>Content Standards</b> .....	Statements of the subject-specific knowledge and skills that schools are expected to teach and students are expected to learn. They indicate what students should know and be able to do.

<b>Copy Assistance Between Drafts</b> .....	Provide help transferring information from one test to another.
<b>Dark Heavy Or Raised Lines Or Pencil Grips</b> .....	Use of these aids to help students write and respond to test items and to assist students identify appropriate areas on which to write responses.
<b>Dictation To A Proctor/Scribe</b> .....	Student provides responses to other person who records the answers on the appropriate response sheet or form.
<b>English Language Learner (ELL)</b> .....	Student whose first language is something other than English and who is in the process of learning English.
<b>Exclusion from Testing</b> .....	The act of barring someone from participation in an assessment program.
<b>Exemption from Testing</b> .....	The act of releasing someone from a testing requirement to which others are held.
<b>Extended Time</b> .....	Timing accommodation that allows extra time to be given to students when completing a test. The amount of extended time needed to complete a test or test sections should be specified.
<b>Frequent Breaks</b> .....	Administer a test with periodic breaks, alter the amount of time students work without a break, or encourage students to signal when a break is needed.
<b>Graph Paper For Math Problems</b> .....	A computational aid used to help students when graphing, drawing tables or other special visual representations are necessary.
<b>Highlight Key Words</b> .....	Emphasize important words in directions. Use of boldface type, underlining, and italicizing are all methods that are used to highlight.
<b>Increase Spacing</b> .....	Increase spacing between test items; reduce number of test items per page.
<b>Individualized Education Program (IEP)</b> .....	A document which reflects the decisions made by IEP committee during an IEP meeting. Included in this document is a description of the student's performance level and the corresponding goals and objectives to address the areas of need.
<b>IEP Committee</b> .....	The group which meets to discuss a student's areas of strength and need, and develops an individualized plan for the student's educational program.



<b>Modifications</b> .....	Substantial changes in what a student is expected to learn and/or demonstrate. The changes include changes in instructional level, content, and performance criteria, and may also include changes in test form or format.
<b>Monolingual</b> .....	Refers to a program that uses one language or a person who speaks only one language. This term is often used to describe regular, mainstream, school programs in English.
<b>Motivational Accommodations</b> .....	Accommodations designed to encourage slow-to-begin students to start the test and also encourages students who give up to continue working on the test and to refocus attention.
<b>Omit Questions That Cannot Be Revised</b> .....	Eliminate questions that cannot be adjusted for an accommodation and/or adjust credit for missing scores.
<b>Opportunity to Learn Standards</b> .....	Requirements for educational inputs and processes designed to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills contained in national, state, district, and/or school content and performance standards.
<b>Out-Of-Level Testing</b> .....	Administration of a test at a level above or below one generally recommended for a student based on his or her grade level or age.
<b>Paper In Alternative Format (Word Processed)</b> .....	Use of technological aids for ease of test presentation such as templates to alter visible print, larger-print versions, and Braille editions of assessments.
<b>Participation Rate</b> .....	Number of students with disabilities or LEP students taking a test divided by the number of students with disabilities or LEP students, respectively, at the grade level or corresponding age level (for ungraded students) covered by an assessment.
<b>Particular Time Of Day</b> .....	Assessment is administered at a time that is most advantageous for the student. Often, the administrator will specify or alter the time of day in which the test will be completed.
<b>Performance Assessment</b> .....	A task that requires a student to create an answer or product rather than simply fill in a blank or select a correct answer from a list; the task performed by the student is intended to simulate real life situations.
<b>Performance Standards</b> .....	Benchmarks for how good a student's skills must be in areas aligned with content standards. Typically, performance standards are indices of level of performance.

