

PSSA Accommodations Guidelines
for
Students with IEPs and
Students with 504 Plans

January 7, 2009

**Lynda Lupp, Nan Rodgers, Marlene Schechter,
Diane Simaska, Mark Steciw**

**Edward G. Rendell,
Governor**

**Dr. Gerald L. Zahorchak,
Secretary of Education**

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Email:

pssa@pattan.net



Welcome and Introductions

- Audience
- Bureau of Assessment and Accountability
- Presenters

Accommodations Training Objectives

- Use the Accommodations Guidelines to examine techniques for making decisions concerning accommodations for students with IEPs
- Discuss accommodations for students with various types of disabilities
- Review current test security and administration procedures



Content

- Part 1: Foundation (Requirement for Parts 2, 3, & 4)
- Part 2: Visual Accommodations
- Part 3: Auditory Accommodations
- Part 4: Multi-Sensory Accommodations

Part 1: Foundation

Laying the Foundation

- Laws and Regulations
- Understanding Accommodations
- Making choices for individual students



Student Participation in Assessments

- The participation of students with disabilities in assessments is assured by the following federal and state laws:
 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA or IDEA 2004)
 - No Child Left Behind of 2001 (NCLB)
 - Chapters 14 & 4 of the State Board of Education Regulations, Title 22, Education. (Pa Code 14.102 & 4.51)

IDEA '04

§ 300.160 Participation in assessments

- (a) *General.* A State must ensure that all children with disabilities are included in all general State and district-wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section 1111 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 6311, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated in their respective IEPs.

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IDEA '04

- b) *Accommodation guidelines.* (1) A State (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, an LEA) must develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. (2) The State's (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA's) guidelines must—
- (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and
 - (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

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NCLB: § 200.6 Inclusion of all students.

- (a) *Students eligible under IDEA and Section 504—*
- (1) *Appropriate accommodations.* (i) A State’s academic assessment system must provide—
- (A) For each student with a disability, as defined under section 602(3) of the IDEA, appropriate accommodations that the student’s IEP team determines are necessary to measure the academic achievement of the student relative to the State’s academic content and academic achievement standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled, consistent with §200.1(b)(2), (b)(3), and (c); and
- (B) For each student covered under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Section 504), appropriate accommodations that the student’s placement team determines are necessary to measure the academic achievement of the student relative to the State’s academic content and academic achievement standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled, consistent with § 200.1(b)(2), (b)(3), and (c).

2009 Assessment Calendar

Assessment	Dates	Grade(s)
PSSA Writing	February 9 - 20	5, 8, 11
PSSA Reading & Math	March 16 - 27	3 through 8, 11
PSSA Science	April 27 - May 8	4, 8, 11
PASA Math & Reading	February 16 - March 27	3 through 8, 11
PASA Science	May 4 - 29	4, 8, 11
ACCESS for ELLs	January 12 - February 20	K - 12
NAEP - selected schools	January 26 - March 6	4, 8, 12

Modified PSSA test pilot: Spring 2009

Participation for All

- PSSA
 - Participate in PSSA without accommodations.
 - Participate in PSSA with accommodations.
- PASA
 - Participate in the PASA (for students with significant cognitive disabilities).
 - Adaptations for students with visual impairments or who are deaf or hard of hearing -2009 PASA Administrator’s Manual: www.pasaassessment.org

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Accommodation Applications

- The use of accommodations is linked through each of these areas:



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Equal Access to Grade Level Content

- Equal access to grade level content is the goal.
- Every IEP team member must be familiar with state and district content standards and where to locate standards and updates.
- Collaboration between general and special educators is key.

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Assessment Accommodations

- Practices and procedures that provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities
- Reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability and do not reduce learning expectations
- Do not change the level of difficulty of the test item and do not affect scoring (invalidating a score)

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Assessment Accommodations



- It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment (i.e. the PSSA tests).

Accommodation Categories

- Presentation
- Response
- Setting
- Timing/scheduling

Presentation Accommodations

- Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to read standard print visually
- Alternate modes of access
 - Auditory
 - Multi-sensory
 - Tactile
 - Visual

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Response Accommodations

- Allow students to complete assignments, tests, and activities in different ways or to solve or organize problems using assistive devices or organizers

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Setting Accommodations

- Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting

Timing/Scheduling Accommodations

- Increase the allowable length of time to complete a test or assignment
- This may change the way that time is organized.

