

# GUIDELINES FOR TESTING STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS ENGLISH LEARNERS



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## **A. Introduction**

Students whose primary language is not English and who are of limited English proficiency represent a steadily increasing percentage of North Carolina's school population and are enrolled at all grade levels in communities across the state. This publication contains policy guidelines and procedures for testing students who are identified solely as English Learners (ELs) in the North Carolina Testing Program.

State and federal laws require that all students participate in the statewide testing program. The local education agency (LEA)/charter school must ensure all students, including those identified as ELs who have the appropriate documentation, (1) participate in the standard administration of a North Carolina test and, if eligible, (2) receive appropriate accommodation(s) during the administration of the test. To ensure test results are valid, all school personnel must follow the appropriate procedures for use of accommodations by ELs presented in this publication and any published supplements or updates.

EL teams/committees must review this publication before making decisions about testing accommodations for students identified as ELs who are participating in the North Carolina Testing Program at grades 3–12. Although this publication addresses the testing of students identified as ELs who are part of the regular education program, some students with disabilities are also identified as ELs. Additional information regarding the testing of students with disabilities who are also identified as ELs can be found in the *Testing Students with Disabilities* document at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/>.

North Carolina LEA personnel, school personnel, parents, and students may duplicate or download the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* publication for instructional and educational purposes only. Portions of this document may be duplicated and distributed to members of the school-based EL team/committee so that informed decisions for testing students identified as ELs may be made. This publication is located on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Division of Accountability Services website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/slep/>.

LEA/charter school test coordinators and EL coordinators must train local staff on the material in this document and disseminate any subsequent published supplements or updates to this publication that provide additional information for decision making in testing students identified as ELs.

## B. English Learner Testing Requirements

### Students Identified as English Learners (ELs)

LEA/charter schools must identify in a timely manner students in need of language assistance services. The WIDA Screener is the assessment used in North Carolina for initial identification and placement of students identified as ELs. The administration of the WIDA™ Screener is based on results from the Home Language Survey (HLS) process. The HLS process and the identification and subsequent placement of EL students in English as a Second Language (ESL) services are guided at the state level by the NCDPI K–12 Standards, Curriculum and Instruction Division. Additional information can be found at <https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/ncels/home>.

Once identified as an EL (results from W-APT/WIDA Screener or ACCESS for ELLs [within one year]), state and federal law require students to be assessed annually with a state-identified English language proficiency test. The test currently used by North Carolina for annual assessment is the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ELLs), or the ACCESS for ELLs.® Eligible students may participate in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs® in place of the ACCESS for ELLs.

Results from these tests for English language proficiency help determine eligibility for state-approved testing accommodations for tests within the North Carolina Testing Program, such as the end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments.

### Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option to the administration of the ACCESS for ELLs test to students in grades 1–12 who are classified as ELs and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is designed for only a small population of ELs who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The student has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) that reflects the student meets the eligibility criteria for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment.
- The student must be instructed using the North Carolina Extended Content Standards in all assessed content areas (i.e., reading, mathematics, and science).
- The student must have a significant cognitive disability.
  - The student’s disability significantly impacts adaptive behaviors, defined as those skills which are essential for someone to live and function independently.
  - The student requires extensive and repeated individualized instruction and support to make meaningful gains.
  - The student uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways.
- The student’s ACCESS for ELLs scores from the prior school year yielded NA across any or all domains or yielded a composite score of less than 2.0. (If the composite score is 2.0 or above, the student does not qualify for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs and must continue to take the regular ACCESS for ELLs.)
- If the student does not have ACCESS for ELLs scores from the prior school year, the

student’s WIDA Screener results must have a proficiency level of 1 in all applicable domains.

### Participation in the Statewide Testing Program

State Board of Education (SBE) policy TEST-011 states that “students identified as ELs shall participate in the statewide testing program using either the standard test administration or the standard test administration with accommodations. Consistent with State Board policies TEST-003 and TEST-016, EL students in their first year in a U.S. school shall take required EOC and North Carolina Final Exams (NCFEs), but the test scores shall not be included as at least 20% of the student’s final grade for the course. This applies to English/Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies EOC and NCFE assessments.”

### Eligibility for Testing Accommodations

Students who score below Level 5.0 Bridging on the reading domain of the WIDA Screener/ACCESS for ELLs, are eligible to receive state-approved EL testing accommodations on all state tests. Students who score Level 5.0 Bridging or above on the reading domain of the WIDA Screener/ACCESS for ELLs or exit EL status must participate in all state tests without accommodations (SBE policy TEST-011).

