North Dakota Accessibility Manual:

HOW TO SELECT, ADMINISTER, AND EVALUATE USE OF ACCESSIBILITY
SUPPORTS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT OF ALL STUDENTS

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CCSSO ACCESSIBILITY MANUAL:
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Section I: Background

Accessibility Supports and Recognizing the Needs for All Learners

In the context of technology-based instruction and assessments, various accessibility supports are available for learners to meet their individualized needs and preferences. These individualized approaches to accessibility place greater responsibility on educational teams who make decisions about what accessibility supports learners need to ensure learners have ample opportunity to show what they know and are able to do during instruction and assessments.

Accessibility supports discussed within this document include both embedded (digitally-provided) and non-embedded (non-digitally or locally provided) universal features that are available to all learners as they access instructional or assessment content, designated features that are available to learners for whom the need has been identified by an informed educator or team of educators, and accommodations that are generally available to learners for whom there is a documented need on an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 plan, or Individual Language Plan (ILP).

Section II: Approach to Accessibility

This section highlights three approaches to accessibility: universal features, designated features, and accommodations. ***Tools 1-3*** in this manual list the frequently used embedded and non-embedded features for each approach.

Please Note:** In some cases, accessibility supports used in instruction may not be allowed on a specific standardized assessment because certain accessibility supports may change the construct of the item, therefore resulting in an invalidation of the assessment results. As a result, the assessment no longer reflects what the assessment was designed to measure. For a list of allowable accommodations specific to standardized assessments, please refer to **Tools 11-14.

Universal Features

Universal features are accessibility supports that are either embedded or provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology (e.g., answer choice eliminator), or non-embedded and provided non-digitally (e.g., scratch paper). Universal features are available to all learners as they access instructional or assessment content. ***Tool 1*** includes descriptions of the most commonly used embedded and non-embedded universal features.

Making Decisions about Universal Features

Although universal features are generally available to all learners, educators may determine that one or more might be distracting for a particular learner. Because universal features are available to all learners, these options do not require authorization through an IEP, 504 Plan, or ILP. Educators may need to pay special attention to the universal features that are frequently used to ensure features are appropriate in meeting individual learner instructional and assessment needs.

Designated Features

Designated features are available for use by any learner for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators, including the parents/guardians and the learner if appropriate) who is familiar with the learner's characteristics and needs. Embedded designated features (e.g., color contrast) are provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology, while non-embedded designated features (e.g., magnification device) are non-digital. Unlike universal features, designated features should be assigned to a learner by trained educators or educator teams using a consistent process. There is no requirement that a learner must be on an IEP, 504 plan or ILP. ***Tool 2*** includes descriptions of the most commonly used embedded and non-embedded designated features.

Making Decisions about Designated Features

Educators (or teams of educators, including parents/guardians and the learner if appropriate) who are familiar with the learner's characteristics and needs should make decisions about designated features. Decisions should reflect those supports that the learner requires and uses during instruction and for assessments. Learner input to the decision, particularly for older learners, is recommended. IEP, 504, or ILP teams should make decisions on what designated features need to be provided to each learner on a plan.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that ensure equitable access to instructional and assessment content and generate valid assessment results for learners who need them. Embedded accommodations (e.g., text-to-speech) are provided digitally through instruction or assessment technology, while non-embedded accommodations (e.g., scribe) is non-digital. Accommodations are generally available to learners for whom there is a documented need on an IEP, 504 plan, or ILP. *Tool 3* includes descriptions of the most commonly used embedded and non-embedded accommodations.

Making Decisions about Accommodations

IEP, 504, or ILP teams make decisions about accommodations. For ELs with disabilities, for example, these teams should include an expert in the area of English language acquisition. These decision makers provide evidence of the need for accommodations and ensure that they are noted on the IEP, 504 plan, or ILP. Decision makers are responsible for entering information on accessibility features and accommodations from the IEP, 504 plan, or ILP.

IEP, 504, and EL teams may request permission to use an exceptional accommodation by reviewing the document on requesting exceptional accommodations found on *pages 45-46*.

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Step 1: Expect All Learners to Achieve Grade-Level Standards

Education is a basic right for all children in the United States. With legislation aimed at the inclusion of all learners comes the drive to ensure equal access to grade-level standards. Academic standards are educational targets outlining what learners are expected to learn at each grade-level. Teachers ensure that learners work toward grade-level standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of each learner. For some learners, accessibility supports are provided during instruction and assessments to help promote equal access to grade-level content.

Individual educators, or teams of educators who are familiar with all characteristics and needs of the learner, should make instructional and assessment decisions for them. Educators are responsible for developing, implementing, and improving accessibility practices for learners. The following are the types of educators who may be involved in making accessibility decisions:

- Special education teachers or 504 Plan committee representatives
- Language educators and facilitators (ESL/bilingual teachers, other ESL/bilingual/migrant teachers or EL administrators, language acquisition specialists, interpreters)
- Assessment officials (test administrators, test coordinators, guidance counselors, reading specialists)
- General education teachers (classroom/content teachers)
- Bilingual special education practitioners
- School administrators (principals, school/district officials)
- Parents (parents/guardians)
- Students (if appropriate)

To accomplish the goal of equal access in education:

- Every educator must be familiar with standards and accountability systems at the state and district level;
- Every educator must know where to locate standards; and
- All general, special, and language educators, as well as other educational stakeholders must collaborate for successful learner access.

All learners can work toward grade-level academic content, ELP, or alternate achievement standards, and should be expected to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met:

1. Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for the diverse/specific population of learners they are serving.
2. Individualized approaches to instruction and assessment are in place, and individualized plans are developed for those learners who need them.
3. Appropriate accessibility supports are provided to help learners access instructional and assessment content.

Including All Learners in State Assessment Systems

Federal and most state laws, legal cases, and federal guidance require that all learners be administered assessments intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of learners. Educators must actively engage in a planning process that addresses:
- Assurance of the provision of accessibility supports to facilitate learner access to grade-level instruction and state assessments,
- Use of alternate assessments to assess the achievement of learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and
- Use of different assessment formats to assess the achievement of beginner ELs; these assessments are tailored specifically for ELs at varying developmental, language proficiency, and academic levels and are aligned with content and achievement standards, curriculum, and instruction.

Federal and State Laws, and Federal Guidance Requiring Student Participation

To effectively support all learners in the classroom, educators should be familiar with federal and state laws, and current guidelines that regulate learner participation in educational processes. These documents are particularly important when serving learners with disabilities, ELs, and ELs with disabilities. Several important laws require the participation of these learners in standards-based instruction and assessment initiatives. Some of these laws address solely learners with disabilities; others regulate educational policies and practices exclusively for ELs. Educators should consider both sets of laws when it comes to instruction and assessment of ELs with disabilities. *Tool 4* highlights federal laws, and federal guidance regulating learner participation in educational processes.

Equal Access to Grade-Level Content

Inclusion of all learners in large-scale assessments and grade-level standards is mandated by federal and state laws. Educators ensure that all learners work toward grade-level standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of learners. Accessibility supports are provided for learners during instruction and assessments to guarantee equal access to grade-level content. To meet this goal of equal access, educators must be familiar with standards and accountability systems at the state and district levels as well as locations of these standards and their updates.