<b>Presentation Accommodations</b> .....	Changes in how an assessment is given to a student. Accommodations include format alterations, procedure changes and the use of assistive devices.
<b>Prompts Available On Tape</b> .....	Use audiotaped directions or tape recorded test items to give oral directions, help students understand test questions, and provide prompts that can be repeated according to student need.
<b>Provide Additional Examples</b> .....	Use of technological aids for ease of test presentation such as templates to alter visible print, larger-print versions, and Braille editions of assessments.
<b>Provide Cues (Arrows and Stop Signs) On Test Booklet</b> .....	Rewrite or reformat directions or write cues on answer forms using symbols or other prompts that are easily interpreted by students.
<b>Provide Special Acoustics</b> .....	Provide adaptive or special equipment (e.g. to minimize extraneous noises) that serve as noise buffers or amplification devices.
<b>Provide Special Lighting</b> .....	Provide adaptive or special equipment (e.g. special watt lights) for student with visual impairments.
<b>Questions Read Aloud To Students</b> .....	Designated person interprets or reads questions or directions to students or answers questions about items during the test without giving answers.
<b>Read Directions To Student</b> .....	Reread directions for each page of questions or for each subsection of the assessment or explain directions to student at anytime during the test.
<b>Reliability</b> .....	In measurement, the extent to which it is possible to generalize from an observation of a specific behavior observed at a specific time by a specific person to observations conducted on a similar behavior, at different times, or by different observers.
<b>Rephrase Or Rewrite Prompts/ Directions</b> .....	Directions may be clarified through restatement for the student either in response to the administrator's decision that clarification is needed for all directions, or in response to student questions.
<b>Rubrics</b> .....	An established set of parameters for scoring or rating student's performance on standards-referenced tasks. Good rubrics consist of a fixed measurement scale (e.g., 4 points), a set of clear criteria, performance descriptions for each criterion at each point on the scale, and sample responses (anchors or benchmarks) that illustrate various levels of performance.

<b>Scheduling Accommodations</b> .....	Changes in when the actual testing occurs. Accommodations can include changes in the time of administration as well as changes in how the administration of the assessment is organized. Student is allowed to respond to assessment items verbally and a proctor or scribe then translates this to an answer sheet.
<b>Scribe Writes Down Student Answers</b> .....	Student is allowed to respond to assessment items verbally and a proctor or scribe then translates this to an answer sheet.
<b>Secure Papers With Tape/Magnets</b> .....	Use markers or other special holders to maintain the position of papers or test material.
<b>Setting Accommodations</b> .....	Changes in the place in which an assessment is given. Accommodations can include changes in the conditions of the assessment setting as well as changes in the location.
<b>Several Days</b> .....	Administer a test in sections over two or more days.
<b>Several Sessions</b> .....	Administer the same test over two or more sessions and possibly in a different order from that used for most students.
<b>Simplify/Clarify Language</b> .....	Language or text may be simplified or clarified through restatement for the student either in response to the administrator's decision that the simplification or clarification is needed, or in response to student questions.
<b>Small Group Administration</b> .....	Administer the test to small group in separate location.
<b>Student Tapes Response</b> .....	Student responses to assessment items are recorded for later verbatim transcription, instead of having student create written responses.
<b>Student Uses Large-Print Booklet</b> .....	Use of large print edition of test for students with sensory disabilities (e.g. visual impairments).
<b>Templates To Reduce Amount Of Visible Print Seen At One Time</b> .....	Use masks to cover portions of the test.
<b>Test Administered By Someone Other Than Classroom Teacher</b> .....	Someone other than the regular test administrator gives test to student. Examples of this accommodation include administration by a special or regular education teacher or other school personnel.
<b>Testing</b> .....	The administration of a particular set of questions to an individual or group of individuals for the purpose of obtaining a score.

<b>Timing Accommodations</b> .....	Changes in the duration of testing. Accommodations can include changes in how much time is allowed as well as how the time is organized.
<b>Wider Lines And/Or Margins</b> .....	Increase size of test booklet for reading ease.
<b>Word Processor, Computer, Typewriter</b> .....	Equipment used by student to assist with recording answers.
<b>Validity</b> .....	The extent to which a test measures what its authors or users claim it measures. Specifically, test validity concerns the appropriateness of the inferences that can be made on the basis of test results.
<b>Videotaped Administration Of Sections</b> .....	Use videotaped prompts to help students understand test questions and directions. Tapes can be separated so that directives are provided for each section of a test.
<b>Wider Lines And/Or Margins</b> .....	Increase size of test booklet for reading ease.
<b>Word Processor, Computer, Typewriter</b> .....	Equipment used by student to assist with recording answers.
<b>Videotaped Administration Of Sections</b> .....	Use videotaped prompts to help students understand test questions and directions. Tapes can be separated so that directives are provided for each section of a test.