**Table 1. Students Eligible to Receive EL Testing Accommodations**

Domain	1 Entering	2 Emerging	3 Developing	4 Expanding	5 Bridging	6 Reaching
Reading	Eligible to Receive State-Approved EL Testing Accommodations for All State Tests				Must Participate in the General State Test Administration without EL Testing Accommodations	

### Inclusion of ELs in the State Accountability Model

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that each state develop a plan for the inclusion of recently arrived ELs in the State Accountability Model. Effective the 2017–18 school year and beyond, SBE policy ACCT-021 requires that all students identified as ELs must participate in state assessments beginning with their first year in a United States (U.S.) school. For the first year, the requirement is for participation and for reporting (e.g., NC School Report Card), not the accountability model. For year two, ELs’ test scores will be included in the growth analysis for the accountability model. For year three and beyond, ELs’ test scores will be included in growth and the achievement indicator of the accountability model. The following table illustrates how North Carolina will include ELs in the accountability model for content assessments.



**Table 2. Inclusion of English Learners in the Accountability Model**

Recently Arrived EL (by year)	Year 1 (Reading, Math, Science)	Year 2 (Reading, Math, Science)	Year 3 and beyond (Reading, Math, Science)
Does EL take assessments?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does EL receive an Individual Student Report?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is EL included in the Accountability System?	No	Included for Growth	Included for Proficiency and Growth

## Exiting EL Identification and the Comprehensive Objective Composite (COC)

Results from the annual ACCESS for ELLs test are used in determining whether a student may exit EL identification. Students must meet the Comprehensive Objective Composite (COC) set by the state to exit EL status. The COC defines the attainment of English language proficiency by a student reaching an overall composite score of 4.8 or above, with at least a 4.0 on the reading domain and at least a 4.0 on the writing domain for kindergarten and tiers B and C in grades 1–12. The exit criteria for the ACCESS for ELLs adaptive online and paper/pencil versions are the same.

The establishment of the COC involves using national research to identify the cut point at which English language proficiency is no longer expected to affect reading and mathematics performance on the state EOG and EOC tests. This method comprehensively takes into account the combination of two objective performance factors: the state EOG and EOC reading and mathematics assessments and the student’s English language proficiency.

Students who exit EL identification are no longer assessed on the English language proficiency test nor are they eligible to receive EL accommodations on state tests.

## Monitored Former English Learner (MFEL)

The ESSA requires that each state determine if students who have exited EL status (using the English language proficiency assessment) will be included in subgroup reporting for the accountability model. In North Carolina, students will be considered Monitored Former English Learners (MFELs) for four years after they exit EL status and thus be a part of the EL subgroup for the accountability model (i.e., School Performance Grades, long-term goals, and participation).

The following table is an example of how a student will be included in the EL subgroup after exiting EL status:

**Table 3. Inclusion in the English Learner (EL) Subgroup after Exiting EL Status**

<b>Year</b>	<b>EL Identification</b>	<b>ELP Assessment Participation</b>	<b>Included in the EL Subgroup</b>
2016–17	EL	Takes ELP assessment and exits EL status	Yes
2017–18	Exited Year 1	Not tested on the ELP assessment	Yes
2018–19	Exited Year 2	Not tested on the ELP assessment	Yes
2019–20	Exited Year 3	Not tested on the ELP assessment	Yes
2020–21	Exited Year 4	Not tested on the ELP assessment	Yes
2021–22	N/A	Not tested on the ELP assessment	No

## **Transfer Students**

In the event a student identified as an EL transfers within a school system, transfers to another North Carolina school system, or transfers out of North Carolina, the student’s English language proficiency scores must be transferred with the student’s cumulative record to the new school. The school in which the student enrolls has up to thirty (30) calendar days to obtain scores on the state-identified English language proficiency test used for testing decisions. If scores are sent, the receiving school must use those scores to determine the student’s EL status. If scores are not received, the receiving school must administer the state-identified W-APT/WIDA Screener within the thirty (30) calendar days of the student’s initial enrollment. The results from the most recent administration of the ACCESS for ELLs or W-APT/WIDA Screener will be used for program services, instructional decisions, and eligibility for state testing accommodations.

## C. Responsibilities of LEA/Charter School Test Coordinators and EL Coordinators

There must be communication and collaboration between LEA/charter school test coordinators and EL coordinators to ensure appropriate training and support are offered to all test administrators and related personnel involved in all tests that are part of the North Carolina Testing Program. The LEA/charter school test coordinator and EL coordinator must work collaboratively to provide information to school-based staff regarding policies and procedures for testing students identified as ELs. This information will demonstrate how to appropriately document a student's participation in the statewide testing program, including whether the student will participate in the

1. general assessment under standard conditions (i.e., without testing accommodations);  
or
2. general assessment with testing accommodations.

