

Colorado Accommodation Manual

Selecting and Using Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment



Success is a journey, not a destination

-Ben Swackhamer

Accommodations for Use on State Summative Assessments

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Section V: Policy for Statewide Assessment Accommodations

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Overview

State and local laws and policies specify practices to ensure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), School Assessment Coordinators (SACs), proctors, and all staff involved in test administration must adhere to these policies.

All students enrolled in a Colorado public school in the grades assessed must be accounted for in either the state summative academic assessment (TCAP and CMAS – Science and Social Studies) or the state summative alternate academic assessment (CoAlt). The purpose of the state summative academic assessments is to accurately describe all students' level of achievement on the Colorado standards. As Colorado moves towards computer based assessment, it is anticipated that most students will be able to access the assessment with built in supports. A few students will need accommodations to access the assessment.

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure assessment results reflect actual student learning.

Assessment accommodations are adjustments made to the assessment procedures in order to provide a student an opportunity to engage with the state assessment while not affecting the reliability or validity of the assessment.

Policies pertaining to accommodations for statewide assessments are set by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) based on current research and assessment practices. Per the *Code of Federal Regulations*, 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 do not invalidate the score and (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score [34 CFR § 300.160(b)(2)]. Therefore, accommodations listed for use on statewide assessments on a student's IEP should follow the policies included in this manual. Use of accommodations that do not follow these policies will result in a misadministration.

Including All Students in State Assessment

In Colorado, participation of all students in state academic assessment is specified in the state law (*C.R.S. 22-7-409*):

(d) (I) (A) ... every student enrolled in a public school shall be required to take the assessments administered ... at the grade level in which the student is enrolled, as determined by the school district.

(B) Any student who is eligible for the state's alternate assessment for students with disabilities, also known as the "CSAP-A", or other assessment approved by rule by the board according to the annual review of the student's individualized education program ... shall instead take the CSAP-A or the other approved assessment.

All students, including students with disabilities, are included in either the summative academic assessment or alternate summative academic assessment.

Additionally students identified with limited English proficiency, including those also with an identified disability, must participate in an annual English language proficiency assessment as mandated in federal law (ESEA, Title I):

Sec. 1111(b)(7): *"(7) ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY. —Each State plan shall demonstrate that local educational agencies in the State will, beginning not later than school year 2002–2003, provide for an annual assessment of English proficiency (measuring students' oral language, reading, and writing skills in English) of all students with limited English proficiency in the schools served by the State educational agency..."*

Parents and IEP teams may not excuse students from any state assessments. For further clarification on this topic, please see the Jan. 20, 2012 Commissioner's letter to Superintendents located in [Appendix A](#).

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Including All Students with Disabilities in State Accountability

Both federal and state laws require that all students with disabilities be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of students. IEP Team members must actively engage in a planning process that addresses:

- provision of accommodations to facilitate student access to grade-level instruction and state assessments
- use of alternate assessments to assess the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities

State assessments are the mechanism for checking whether schools have been successful in with students attaining the knowledge and skills defined by the content standards. School, district, and state accountability are based on measuring success in educating all students and determining what needs to be improved for specific groups of students. With the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Waiver, Colorado's federal Title I accountability system is now defined in terms of Colorado's School and District Performance Frameworks (SPF and DPF), which measure the academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps, and postsecondary workforce readiness of students in Colorado schools and districts each year. Schools, districts, and the state are held accountable for improvements on an annual basis by public reporting, the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and ultimately through consequences delineated in [SB-09-163](#), if they remain persistently low performing for five years.

For accountability information, please contact CDE: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Accountability/NCLBWaiver.asp>

Selecting and Planning for State Assessment Accommodations

Accommodations provide students an opportunity to access material without providing an unfair advantage to any student. Access can be defined as the right or privilege to approach, reach, enter, or make use of something. Access is not about higher achievement. Accommodations allow students to engage with the assessment. Accommodations must maintain the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment. Accommodations that change the construct (what is being measured) may not be used on state assessments. When an educational team is making determinations about accommodations on state assessments they must consider both what the student needs to access the assessment, and what is being measured. Providing an accommodation for the sole purpose of increasing test scores is not ethical.

The departure from standardized testing procedures can potentially invalidate the test results. Caution must be used when selecting accommodations for state assessments. Selected accommodations must be used during instruction and on classroom and district assessments least 90 days prior to use on the assessment. During this time the accommodation must be evaluated on an ongoing basis through data documentation. The accommodation must be used routinely with sufficient frequency to ensure the student can use it with fluency and independence. It should be recognized that introducing an accommodation at the time of the assessment may actually hinder the student's performance.

Side-by-Side Comparison of Assignments Example

One technique for documenting a student's need for an accommodation on state assessments is the side-by-side comparison of assignments. This technique provides the student with two similar assignments. Caution should be taken when using assignments that may negatively impact the student's grade. These assignments are to validate the use of an accommodation, and should not be brand new consents or skills for the student.

The following is an example of how this technique could be used in evaluating the need for an Oral Script on the state assessment:

On the first assignment the instructions and the assignment are read to the student.

On the second assignment, the student reads the instructions and assignment independently.

Compare the student results on the assignments.

1. If there is limited difference in score – the student does *not* need an oral presentation on the state assessments

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2. If the student does best on assignment one, but is able to pass assignment two (even if it is a lower score) – the student does *not* need an oral presentation on the state assessments
3. If the student takes a long time on assignment two, and is able to pass it – the student does *not* need an oral presentation on the state assessments
4. If the student refuses to attempt assignment two – other evidence must be look at to determine if this is a behavioral concern, student preference or a reading concern
5. If the student fails assignment two, or attempts and is unable to complete assignment two (extreme frustration) – oral presentation on the state assessment may be appropriate

Once state assessment accommodation decisions have been made the accommodation must be documented in a formal educational plan. For most state assessments accommodations are only available to students with an IEP, 504 plan or students identified as an English learner. A formal educational plan for may be used for documenting accommodations on the TCAP. These formal educational plans must meet the following requirements:

1. Based on the student’s education-related need (area of impairment), not preference
2. Created by a team which includes at a minimum
 - a. Parent/guardian
 - b. Licensed educator responsible for student’s academic instruction
 - c. Student
3. Based on empirical data that has been evaluated and found to provide access to instruction and assessment
4. Documented in formalized manner including but not limited to an IEP, a 504 plan or an ELL plan.
5. Reviewed annually, at a minimum, and changed as appropriate to reflect current student education-related need based on up-to-date empirical data
6. Must be signed by team members to indicate attendance and agreement

Each state assessment has a unique set of allowable accommodations as indicated in later sections of this manual. Educational plans may have several sections related to state assessments to indicate accommodations that will be provided for a specific state assessment.