All learners, including ELs and ELs with disabilities, can work toward grade-level academic content standards while they are improving their English proficiency. They will be able to achieve these standards when instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners. Meaningful access to grade-level content by diverse learners is also made possible by appropriately selected accommodations. Additionally, to secure successful learner

access to grade-level content, ESL/bilingual educators, special educators, and their general education counterparts must collaborate when making accessibility decisions.

Step 2: Learn About Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment

Current technology enables educators to introduce computer-based instruction and assessment accessibility supports that facilitate individualized educational processes. The purpose of these supports is to reduce or eliminate the effects of barriers that prevent learners from demonstrating what they know and can do. Accessibility supports provided in the classroom do not reduce expectations for learning. These accessibility supports – universal features, designated features, and accommodations – empower learners with a multitude of choices, enabling them to access instructional and assessment content effectively.

Accessibility supports provided to a learner during state assessments, such as universal features (e.g., writing tools), designated features (e.g., translations), or accommodations (e.g., closed captioning), must also be provided during classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and district assessments; however, some instructional accessibility supports, may not be appropriate for use on certain statewide assessments, which is why it is so important to check available accessibility supports for specific state assessments (e.g. NDSA, ACT, NAEP, etc.). In other cases, accessibility supports provided on assessments may be slightly different from those provided in the classroom (e.g., digital notetaking on an assessment). It is important that educators help learners become familiar with the supports provided through the technology assessment specific allowable accommodations. See ***Tools 11-14*** for allowable accommodations on specific standardized assessments.

It is critical that educators become familiar with state policies about the appropriate use of accessibility supports during assessments. In the age of technology-mediated educational practices, accessibility supports facilitate effective instruction and assessment of learners if they are selected and used properly.

Typically, accessibility support use may not begin and end in the school setting, but this may vary depending on the individual. As learners become more proficient in instructional content, their need for some accessibility supports may decrease. For instance, ELs may not need native language supports as their English language proficiency increases. Accessibility supports for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined.

When determining accessibility supports for English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments, it is important to remember that ELP assessments and content area assessments measure different constructs, and therefore, different accessibility supports may be allowed for each. This is also true for alternate assessments.

Meaningful collaboration should be encouraged among classroom teachers, special education teachers, English Learner specialists, school administrators, assessment officials, parents, and the learners to ensure beneficial instruction and assessment. Educators should coordinate their accessibility approaches in the classroom through ongoing interaction and collaboration with each other.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Implications

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a scientifically based framework that guides the design of all aspects of the learning environment including curriculum, materials, instructional design, instruction and assessment. UDL reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations and supports, and maintains high achievement expectations for all learners, including learners with disabilities and learners who are limited English proficient.

UDL policies and practices are intended to improve access to learning and assessments for all learners by allowing for multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression. When UDL techniques are employed by educators, they can gain a more accurate understanding of what learners know and can do. UDL techniques should be applied consistently during instruction and assessment and may reduce the need for accommodations and for learner participation on alternate assessments based on alternate academic standards. UDL can provide educators with more valid inferences about the achievement levels of all learners.

UDL of assessments does not simply mean that instruction and assessments are carried out in a computer-based environment. With greater implementation of technological solutions, thinking about accommodations and UDL may change. Traditionally, educators have thought of UDL as coming first, and accommodations being applied during instruction and assessment. With current technology, educational stakeholders can build some accommodations into the design of instructional and assessment content itself and redefine some accommodations as universal or designated features to empower greater numbers of learners with optimal accessibility options.

Modifications in Instruction and Assessment

Accessibility supports do not reduce learning expectations. They meet specific needs of learners during instruction and assessment and enable educators to know that measures of a learner's work produce valid results.

Modifications refer to practices or materials that change, lower, or reduce required learning expectations. Modifications may change the underlying construct of an assessment. Examples of modifications include:
- Requiring a learner to learn less material (e.g., fewer objectives, shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems);
- Reducing assignments and assessments so a learner only needs to complete the easiest problems or items;

- Using an accessibility support that invalidates the intended construct;
- Revising assignments or assessments to make them easier (e.g., crossing out half of the response choices on a multiple-choice test so that a learner only has to pick from two options instead of four); or
- Giving the learner hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests.

Providing modifications to learners during classroom instruction and classroom assessments may have the unintended consequence of reducing their opportunity to learn critical content. Nevertheless, modifications can be used in instruction as long as learners do not expect that these modifications will transfer to state specific standardized assessments. If learners have not had access to critical, assessed content, they may be at risk for not meeting grade-level content requirements. Providing a learner with a modification during a state accountability assessment may constitute an assessment irregularity and invalidate assessment scores.

Instructional Accessibility Supports

To optimize learner educational experiences, educators should hold regular meetings to coordinate their instructional approaches. Educators should consider:
- Learner characteristics and needs;
- Instructional tasks expected of the learner to demonstrate proficiency in grade-level state standards; and
- Consistency between accessibility supports used for classroom instruction and those used on assessments.

Educators should ask:
- What are the learner's specific instruction and assessment needs?
- How might the learner's access to curriculum, instruction, and assessment be supported with the goal of developing learner independence?
- What materials and equipment are currently available in the environment?
- What accommodations, services, and supports does the learner need to be actively involved and make progress in the educational program?

A learner may not be receiving an accessibility support he or she really needs or may be receiving too many. Research indicates that more is not necessarily better, and that providing learners with accessibility supports that are not truly needed may have a negative impact on performance. The better approach is to focus on a learner's identified needs within the general education curriculum.

To ensure that all learners are engaged in standards-based instruction, educators should consider their unique needs and characteristics when making instructional accessibility decisions.

For example, learners with high English language needs and low disability-related needs may require more language-based supports, while others with high disability-related needs and low English language needs may require more supports that remove disability-related barriers. Learners with high English language needs and high disability-related needs may benefit from more intensive language- and disability-related supports' while learners with low English language needs and low disability-related needs will require fewer supports that alleviate linguistic and disability-related challenges.

Step 3: Identify Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment

To ensure that all learners are engaged in standards-based instruction and assessments, every educator must be knowledgeable about state and district academic standards and assessments. Effective decision making about the provision of appropriate accessibility supports begins with making appropriate instructional decisions. In turn, optimal instructional decision making is facilitated by gathering and reviewing reliable information about learners' access needs, disability status, English language proficiency, and present level of performance in relation to academic standards.

Decisions should be based on individual characteristics and needs. Making blanket decisions for groups of learners at particular language acquisition levels or with particular disabilities is not appropriate. When individualized accessibility decisions are made thoughtfully, they can advance equal opportunities for learners to participate in the general education curriculum.

Learners' needs and preferences are probably the most important criteria that should be considered when making optimal accessibility decisions. Such as:
- Disability needs
- English Language Proficiency test results
- Oral proficiency in English and other languages
- Literacy levels in English and native language
- Implications of special education programs
- Education received before coming to the U.S. (e.g., evidence of limited or interrupted formal education)
- Time spent in English speaking schools and time spent in North Dakota
- Performance on other assessments
- Resources available in learner's native language
- Cultural background

Documenting Accessibility Supports for All Learners

To ensure continuous monitoring and improvement of accessibility approaches, educators should document how learners use accessibility supports. Documenting which universal features (if any) are used for each individual learner and which designated features and accommodations are available to the learner will enable educators to make more informed decisions.