Local personnel must ensure any consequences resulting from the provision and/or use of an accommodation (e.g., procedures that invalidate test results) are explained to and understood by parents/legal guardians/surrogate parents and students who are 18 or older.

### Document Information

LEA/charter school test coordinators and EL coordinators are to distribute copies of this document, which contains SBE policies for testing students identified as ELs, to appropriate school personnel and members of the community so these designated individuals can review them and make informed decisions related to testing ELs.

This publication addresses the testing of students identified as ELs, but for students identified as ELs who also have disabilities, refer to the North Carolina Testing Program's *Testing Students with Disabilities* document, which is available through the local school system or at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/>.

### Joint Responsibility

LEAs/charter schools should develop a plan to designate responsibilities for the LEA/charter school test coordinator and EL coordinator that will clearly define roles in the assessment of students identified as ELs. It is the joint responsibility of these coordinators to work collaboratively to ensure the following occur within a reasonable time frame.

1. All school test coordinators, school administrators, teachers, parent(s), guardian(s), and surrogate parent(s) are informed about
  - a. the state testing requirements at each grade level (including the state-identified English language proficiency test and the National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], if applicable); and
  - b. the guidelines governing the provision and use of testing accommodations.

2. A local monitoring system is established to ensure only eligible students identified as ELs with the appropriate documentation in their current EL Plans are provided testing accommodations during the administration of state tests and, to ensure valid test results, all state policies are followed.
3. The required documentation in the student's EL Plan is on file in a secure location in compliance with the North Carolina Testing Program and with all federal requirements.
4. Any special scheduling or other provisions that may be required to accommodate the testing of ELs are to be arranged.
5. Each school's implementation of state policies is to be monitored to ensure appropriate procedures are followed during the administration of state tests with accommodations. Appropriate accommodations are provided only to students identified as ELs who have documentation that they are eligible to receive them.
6. If a student is not provided a required testing accommodation (i.e., has a documented need) during a test administration, the result may be a misadministration. When a school does not provide a student with a required testing accommodation, (a) the parent/guardian must be notified immediately and (b) a Report of Testing Irregularity available through the Online Testing Irregularity Submission System (OTISS) must be completed. (c) If the parent/guardian signs a statement waiving the right to have the student retested with the required accommodation, the test results from the administration without the accommodation will be used for state and local accountability purposes and student performance placement. This statement waiving the right to retest must be signed before the parent/guardian is informed of the test results. (d) If the parent/guardian signs a statement indicating that the student must be retested with the required accommodation, the superintendent/LEA/charter school test coordinator declares a misadministration, and the affected student is administered another secure form of the test with the required accommodation. This statement of consent to retest must be signed before the parent/guardian is informed of the test results.
7. If a student is provided with a testing accommodation that is not required, (i.e., documented) (a) the parent/guardian must be notified immediately, (b) a Report of Testing Irregularity available through the OTISS is to be completed, and (c) an investigation must be conducted to determine if the provision of the accommodation does in fact result in a misadministration. (d) The superintendent/LEA/charter school test coordinator declares a misadministration if necessary, and (e) the affected student is administered another secure form of the test without the provision of the accommodation. If, after the investigation, a misadministration is not declared, the test results from the administration with the undocumented accommodation will be used for state and local accountability purposes and student performance placement.
8. A local system is implemented for (a) notifying parents/guardians and students

before the actual test administration date about the approved accommodations the student will be provided during the actual test administration and (b) establishing procedures to use if a student declines to use an approved accommodation(s) during an actual test administration. This information must be documented in the LEA and school testing plans.

9. All appropriate staff receive training on the state-identified language proficiency test.

## **Joint Training of Local Staff**

Early in the school year, school personnel must receive training on how to use accommodations during instruction. Before testing, training sessions on testing ELs must be conducted by the LEA/charter school for

- test administrators,
- proctors (if utilized),
- ESL teachers, and
- any other appropriate school personnel who serve students identified as ELs on EL teams/committees or who are otherwise involved in administering a state test or providing accommodations during the administration of a state test (with the exception of EL testing accommodations on the state-identified English language proficiency test).

Training related to testing is primarily the responsibility of the LEA/charter school test coordinators. However, EL coordinators and general curriculum specialists are strongly encouraged to participate and assist in developing training for personnel involved in testing students with limited English proficiency. In no case shall a test be administered by an individual who has not participated in training on the administration of state tests (including the state-identified English language proficiency test) or on the appropriate use of accommodations.

All school system personnel are to be made aware of the following when administering state tests with or without accommodations:

1. Every attempt must be made to relieve students' test anxiety.
2. The security of the test must be maintained at all times.