Logistics of providing accommodations during state assessments must be mapped out. It is essential for all of these individuals to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the appropriate use of accommodations. Accommodation logistics include but not limited to making sure appropriate assessment forms (large print, braille, high contrast, paper based for computer assessments) are ordered, nonstandard accommodations requests are submitted, testing environments are procured, and test administrators for accommodated sessions are trained. Additionally some accommodations may require work after the assessment such as transcribing student work. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel, including District Assessment Coordinators (DACs), School Assessment Coordinators (SACs) and test proctors to plan the logistics and provision of state assessment accommodations.

Each building must have a testing schedule which includes the necessary accommodations for individual students on testing day. These schedules must plan for test security concerns related to students on unique testing schedules. Students on a unique testing schedule, due to an accommodated session, may not inter-mingle with peers who are on a different schedule. School personnel must take this into consideration as they plan schedules for test days. Additionally, each building is likely to need separate testing environments for the administration of some accommodations.

DACs, SACs and test proctors should know which specific accommodations must be provided to individual students in advance of the first day of testing. These individuals must know how to administer the accommodations properly. Staff who administer accommodations must be trained and know the specific policy so student scores are valid.

Post-Secondary Implications

College and career readiness is an important education outcome for all students. As students plan for their transition to post-secondary settings, it is important for educational teams to have documented students’ use of accommodations.

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Colleges and universities typically only allow accommodations on assessments for students with an IEP or 504 plan, and may allow fewer accommodations than were available in the K-12 setting; thus it is important to consider the postsecondary implication of accommodations on state assessments. This may also be true for students who transition into vocational and other workplace settings.

Accommodation Categories for State Assessments

Colorado state assessments are designed to provide access for the greatest number of students during the assessment; however, due to differences among individuals, some students may need additional supports to access the assessment. These accommodations are divided into categories which indicate for which student the accommodation is allowed.

Standard Accommodations /Accessibility Features

Standard accommodations/accessibility features may be used state assessments by any student regardless of disability or language status. The use of standard accommodations is consistent with administration practices and guidelines. These features increase the accessibility of assessments for all students.

Standard accommodations/accessibility features have been predetermined to maintain the validity, reliability, integrity and comparability of the assessment.

The TCAP and COSA – Science and Social Studies each have a unique set of standard accommodations/accessibility features as indicated in later sections of this manual. Other state assessments only allow accommodations for students with an IEP, 504 plan or identified as an English learner.

Restricted Accommodations

Restricted accommodations are available for use only for students with an IEP, 504 or identified as an English learner. These restricted accommodations provide additional support for specific areas of weakness which would make the assessment inaccessible without the additional support. Students must meet specific criteria which necessitate the accommodation. The criteria affirm the accommodation provides access and does not provide advantage. If a student does not meet the criteria listed the educational team may request a nonstandard accommodation through the DAC.

Nonstandard Accommodations

Students with an IEP or 504 plan may use accommodations regularly during instruction and on classroom and district assessments which is not available as an accommodation for the state testing. For these few students, a request may be made through the DAC for use of this accommodation on the state assessment. Nonstandard accommodations are requested for less than .01 % of students taking TCAP annually.

Decisions about the need for and selection of accommodations for students are the responsibility of the IEP Team or 504 Service Plan Committee. Each request for a nonstandard accommodation, submitted through the DAC to CDE by the state deadline, will be reviewed by a team comprised of representatives from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Assessment Unit (AU) and the Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU). Each request is reviewed to ensure the accommodation maintains the validity of the assessment and that all state policy criteria are met. Requests that are determined to invalidate the construction of the assessment, provide advantage to a student will be denied, or that do not follow the state policy will be denied.

For further information including request requirements, please see [Appendix E](#).

Special Circumstances

Special circumstances related to assessment are covered in detail in the *Procedures Manual*. Occasionally situations arise when an accommodation for state assessment is needed and a formal educational plan is not in place. Special circumstances which need an accommodation and not covered in this manual or the *Procedures Manual* should be reviewed with the AU to determine if the needed accommodation would result in a valid score for the student.

The AU does not support the testing of grievously ill students.

Students New to District

If a student moves into the district just prior to the test and no documentation is provided about accommodations that have been used, every effort should be made to procure relevant documentation (e.g., IEP, ILP, etc.). If no documentation can be obtained, the student and his/her parent or guardian should be consulted regarding accommodations the student received during instruction and on assessments over the past three months. After every avenue of documentation has been exhausted and fruitless, the new student is eligible for any standard accommodations/accessibility feature the student has received regularly during instruction and on other assessments since arrival in the district. These accommodations must be documented in a formal educational plan prior to use on the state assessment.

To request a nonstandard accommodation for a student new to the school district, an IEP or 504 plan with documentation of accommodations must be obtained from the previous educational setting.

Students Newly Identified as Having a Disability

If a student has just recently been identified as having a disability, but not been formally staffed into special education, then documented standard accommodations/accessibility features may be used on the TCAP or CMAS – Science and Social Studies. This circumstance would not require the three month rule; however, the student should have adequate time to practice and become familiar with the accommodation prior to the assessment.

Students must be formally staffed and on a current IEP or 504 plan prior to requesting a nonstandard accommodation. Late nonstandard accommodation requests may be submitted for students newly identified; however, the review of these requests is dependent on the availability of the review committee.

Unforeseeable Circumstances

At times, students suffer from unforeseeable circumstances less than three months prior to the start of testing, such as a broken arm or a car accident. As a result of these unforeseeable circumstances, a student may require an accommodation that is not documented in a formal educational plan. The student may be provided the necessary standard accommodations. The student should have time to practice the accommodation prior to it being used on the assessment. SACs should ensure use of the accommodation is documented according to district policy. Guidelines for accommodations for these circumstances may be found in the *Colorado Procedures Manual*.