Documenting Accessibility Supports Under IDEA

For learners with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), determining appropriate instructional and assessment accessibility supports should not pose any particular problems for educators who follow appropriate educational practices. With information obtained from the required summary of the learner's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP), the process of identifying and documenting accessibility supports should be a fairly straightforward event. The PLAAFP is a federal requirement in which collaborative team members must state "how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum - the same curriculum as non-disabled children" [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)].

In addition to the PLAAFP, there are potentially three areas in which accessibility supports can be addressed in a learner's IEP:
1. "Consideration of Special Factors" [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication (blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, limited English proficiency), behavioral, and assistive technology supports are considered.
2. "Supplementary Aids and Services" [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes "aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate."
3. "Participation in Assessments" [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

Documenting Accessibility Supports on a Learner's 504 Plan

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide certain accessibility supports to learners with disabilities even if they do not qualify for special education services under IDEA. The definition of a disability under Section 504 is much broader than the definition under IDEA. All IDEA learners are also covered by Section 504, but not all Section 504 learners are eligible for services under IDEA. Section 504 states:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. [29 U.S.C. Sec. 794]

Examples of learners who may receive designated features or accommodations based on their 504 plan include learners with:
- Allergies or asthma;
- Attention difficulties;
- Communicable diseases (e.g., hepatitis);
- Drug or alcohol addictions, as long as they are not currently using illegal substances;
- Environmental illnesses; or
- Temporary disabilities from accidents who may need short-term hospitalization or homebound recovery.

Decision-Making Process

The decision-making process for providing accessibility supports should minimally include consideration of these three factors:
1. Learner characteristics – disabilities, language proficiency, accessibility supports used in classroom instruction/assessments to access and perform in academic standards and state tests.
2. Classroom instruction and assessment tasks – knowledge about what tasks are required in instruction and on state assessments' and ways to remove physical and other barriers to a learner's ability to perform those tasks.
3. Accessibility policy – accessibility policy for an assessment or part of an assessment and consequences of decisions. Refer to specific guidance on standardized assessments and allowable accommodations (see ***Tools 11-14***).

Learner Characteristics

Selecting accessibility supports for instruction and assessment is the role of the learner's educator or a team of educators who are familiar with the learner's needs and characteristics. Accessibility supports should be chosen based on the individual learner's characteristics and need for the accessibility supports.

The following questions can be used to guide the selection of appropriate accessibility supports for learners being assigned such supports for the first time and for learners currently using such supports:

The Learner: Strengths and Weaknesses
1. What does the learner need to do that is currently difficult for him/her to do independently?
2. What are the learner's language learning strengths and areas for further improvement (applicable to all learners, not just ELs)?
3. How do the learner's needs affect the achievement of grade-level standards?
4. What are the learner's interests and college and/or career plans?
5. What accessibility supports are regularly used by the learner during instruction and assessments?

The Environment: Physical and/or Technical
1. What materials and equipment are currently available in the environment?
2. What are the perceptions of parents, teachers, and other specialists about how the accessibility support "worked"?
3. What are the barriers regarding the physical environment?
4. What difficulties does the learner experience when using accessibility supports?
5. What is the learner's perception of how well an accessibility support "worked"?

Tasks: What the Learner Must Do
1. What accessibility supports will increase the learner's access to instruction and assessment by addressing the learner's individual learning needs? These may be new supports or supports the learner is currently using.
2. What are the results for assignments and assessments when accessibility supports are used verses when they are not used?
3. How might technology or other methods of delivery be used to support the learner's active engagement in learning activities?
4. How might the activities be adapted or modified to accommodate the learner's specific needs?

The Tools: What Helps the Learner Be Successful?
1. Are there effective combinations of accessibility supports?
2. Should the learner continue to use a particular accessibility support, are changes needed, or should the use of the accessibility support be discontinued?
3. What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the learner need to achieve grade-level standards?
4. What type of technical resource (no, low, high tech) should be considered when supporting the learner's access to instruction and assessment?

When matching accessibility supports with learners' needs, educators should consider the following:
- The learner's willingness and ability to learn to use the accessibility support;
- Opportunities to learn how to use the accessibility support in classroom settings; and
- Conditions for use of the accessibility support on district and/or state assessments.

Involving Learners in Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accessibility Supports

It is critical for learners to understand their needs and learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Some learners have had limited experience expressing personal preferences and advocating for themselves. Educators can play a key role in working with learners to advocate for themselves in the context of selecting, using, and evaluating accessibility supports, making sure the right number of supports are selected, and avoiding employing too many or too few supports.

Learners need opportunities to discover which accessibility supports are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make certain those supports are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school.

Prior Use of Accessibility Supports

Learners are most successful using accessibility supports on an assessment when they have used those supports prior to the assessment. Educators are encouraged to implement accessibility supports in instruction to make sure these concerns are addressed before assessments are administered. Accessibility supports should not be used for the first time on any assessment. Instead, it is important to address these concerns ahead of time:
- Plan time for learners to learn new accessibility supports;
- Be sure that learners know how to use embedded and non-embedded accessibility supports. For embedded supports, there may be practice or sample items or tutorials for learners to experience prior to test administration; and
- Plan for evaluation and improvement of the use of accessibility supports.

Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment

It is important to remember that some accessibility supports used in instruction may not be allowed on an assessment because they would invalidate the results of the assessment. This means that the performance no longer reflects what the assessment was designed to measure. In these instances, educators should be sure to allow learners ample opportunities to perform classroom tasks and assessments without the use of the accessibility support.

On some assessments, accessibility supports may be presented in a way that is different from the variations used during instruction. To facilitate effective assessment processes, educators should make sure learners are informed of these changes and have a chance to practice the different accessibility supports prior to the test. This is particularly important for learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose instruction may happen offline but who have to be prepared for taking online assessments.

If the accessibility support is considered a necessary step in scaffolding grade-level content instruction, having some practice without the support during classroom work would be an expected strategy to gauge learner progress independent of the support and would also provide learners opportunities to practice not using a support before an assessment. If the instructional accessibility support is more permanent in nature and is not an allowable accommodation on an assessment, decision makers should contact district or state personnel about its use and follow the procedures to request the use of an exceptional accommodation (refer to **pages 45-46**).

State Accessibility Policies: Maintaining Validity of Assessment Results

When selecting accessibility supports for state assessments, it is important to keep in mind the accessibility policies set to maintain the validity of the results of an assessment, and to know the consequences of the decisions. If educators determine that a learner should use a certain accessibility support during an assessment, but the learner refuses to use the support, the validity of the assessment results may be compromised.

Educators should plan how and when the learner will learn to use each new accessibility support. They should ensure ample time is available to learn new instructional and assessment accessibility supports before an assessment takes place. Finally, they should plan for the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the learner's use of accessibility features.