Training on testing ELs is to include:

- information located in the *Guidelines for Testing Students Identified as English Learners* document (this publication) and the *North Carolina Testing Code of Ethics* located in Appendix B; (The *North Carolina Testing Code of Ethics* includes information about maintaining test security and the sanctions for violations.)
- information about ordering test materials; (The superintendent/charter school director or the superintendent's/director's designee, usually the LEA test coordinator/charter school test coordinator, is responsible for ensuring secure test materials are properly ordered.) and
- information about testing accommodations. Additional information regarding

accommodations is located in *Sections D, E, and F* of this publication.

To ensure valid test results, training before the administration of each state test must include the review of accommodation(s) that have been approved for the student to use with specific tests and the appropriate use of and procedures for the provision of the approved accommodation(s).

A student may require accommodations for only one test (for example, reading), or a student may have approval for accommodations for several tests (for example, reading, mathematics, and science). In addition, a student may have approval for more than one accommodation per test because of his or her individual needs.

If accommodations are appropriately documented in the EL Plans, a small group of students in the same grade using the same accommodations are allowed to use the same form (i.e., same form letter and form number).

Note: For online testing the computer will generate the same test form for all students who have the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation selected in their student interface questions (SIQ).

Unless the provision or use of the testing accommodation requires special handling, the test administrator must follow local procedures for processing test materials.

The test administrator must code all applicable bubbles on the student answer sheet for paper/pencil tests or complete the Accoms tab in NC Education for online tests to identify the specific accommodation(s) provided during the test administration. Coding must be accurate. This information is used for state and federal reporting purposes and for making determinations about the validity of test scores. When a state test is administered with accommodations, students are to be provided with the following information on an individual basis before the test date:

- a. identity of the test administrator (For best practices, students should know and have worked with the test administrator before the test administration.);
- b. test date, time the test administration is scheduled to begin, room location; and
- c. testing accommodations that will be provided and the way in which they will be provided.

## **Review of Recommendations**

The EL coordinator, in collaboration with the LEA/charter school test coordinator, is to review the testing accommodations determined by the EL teams/committees. This may include the review of individual student's documented testing accommodations in EL Plans and any available testing accommodations reports from the accommodations management system (i.e., Every Child Accountability and Tracking System [ECATS], PowerSchool, or an LEA-/charter school-approved third-party application).

## **D. Procedures for Determining Participation in the Standard Test Administration or Testing with Accommodations**

The following procedures are to be used when determining whether ELs will participate in the general state tests with or without accommodations.

### **Notification of Testing**

According to SBE policy TEST-001, “LEAs shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide information to students and parents or guardians advising them of the district-wide and state-mandated tests that students will be required to take during the school year. In addition, LEAs shall provide information to the students and parents or guardians to advise them of the dates the tests will be administered and how the results from the tests will be used and the consequences thereof. Also, information provided to parents or guardians shall include whether the SBE or local board of education requires the test(s). LEAs shall report scores resulting from the administration of districtwide and state-mandated tests to students and parents or guardians along with available score interpretation information within thirty (30) days from the generation of the score at the LEA level or from the receipt of the score and interpretive documentation from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).”

### **General Local Procedures**

Decisions should be made by the school EL team/committee, and not the individual ESL teacher, to ensure appropriate testing decisions are made for students identified as ELs. The team/committee should meet annually and may consist of the school principal, ESL teacher, regular education teacher, counselor, and parent/guardian. The parent/guardian or teacher may request a meeting of the team/committee if changes need to be made to the student’s accommodations.

Testing decisions for the use of accommodations must be made on a case-by-case basis for the individual student. Addressing one state test at a time enables the team/committee to focus on individual student needs for each test. Parents/guardians who cannot attend this meeting must be notified of the testing accommodations.

All valid test scores will remain in the student’s permanent record and will be used for student placement decisions into language-instruction educational programs designed for ELs and for accountability purposes. Invalid test scores are not to be included in the student’s permanent record or be used for placement decisions or accountability purposes.

In the event the team/committee responsible for making decisions about assessment accommodations encounters procedures not specified in this document, the team/committee is to contact the LEA/charter school test coordinator and the EL coordinator for clarification before documenting a final decision. The LEA/charter school test coordinator and EL coordinator can provide the team/committee with information regarding the potential effect of the decision in regard to test validity and test security (e.g., test scheduling) in addition to state and federal mandates.

Note: The SBE determines standards for all North Carolina tests. Individuals responsible for making decisions about testing accommodations for ELs are not permitted to revise the standards established by the SBE in order to meet the unique needs of a student.

## **Accessibility Supports**

North Carolina's Accessibility Framework consists of some accessibility supports that are available to students in instructional and testing situations. In order to be used during an assessment, students must have experience using the accessibility supports regularly in classroom instruction and with similar classroom assessments. Accessibility supports must not be introduced for the first time during state assessments. See *Section E* of this guide for more information on the accessibility supports approved by the North Carolina Testing Program for use by all students.