\* The previous definitions were taken from The National Center for Education Statistics: Research and Development Report, July 1997.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What are accommodations?**

*Accommodations include a variety of alterations in presentation format, response format, setting in which the test is taken, timing or scheduling. The accommodations do not substantially change level, content or performance criteria of assessments.*

### **Why do students with disabilities need accommodations?**

*The main goal of accommodations is to “level the playing field,” that is, to provide equal opportunity for students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.*

### **Who makes the decision about accommodations students receive on assessments?**

*It is mandated by federal and state law that necessary accommodations be provided to students with disabilities. In addition to guidelines set forth by states and school districts, decisions about appropriate accommodations should be made by those individuals most familiar with the student’s strengths and weaknesses. IEP teams, including teachers and parents, should all participate in the decision-making process.*

### **What if the IEP states that a student with disabilities will not participate in standardized testing?**

*Although every effort should be made to include students with disabilities in the regular assessment, this is not always appropriate. That is, if the I.E.P. states that a student should NOT participate in standardized testing, then the student should NOT participate in these tests (including the STEPS test).*

### **Why should students with disabilities participate in large scale testing?**

*There are numerous reasons why students with disabilities should participate in large scale testing. Below are a few key reasons:*

- Legislation requires that students with disabilities participate in large scale testing;*
- Assessments provide an avenue for program monitoring, evaluation and accountability. Participation by students with disabilities in large scale testing can help facilitate policy decisions and changes that are applicable to these students;*
- Participation in large scale testing places similar expectations on students with disabilities and encourages these students to pursue the same educational goals as other students.*

**Will the scoring rubrics be different for students with disabilities and who will score the tests?**

*No, the scoring rubrics will not be different. The scoring rubrics will be exactly the same for students with disabilities as all other students being tested. Teachers will score the tests in the same way and under the same guidelines as students who take the tests without disabilities.*

**Will Braille and large-print tests be available for those students whose IEP's indicate such a need?**

*Yes. Students requiring Braille tests may receive up to three times the normal amount of time allotted for each test section. Students requiring large print tests may receive up to 1 1/2 times the normal amount of time allotted for each test section.*

**How will Braille test be scored?**

*When scoring Braille tests, schools will use the same scoring rubric. These tests will be scored by at least one or more special education teachers from the Visually Handicapped Program.*

**For field tests, will there be an audio tape provided for those students whose IEP's indicate a need for oral directions/prompts?**

*No. Schools must make arrangements for providing oral directions / prompts as indicated on the student's IEP. This accommodation will be available in large-scale testing when indicated by the student's IEP.*

**Can an accommodation be used during testing if the student has not had an opportunity to use the accommodation in classroom instruction and classroom testing?**

*No. Students **should not** receive accommodations for the first time on a large-scale test. The accommodations the students receive on large-scale tests should be aligned with their I.E.P.s, and with classroom instruction and classroom testing. That is, teachers must provide opportunities for students with disabilities to use accommodations by providing instructional accommodations as well as accommodations during classroom testing.*

**If a test accommodation is not listed on the I.E.P., but as a teacher I feel the student needs this accommodation what should I do?**

*A teacher can provide a student with instructional accommodations and document the student's responses to these accommodations in the context of classroom instruction and testing and provide this information to the student's I.E.P. team for consideration. However, if the accommodation you are providing is not listed on the student's **current** I.E.P. it should not be used in large-scale testing.*

**Who can I contact if I have further questions or need additional clarification?**

*If you have additional questions, concerns, or need clarification please contact the test coordinator at your school site.*

## RESOURCES

*Alternate Assessments for Students with Disabilities.* NCEO Policy Directions Number 5 by M. Thurlow, K. Olsen, J. Elliott, J. Ysseldyke, R. Erickson, & E. Ahearn (1996) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Assessment Guidelines that Maximize the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Large-Scale Assessments: Characteristics and Considerations.* A report authored by J. Elliott, M. Thurlow, and J. Ysseldyke (1996, Synthesis Report 25) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Increasing the Participation of Students with Disabilities in State and District Assessments.* NCEO Policy Directions Number 6 by M. Thurlow, J. Ysseldyke, R. Erickson, and J. Elliott (1997) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Making Decisions About the Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Large-Scale Assessments.* A report authored by J. Ysseldyke, M. Thurlow, K. McGrew, and M. Vanderwood (1994, Synthesis Report 13) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Outcomes Assessment for Students with Disabilities: Will it be Accountability or Continued Failure?* An article authored by M. McLaughlin and S. Hopfengardner-Warren appearing in *Preventing School Failure* (1992, vol 36, issue 4, pp. 29-33).