Step 4: Administer Accessibility Supports during Instruction and Assessment

Accessibility during Instruction

Learners must be provided with selected accessibility supports during instruction that necessitates their use. An accessibility support should not be used solely during assessments. Accessibility supports should always be chosen based on a learner's individual characteristics in order to help them with accessing content meaningfully and equitably.

As North Dakota moves toward providing assessments on technology-based platforms, educators must make sure that learners have opportunities to become familiar with the technological aspects of the assessment process. In addition to taking practice tests using the same testing platform, it is also important for educators to provide opportunities for all learners to use technology for learning. It is important that educators be aware of the range of accessibility supports available for their learners and use these supports appropriately and consistently in instruction and assessment.

Accessibility during Assessment

Once decisions have been made about providing accessibility supports to meet individual learner needs, the logistics of providing the chosen accessibility supports during state and district assessments must be mapped out. It is essential for all educators to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accessibility supports and related technologies. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel to plan the logistics and provision of assessment accessibility supports on test day.

Providing accessibility supports through the testing platform can ensure that the provision of accessibility is standardized from learner to learner and district to district. However, it is important to monitor the provision of accessibility supports on test day to ensure that supports are delivered, and the technology is working as it should. Educators should be in communication with assessment coordinators in a timely manner to ensure that the assessment is properly programmed and verified with the appropriate accessibility supports for the learner.

The same accessibility supports cannot always be used on various types of assessments (e.g., content assessments, ELP assessments, alternate assessments). For instance, stacked translations may be appropriate on content or alternate assessments but would likely invalidate the measured construct on ELP assessments.

Prior to the day of a test, teachers should ensure that test administrators and proctors know what accessibility supports each learner will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test administrators and proctors should know whether a learner needs to test in a separate location, so plans can be made accordingly. Staff administering accessibility supports, such as reading aloud to a learner or scribing learner responses, must adhere to specific guidelines so that learner scores are valid. *Tools 6-10* provide read aloud, scribe, translation, and human signer guidelines for non-embedded accessibility supports.

Ethical Assessment Practices

Ethical assessment practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical assessment practices include inappropriate interactions between test administrators and learners taking the assessment. They also include, but are not limited to, allowing a learner to answer fewer questions, offering additional information, coaching learners during testing, editing learner responses, telling a learner they may want to review an answer, or giving clues in any other way.

Standardization

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 learner achievement. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accessibility supports is necessary to ensure that assessment results reflect actual learner knowledge.

According to IDEA, 34 CFR §§300.160(b)(2)(i) and (ii) (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.

Test Security

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers and is critical in ensuring the integrity of a test and validity of test results. If non-embedded accessibility supports are used, assessment security can become an issue when other test formats are used (e.g., braille, large print) or when someone other than the learner is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader, scribe). To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to (1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, (2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content, and (3) return all test materials as instructed once the testing window has closed.

Some of the same considerations for test security apply to embedded accessibility supports. For example, ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the test and that test materials are kept confidential is critical in technology-based assessments. In addition, it is important to guarantee that (1) learners are seated in such a manner that they cannot see each other's terminals, (2) learners are not able to access any unauthorized programs or the internet while they are taking the assessment, and (3) learners are not able to access any saved data or computer shortcuts while taking the test. In most cases, any special required hardware devices and appropriate applications, such as switches, should be compatible with computer-delivered assessments. Prior to testing, educators should check on device compatibility and make appropriate adjustments if necessary.

Step 5: Evaluate Use of Accessibility Supports in Instruction and Assessment

Accessibility supports must be selected on the basis of individual learner needs and must be used consistently for instruction and assessment. Observations conducted during the assessment administration, interviews with test administrators, impact on performance, talking with the learner after the assessment, and the ability to increase the independence of the learner will likely provide beneficial information that can be used to guide an informative evaluation process on accessibility supports.

Some questions to consider when monitoring the impact of an accommodation might be:
1. Did the learner regularly use the accommodation?
2. Was the learner able to participate fully in the classroom and assessments with the accommodation?
3. Was the learner able to master the learning goals/objectives with the accommodation?

If the answers to the above questions are no, the educator team(s) will want to determine why the accommodation is not effective or consider providing the learner additional instruction and practice using the accommodations.

The learner may become less dependent on accommodations and more reliant on his/her own abilities. Educators must continually monitor the learner's skill development, and the impact of a particular accommodation in order to plan for, implement, and reduce the use of a certain accommodation as the learner becomes more independent.

Post-secondary Implications

College and career readiness is an important educational outcome for all learners. As learners plan for their transition to post-secondary settings, it is important for educators to have documented the leaners use of accessibility supports so the learner can continue to use them as needed in their college and career settings. Colleges and universities may allow fewer accessibility supports than are available in K-12 settings, so it is important for learners to document their need to use accessibility supports. This may also be true for learners who transition into vocational and other workplace settings. Learners should be encouraged to research their accessibility needs within the context of each particular education institution or place of employment.

In some instances, standardized assessments are used in states for accountability purposes. These tests may be viewed differently by higher education institutions for college entrance. The same accessibility supports may not be available in some cases.

In other instances, learners with significant cognitive disabilities, who are served under IDEA, may participate the North Dakota Alternate Assessment (NDAA). Learners taking the NDAA require extensive, direct instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains. The learner's post-secondary outcomes likely may require supported or assisted living.

Tool 1: Universal Features

Note: The accessibility supports included in the following table may, in some cases, belong to different tiers or be prohibited depending on state policies and assessment types. In several instances, similar supports are grouped for the sake of clarity.

Embedded and Non-Embedded Universal Features Available to All Students

Universal Feature	Description
Amplification	The learner raises or lowers the volume control, as needed, using headphones.
Breaks	The number of items per session can be flexibly defined based on the learner's need. There is no limit on the number of breaks that a learner may be given. This universal feature could result in the learner needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Calculator: hand held or digital	A handheld or digital calculator can be accessed for calculator-allowed items when learners click on the calculator button. When the embedded calculator, as presented for all learners, is not appropriate (for example, for a learner who is blind), the learner may use the calculator offered with assistive technology devices (such as a talking calculator or a braille calculator).
Digital notepad, Global notes, Scratch paper	These tools are used for making notes, computations, or responses.
Eliminate answer choices/answer choice eliminator, Strikethrough	This feature is used to eliminate those answer choices that do not appear correct to the learner.
English dictionary	An electronic or paper English dictionary may be available for the learners to look up word meanings.
English glossary	Grade- and context-appropriate definitions for learners to utilize that may be embedded in textbooks, footnotes, margins, photos, charts, illustrations, or glossaries at the end of textbooks to clarify word meanings. These glossaries may also be offered in electronic or paper versions.
Expandable passages	A learner or educator is able to expand a document or passage, so it takes up a larger portion of the screen or paper as the learner reads.
Highlighter	The learner uses this digital or physical tool for marking desired text, items, or response options with a color.
Line reader, Line reader mask tool, Line guide	The learner is able to use this feature either with a physical or electronic tool as a guide when reading text.