Documenting Accommodations in the IEP

- Consideration of special factors --
 - Assistive technology devices and services
- Supplementary aids and services --
 - Aids, services, and other supports
- Participation in assessments --
 - How will a student participate in state and district-wide assessments

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What Doesn't Work?

- Checking off every accommodation available on the IEP form, hoping “something” will work
- Not getting input from the general education teachers
- What else doesn't work?

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Of the Accommodations that Match the Student's Needs, Consider ...

- The student's willingness to learn to use the accommodations
- Opportunities to learn how to use the accommodations in classroom settings
- Conditions for use on state assessments

See Teacher Tool 1

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Involve Students

- Involve students in selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations.
- The more input students have in selecting, the more likely the accommodations will be used.
- Students should see accommodations as adding value to daily life — not only in school but in postsecondary, career, and the community.

See Teacher Tool 2

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Questions to Guide Evaluation at the School or District Level

- Are there policies to ensure standardized and ethical assessment administration and that test security practices are followed?
- Are students receiving accommodations as documented in the IEP and 504 plans?
- What are the results for students when accommodations are used?

See Teacher Tool 3

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Questions to Guide Evaluation at the Student Level

- What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation worked?
- What seem to be effective combinations of accommodations?
- What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations for a student?
- What are the perceptions of teachers and others?

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Exceptions to Participation in PSSA

- Participates in PASA for Math & Reading, Science
 - This student will participate in a teacher-created alternate assessment for writing
- Optional participation in Reading and Writing for 1st year ELL students
- Parental request for religious exclusion

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What about ELLs with IEPs or 504 Plans?

In addition to accommodations in IEPs or 504 Plans, consider:

- Accommodations available for ELLs
 - Word-to-word translation dictionaries
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Spanish/English Math and Science tests
- All ELLs, grades K-12, participate in the ACCESS, Pennsylvania's English Language Proficiency Test

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AUDITORY PRESENTATION ACCOMMODATIONS		Standard	Not allowable for PSSA	
			Ethics/Security	Invalidates score
Human Reader	Mathematics and science PSSA tests only: a qualified person may be provided to read orally to students who are unable to decode text visually. Readers should use even inflection so that the student does not receive any cues by the way the information is read. It is important for readers to read test items/questions and text word for word exactly as written. Readers may not clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance to students. Readers need to be familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the content. This is especially important for high school mathematics and science. Readers should be provided to students on an individual basis. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. Due to limited resources it might be necessary to read to a small (not more than 5) group of students.	✓		
All PSSA tests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading aloud or signing directions. 	✓		
Mathematics PSSA test:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading aloud or signing to questions. 	✓		
Reading PSSA test:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading aloud or signing test items/questions. 		✓	✓

TABLE 5 *continued*

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF; HARD OF HEARING

Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Visual cues • Written notes, outlines, and instructions • Videotape and descriptive video • Provide advance organizers and outlines of lectures for student to follow • Use gestures (e.g., point to materials) • Repeat questions and responses from classmates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign language • Audio amplification devices • Repeat questions and responses from classmates regarding directions and procedures • Give interpreter instructional materials in advance

Electronic Readers (Screen Reader and/or Text Reader) - Pages 31, 32

Must meet all 4 criteria:

1. Used routinely in this subject both before and after PSSA
2. Severely limited or prevented from participating without it (not simply performing below grade-level expectations)
3. Documented in IEP or 504
4. PDE has granted approval prior to test window

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Accommodation Procedures

- Document, document, document...
 - Part IV of IEP MUST be documented correctly
- Provide training
- Communicate and collaborate with Test Coordinator
- Map out the logistics
- Prepare for the implementation of accommodations prior to, during, and after the assessment

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Prior to Assessment

- Know the accommodations to be provided
- Know how to administer them
- Know where extended-time and read-aloud will take place
- Use accommodation forms/databases to monitor implementation.

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During the Assessment: Ensure Standardization

- Standardization: The adherence of uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment
- Strict adherence to guidelines helps to ensure that test results reflect individual student learning
- The objective of providing assessment accommodations is to make fair comparisons with other students taking the test

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During the Assessment: Practice Ethical Testing

- Unethical testing practices are inappropriate interactions between test administrators and students taking tests
 - Coaching student during tests
 - Editing student responses
 - Giving clues in any way
 - Changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information



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During the Assessment: Ensure Test Security

- Ensure the confidentiality of test questions and answers
- Maintain test integrity and validity
- This becomes an issue when accessible test formats are used or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test