Note: This exception pertains only to unforeseeable circumstances and not those that could have been reasonably predicted by school or district personnel. For example, a student breaks his or her writing arm shortly before the assessment and is physically unable to write in the test booklet. The student would qualify for a scribe or assistive technology as a standard accommodation.

Combined TCAP Reading and Writing Session

The combined session for grades 4 - 10 of the TCAP Reading/Writing assessment contains several reading items and one extended writing prompt at the end of the session.

When administering this combined session to a student using assessment accommodation, it is important to keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Only reading accommodations are allowable for the reading items
- Only writing accommodations are allowable for the final extended writing prompt

If using the Oral Script accommodation, it is necessary that the proctor is familiar with the directions for the Reading/Writing combined session.

Proctors may need to have both the Teacher Read Directions script and the Oral Script for this session. For example, if a student is using the Teacher Read Directions accommodation for reading and the Oral Script accommodation for writing, the Teacher Read Directions script will be used for all reading items, and the Oral Script will be used for the writing prompt of this session.

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Due to the complex nature of this session, grouping considerations must be made prior to beginning of this session.

The grouping for this session may be different than grouping for other sessions of the Reading and Writing assessment. It would be appropriate to group students by accommodation such that students who receive only the Oral Script accommodation are together, students who receive only the Teacher Read Directions accommodation are together, and students who receive both are together.

Section VII: Accommodations for CoAlt – R, W & M Accommodations for CoAlt – S & SS

The Colorado Alternate (CoAlt) assessments are standardized academic assessments developed to be accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities. The CoAlt – Reading, Writing and Mathematics (CoAlt – R, W & M) assessment measures student progress towards Colorado’s Expanded Benchmarks in grades 3-10. The CoAlt – Science and Social Studies (CoAlt – S & SS) assessments measures student progress towards the Extended Evidence Outcomes of the Colorado Academic Standards. Science assessments are given in grades 5, 8 and 12. Social Studies assessments are given in grades 4, 5, and 12.

Students taking these assessments typically require individualized supports to meet student communication needs. Test examiners may need to adapt materials and presentation methods while maintaining the assessments’ standardization, validity and reliability. Accommodations should make test materials accessible to the student and allow the student to respond to test materials without changing the construct of the assessment.

Some common accommodations on CoAlt include:

- Material size
- Material contrast levels
- Use of concrete or 3-dimensional objects
- Cutting the answer choices apart
- Use of assistive technology devices
- Pictures colored

As with any accommodation used on statewide assessments, CoAlt accommodations must be documented on the student’s IEP. Accommodations must be used regularly during instruction and on classroom/district assessments for at least three months prior to the assessment window.

Reproduction of answer choices and task manipulatives is only permitted for individualized accommodations. These reproductions are secure testing materials and must be returned to the SAC after production and administration.

In order to facilitate the adaptation of materials, DACs may download electronic versions of student materials from secure file share sites. CoAlt – R, W, & M PDFs may be downloaded from [CTB Navigator](#). CoAlt – S & SS PDFs may be downloaded from Pearson’s SFTP.

The content of an item must not be changed by the use of an accommodation, as that would be considered a modification of the item and would invalidate the assessment. Additionally, accommodations must not lead students to select a particular answer. For example, if modified picture representations are used and the student is provided three black and white pictures and one color picture, the accommodation would entice the student to select the color picture, thus compromising the item.

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A simplified way to remember not to invalidate the construct of the assessment is to follow these rules:

1. *Do not* read the reading passages.
2. *Do not* translate the reading passages
3. *Do not* write the writing assessment
4. *Do not* decrease or increase the number of answer options

The picture symbols provided in the CoAlt assessment should be used, except in the following circumstances:

- The student needs to use objects rather than pictures
- The student needs pictures of real objects rather than drawings
- The student has a personal lexicon with a specific representation for the concept or words in the student answer choices – in this case, all answer choices must be from the student’s personal lexicon.

For each item, the test examiner will need to be aware of the indicator being assessed in order to ensure that the accommodation will not interfere with what is being measured. For example, if the assessed indicator is “estimate a number up to 20” and the student is provided only answer choices on his or her communication device that could be correct, then the item is compromised because there are no incorrect choices or distracters.

As test examiners are individualizing testing materials for students they must consider two questions:

1. What does the student need to access the assessment?
2. What is being measured?

The following tables outline common standard accommodations for CoAlt and their corresponding accommodation codes. All accommodations with codes used during testing are marked on the student data grid.

CoAlt Accommodations Tables Legend

- ⊘ = Not Allowable
S = Standard

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Presentation	Accommodation	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Accommodation Bubbling Code
	1: Color Overlays	S	S	S	S	S	Other
	2: Low-Vision Devices	S	S	S	S	S	Other
	3: Signing of Test Examiner Statements	S	S	S	S	S	Signing
	4: Reading or Signing of Reading Passages	⊘	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No
	5: Braille with Tactile Graphics	S	S	S	S	S	Braille
	6: Audio Amplification	S	S	S	S	S	Other
	7: Modified or Enlarged Picture Symbols	S	S	S	S	S	Modified Picture Symbols
	8: Real Objects	S	S	S	S	S	Objects
	9: Assistive Technology	S	S	S	S	S	AT

Response	Accommodation	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Accommodation Bubbling Code
	10: Assistive Technology	S	S	S	S	S	AT
	11: Scribe ¹	N/A	⊘	N/A	N/A	N/A	No
	12: Signing to Communicate to Test examiner	S	⊘	S	S	S	Signing
	13: Eye Gaze	S	S	S	S	S	Eye Gaze
	14: Underlining/Highlighting	S	S	S	S	S	No
	15: Student's Preferred Writing Tool	S	S	S	S	S	No

Setting	Accommodation	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Accommodation Bubbling Code
	16: Sensory	S	S	S	S	S	No
	17: Change of Location	S	S	S	S	S	No
	18: Noise Buffers	S	S	S	S	S	No
	19: Small Group	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No

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Timing	Accommodation						Accommodation Bubbling Code
		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	
	20:	Time of Day	S	S	S	S	
21:	Multiple or Frequent Breaks	S	S	S	S	S	Other

1 CoAlt is an individually administered assessment in which the test examiner scores student responses at the time of the assessment. Students do not write or bubble in answers for reading, mathematics, or science. Using a scribe for the writing sessions invalidates the construct of the assessment.