Universal Feature	Description
Keyboard navigation	The use of keystrokes or key commands in place of a mouse to navigate the computer. Learners may use assistive technology devices or software programs that utilize keyboard navigation in the classroom during instruction or assessment.
Mark for review, Flag for review	Allows learners to flag items for future review. Learners may circle, star, check, or use sticky flags to mark areas.
Math tools	Learners may use digital or physical tools, such as rulers, number lines, or math manipulatives.
Spellcheck	Writing tool to check the spelling of words in learner-generated responses.
Writing tools	The learner uses writing tools to format and edit written responses. Tools may include cut and paste, copy, underline, italicize, bold, and undo/redo.
Zoom	A tool for enlarging the size of text and graphics on a given screen or a large-print version of textbooks or other text. This feature allows learners to view material in magnified form on an as-needed basis.
Noise buffer, Headphones, Audio aids	The learner may use noise buffers to minimize distraction or filter external noise during testing.
Thesaurus	An electronic or paper thesaurus containing synonyms of terms may be provided to the learner.

Tool 2: Designated Features

Note: The accessibility supports included in the following table may, in some cases, belong to different tiers or be prohibited depending on state policies and assessment types. In several instances, similar supports are grouped for the sake of clarity.

Embedded and Non-Embedded Designated Features Identified in Advance

Designated Feature	Description
Masking	The learner is able to block off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting. Masking allows learners to hide and reveal individual answer options, as well as all navigational buttons and menus.
Color contrast	The learner is able to adjust the text color and screen background color based on the learner's need or preference.
Text-to-speech, Read aloud	Text is read aloud to the learner via embedded text-to-speech technology or a human reader.
Magnification	The size of specific screens may be adjusted by the learner or with an assistive technology device or magnification software. Large-print tests or magnifying devices may also be used.
Bilingual dictionary	A bilingual/dual language word-to-word paper or electronic dictionary is provided to the learner as a language support.
Color overlay	Color transparencies are placed over paper-based materials.
Translated test directions	Translation of general test directions (not item prompts or questions) is a language support available to learners. Test directions can be provided either by being read aloud or signed by a test administrator who is fluent in the learner's native language. Translations may be provided by a human or the test platform.
Separate setting	Test location is altered so the learner is tested in a setting apart from that available for most learners.
Scribe	Allows a student to use their voice or assistive technology devise to dictate responses or give commands (e.g., pulling down menus, saving work, etc.)
Simplified test directions	An Educator or test administrator rephrases/or simplifies the directions for learners during instruction and assessment.
Stacked Translations	Stacked translations provide a full translation above the original English item.
Translated glossary	Translated glossaries are made available to find the meaning of content-specific words. This may be in the back of a textbook or found on electronic versions of text, assessments, etc.

Tool 3: Accommodations

Note: The accessibility supports included in the following table may, in some cases, belong to different tiers or be prohibited depending on state policies and assessment types. In several instances, similar supports are grouped for the sake of clarity.

Embedded and Non-Embedded Accommodations Available with an IEP, ILP, or 504 Plan

Accommodation	Description
American Sign Language (ASL)	Test content is translated into ASL video or provided by a human signer. The signed test content is viewed on the same screen.
Closed captioning	Printed text appears on the computer screen as audio materials are presented.
Streamline	Provides a streamlined interface in which the items are displayed below the stimuli or text.
Abacus	This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus.
Assistive technology, Alternate response options	Alternate response options include, but are not limited to, adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches.
Braille	A raised-dot code that individuals read with the fingertips. Graphic materials (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, illustrations) are presented in a raised format (paper, thermoform, or refreshable braille). Both contracted and un-contracted braille (English Braille, American Edition) are available; Unified English Braille will be adopted for future assessments. Nemeth code is available for math.
Calculator, Calculation device	A handheld or digital calculator can be accessed for calculator-allowed items when learners click on the calculator button. When the embedded calculator, as presented for all learners, is not appropriate (for example, for a learner who is blind), the learner may use the calculator offered with assistive technology devices (such as a talking calculator or braille calculator).
100s Number Table	A paper-based table listing number from 1-100.
Print on demand	Paper copies of passages, stimuli, and/or test items are printed for learners.
Speech-to-text, Scribe	Allows a learner to use their voice or input device to dictate responses or give commands.
Multiplication table	A paper-based single digit (1-9) multiplication table is made available to the learner.

Tool 4: Federal Laws, Court Cases, and Federal Guidance on Student Participation

	Federal Laws
ESSA	The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was issued on December 10, 2015 (https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/hrpt354/CRPT-114hrpt354.pdf). It reauthorizes the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the national education law and commitment to equal opportunity for all students. The bill mandates annual reporting of disaggregated data of groups of students, generating information about whether all students are achieving and whether schools are meeting the needs of low-income students, students of color, students with disabilities, and English learners. Specific ESSA requirements include provisions for: (I) the participation in such assessments of all students; (II) the appropriate accommodations, such as interoperability with, and ability to use, assistive technology, for children with disabilities (as defined in section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(3))), including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and students with a disability who are provided accommodations under an Act other than the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), necessary to measure the academic achievement of such children relative to the challenging State academic standards or alternate academic achievement standards described in paragraph (1)(E); and (III) the inclusion of English learners, who shall be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided appropriate accommodations on assessments administered to such students under this paragraph, including, to the extent practicable, assessments in the language and form most likely to yield accurate data on what such students know and can do in academic content areas, until such students have achieved English language proficiency.
IDEA	The Individuals with Disabilities Act, specifically governs services provided to students with disabilities. Accountability at the individual level is provided through IEPs developed on the basis of each child's unique needs. IDEA requires the participation of students with disabilities in state- and district-wide assessments. Specific IDEA requirements include

	Children with disabilities are included in general state and district-wide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations, where necessary [Sec. 612 (a) (16) (A)]. The term 'individualized education program' or 'IEP' means a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes…a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in such assessment; and if the IEP Team determines that the child will not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and how the child will be assessed [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (V) and VI)]. For the small group of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are also English learners, these assessments will be an important tool to measure their progress in learning English. IDEA, 34 CFR §§300.160(b)(2)(i) and (ii) (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.
Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act	Section 504 provides individuals with disabilities with certain rights and protects individuals with disabilities against discrimination in federally funded programs and activities. Section 504 states 　　No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705(20) of this title, shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any executive agency. In school settings, 504 legislation guarantees and protects students with disabilities who may not otherwise have an IEP but are still considered an individual with disabilities. The definition of a student with disabilities is much broader under 504 than it is under IDEA. An important part of the 504 plans developed by schools for students with

	disabilities is often the lists of accommodations that the student can use on assessments.
	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ensure a level playing field for students with disabilities in a wide range of settings, including testing, and, similarly to IDEA, provide for reasonable testing accommodations to be given to students with disabilities as outlined/as needed. Title III of the ADA requires equal access and participation. The IEP/504 team is charged with making accommodations decisions for all IDEA/504 eligible students every year, as part of the annual IEP/504 process.

Tool 5: Dos and Don'ts When Selecting Accessibility Supports

Do…make accessibility decisions based on individual needs (e.g., the learner's amount of time in the country, disability needs, etc.).
Don't…make blanket decisions about designated features.

Do…select accessibility supports that reduce the effect of disability and language barriers to access content and demonstrate learning.
Don't…select accessibility supports unrelated to documented learner needs or give learners an unfair advantage.