*Providing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities in State and District Assessments.* An NCEO Policy Directions Number 7 by J. Elliott, J. Ysseldyke, M. Thurlow, and R. Erickson (1997) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Recommendations for Making Decisions About the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Statewide Assessment Programs.* A report authored by J. Ysseldyke, M. Thurlow, K. McGrew, and J. Shriner (1994, Synthesis Report 15) at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Reporting the Results of Students with Disabilities in State and District Assessments.* NCEO Policy Directions Number 8 by R. Erickson, J. Ysseldyke, M. Thurlow, and J. Elliott at the National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota.

*Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.* A report authored by W. King, J. Baker, and J. Jarrow (no date) at the Association on Higher Education and Disability, University of Ohio.

*Testing Students with Disabilities: Practical Strategies for Complying with District and State Requirements.* A book by M. Thurlow, J. Elliott, and J. Ysseldyke (1998), published by Corwin Press, Inc. (Thousand Oaks, CA).

# RESOURCES

## ORGANIZATIONS AND WEB SITES THAT PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

*This resource list is intended to provide a better understanding of special education areas and topics. Some of the resources address a specific disability group, while most of the resources include information relevant to all disability groups.*

### California Department of Education

Special Education  
515 L Street, #270  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Telephone: 916-445-4602  
Fax: 916-327-3706

### Council for Exceptional Children

1920 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191-1589  
Telephone: 703-2649479, 800-224-6830  
Fax: 703-264-1637  
<http://www.cec.sped.org/>

### National Center on Educational Outcomes

University of Minnesota  
350 Elliott Hall  
75 East River Road  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
Telephone: 612-626-1530  
Fax: 612-624-0879  
<http://www.coled.umn.edu/nceo/>

### National Information Center for Children and Youth With Disabilities (NICHCY)

Academy for Educational Development  
P.O. Box 1492  
Washington, DC 20031-1492  
Telephone: 202-884-8200  
Fax: 202-884-8441  
<http://www.nichcy.org/>

### Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services

US Department of Education  
330 C Street, SW  
Switzer Building, Room 3132  
Washington, DC 20202-2524  
Telephone: (202) 205-8241  
Fax: (202) 401-2608  
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/index.html>

### The Special Edge

429 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Telephone: (916) 492-9990 or 800-869-4337  
Fax: (916) 492-9995  
[rise@wested.org](mailto:rise@wested.org)

### Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC)

University of Oregon  
Eugene, OR 97403-1268  
Telephone: 541-346-5641  
Fax: 541-346-5639  
<http://interact.uoregon.edu/WRRC/WRRC.HTML>

## ORGANIZATIONS FOR SPECIFIC DISABILITY TYPE

### Braille Institute of America

741 North Vermont Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
Telephone: 323-663-1111  
Fax: (323) 663-0867  
[www.brailleinstitute.org](http://www.brailleinstitute.org)

### National Association of the Deaf

814 Thayer Avenue, Suite 250  
Silver Spring, CO 20910-4500  
Telephone: 301 587-1788  
TTY: 301 587-1789  
Fax: 587-1791  
[www.nad.org](http://www.nad.org)

### Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

20 Roszel Road  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
Telephone: 800-221-4792, 609-452-0606  
Fax: 609-987-8116  
[www.rfbid.org](http://www.rfbid.org)

### Learning Disabilities Association of America

4156 Library Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15234  
Telephone: 412-341-1515 or 412-341-8077  
Fax: 412-344-0224  
[www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org)

### Learning Disability OnLine Report

[www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)  
A free monthly newsletter online.

### National Center for Learning Disabilities

381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1401  
New York, NY 10016  
Information: 888-575-7373  
Telephone: 212-545-7510  
Fax: 212-545-9665  
[www.nclld.org](http://www.nclld.org)

### Special Education Resource on the Internet (SERI)

c/o Hood College  
401 Rosemont Ave  
Frederick, MD 21701-8575  
Telephone: 301. 663. 3131  
<http://www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.htm>

*Special Education Resource on the Internet (SERI) is a collection of Internet accessible information resources of interest to those involved in the fields related to Special Education. This collection exists in order to make on-line Special Education resources more easily and readily available in one location.*



# ACCOMMODATIONS

## ALIGNMENT BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TEST STRATEGIES

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### CLASSROOM

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

- Cooperative Group Work
- Individualized Grading
- Peer Tutoring
- Draft Copy Assistance
- Instructional Scaffolding
- Multi modality Materials
- Respectful Interactions
- Instruction In Smaller Bits
- Build On Smaller Units
- Note Taking
- Emphasis On Study Skills
- Focus On Appropriate Behaviors/Choices

#### INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS

##### PRESENTATION

- Prompts available on tape
- Increase spacing between items or reduce items per page or line
- Reading passages with one complete sentence per line
- Omit questions that cannot be revised, prorate credit
- Rephrase prompt
- Computer reads paper to students

##### TIMING/SCHEDULING

- Extended time
- Particular time of day
- Several sessions
- Several days
- Frequent breaks

### TESTING

#### TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

##### PRESENTATION

- Prompts available on tape
- Increase spacing between items or reduce items per page or line
- Reading passages with one complete sentence per line
- Omit questions that cannot be revised, prorate credit
- Rephrase prompt
- Computer reads paper to students

##### TIMING/SCHEDULING

- Extended time
- Particular time of day
- Several sessions
- Several days
- Frequent breaks

# ACCOMMODATIONS

## ALIGNMENT BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TEST STRATEGIES

### INSTRUCTIONAL

#### SETTING

- Administer the test individually
- Small group administration
- Increase spacing
- Provide special lighting
- Provide special acoustics
- Administer test in location with minimal distractions
- Assignment administered by someone other than classroom teacher
- Assignment administered in a small group, individually, or study carrel in the general education classroom.

#### ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

- Highlight key words, phrases, or verbs in directions, by bold print, highlighter, or underlining
- Read directions to student
- Reread directions for each page
- Simplify/clarify language
- Provide cues (arrows and stop signs) on test booklet
- Provide additional examples

#### DEVICES/SUPPORTS FOR PRESENTATION

- Templates to reduce amount of visible print seen at one time
- Auditory amplification device, hearing aid or noise buffers
- Audio taped administration of sections
- Videotaped administration of sections
- Secure papers with tape/magnets
- Questions read aloud to students
- Marks or markers to maintain place
- Dark heavy or raised lines or pencil grips
- Assistive devices \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)
- Computer presentation/slide projector administration of test
- Scribe writes down student answers

### TESTING

#### SETTING

- Administer the test individually
- Small group administration
- Increase spacing
- Provide special lighting
- Provide special acoustics
- Administer test in location with minimal distractions
- Assignment administered by someone other than classroom teacher
- Assignment administered in a small group, individually, or study carrel in the general education classroom.

#### TEST DIRECTIONS

- Highlight key words, phrases, or verbs in directions, by bold print, highlighter, or underlining
- Read directions to student
- Reread directions for each page
- Simplify/clarify language
- Provide cues (arrows and stop signs) on test booklet
- Provide additional examples

#### DEVICES/SUPPORTS FOR PRESENTATION

- Templates to reduce amount of visible print seen at one time
- Auditory amplification device, hearing aid or noise buffers
- Audio taped administration of sections
- Videotaped administration of sections
- Secure papers with tape/magnets
- Questions read aloud to students
- Marks or markers to maintain place
- Dark heavy or raised lines or pencil grips
- Assistive devices \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)
- Computer presentation/slide projector administration of test
- Scribe writes down student answers

# ACCOMMODATIONS

## ALIGNMENT BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TEST STRATEGIES

### INSTRUCTIONAL

#### ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

- Increase spacing between words/lines
- Wider lines and/or margins
- Graph paper for math problems
- Paper in alternative format (word processed)
- Allow student to mark responses in booklet rather than answer sheet

#### DEVICES SUPPORTS FOR RESPONSE

- Word processor/computer/typewriter
- Student tapes response for later verbatim transcription
- Dictation to a proctor/scribe
- Student uses large-print booklet
- Alternative response such as oral, typed, pointing
- Large diameter, special grip pencil
- Copy assistance between drafts
- Tape recorder
- Calculator
- Arithmetic tables
- Spelling dictionary
- Spell check

### TESTING

#### TESTING FORMAT

- Increase spacing between words/lines
- Wider lines and/or margins
- Graph paper for math problems
- Paper in alternative format (word processed)
- Allow student to mark responses in booklet rather than answer sheet

#### DEVICES SUPPORTS FOR RESPONSE

- Word processor/computer/typewriter
- Student tapes response for later verbatim transcription
- Dictation to a proctor/scribe
- Student uses large-print booklet
- Alternative response such as oral, typed, pointing
- Large diameter, special grip pencil
- Copy assistance between drafts
- Tape recorder
- Calculator
- Arithmetic tables
- Spelling dictionary
- Spell check

#### COMMENTS

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---