1: Color Overlays	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>Color overlays may be used to adjust print-to-page contrast. These may be a full page or a partial page of colored plastic.</p> <p>Students select their answers.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Other</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students with visual distortion or scotopic sensitivity. Students with light sensitivity, eyestrain, headaches, blurring of print, or dyslexia.</p>

2: Low-Vision Devices	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>The assessment must be administered by a test examiner who is familiar with the device being used.</p> <p>Low vision devices include magnifiers, Closed Circuit TVs (CCTV), document cameras or other tools familiar to the students. These tools can be used to display printed material with image enlargement on the screen or monitor.</p> <p>Low vision devices may not store images of secure test materials.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Other</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students with visual impairments.</p>

3: Signing of Test Examiner Statements	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>Interpreters translate the test examiner Statements in the same method of sign language typically used by the student (ASL, PSE, or SEE). Interpreters must use care to not provides cues to correct answers or omit information needed to correctly answer a test item.</p> <p>Interpreters may have access to the CoAlt prior to administration to ensure they are familiar with the terminology and appropriate practices associated with this accommodation. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i>.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Signing</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students who use sign language as their primary mode for receptive and expressive language</p>

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4: Reading or Signing of Reading Passages	
	Not Allowable
Implementation:	CoAlt is an individually administered assessment where questions and answer choices are presented orally to students. The reading assessment is designed to measure <i>decoding</i> and <i>comprehension</i> simultaneously. Fluency, phonemic awareness, and phonics are not measured on these assessments with reading passages. Accommodation Bubble: Misadministration
Appropriate for:	None

5: Braille with Tactile Graphics	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	The assessment must be administered by a teacher who is proficient in reading braille. Test examiners will need to have access to the testing materials prior to administration to braille the answer choices and reading passages, and to make needed accommodations for tactile graphics. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i> . DACs may access electronic student materials through CTB navigator secure file sharing. Accommodation Bubble: Braille
Appropriate for:	Students who read and write braille.

6: Audio Amplification	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	The test examiner must be familiar with the amplification system being used. Either a personal or classroom-based system can be used. Accommodation Bubble: Other
Appropriate for:	Students with hearing impairments. Students who have difficulty “tuning out” ambient noise.

7: Modified or Enlarged Picture Symbols	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>Modified or enlarged picture symbols must be consistent in format, size, coloring and style. For example, if pictures of real objects are used, then all answer options presented for that question must be pictures of real objects.</p> <p>Modified pictures must be representative of the original set of answer choices provided. Selection of modified picture symbols must be made with care to not provide cues to correct answers.</p> <p>Test examiners will need access to the testing materials prior to administration to make modifications or enlarge the assessment and make needed accommodations for tactile graphics. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i>.</p> <p>DACs may access electronic student materials through CTB navigator secure file sharing.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Modified Picture Symbols</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students with visual impairments. Students who use a low-vision device. Students who use specific symbol sets.</p>

8: Real Objects	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>Real objects must be representative of the original set of answer choices provided. Selection of modified picture symbols must be made with care to not provide cues to correct answers.</p> <p>Test examiners will need access to the testing materials prior to administration to braille the assessment and make needed accommodations for tactile graphics. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i>.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Modified Picture Symbols</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students with visual impairments. Students who use a low-vision device. Students who use specific symbol sets.</p>

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9 & 10: Assistive Technology	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>The use of assistive technology includes but is not limited to: augmentative communication devices, personal portable keyboards, and/or computers and laptops.</p> <p>Test examiners will likely need access to the testing materials prior to administration to program devices. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i>.</p> <p>Additional considerations for test security must be applied when students are using assistive technology: Students must <i>not</i> retrieve or access work from another student. Students must <i>not</i> be able to access additional programs or the Internet while in the testing environment.</p> <p>Assistive technology devices with assessment-specific answer choices and student responses on them are secure test materials until the secure test information is removed from the device. For personal communication devices, a “hidden” page accessible only by the test examiner can be considered secure but must be removed at the end of testing.</p> <p>Assistive technology may not be used to read the reading passages to students as this invalidates the construct of the reading assessment.</p> <p>Only authorized personnel may have access to the test, test materials and student answers.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: AT</p>
Appropriate for:	<p>Students who use assistive technology for communication. Students who use assistive technology on a day-to-day basis in the classroom and for assessments.</p>

11: Scribe	
	<p>Not Allowable</p>
Implementation:	<p>CoAlt is an individually administered assessment in which the test examiner scores student responses at the time of the assessment. Students do not write or bubble in answers for reading, or mathematics. The writing test includes both selected response (multiple choice) and constructed response (written) items. The construct for constructed response items is for the student to <i>independently create a permanent product that conveys meaning</i>.</p> <p>Bubble: Misadministration</p>

12: Signing to Communicate to the test examiner	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>CoAlt is an individually administered assessment in which the test examiner scores student responses at the time of the assessment. Interpreters translate signed student responses in the same method of sign language typically used by the student (ASL or SEE).</p> <p>Students may not sign to a scribe for the written response on the writing assessment, as use of a scribe is not allowed on that section of the assessment.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Signing</p>
Appropriate for:	Students who use sign language as their primary mode for receptive and expressive language

13: Eye Gaze	
	<p>CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation</p>
Implementation:	<p>Test examiners will adapt student materials to meet the eye gaze equipment regularly used for the student. It is important that the test examiner be familiar with the student’s individual mode of communication to correctly interpret the student’s responses.</p> <p>For the writing assessment, the student should use their individual mode of creating a permanent written product for non-selected response items. Using eye gaze with a scribe on constructed response writing items is not allowed (see scribe).</p> <p>Test examiners will need access to the testing materials prior to administration to make needed accommodations for eye gaze equipment. Instructions for early access to assessment materials may be found in the <i>Colorado Student Assessment System Procedures Manual</i>.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Eye Gaze</p>
Appropriate for:	Students who use eye gaze as their primary mode for receptive and expressive language

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Accommodations for CoAlt

14: Underlining / Highlighting	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	Students may underline or highlight portions of the assessment such as reading passages. Test examiners may not underline or highlight the assessment as that may provide cues to correct answers, or omit information needed to correctly answer a test item. Accommodation Bubble: None
Appropriate for:	Students with print disabilities. Students with communication impairments.