Do…be certain to document instructional and assessment accommodation(s) on the IEP, 504, or EL plan.
Don't…use an accommodation that has not been documented on the IEP, 504, or EL plan.

Do…turn off certain universal features for some learners if these features prove to be distracting.
Don't…assume that all universal features should be available to all learners without previous try-outs.

Do…select designated features based on input of one or more informed educators.
Don't…make accessibility decisions based on whatever is easiest to do (e.g., preferential seating).

Do…ensure that accommodations are selected based on multiple stakeholders' input.
Don't…make unilateral decisions about accommodations.

Do…make decisions about designated features and accommodations prior to the assessment day.
Don't…assume that various combinations of accessibility supports will work effectively without testing these combinations.

Do…be specific about the "Where, When, Who, and How" of providing accessibility supports.
Don't…assume that all instructional accessibility supports are appropriate for use on assessments.

Do…refer to state accessibility policies and understand implications of selections.
Don't…simply indicate an accessibility support will be provided "as appropriate" or "as necessary."

Do…evaluate accessibility supports used by the learner.
Don't…check every accessibility support possible on a checklist simply to be "safe."

Do…get input about accessibility supports from educators, parents, and learners.
Don't…assume the same accessibility supports remain appropriate year after year.

Do…provide accessibility supports for assessments routinely used for classroom instruction or ensure that learners practice each support sufficiently.
Don't…provide an assessment accessibility support for the first time on the day of a test.

Do…select accessibility support based on specific individual learner needs.
Don't…assume certain accessibility supports, such as a dictionary, are appropriate for every learner.

Tool 6: Read Aloud Guidelines

Background

In cases where a learner cannot use the computer-based version of assessments, the learner should be provided the read aloud feature. When provided the read aloud support, the student will have those parts of the test that have audio support in the computer-based version read aloud by a qualified human reader.

Qualifications of Test Readers
- The human reader should be an education professional who is familiar with the learner, and who is typically responsible for providing this feature in the classroom.
- The human reader must be trained in accordance with test administration and security policies and procedures.
- The human reader must have prior experience in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this support to a learner during test administration.

Preparation Procedures
- Human readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test environment and format of the test in advance of administering the read aloud support during operational testing.
- Human readers must clearly distinguish between the test content that should and should not be read aloud to learners. Reading aloud test content that is not permitted will result in a test misadministration and will invalidate the test.
- Prior to administering the test, the human reader should inform the learner of the parameters of the read aloud support.
- The human reader must be aware of whether the learner requires additional accessibility supports that have been approved for use during the test.

Guidelines for Reading Aloud
- The test environment must be configured in such a way as to ensure that the read aloud does not interfere with the instruction or assessment of other learners (e.g., ensuring adequate spacing so that the reader's voice does not carry to other learners or testing in a separate setting).
- The human reader can only read aloud the same test content that is supported through audio in a computer-based version. No other test content may be read aloud.
- The human reader must read test content exactly as written and as clearly as possible.
- The human reader must communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- The human reader should avoid gesturing, head movements, or any other verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words.

- The human reader must avoid conversing with the learner about test items and respond to the learner's questions by repeating the item, words, or instructions verbatim as needed.
- The human reader must not paraphrase, interpret, define, or translate any items, words, or instructions.
- The human reader may provide spelling of any word in a writing item prompt if requested by the learner.
- The human reader should adjust his/her reading speed and volume if requested by the learner.

Post-Administration
- The human reader must not discuss any portion of the test or the learner's performance with others.

Tool 7: Scribe Guidelines

Background

A scribe is an adult who writes down or inputs to the computer what a learner dictates via speech or an assistive communication device. A guiding principle in providing a scribe during test administration is to ensure that the learner has access to and is able to respond to test content.

Qualifications of Scribes
- The scribe should be an education professional who is familiar with the learner, and who is typically responsible for providing this accommodation in the classroom.
- The scribe must be trained in accordance with test administration and security policies and procedures as articulated in test administration manuals, accessibility and/or accommodations manuals.
- The scribe must have prior experience in providing scribing or transcribing services and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this accommodation to a learner during operational test administration.

Preparation Procedures
- Scribes are expected to familiarize themselves with test format (using a practice test), as well as test environment, in advance of the testing session if administering the scribe accommodation during operational testing.
- Scribes must be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan if the learner for whom they are scribing has a disability, so that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.
- Scribes must be aware if the learner requires additional accessibility features or accommodations that have been approved for use during the test.
- Scribes should meet with the learner in advance and practice scribing with the learner prior to the assessment.

Guidelines for Scribing
- Scribing must be provided in a separate setting so as not to interfere with the instruction or assessment of other learners.
- For computer-based administrations, scribes must enter learner responses directly into the test interface, making use of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility supports available for a given item and learner.
- Scribes should comply with learner requests regarding use of all available features within the test environment.
- Scribes must avoid conversing with the learner about test items and record the learner's responses verbatim, even if they contain errors.
- Scribes may respond to procedural questions asked by the learner (e.g., test directions, navigation within the test environment).

- Scribes may not respond to learner questions about test items if their responses compromise validity of the test. The learner must not be prompted, reminded, or otherwise assisted in formulating his or her response during or after the dictation to the scribe.
- Scribes may ask the learner to restate words or parts of a sentence as needed. Such requests must not be communicated in a manner suggesting that the learner should make a change or correction.
- Scribes may not question or correct learner choices, alert learners to errors, prompt, or influence learners in any way that might compromise the integrity of learner responses.
- Scribes may not edit or alter learner work in any way and must record exactly what the learner has dictated.
- The learner must be allowed to review and edit what the scribe has written.

Post-Administration
- The scribe must not discuss any portion of the test, or the learner's performance, with others.

Guidelines for Transcription
- Responses must be transcribed verbatim onscreen or in the paper test booklet by the test administrator as soon as possible after the test is administered.
- Any stored test content on the word processing device must be deleted after the transcription is complete. While awaiting transcription, the device with recorded answers must be stored in a secure, locked location.

Tool 8: Translation Guidelines

Sight translation is the provision of spontaneous oral translation of test items and/or directions from English to an EL's native language. That is, sight translation involves on-the-spot rendering of printed test materials orally in the learner's native language. Sight translation is the term used by professional translators and interpreters. However, in public education, the term oral translation is more frequently used.

Scripted oral translation involves having the sight translator read aloud a previously translated script of a test in the learner's native language. To the learner, it may seem like a sight translation, in that the script is read aloud. However, the translation of the script has been previously prepared by a translator. Thus, the person who reads it neither interprets nor translates.

Note: Translators should not be family members.

