

## Accommodations: Synopsis

### WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

### SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

An accommodation is a change that helps a student overcome or work around the disability. Allowing a student who has trouble writing to give his answers orally is an example of an accommodation. This student is still expected to know the same material and answer the same questions as fully as the other students, but he doesn't have to write his answers to show that he knows the information. Accommodations reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.

Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.

- I. **Setting Accommodations:** Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.
- II. **Timing and Scheduling Accommodations:** Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized.
- III. **Response Accommodations:** Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using an assistive device or organizer.
- IV. **Presentation Accommodations:** Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual.

### MODIFICATIONS OR ALTERATIONS VS. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations. They provide access. Modifications refer to practices that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Using modifications may result in implications that could adversely affect students throughout their educational career.

### DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT'S IEP

- I. *“Consideration of Special Factors”* [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered.
- II. *“Supplementary Aids and Services”* [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes “aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings.

- iii. “*Participation in Assessments*” [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

#### INVOLVING STUDENTS IN SELECTING, USING, AND EVALUATING ACCOMMODATIONS

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. It is critical for students with disabilities to understand his/her disability and learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Students who use accommodations will also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education and at work. The more that students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. **An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments.** Although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be state approved for use on a standardized assessment.

#### ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

Students with disabilities are to be included in all state wide and district wide assessments. The IEP team determines how the student will participate in state and district wide assessments—with or without accommodations, or by means of an alternate assessment. Assessment accommodations are determined based on the student’s needs. Those accommodations can only be used for state assessment purposes if they are used regularly by the student during instruction and/or classroom testing. The state approved assessment accommodation list is located on the Oklahoma State Department of Education Web site. Students must meet the eligibility requirements found in the *Criteria Checklist for Assessing Students with Disabilities on Alternate Assessments*<sup>1</sup> before taking an alternate assessment.<sup>2</sup>

#### RESOURCES

<http://www.ok.gov/sde/achieving-classroom-excellence-act-ace>

<http://ok.gov/sde/assessment>

<http://ok.gov/sde/accountability-assessments>

<http://ok.gov/sde/assessment-administrator-resources-administrators>

**Oklahoma State Department of Education**  
Special Education Services  
(405)521-3351  
<http://ok.gov/sde/special-education>

<sup>1</sup> <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/OSDE%20Form%202012%20Assessment%20Criteria%20Checklist.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Oklahoma%20Special%20Education%20Handbook%20Manual.pdf>