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After the Assessment

- Complete Bubble Sheet
- Permanently delete files
- Return ALL material
 - Student booklets
 - Modified test versions
 - Original student work
 - Scratch paper

ACCOMMODATIONS SECTION	
This section must be completed for assessed students only, if applicable.	
<p>8. Student was absent without make-up for one or more sections of the following subjects:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Mathematics</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Reading</p> <p>9. Student used the following Presentation Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):</p> <p>Math Reading</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Braille format</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Large-print format</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Magnification device</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Reading windows; reading guides</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sign language interpreter</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Qualified interpreter for ELL student</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Test directions read aloud (mark only for additional procedures; e.g., multiple times, slower presentation)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Test directions signed or recorded</p> <p><input type="radio"/> N/A Test items/questions read aloud or signed</p> <p><input type="radio"/> N/A Test items/questions recorded</p> <p><input type="radio"/> N/A Test items/questions interpreted for ELL student</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Electronic screen reader (PDE must approve the program and all functions)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other (as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or approved by PDE)</p> <p>10. Student used the following Setting Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):</p> <p>Math Reading</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Hospital/home setting</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Tested in separate setting</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Small group testing</p>	<p>11. Student used the following Response Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):</p> <p>Math Reading</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Braille/Note taker (per Accommodations Guidelines)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Test administrator scribed open-ended responses at student's direction</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Test administrator marked multiple-choice responses at student's direction</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Test administrator transcribed student responses (per Accommodations Guidelines)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Augmentative communication device</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Typewriter, word processor, or computer (per Accommodations Guidelines)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Audio recording of student responses (per Accommodations Guidelines)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> N/A Manipulative (Cenmer abacus; number line; or as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or approved by PDE)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> N/A Translation dictionary for ELL student</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Electronic screen reader (PDE must approve the program and all functions)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other (as indicated in Accommodations Guidelines or approved by PDE)</p> <p>12. Student used the following Timing Accommodations (mark all that apply, if any):</p> <p>Math Reading</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Scheduled extended time</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Student-requested extended time</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Multiple test sessions</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Changed test schedule</p>

2009 Accommodations Guidelines



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www.pde.state.pa.us

Email:

pssa@pattan.net



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Part 2: Visual Accommodations

Review of Accommodations for Students with Visual Impairments (VI)

- Student Characteristics
- Accommodations vs. Visual Modification
- What's new (new items are in red)

Student Characteristics

- Student characteristics
 - Low incidence/heterogeneous population
 - Visual impairment
 - Blind
 - Low vision
- Access to instructional materials and testing
 - Visual access (print/pictures)
 - Auditory access
 - Tactual access (braille)
 - Combination

Key Concepts when Considering Accommodations for Students with VI

- Many students with visual impairments will need accommodations to access instructional and testing materials.
- Guard against over accommodating and recognizing that when we change the content or level of expectation, it may become a modification rather than an accommodation.
- Accommodations “level the playing field.”

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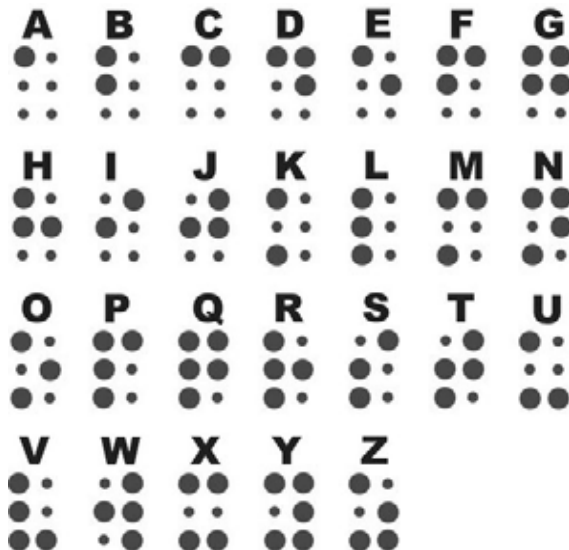
Modified Test Formats

- o Braille
- o Large print
- o Must be ordered from DRC
- o Order forms are included with testing materials

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Tactile and Visual Presentation Accommodations (Page 25, 26)

- Braille/Large Print
- IEP teams need to utilize appropriate learning media assessments to determine optimal print size for *sustained reading tasks*
- *LEAs should contact DRC @ 1-800-451-7849 if a student requires braille or PDE @ 717-787-4234 if a student requires print larger than 18 point type for a specific section of text*



Visual Presentation Accommodations (Page 26)

- Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)
- Screen Magnification Software
 - Some students use enlarged computer monitors and/or screen enlargement programs or computer operating system accessibility options. Must follow all guidelines for electronic readers.