15: Student's Preferred Writing Tool	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	CoAlt student responses are not scanned; therefore, students may use their preferred writing tool. Accommodation Bubble: None
Appropriate for:	Students with physical impairments Students with sensory integration impairments Students with strong preferences on writing instruments

16: Sensory	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	Student sensory needs may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• slant board• special chair• balance ball• fidget toy• weighted vest Accommodation Bubble: None
Appropriate for:	Students with sensory impairments

17: Change of Location	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	<p>Student may have specific needs as to the location the assessment is given in such as being assessed in a familiar location.</p> <p>It is important that the testing environment be free of distractions and test security is adhered to. Multiple students may not be in the testing environment at the same time.</p> <p>The location must be a secure and safe environment that is monitored while the assessment is being given.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: None</p>
Appropriate for:	Students with sensory impairments Students with strong preferences on location

18: Noise Buffer	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	<p>Earphones, earplugs or headphones are examples of possible noise buffers.</p> <p>The student must be able to hear and interact with the test examiner during the assessment.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: None</p>
Appropriate for:	Students with sensory impairments

19: Small Group	
	Not Applicable
Implementation:	<p>CoAlt is an individually administered assessment.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: None</p>
Appropriate for:	Not Applicable

20: Time of Day	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	<p>CoAlt is an individually administered assessment. Students preferred time of day should be considered during development of the school testing schedule.</p> <p>Accommodation Bubble: Other</p>
Appropriate for:	Students who perform best at a particular time of day

Section VII

Accommodations for CoAlt

21: Breaks: Multiple or Frequent	
	CoAlt – R, W & M Standard Accommodation CoAlt – S & SS Standard Accommodation
Implementation:	Breaks may be predetermined or given on an as-needed basis. Breaks may be given after any question is completed. Breaks may be overnight. Students may not remove any of the secure assessment material from the room during their breaks. Accommodation Bubble: Other
Appropriate for:	Students with sensory impairments Students with attention impairments Students with health issues Students who experience fatigue due to cognitive overload Students who experience fatigue from eye strain due to low vision Students who experience frustration

Appendices

- Appendix A:** Letter on Common Misconceptions
- Appendix B:** Special Instructions for Signing of Oral Scripts
- Appendix C:** Special Instructions for Scribe
- Appendix D:** Verification of Removal of Saved Data
- Appendix E:** Nonstandard Accommodations Request
- Appendix F:** Students with Disabilities Who Are Culturally & Linguistically Diverse
- Appendix G:** Accommodations Monitoring and Accommodation Documentation Checklist
- Appendix H:** Universal Design



COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Robert K. Hammond
Commissioner of Education

Keith Owen, Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner

February 8, 2013

Dear Superintendents,

The state assessment season is already upon us. The Colorado student assessments, TCAP (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program) and CoAlt (Colorado Alternate Assessment), are set to begin this month. In response to requests from Districts Assessment Coordinators, the Assessment Unit is again sending out information regarding Colorado laws and rules governing student participation in state assessments.

Misconception 1: Parents may “opt out” their child(ren) from participating in the state assessment program (TCAP/CoAlt).

Clarification: Per Colorado law [22-7-409(1.2)(d)(I)(A)], as part of the school and district accountability system, every student enrolled in a public school is required to take TCAP or CoAlt. There is nothing in this section of the law allowing parent’s choice regarding this testing. Some have suggested that State Law [22-1-123 (5) (a)] gives parents an “opt out” from state assessments because it states, “Schools (etc.)... shall obtain the written consent of a student’s parent or legal guardian prior to the student being given any survey, analysis, or evaluation...” However, this law only pertains to certain types of sensitive, personal student information such as political affiliations, illegal behavior, and family income that are specifically listed in the statute. The TCAP and CoAlt are *not* among the surveys, analyses or evaluations referenced in this statute. In fact as of 2012, the statute explicitly excludes TCAP/CoAlt: “except that the requirement of written consent does not apply to a student’s participation in an assessment administered pursuant to section 22-7-407 or 22-7-409...”

Misconception 2: Schools and districts are not penalized when parents refuse to allow their child(ren) to be assessed.

Clarification: Lack of participation is represented in the new accreditation system as reflected in the Performance Frameworks. Schools and districts not meeting the participation requirements drop one full category on the Performance Frameworks.



COLORADO DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Appendix A

Letter from Commissioner Hammond

Misconception 3: Parental refusals have no negative impact on students as a group.

Clarification: The accuracy of all of the accountability data is impacted when students do not participate due to parental refusal. This data is publicly displayed and also is utilized to make policy decisions at the state, district and school levels. Obviously, the more accurately the data reflects the true performance of the students, the better informed policy makers are when high stakes decisions are being made. We entrust our schools with the great responsibility of educating our children. TCAP gives us a common tool to use when we are looking at how well schools and districts are preparing students for the world of college or work. It is useful for Colorado's citizens to be able to look at the performance of its public schools using a common, fair tool, given under the same conditions in every school: TCAP. It is an important method of looking at all our schools and districts in a comparable way.

Misconception 4: Parental refusals have no negative impact on their individual child(ren).

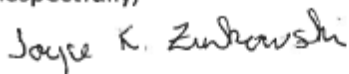
Clarification: TCAP does not try to measure all the learning students engage in throughout the year – but it is a very reliable annual measure of student achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Students who do not participate are not provided with this information. In addition, students who do not participate in state testing do not get growth projections, which can be an important gauge of whether or not the student is on track for being college and career ready. As an example, TCAP is able to provide a good prediction of each student's probable ACT scores.

Misconception 5: Schools are obligated to provide alternate learning activities during testing times.

Clarification: Since all students are required to take TCAP/CoAlt (see **Misconception 1**, above), schools are not obligated nor required to provide alternate activities.

As always, we appreciate your commitment to administering the state assessments appropriately.

Respectfully,



Joyce K. Zurkowski
Executive Director
Assessment Unit

Special Instructions for Signing of Oral Scripts



**Content
Terminology**

When the Oral Scripts are being read, the proctor is instructed to pause and not say the term so the students can look at their book and read. The specific directions from the script are provided below:

I will read the words and then pause while you read a math term silently to yourself. Nod your head when you are ready for me to start.