## **Instructional Accommodations**

This document focuses on the North Carolina Testing Program and the testing accommodations that may be considered in determining how a student will equitably participate in the state tests. It is important, however, to also recognize instructional accommodations. EL teams/committees should always give their initial consideration to accommodations used during instruction and classroom assessments. These accommodations should enable the student to access information during instruction and generally are not held to the same restrictions as testing accommodations. A wide array of accommodations may be used during instruction. If there are questions regarding instructional accommodations, the student's ESL teachers and/or school system EL staff may be of assistance. After the EL team/committee determines the accommodations needed during instruction and classroom assessments, it should then address state testing. The accommodations for state tests are typically a subset of those needed during instruction.

## **North Carolina Testing Program**

Each school year, the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program publishes information regarding the current North Carolina Testing Program. Updated North Carolina Testing Program publications can be obtained by visiting the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program website at:  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/testing/>.

## **Student Participation in the North Carolina Testing Program**

Although the ACCESS for ELLs is part of the North Carolina Testing Program, accommodations for this test that are designed for ELs are described in the *WIDA Access for ELLs North Carolina Policy and Procedures Guidance for Annual Testing*.

Table 4 provides a list of the state-mandated tests (by grade) administered statewide in the North Carolina Testing Program for the 2019–20 school year. In addition, field tests/special studies may be administered annually in selected subjects and grades.

The team/committee responsible for making decisions about assessment accommodations must be informed about the state testing requirements at each grade level and understand the guidelines governing the provision and use of the testing accommodations.



**Table 4. State-Mandated Tests in the North Carolina Testing Program<sup>1</sup>**

Grades K–2

1. *ACCESS for ELLs (K)*
2. *ACCESS for ELLs (1–2)*

Grade 3

1. Beginning-of-Grade 3 (BOG 3) Reading Test
2. North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) Assessment of Reading
3. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
4. *ACCESS for ELLs*

Grade 4

1. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Reading
2. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
3. NAEP
4. *ACCESS for ELLs*

Grade 5

1. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Reading
2. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
3. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Science
4. *ACCESS for ELLs*

Grade 6

1. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Reading
2. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
3. *ACCESS for ELLs*
4. North Carolina Final Exams (NCFEs)<sup>2</sup>

Grade 7

1. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Reading
2. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
3. *ACCESS for ELLs*
4. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Federal and state policies require all eligible students, including students identified as ELs and students with disabilities, be included in the statewide testing program in one of the following categories: standard test administration, standard test administration with accommodations, or state-designated alternate assessment with or without accommodations.

<sup>2</sup> NCFEs are administered at the end of the course (regardless of the grade level in which the course is offered). State Board policy [TEST-016](#) states that “all eligible public school students shall participate in the administration of the assessments (standard administrations with or without accommodations).”

### Grade 8

1. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Reading
2. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Mathematics
3. North Carolina EOG Assessment of Science
4. NAEP
5. *ACCESS for ELLs*
6. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

### Grade 9

1. North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments<sup>3</sup>
2. *ACCESS for ELLs*
3. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

### Grade 10

1. North Carolina EOC Assessments<sup>3</sup>
2. PreACT<sup>®4</sup>
3. *ACCESS for ELLs*
4. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

### Grade 11

1. North Carolina EOC Assessments<sup>3</sup>
2. ACT<sup>®5</sup>
3. *ACCESS for ELLs*
4. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

### Grade 12

1. North Carolina EOC Assessments<sup>3</sup>
2. ACT WorkKeys<sup>®4</sup>
3. NAEP
4. *ACCESS for ELLs*
5. NCFEs<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>NCFEs are administered at the end of the course (regardless of the grade level in which the course is offered). State Board policy [TEST-016](#) states that “all eligible public school students shall participate in the administration of the assessments (standard administrations with or without accommodations).”

<sup>3</sup>North Carolina EOC assessments are administered at the end of the course for English II, NC Math 1, NC Math 3, and Biology. SBE policy [TEST-003](#) specifies that “students who are enrolled for credit in courses in which EOC assessments are required shall take the appropriate EOC assessment at the completion of the course.”

<sup>4</sup>For more information on PreACT and ACT WorkKeys accommodations, refer to the appropriate administration manual.

<sup>5</sup>Two accommodations options are available for the ACT: (1) ACT-Approved accommodations and (2) Non-College Reportable accommodations. ACT-Approved accommodations are available based upon a documented need in an EL Plan. Scores from ACT-Approved accommodations administrations are fully reportable for colleges, scholarships, and other entities. Non-College Reportable accommodations do not require ACT approval and may be utilized during the ACT assessment.