Multi-Sensory Presentation Accommodations (Page 31)

- Electronic readers: Intended for those students with a severe disability that precludes them from accessing the test...
 - Scan and Read Programs
 - Screen readers

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Response Accommodations

- Electronic braille writers
- Note-taking devices
- Adapted PDAs
- Large print

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Electronic Braille Writer, Note-Taking Devices, and Adapted PDAs

Allowable for PSSA tests with following conditions:

- Braille or standard input may be printed out in text form
- Student responses must be transcribed into the regular scannable test booklet
- Not allowable: Use of spell/grammar checker, auto correct, word prediction functions, internet functions, stored files or other supports



If the note-taking device is connected to a computer, guidelines for use of an electronic reader apply

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Materials or Devices Used to Solve or Organize Responses (Page 40)

- A Cranmer abacus may be used when math problems are to be calculated without a calculator. The abacus functions as paper and pencil for students with visual impairment
- Use of a number line (large print or braille)
- Use of large print and/or tactile rulers



Tactile rulers do not measure less than 1/16”.

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Setting Accommodations (Page 41)

- A student with low vision may bring appropriate task lighting to the test situation.

Timing and Scheduling Accommodations (Page 45)

- Extended Time
 - Should be determined by IEP team based on learning media assessment results
 - Remember to “raise the bar.”

Part 3: Auditory Accommodations

Review of Accommodations for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Student Characteristics
- Auditory Accommodations vs. Auditory Modification

Student Characteristics

- Student characteristics
 - Low incidence/heterogeneous population
 - Hearing loss
 - Deaf
 - Hard of hearing
- Communication
 - May use a signed language or mode (visual)
 - May use an auditory and/or oral mode (audition)
 - Amplification

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Student Characteristics

- Degree/configuration of hearing loss
 - Impact upon education
- * Note: Communication accommodations need to be consistent with each student's *Communication Plan* section documented on the IEP

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Accommodations do NOT...

- Change, lower, or lessen learning, or reduce assessment expectations.
 - *Example: Require a student to learn less material.*
 - *Example: Revise assignments or tests to make them easier.*
- Result in implications that could adversely affect a student throughout his/her educational career.

CFU: Reducing learning and lowering expectations are called _____.

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Standard Allowable Accommodations

- Sign language
- Assistive listening devices
- Extended time



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Sign Language (pp. 27-28)



- A sign language interpreter needs to translate accurately in the student's preferred mode of communication.
- If the test is not administered one-on-one, no more than 5 students may be grouped together.
 - All students in the group must be given the same test form number.

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Sign Language

- An interpreter may have access to the test form **3 days prior to administration.**
 - Plan ahead! Reserve a secure room.
 - Plan ahead! Interpreter sub for testing day?
- An interpreter may only access the test in a secure setting.
 - The assessment and preparation notes may not leave the building.
- An interpreter is required to sign a confidentiality agreement when viewing the test ahead of time.



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Sign Language

- The following sections of the PSSA are allowed to be signed:
 - Directions for all tests
 - Math items/questions
 - Writing prompts
 - Science items/questions

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Sign Language

- The following sections of the PSSA are **NOT** allowed to be signed:
 - Reading passages, multiple-choice questions and answer choices
 - Writing multiple-choice passages, questions, and answer choices

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Sign Language Message Delivery

- All test items must be signed as they are written, except when doing so would reveal an answer to a test question.
- Interpreters may not paraphrase, clarify, elaborate, or provide assistance with the meanings of words, intent of test questions, or responses to test items.

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Sign Language Message Delivery

Math example (Grade 3)

C.1.1.1

15. Juliet drew a shape that had only 3 sides. Which shape did she draw?

- circle *no sides*
- rectangle *four sides*
- square *four sides*
- triangle *

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Sign Language Message Delivery

Informational writing prompt (Grade 8)

Write an essay about an unusual food you have eaten. Explain what makes it so unusual.

Assistive Listening Devices

- Students may use amplification devices in addition to their hearing aids (the same equipment used during instruction time).

Notes:

- Provide fresh batteries when testing.
- Reduce ambient noise.

Extended Time



- Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may need more time than the rest of the regular education testing group (allowable accommodation).
 - English may be the second language for some students so they may require additional time to read and comprehend the meaning of each question.
- Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis and documented on the IEP, prior to the administration of the PSSA.