Pause to see that students are ready.

[Then there is an item with ___ instead of the number or math symbol.]

This format works well when the test is presented orally, because the proctors are reading and the student is looking at his/her test book and following along. When the proctor pauses, the student reads the math terminology silently.

However, this format does not work well for students who are using the Sign Language accommodation for presentation of the assessment. These students are focusing on the interpreter who is signing instead of following along in their book. It is difficult for them to track with the interpreter and look down and quickly find the term they are to read on their own.

We are clarifying the directions for when interpreters are signing the Oral Script so that the flow of signing continues smoothly and these students are provided with the same information that all students who use the Oral Script receive.

Sign Language Interpreters should ...

- look through the Oral Script and note which items have content terminology before the administration of the test
- refer to the TCAP test books to find the content terminology and write the item number and the content terminology on the board immediately prior to the administration of the session
- as they are signing the Oral Script, point to the content terminology that is on the board for a particular item instead of pausing
- erase the content terminology that was written on the board immediately after the administration of the session

Sign Language Interpreters who have questions should contact their DAC.

Appendix C

Special Instructions for Scribe

Special Instructions for Scribe

The role of a scribe is to write what is dictated, no more, no less.

There are skills involved when being a scribe that require extensive practice. Both the student and the scribe must have the opportunity to work together prior to an assessment. Use of a scribe must be part of the student's daily instructional environment.

A person who serves as a scribe needs to be carefully prepared to ensure that he or she knows the vocabulary involved and understands the boundaries of the assistance to be provided. The person must also be trained in test administration procedures for the assessment.

A scribe may not edit or alter student work in any way and must record word-for-word exactly what the student has dictated.

Scribes should request clarification from the student about the use of punctuation and capitalization, and must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written.

For multiple choice items, the student must point to or otherwise indicate the response option chosen. The scribe will then darken the bubble corresponding to that response option.

For constructed response items for reading, math, and science, the student must dictate to the scribe, who will then write the student's response in the test booklet exactly as the student states. The scribe may use proper mechanics and spelling. Once the student has dictated his or her response, the scribe will show the student what was written and the student may then choose to make any changes.

For constructed response items for writing, the student must dictate to the scribe, who will then write the student's response, verbatim, in the test booklet as one long statement with no punctuation or capitalization; however, the scribe may spell words correctly. Once the student has dictated his or her response, the scribe will show the student what has been written and ask the student to indicate where punctuation and capital letters should be placed. At this time, the student may also choose to make any changes or additional edits.

Appendix D
Verification of Removal of Saved Data

School Name: _____

Designee Responsible to Delete Content: _____

School Assessment Coordinator Name: _____

I verify that all electronic copies of the Colorado State Assessment have been permanently removed from any technology at this school according to district policy.

_____ (initials)

I verify that all electronic copies of student answers from the Colorado State Assessment have been permanently removed from any technology at this school, according to district policy.

_____ (initials)

I verify that all flash drives that may contain student answers from the Colorado State Assessment have been permanently wiped clean, destroyed or turned in to the District assessment coordinator according to district policy.

_____ (initials)

Designee Responsible to Delete Content

Date

SAC Signature

Date

Appendix E

Nonstandard Accommodations Request

Nonstandard Accommodations

Decisions about the need for and selection of nonstandard accommodations for students are the responsibility of the IEP Team or 504 Service Plan Committee. Each request for a nonstandard accommodation will be reviewed by a team comprised of representatives from the Assessment Unit (AU) and the Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) at CDE. The request is reviewed to ensure the accommodation maintains the validity of the assessment, and that the policies set forth by CDE are maintained.

Nonstandard accommodations must be applied for and approved annually by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) prior to use on statewide assessments. Nonstandard accommodations that are used without prior approval must be indicated on the student data grid by marking the test invalidation bubble 8, “non-approved nonstandard accommodation.” The test will result in a “no score” and the student will not be counted in participation for accountability purposes.

Standard accommodations must be considered prior to requesting a nonstandard accommodation.

Nonstandard accommodation requests must include the IEP or 504 Plan that shows the specific accommodation documented. The accommodation documentation must indicate the accommodation is *needed and used* during instruction, on classroom assessments, on district assessments, and on state assessments. The IEP or 504 plan must be current, and not expire prior to the assessment window. Expired or draft plans will not be considered appropriate documentation.

The request must be individualized for the student who needs the accommodation. The practice of writing a “model” nonstandard accommodation request and changing the name does not meet the requirement for personalization. The documentation must show why the specific student needs the requested accommodation, and must include appropriate student specific data.

Nonstandard accommodation requests must be received by the AU, no later than the State deadline of **December 13th** of the current school year. The DAC may choose to set an earlier date for an individual district to ensure all nonstandard accommodations requests are reviewed at the District level prior to being forwarded to CDE.

Nonstandard accommodation requests for a **Scribe** must include evidence of the student working with assistive technology for writing regularly and with fidelity during instruction, yet the student is unable to use the assistive technology on the assessment due to unique factors (fixation, tactile concerns, extreme frustration etc.).

Nonstandard accommodation requests must include data to support all claims of instructional use, and academic need for the accommodation. It may be appropriate to include examples of work with and without the requested accommodation.

- Nonstandard accommodations that are not appropriately documented will not be approved for use on state assessments.
- Nonstandard accommodations that are not used *regularly and with fidelity* during instruction will not be approved for use on state assessments. (Included documentation must support this claim.)
- Nonstandard accommodations that do not maintain the assessment construct (change what is being measured) will not be approved for use on state assessments.
- Nonstandard accommodations requests that indicate the accommodation is about a student receiving a higher score will not be approved for use on state assessments.
- Nonstandard accommodation requests that are incomplete, including but not limited to supporting documentation will not be approved for use on state assessments.
- Nonstandard accommodation requests for a scribe due to poor handwriting, poor spelling, difficulty with writing organization, lack of instruction, or resistance to performing writing tasks will not be approved for use on state assessments.

The use of nonstandard accommodations must be requested for consideration via the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and Special Education Director. Signatures of these district personnel are required on each request. The form needed to request a nonstandard accommodation is available on CTB Navigator through the DAC. A list of current DACs is found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/DAC.asp>.