Vocabulary and Syntax
- Use vocabulary in test items that is widely accessible to all learners (e.g., do not use Castilian Spanish if learners are from Mexico and Central America). When faced with multiple translations for a single term/word, choose the translation that will be recognized by the greatest number of learners.
- Be sensitive to and minimize vocabulary that many learners are likely to be unfamiliar with because of socio-economic status (e.g., "appraiser").
- Avoid the use of syntax or vocabulary that is above the test's target grade-level. The test item should be written at a vocabulary level no higher than the target grade-level, and preferably at a slightly lower grade-level, to ensure that all learners understand the task presented.
- Keep sentence structures as simple as possible. In general, learners tend to find a series of shorter, simpler sentences to be more accessible than longer, more complex sentences.
- Consider the impact of cognates. Be particularly aware of false cognates.
- Do not use cultural references or idiomatic expressions (such as "junior varsity teams" or "being on the ball") that are not equally familiar to all learners.
- Avoid sentence structures that may be confusing or difficult to follow, such as the use of passive voice or sentences with multiple clauses.
- Do not use syntax that may be confusing or ambiguous, such as negation or double negatives.
- Minimize the use of low-frequency, long, or morphologically complex words and long sentences.

Review/Revision Procedure for the Test Version Translated to the Native Language and Side-by-Side Bilingual Version

1. The bilingual educator, the translator, and other team members who can read in the target language:
   - independently read the translated item and respond to it as if each of them was a learner taking the test;
   - independently compare the original and translated versions of the item and look for translation errors; and
   - independently edit the translated item (if needed) and write comments on it.
2. With facilitation from project staff, all team members discuss any proposed changes and decide by consensus whether, and how, the translation of the item should be modified.
3. Project staff keeps an updated copy of the translated item.

Review/Revision Procedure for the Directions Translated into Native Language

1. The bilingual educator, the translator, and other team members who can read in the target language:
   - independently read the (untranslated) items for which the directions apply and respond to them as if each of them was a learner taking the test;
   - independently compare the original and translated version of the directions and look for translation errors; and
   - independently edit the translated directions (if needed) and write comments on it.
2. With facilitation from project staff, all team members discuss any proposed changes and decide by consensus whether, and how, the translation of the directions should be modified.
3. Project staff keeps an updated copy of the translated directions.

Review/Revision Procedure for the Bilingual Glossary

1. The bilingual educator, the translator, and other team members who can read in the target language:
   - independently examine the item in English and respond to it as if each of them was a learner taking the test;
   - independently compare the target words in the original version and their translation in the glossaries and look for translation errors; and
   - independently change the translation of the target words (if needed).
2. With facilitation from project staff, all team members discuss any proposed changes and decide by consensus whether, and how, the translation of the target words should be modified.
3. Project staff keeps an updated copy of the translated target words.

Tool 9: Dos and Don'ts for Translators

What types of training might be made available for translators?

As outlined in the following Dos and Don'ts chart, per State policy, translators might participate in all aspects of staff training related to test administration and protocols, test security, code of ethics, and planning for testing day. Schools/districts may wish to print the Dos and Don'ts chart for translators and require translators to check each of the 'Do' tasks.

	Dos	Don'ts

Before the Test	❏ Do provide supervised access to the Test Administration Directions (TAD) up to four days prior to test administration.
	❏ Do know which test sections should be administered prior to each test administration.
	❏ Do sign test materials in and out with each use. No test materials may leave the district except the TAD.
	❏ Do review Test Security Agreements and Code of Ethics.
	❏ Do sign a Test Security Agreement to be kept on file at the district office.
	❏ Do participate in training with the school test coordinator or designee.
	❏ Do make sure you are aware of any school policies regarding bathroom emergencies, student sickness during the test, fire alarm procedures, etc.
	❏ Do review the accommodations permitted for the EL learner receiving translation support. Do plan for test day:
	   o Review the allowable accessibility supports.
	   o Read and practice test directions in advance – practice and create script to read to students.
		• Don't remove the test booklet from the school.

During the test	❏ Do tell the student the rules of the test administration in the learner's native language (including which parts of the test can and cannot be translated). ❏ Do make sure you and the learner each have a copy of the test. After testing, leave the test booklet at the school with the test coordinator. ❏ Do interpret/translate all directions, including example questions. ❏ Do emphasize words printed in boldface, italics, or capitals. ❏ Do avoid voice inflection which may be seen as cueing. ❏ Do identify potentially unknown words in a test item. Look up the meaning of the unknown words in a monolingual English or bilingual dictionary and write the meaning or target language equivalent of the word on your copy of the test booklet. Destroy notes after use.	• Don't alert the learner to his/her mistakes during testing. • Don't prompt the learner in any way that would result in a better response or essay. • Don't influence the learner's response in any way. • Don't define terms for the learner. That constitutes assistance that gives the learner extra help that is not received by other learners. It is unethical for an interpreter to provide such assistance and it is also strictly forbidden.
After the test	❏ Do participate in the evaluation process (and/or discussion of how well the accommodation worked).	• Don't discuss test or responses with others.

Tool 10: Human Signer Guidelines

1. In cases where a learner requires a sign language support, and for whom the American Sign Language (ASL) video accommodation is not available or appropriate, a human signer is provided. Human signers must follow these procedures during testing to ensure the standardization of the signed presentation to the learners.
2. Signers must be trained on test administration policies by local test coordinators.
3. Signers should use signs that are conceptually accurate, with or without simultaneous voicing, translating only the content that is printed in the test book or on the computer screen without changing, emphasizing, or adding information. Signers may not clarify (except for test directions), provide additional information, assist, or influence the learner's selection of a response in any way. Signers must do their best to use the same signs if the learner requests a portion repeated.
4. Signers must sign (or sign and speak when using Sim-Com [Simultaneous Communication]) in a clear and consistent manner throughout test administration, using correct production, and without inflections that may provide clues to, or mislead, a learner. Signers should be provided a copy of the test and the administrative directions prior to the start of testing (check individual state policy for the amount of time allowed), in order to become familiar with the words, terms, symbols, signs, and/or graphics that will be signed to the learner.
5. Signers should emphasize only the words printed in boldface, italics, or capital letters and inform the learner that the words are printed that way. No other emphasis or inflection is permitted.
6. Signers may repeat passages, test items, and response options, as requested, according to the needs of the learner. Signers should not rush through the test and should ask the learner if they are ready to move to the next item.
7. Signers may not attempt to solve mathematics problems or determine the correct answer to a test item while signing, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection which may mislead the learner.
8. Signers must use facial expressions consistent with sign language delivery and must not use expressions which may be interpreted by the learner as approval or disapproval of the learner's answers.
9. Test administrators must be familiar with the learner's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan and should know in advance which accommodations are required by the learner, and for which test the learner is designated to receive a human signer. Test administrators must be aware of whether a learner requires additional tools, devices, or adaptive equipment that has been approved for use during the test, such as a magnifier, closed circuit television (CCTV), abacus, brailler, slate, or stylus. If use of these tools impacts the translation of the test, the signer should be made aware of this. Upon review of the test, if a human signer is unsure how to sign and/or pronounce an unfamiliar word, the signer should collaborate with an ASL-fluent content expert (if available) on which sign is most appropriate to use. If the signer is unable to obtain this information before the test, the signer should advise the learners of the uncertainty and spell the word.