## Special Studies/Field Tests

ELs who are administered a North Carolina-developed field test or special study are to participate (under standard conditions or with accommodations) in the same manner as the current EL Plan supports their participation in the operational version of the test (e.g., a sixth-grade student who is to receive approved accommodations for the operational EOG mathematics test receives the same accommodations for an EOG mathematics field test/special study). Contact the LEA/charter school test coordinator for the annually updated list of the North Carolina-developed field tests/special studies.

## Testing under Standard Conditions

When appropriate, ELs should be administered state tests under standard conditions (i.e., without testing accommodations).

## Procedures for Discussing Testing with Accommodations

The accommodations to be used during regular classroom instruction and assessments are to be discussed, finalized, and substantiated in the current EL Plan before the discussion and substantiation of accommodations to be used during a state-mandated test administration.

## Guiding Principles for Accommodations

The following “Guiding Principles” for accommodations used during state-mandated administrations is located in *Making Assessment Accommodations: A Toolkit for Educators (2000)*, published by the Council for Exceptional Children. EL teams/committees may want to consider these guidelines in making decisions for testing accommodations for EL students.

- a) **“Do not assume that all English Learners need testing accommodations.”** Accommodations provided and used in state assessments should be used routinely in instruction and similar classroom assessments.
- b) **“Base accommodations on student need.”** Accommodations must be based on the particular needs of the individual student. Do not base such decisions on educational program placement. While students with the same abilities may tend to need the same or similar kinds of accommodations, this is not a sound basis for making decisions.
- c) **“Be respectful of the student’s cultural and ethnic background.”** When a testing accommodation is being discussed, make sure the student and the student’s family are comfortable with it. Additionally, the student’s ability to access the test from a language perspective must be taken into consideration when making testing decisions.
- d) **“Integrate assessment accommodations into classroom instruction.”** Decisions regarding testing accommodations must be based on those accommodations the student requires to access instruction and similar classroom assessments. Thus, the instructional accommodations decision comes before the testing accommodations decision.
- e) **“Know which accommodations are approved for each assessment.”** Refer to the tables in each administration guide for a list of approved testing accommodations. The

lists are specific for each test.

- f) **“Plan early for accommodations.”** The need for accommodations should become evident during classroom instruction, the discussion concerning testing accommodations should take place well before the administrations of any assessments for which they are needed.
- g) **“Include students in decision making.”** Whenever possible, the student should be included in deciding whether a testing accommodation is appropriate. The student can often express whether he/she feels there is a need for the accommodation and whether he/she is willing to use it. It is unlikely the student will use the accommodation if he/she is uncomfortable with it.
- h) **“Understand the purpose of the assessment.”** It is important to know which construct is being tested so the chosen accommodations yield valid results. For instance, use of the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation is a valid option for the North Carolina EOG Assessment in Mathematics, but it would invalidate the results from the North Carolina EOG Assessment in Reading.
- i) **“Request only those accommodations that are truly needed.”** The decision regarding testing accommodations must be based on the individual needs of the student. If the student does not need an accommodation in order to access the test, use of it may overwhelm or distract the student. For instance, if a student is provided the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation but does not need it in order to access the test, the distraction of someone reading the test may outweigh any benefits.
- j) **“Determine if the selected accommodation requires another accommodation.”** There are some accommodations, such as the *Test Read Aloud (in English)*, that require the student to also receive a special test environment accommodation.
- k) **“Provide practice opportunities for the student.”** All students should have opportunities to practice sample questions in the same format that they will experience on the test. Practice opportunities may demonstrate that a specific testing accommodation is unnecessary for a student.
- l) **“Remember that accommodations in test-taking won’t necessarily eliminate frustration for the student.”** Testing accommodations are not meant to provide a student with an unfair advantage, but rather an opportunity to demonstrate what he/she can do. Therefore, the use of testing accommodations does not guarantee a proficient score for the student or a reduction in test anxiety or other emotions caused by the testing situation.

## **Accommodations for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) at Grades 4, 8, and 12**

*Background Information about the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).* The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in various subject areas. The

NAEP has two types of assessments, main and long-term trend. Main assessments are conducted in a range of subjects with fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders across the country. Assessments are given most frequently in mathematics, reading, science, and writing. Other subjects, such as the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history, are assessed periodically.

Long-term trend (LTT) assessments measure student performance in reading and mathematics, using some questions repeatedly to ensure comparability across the years. The LTT assessments allow the performance of today's students to be compared with those from more than 40 years ago and inform the development of new assessment instruments that reflect current educational content and assessment methodology. The LTT assessments are administered every four years.