Requests may be sent to CDE via fax, secure courier, FedEx/UPS with tracking, email as a password protected pdf with the password sent in a separate email.

Requests received after the state deadline will only be reviewed if the student is new to the district or newly identified as having a disability. In this situation, “new” is defined as enrolled/identified after December 1st of the current school year.

Practices of placing a student on an IEP or 504 plan solely for the purpose of requesting a nonstandard accommodation for the state assessment is inappropriate.

The Assessment Unit does not support the testing of grievously ill students, and will not approve a nonstandard accommodation request submitted for these students.

After the request has been reviewed by the nonstandard accommodation team, the DAC will receive notification if it has been approved for use on the general summative assessment. This documentation should be maintained by the district.

Approved Nonstandard Accommodations

Examples of nonstandard accommodations that may be approved include, but are not limited to:

- the use of specialized papers (lined paper, graph paper)
- the use of extra paper
- visual or verbal cues to stay on task
- blank graphic organizer
- individual countdown timer

If approved the nonstandard accommodation bubble is marked on the state assessment student data grid, along with all other accommodations the student uses. The student will receive a valid test score and count as a participant for AYP purposes.

Non-Approved Nonstandard Accommodations

Examples of non-approved nonstandard accommodations that will not be approved include but are not limited to:

- reading the reading test
- multiplication tables for the math assessment
- Cuisenaire® rods or Math Rods™ for math assessment
- calculators for math sessions (where not allowed for)
- scribe due to lack of exposure/instruction with assistive technology

If the request is not approved, the instructional team has the following options:

1. The student may test without the requested nonstandard accommodation and receive a score. The student may use any standard accommodations or other approved nonstandard accommodation as appropriately documented in their formal educational plan.
2. The student may test with the nonstandard accommodation and receive a “no score.”
 - a. The DAC will need to code the test invalidation bubble 8, “non-approved accommodation/modification” on the data grid.
 - b. The student will not count toward participation in the state’s assessment program for accountability purposes, according to the Modified Achievement Guidelines released in May 2007.

Appendix E

Nonstandard Accommodations Request

Nonstandard Accommodation Request

To be submitted by the District Assessment Coordinator only

Due Date: December 13, 2013

Date of Request (MM/DD/YY): _____/_____/_____

District Name: _____

DAC Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Student Name: Last _____ First _____ MI _____

SASID (10 digits): _____

Grade: _____ School: _____

1. Was this nonstandard accommodation requested/used last year on the state assessment? _____

2. Indicate the assessment and the content area for the nonstandard accommodation.

____ General academic assessment ____ Alternate academic assessment

 ____ Reading ____ Science

 ____ Writing ____ Social Studies

 ____ Mathematics

____ English language proficiency assessment

 ____ Speaking ____ Listening

 ____ Reading ____ Writing

3. Attach a copy of the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

IEP _____

504 Plan _____

4. Clearly indicate the nonstandard accommodation you are requesting for this student.
 - a. Include when the accommodation was *first used during instruction*.
 - b. Include data indicating the accommodation is used *regularly and with fidelity during instruction and on classroom and district assessments*.
 - c. Include data and/or student work that shows the need for this accommodation to access the assessment.

5. If *Scribe* is requested:
 - d. List *all assistive technology* that has been used with this student including those which are currently being used with this student.
 - e. Explain why assistive technology is not being used to access the state assessment.
 - f. Include information on how often the student is working with assistive technology during instruction.
 - g. Include notes from teachers/SWAAAC team, work samples with and without assistive technology.
 - h. Clearly describe the plan for this student to become independent in writing.
 - i. Indicate how many years the student has been allowed a scribe on state assessments.

6. Explain how this nonstandard accommodation maintains the construct of the assessment.

For example a scribe on the writing assessment invalidates the construct; however, writing is not the construct for reading, mathematics, science and social studies.

7. Provide any additional information that would help the review committee in determining the appropriateness of this accommodation for this student on the state assessment.

DAC Signature

Special Education Coordinator
Signature

Appendix F

Students with Disabilities Who Are Culturally & Linguistically Diverse

Students with Disabilities who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

Students who are identified as English Language Learners with disabilities must have instructional and assessment accommodations documented in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This population of students may qualify for accommodations in both the *Colorado Accommodation Manual* and the *Colorado Accommodation Guide for English Language Learners*. Special education and English Language Acquisition (ELA) professionals should work closely together when determining appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Students who are English Language Learners may have the Oral Script for the Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Writing academic assessments translated into their native language only if the student has received instruction in his/her native language within the past year or is currently receiving instruction in his/her native language.

Note:

The reading assessment on the TCAP and the CoAlt may *not* be translated, as it would change what is being measured.

Accommodations Monitoring and Accommodation Documentation

As stated throughout this manual, all testing accommodations used on statewide assessments must be used both during instruction and on classroom and district assessments. Different state assessments have different requirements on who may have accommodations on the assessment, and districts must have a plan in place to ensure and monitor the appropriate use of accommodations on statewide assessments. Only students with a formally identified disability (IEP or 504 Plan) may access and use accommodation on the ACCESS for ELLs, Alternate ACCESS for ELLs, CoAlt. Students on any formal educational plan may access and use accommodations on TCAP. The SUMMIT allows accommodations only for students with a formally identified disability; however, some embedded features need to be “turned on” prior to the assessment. Careful tracking of accommodations is needed to ensure students have appropriate access to the state assessments.

Collecting and analyzing data on the use and effectiveness of accommodations are necessary to ensure meaningful participation of students in state assessments.

When documenting the need for an accommodation in a classroom setting, a technique that is often referred to, addition to test scores, is the side-by-side comparison of assignments. This technique provides the student with two similar assignments. These assignments should not affect the student’s grade (if possible consider completion when marking in the grade book) and should not be brand new consents or skills for the student.

This is an example of determining if a student needs oral presentation. On the first assignment have the instructions, and the assignment read to the student. On the second assignment, do not provide the oral presentation, and have the student read independently. Compare the student results on the assignments.

1. If there is limited difference in score – the student does not need an oral presentation.
2. If the student does best on assignment one, but is able to pass assignment two (even if it is a lower score) – the student does not need an oral presentation
3. If the student takes a long time on assignment two, and is able to pass it – the student does not need an oral presentation
4. If the student refuses to attempt assignment two – other evidence must be look at to determine if this is a behavioral concern, student preference or a reading concern
5. If the student fails assignment two, or attempts and is unable to complete assignment two (extreme frustration) – the student needs an oral presentation.