10. When using an ASL sign that can represent more than one concept or English word, the signer must adequately contextualize the word, in order to reduce ambiguity. The signer may also spell the word after signing it, if there is any doubt about which word is intended.
11. Signers must spell any words requested by the learner during the test administration.
12. When test items refer to a particular line, or lines, of a passage, re-sign the lines before signing the question and answer choices. For example, the signer should sign, "Question X refers to the following lines…," then sign the lines to the learner, followed by question X and the response options.
13. When signing selected response items, signers must be careful to give equal emphasis to each response option and to sign options before waiting for the learner's response.
14. When response choices will be scribed, the signer should inform the learner at the beginning of the test that if the learner designates a response choice by letter only ("D", for example), the signer will ask the learner if he/she would like the response to be signed again before the answer is recorded in the answer booklet or the computer-based test.
15. If the learner chooses an answer before the signer has signed all the answer choices, the human signer must ask if the student wants the other response options to be signed.
16. After the signer finishes signing a test item and all response options, the signer must allow the learner to pause before responding. If the pause has been lengthy ask, "Do you want me to sign the question or any part of it again?" When signing questions again, signers must avoid emphasis on words not bolded, italicized, or capitalized.

Tool 11: North Dakota State Assessment Guidelines

The North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) is an Online Testing System.
For a list of allowable accommodations specific to the NDSA please go to:

North Dakota State Assessment Allowable Accommodations (TIDE User Guide, Appendix B and C)

If an accommodation is not listed, please refer to pages 45-46 of this manual for guidance on requesting an exceptional accommodation.

Tool 12: ACT Guidelines Guiding Principles for Determining Accommodations on the ACT

ACT approves accommodations for examinees with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and has adopted the following guiding principles for responding to requests for accommodations on the ACT.

1. Fair: Requirements and procedures for test accommodations must ensure fairness for all examinees, both those seeking accommodations and those testing under standard conditions.
2. Consistent: Accommodations must be consistent with ADA requirements and appropriate and reasonable for documented disability.
3. Valid: Accommodations must not result in undue burden, as that term is used under the ADA, or fundamentally alter that which the test is designed to measure.
4. Professional: Documentation of the diagnosis must meet guidelines that are considered to be appropriate by qualified professionals and must provide evidence that the person's impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities. Applicants must also provide information about current and/or prior accommodations made in similar settings, such as in academic classes and other testing situation.

In order to request ACT accommodations, please review the ACT Policy for Accommodations Documentation:

ACT Policy for Accommodations Documentation

For additional information regarding accommodations checklists, resources for students and parents, test date windows, and FAQs for students and parents please visit:

ACT Accommodations and Support Guidelines

Tool 13: English Language Learners: ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

The ACCESS for ELs 2.0 Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement applies to all ELs who take ACCESS for ELs 2.0, Kindergarten ACCESS for ELs and Alternate ACCESS for ELs. It accentuates the individualized approach needed for the implementation of these important assessment practices for ELs.

This accessibility supplement was developed to guide the selection and administration of Test Administration Considerations, Universal Tools, and Accommodations for individual English Learners (ELs) in order to produce valid assessment results. WIDA's approach to assessment is rooted in the understanding that ELs are diverse; all ELs are capable of making progress toward English language proficiency; and ELs must acquire discipline-specific language practices that enable them to produce, interpret, and effectively collaborate on content-related grade-appropriate tasks.

WIDA is committed to providing an assessment that best measures rigorous English language proficiency standards which correspond with the college- and career-ready standards reflected in the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards. WIDA recognizes that the validity of ACCESS for ELs 2.0, Kindergarten ACCESS for ELs and Alternate ACCESS for ELs results depends upon all eligible ELs participating in the assessment and that each learner, including those with disabilities, is provided appropriate access to the assessment.

For a list of allowable accommodations for the ACCESS Assessment for ELs please refer to the WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations:

WIDA Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement

Tool 14: National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only assessment that measures what U.S. learners know and can do in various subjects across the nation, states, and in some urban districts. Also known as The Nation's Report Card, NAEP has provided important information about how learners are performing academically since 1969.

NAEP is a congressionally mandated project administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

NAEP is given to a representative sample of learners across the country. Results are reported for groups of learners with similar characteristics (e.g., gender, race and ethnicity, school location), not individual learners. National results are available for all subjects assessed by NAEP. State and selected urban district results are available for mathematics, reading, and (in some assessment years) science and writing.

For a list of allowable accommodations for the NAEP please refer to:

NAEP Accommodation Guidelines

Guidance on Exceptional Accommodations for North Dakota State Assessments

Learners may have an accommodation on their IEP/504 plan that is not listed as an approved state accommodation. In rare instances, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will approve this "Other" accommodation for use during state testing. These accommodations should be used during classroom instruction and assessments on a regular basis and the learner should be proficient with their use.

Only a very limited number of learners who meet specific guidance criteria may use a unique accommodation on North Dakota State Assessments and receive a valid score. Standard accommodations for all North Dakota State Assessments are listed in the *North Dakota Accessibility Manual*.

The special education director/coordinator, district test coordinator, or EL coordinator must submit a *Unique Accommodation Request* to the NDDPI for approval.

If the request is approved by the NDDPI, the learner may receive a valid score on the assessment when using the unique accommodation.

If the accommodation request is not approved and the learner still used the accommodation on North Dakota State Assessments, the district may be instructed to mark the assessment as having a non-approved accommodation. This will result in the score being invalidated or suppressed and the learner being considered a "non-participant" for the assessment.

Unique Accommodation Request Application

IEP teams, Section 504 committees, and EL committees may request permission to use accommodations other than those included in the *North Dakota Accessibility Manual*. The office of Special Education should receive such requests no later than four (4) weeks before the learner's first day of testing.

The request should come from the special education director/coordinator, district test coordinator, or EL Coordinator. The following information must be included in the request:

1. Student ID #, District, School name
2. Specific requested accommodation(s)
3. Rationale for the request provided by the IEP team, Section 504 committee, or EL committee
4. Verification statement that the learner receives the accommodation(s) on a regular basis during classroom instruction and classroom assessment, and is familiar with the accommodation(s)
5. Impact of the learner's assessment results if the learner is not permitted to use the requested accommodation(s)

Send written requests at least four (4) weeks prior to the administration of the assessment to:

Office of Assessment
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58503

If the request is approved by NDDPI, the learner may receive a valid score on the assessment when using the requested accommodation.

If the accommodation request is not approved and the learner still uses the accommodation during the NDSA or NDAA, the district may be instructed to mark the assessment as having non-approved accommodation. This will result in the score being invalidated or suppressed and the learner being considered a "non-participant" for the assessment.

Upon completion of the review of a request, the review committee will reply to the request within 10 days.

Glossary

Students with disabilities: are learners who are eligible to receive services identified through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

English learners (ELs): are learners whose native language is not English and who do not yet possess sufficient English language proficiency (ELP) to fully access curriculum that is in English.

English learners with disabilities (ELs with disabilities): are learners whose native language is not English, who do not yet possess sufficient ELP to fully access content that is in English, and who have disabilities served by IDEA or Section 504.

Exceptional accommodations: are accommodations on a learner's Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plan or Individual Language Plan (ILP) that are not listed as approved state accommodations. In rare instances, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will approve these "Other" accommodations for use during state testing. These accommodations should be used during classroom instruction and assessments on a regular basis and the learner should be proficient with their use. Refer to pages 45-46 for proper process on requesting an exceptional accommodation.

IEP: Individual Education Plan

ILP: Individual Language Plan

Resources

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