Since NAEP assessments are administered uniformly using the same sets of test questions across the nation, NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and select urban districts. The assessments stay essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. This uniformity permits the NAEP to provide a clear picture of student academic progress over time.

For each main NAEP administration, a sample of students is drawn from both public and nonpublic schools at grades 4, 8, and 12. (*ESSA* requires reading and mathematics assessments at grade 12 on a nationally representative basis at a minimum of every four years.) For each LTT assessment, a sample of students at ages 9, 13, and 17 is drawn from both public and nonpublic schools. All sampling for the NAEP assessments is conducted at the national level. The sample of schools and students is chosen in a two-stage sampling process. First, the sample of schools is selected by probability sampling methods. Then, within the participating schools, random samples of students are chosen.

The NAEP test results include data on subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., all fourth-graders) and groups within those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). The NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools, although states can report NAEP results for selected, large urban districts. NAEP results are based on representative samples of students at grades 4, 8, and 12 for the main assessments or samples of students at ages 9, 13, or 17 years for the LTT assessments. These grades and ages were selected because they represent critical junctures in academic achievement.

To ensure the data have integrity and are complete, every effort must be made to include each selected student in the NAEP assessments. The NCDPI recommends EL teams document the accommodation(s) to be used during the administration of the NAEP in the event the student is part of the NAEP sample. Participation is required for students who can access the assessment; there are no consequences for students or schools based on student performance. Planning ahead allows ELs to use accommodations approved by the test publisher during the administration of a NAEP test. Contact the school NAEP coordinator for the most recent list of approved accommodations designated by NAEP.

If the team determines after consulting with the school testing coordinator and the EL team that a student cannot access the NAEP, a student may be excluded from participating in the

administration of the NAEP. Before excluding a student based on an accommodation need, the school test coordinator is to send an e-mail to the North Carolina NAEP State Coordinator at [Andrea.Faulkner@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:Andrea.Faulkner@dpi.nc.gov). The e-mail should include the school name and contact information along with a summary of the student's accommodation needs. Confidential student-identifying information should not be included in the e-mail. The NAEP State Coordinator will review the e-mail and respond with a follow-up e-mail or phone call to include comprehensive guidance.

## Accommodations for North Carolina-Developed Tests

Each member of the school-based EL team/committee is to have access to the accommodation information located in *Section F: Testing Accommodations for English Learners: Descriptions and Procedures* at the team meeting so specific procedures for a test administration can be discussed, determined, and documented. The team/committee is to discuss specific procedures located in *Section F* before any final decision so as to avoid anomalies and misadministrations. The team/committee has the responsibility of specifying, to the greatest degree possible, how the accommodation is to be provided during testing. For example, the team/committee is to address (a) the number of sessions needed when using the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation, (b) the approximate amount of extra time to be given when providing the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation, and (c) how the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation will be provided for tests that do not measure reading comprehension. *Section F* should guide the LEA/charter school test coordinator and the test administrator in providing accommodations to students during the actual test administration.

The following accommodations approved for use by the NCDPI Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program will result in valid test scores for North Carolina-developed tests:

- *Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator*
- *Multiple Testing Sessions*
- *Scheduled Extended Time*
- *Testing in a Separate Room*
- *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self*
- *Test Read Aloud (in English)* (Use of this accommodation during the administration of a state test that measures reading comprehension invalidates the results from the test.)

Note: Tests in the North Carolina Testing Program that measure reading comprehension include the (a) Beginning-of-Grade 3 Reading Test; (b) the grades 3–8 EOG Reading Tests; (c) English II EOC test; and (d) the English I, English III, and English IV NCFEs.

## Documentation of Accommodations

If the EL team/committee determines testing with accommodations is appropriate, documentation must substantiate this in the student's current EL Plan. Moreover, the documented accommodations must be used routinely during (a) classroom instruction and (b) similar classroom assessments that measure the same construct. If a student does not have at least thirty (30) school days before the test date to use the accommodation, then its use cannot be considered "used routinely" during instruction or similar classroom

assessments.

LEAs/charter schools must ensure the language used on testing accommodation documentation (e.g., EL Plans) aligns with state-approved language. The state-approved language must be used to document both the testing accommodations and the guidelines for providing them. Because some accommodations require details as to how the accommodation must be provided (e.g., the amount of *Scheduled Extended Time*), it is also essential that accommodations documentation include designated areas to record the required details of how to provide these accommodations.

The NCDPI has provided optional Testing Accommodations Charts to assist in maintaining alignment and consistency in accommodations documentation. For example, an EL team/committee could complete the EL Testing Accommodations Chart and include it in the EL Plan as substantiation for testing accommodations. These charts are available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/accom>.