Examination of data may also indicate areas in which the educational team and test proctors need additional training and support. In addition to collecting information about the use of accommodations within the classroom, information also needs to be gathered on the implementation of accommodations during classroom, district and state assessment. Data may include:

- Observations conducted during tests administration
- Interviews with test administrators
- Talking with students after testing sessions

Additionally, it is important to document whether the student used the documented accommodation on the assessment, and provide this information to the student’s educational team for consideration on the follow year’s educational plan.

Prior to testing

DACs and School Assessment Coordinators (SACs) should collect information regarding students who require testing accommodations with sufficient time to properly plan the test administrations. Accommodations during test administration must reflect what is documented in a student’s formal educational plan and what is happening during instruction.

Appendix G

Accommodations Monitoring and Accommodation Documentation

- If an accommodation is not appropriately documented it may not be used on state assessments.
- If an accommodation is not being used *regularly* and with *fidelity* during instruction and on classroom and district assessments, it may not be used on state assessments.

Once the accommodations have been verified, the DAC and SAC can use this information to identify resources available and needed, such as space for small groups or individual administrations, sign language interpreters, translators and technology equipment.

Assessment proctors who are in “accommodated sessions” should receive training on the appropriate way to administer that accommodation. Prior to the day of a test, test proctors should know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly.

During testing

DACs and SACs should take steps to ensure that accommodations are being administered appropriately.

After testing

It is important to document whether the student used the documented accommodation on the assessment, and that this information is considered by the education team in making determinations for state assessment accommodations during the annual review. For example, a student’s IEP states that he or she is to receive extended time. The student took the assessment in an extended time small group; however, he finished within the regular administration period. Providing data on the use and impact of accommodations during assessments may support the continued use of some accommodations or the rethinking of others.

Documentation of accommodations should be maintained for at least one year. Districts may develop their own data documentation forms.

State Accommodations Monitoring Visits

As part of the Title 1 monitoring visit, personnel from the AU participate in on-site monitoring of accommodations. The purpose of the monitoring visits is to ensure policies and practices are in place for test security, and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. This includes the documentation and provision of accommodations on the statewide assessments. These monitoring visits include:

1. Interviews with assessment proctors,
2. Interviews with school assessment coordinators,
3. Interview with district assessment coordinator,
4. Interview with district Special Education coordinator,
5. Interview with and the district English Language acquisition director
6. Records Review based on accommodations given the previous testing year (e.g. 2011 2012 – 2013 monitoring will be on accommodations provided during the spring 2012 test administration.)

Appendix G
Accommodations Documentation Checklist

Teacher _____ School _____ Year _____

Student Name

Student SASID

Accommodation for
READING

Accommodation for
WRITING

Accommodation for
MATHEMATICS

Accommodation for
SCIENCE

Date of Onset of Use

Used in Instruction
(Y/N)

Documentation Date
(i.e. IEP, ILP)

Used on TCAP (Y/N)

CODES:
Accommodation type: 1= Braille 2=Large Print 3=Teacher-read directions 4= Manipulative (math) 5=Scribe 6=Signing 7=Assistive technology 8=Extended time 9=Oral Script (writing, math and science only) A=approved nonstandard B=Translated oral script C=Word-to-Word dictionary

Documentation: Individual Educational Program –IEP; Individual Literacy Plan –ILP,; 504 Plan –504; District Plan –DP; English Language Acquisition Plan –ELA or Other

Principal/SAC Signature _____

Appendix H

Universal Design

Universal Design for Assessment

The Unit of Student Assessment is working with CTB/McGraw-Hill to ensure that Universal Design and Plain Language are inherent in the development processes of state assessments.

Universal Design is an assessment practice which focuses on:

- Precisely defined constructs: direct match to objective being measured
- Accessible, non-biased items: ensure the ability to use accommodations (Braille and Oral Presentation), quality in all items
- Simple, Clear Directions and Procedures: understandable language, consistency in format and procedures across content areas
- Maximum Legibility: simple fonts, use of white space, heading and graphic arrangement relative to importance, heading and graphic arrangement relative to the order in which content should be considered
- Maximum Readability: plain language

Plain Language ensures the clarity of a test item without diminishing the quality. Test items altered for plain language result in:

- Active voice
- Short sentences
- Common everyday words
- Purposeful graphics—aid in understanding however
- Do not lead or distract from an answer
- Easy-to-Read design features—white space and headings are cues to what is important

Plain language and universal design ensure that items are presented in the clearest and most straightforward manner possible. The items are designed to provide better access to the content in the item; however, accommodations are still necessary for many students in order for barriers to be removed. Items developed under the guidelines of plain language and universal design may be more amenable to accommodations by providing access to the assessment. The term “universal design” is defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) as having the same definition as that found in the Assistive Technology Act of 1998: The term “universal design” means a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities, which include products and services that are directly accessible (without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are interoperable with assistive technologies. (20 U.S.C. §1401(35)(IDEA); 20 U.S.C. §1003(23)(HEOA), both referencing the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 U.S.C. §3002).

When applied to assessments, universal design provides all students with equal opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. The purpose of universally designed assessments is to provide access for the greatest number of students during assessment, and to minimize the need for individualized design or accommodations. Universal design acknowledges differences among individuals, and that for accurate assessment to occur, a range of methods and materials are needed to measure learning. Universal design builds flexibility into assessments at the development stage, which enables flexible adjustments for a broad range of students. All students are intended to benefit from assessments that are universally designed.

The CDE Assessment Unit in conjunction with the test vendors apply these principals of universal design during development of the assessments:

- Items and tasks consider the diversity of the assessment population.
- Item and task constructs are precisely defined.
- Items and tasks measure what is intended, with a direct link to the Colorado Academic Standards.
- Items and tasks are accessible and non-biased.
- Instructions and procedures are simple, clear, and intuitive with a consistent format.
- Items or task material uses text appropriate for the intended grade level.

Universal design cannot eliminate the need for accommodations and alternate assessments. However, universally designed general assessments may reduce the need for accommodations and alternate assessments.