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Extended Time

- Students may need to move to an *extended time area*.
 - Plan ahead! Avoid disruption when needing an additional room
- There must be sufficient time to complete a section prior to the end of the school day.
- Test sections must be administered in sequence.
- Students should have extended time as long as they are working productively.

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Email:

pssa@pattan.net



Part 4: Multi-Sensory Accommodations

Review of Multi-Sensory Accommodations

- Student characteristics
- How to implement accommodations during testing



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Student Characteristics

Students needing these accommodations may have difficulty with:



Communicating

Attention

Writing

Spelling

Reading

Physical Access

Typing



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Human Reader (Page 28)

For students who are unable to decode text visually, the following sections of the PSSA

May be read aloud:

- Directions for all PSSA tests
- Math test items/questions
- Writing prompts
- Science test items/questions

May NOT be read aloud:

- Reading passages
- Reading questions & answer choices
- Writing passages
- Writing questions & answer choices

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Text Reader Eligibility Requirements (Page 32)

Use intended for students with a severe disability, e.g.,

- Limited motor ability
- Significant vision disability

NOT intended for struggling readers and or low performing students with learning disabilities

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Scribe (Page 36)

- Writes what student dictates using an AAC device, pointing, sign language, or speech
- May not edit or alter in any way
- Must allow the student to review and edit what has been written
- Records student responses directly into PSSA test booklet



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Scribe May Write Down As Student Dictates (Page 36)

- Multiple choice answer selection may be dictated in a language other than English, e.g. student indicates choice A, choice B, etc.
- Multiple-choice and open-ended responses in English
 - Mathematics PSSA
 - Reading PSSA
 - Science PSSA
- *Student must respond in test booklet in English in order to receive a score*



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Response Accommodations (Page 37)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Device

- A system designed to support or augment communication
 - Letter Boards
 - Written words
 - Electronic Device
- Student responses must be transcribed into regular test booklet



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Response Accommodations (Page 38)

- Word processor
 - Use of spell/grammar checker, word prediction, internet functions, stored files, and other supports are not allowed
- Audio recorder—tape/CD/electronic recorder (with NO computer speech recognition)
 - Use is not allowed on the writing PSSA



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Response Accommodations: Speech to Text (Page 39)

- Must have prior approval from PDE!
- Intended for students with significant disabilities that don't allow them to produce written responses by other acceptable means
- Student dictates text into the computer
- Test administrator transcribes dictated responses into regular test booklet

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Response Accommodations (Page 40)



It is not allowable to use:

- Manipulatives other than those described in the accommodations guidelines
- Calculator may not be used on non-calculator sections of the PSSA test
- Preprinted graphic organizers

It is allowable to use:

- Calculator or number line
- Calculators with large keys or voice output
- Students ARE ALLOWED to create their own graphic organizers (at the time of the test)

Setting Accommodations (Pages 42,43)

- Accommodations may be distracting to other students
- Allow access for all students
- Students using word processing software may need to be in computer labs for testing
- Make sure students with mobility impairments
 - Can access the test room
 - Have room for wheelchairs and equipment needed for testing

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In Conclusion.....

- The goal of school is learning. Students with disabilities have the opportunity to truly show what they have learned when appropriate accommodations are paired with effective instruction and assessment.

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A Final Word.....

- Therefore....choose accommodations for each student thoughtfully and use them consistently while monitoring student progress to insure success for every student!

Email:

pssa@pattan.net



CONTACT INFORMATION

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Bureau of Assessment and Accountability 717-705-2343

Bureau of Special Education 717-783-2311

Data Recognition Corporation

PA Customer Service 1-800-451-7849

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References

- www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/AccommodationsManual.pdf
- http://www.pde.state.pa.us/and_t/lib/and_t/2008AccommodationsGuidelines.pdf
- http://www.pasaassessment.org/files/PASA_NEWMANUAL_2008.pdf

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References

- The *Online Accommodations Bibliography* at the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) is a source of information on the range of possible accommodations as well as the effects of various testing accommodations for students with disabilities:

<http://cehd.umn.edu/nceo/AccomStudies.htm>

- Parent guide and information on Alternate Assessments:

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/learning/index.html>



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Office of Elementary/Secondary Education Diane Castelbuono, Deputy Secretary

- Bureau of Assessment & Accountability
Shula Nedley, Director
- Division of Assessment
Ray Young, Division Chief
- Bureau of Special Education,
John Tommasini, Director
- Central Division of Compliance
Monitoring & Planning
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