## **Precedence for Testing Accommodations Documentation**

To meet the needs of the whole child and ensure a complete record of testing accommodations that addresses all of a student's needs, the NCDPI has established the following order of precedence for testing-accommodations documentation:

1. IEP
2. Section 504 Plan
3. EL Plan
4. Transitory Impairment documentation

For example, for a student with an IEP who is also identified as an EL, all testing accommodations must be documented in the student's IEP (including those related to the student's English learning needs). Using the IEP to document all of the student's testing accommodations does not diminish the importance of the accommodations based on the student's various identifications, but rather encourages child-centered, results-oriented decision making. In order to implement the documentation in the best interest of the student, the appropriate team members must be present at meetings where accommodations decisions are made.

## **Students with Disabilities Also Identified as English Learners**

Students with disabilities who are also identified as ELs are eligible for all of the state-approved testing accommodations for students with disabilities. These students are also eligible for the state-approved testing accommodations for ELs if they meet specific criteria as outlined in SBE policy TEST-011. All of the EL testing accommodations overlap with those approved for students with disabilities, with the exception of the *Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator* accommodation.

For a student with a disability who is also identified as an EL, the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan must document all testing accommodations, including those related to the student's limited English proficiency. The testing accommodations related to the English proficiency needs of

these students should also be indicated in their EL Plan along with the other pertinent information required within the plan.

Additional information regarding the testing of students with disabilities who are also identified as ELs can be found in the *Testing Students with Disabilities* document at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/tswd/>.

## Changes in Accommodations before Testing

In order for a student identified as an EL to be eligible to receive a testing accommodation, it must be documented in the student's EL Plan, and the accommodation must be used routinely during instruction and similar classroom assessments. Instructional accommodations can and should be used/changed as appropriate in order to meet the needs of the student; however, **it is a best practice for a student to have at least thirty (30) school days before the test date to use the accommodation.** This best practice ensures the student has experience using the accommodations during instruction and similar classroom assessments before testing. The use of testing accommodations that have not been used routinely during instruction or similar classroom assessments may result in a misadministration and invalid test scores.

## More Than One Accommodation

A student may have approval for more than one testing accommodation because of his or her individual needs.

## Notifying Students about Testing Accommodations

Notifying students before the actual test administration date about the accommodations they will be provided allows students to know what to expect in advance of testing. For example, if a student will be provided the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation during the administration of a mathematics test, the EL team/committee may have agreed and documented that the test administrator is only to read aloud upon student request. On the other hand, the team/committee may have specified that the test administrator is to read all words aloud to the student. Knowing such details beforehand assists the student in preparing for the test administration.

Notifying the student ahead of time gives school personnel the opportunity to address any student concerns before the actual test administration date. For example, when the student is notified about the accommodation before the test date, the student may state that he or she does not want to use the accommodation documented on the EL Plan. This prior knowledge allows the school time to work with the student, parent/guardian, and the EL team/committee to resolve the issue beforehand.

Note: Accommodations documented on the EL Plan must be provided during the test administration regardless of whether a student wants to use them.



## Procedures to Follow When a Student Declines the Use of a Testing Accommodation

Once the EL team/committee determines which accommodation(s) the student will be provided during the test administration, the procedures to be followed in the event the student declines to use the accommodation(s) during the actual test administration must be discussed. This discussion must be documented in the current EL Plan. Every effort must be made to ensure EL Plan requirements are followed, including the use of accommodation(s) that are documented in the current EL Plan.

- **Step 1.** At the annual review of the EL Plan, the EL team/committee determines and documents the testing accommodations for which a student demonstrates need. Before the test administration date, the student will be notified of which accommodation(s) he or she will be provided during the actual test administration. Documentation of notification should be maintained at the school. The student will also be reminded of the accommodation(s) on the day of testing before the actual test administration. (The team/committee must discuss the procedures to be followed in the event the student declines the use of the accommodation(s) during the actual test administration.) Steps 2–5 below may be unnecessary during the actual test administration if the student uses the documented accommodation(s).
- **Step 2.** On the day of the test administration, it is the school’s responsibility to ensure all documented accommodations are provided to a student. If the student declines the use of an accommodation, the student’s decision is discussed thoroughly with the student to ensure he or she understands the reasons for the accommodation(s) and the potential consequences of not using them. This can be handled by the test administrator, principal, or principal’s designee. If the student agrees to use the accommodation(s), the testing session continues.
- **Step 3.** If the student continues to decline the use of the accommodation(s), the test is administered without the accommodation(s). The incident must be reported immediately to the school test coordinator to allow any needed changes to the student’s testing time and location. Documentation is made on the state accommodations monitoring form (i.e., *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing*) indicating the student did not use the accommodation(s). The school test coordinator will notify the EL contact and the LEA test coordinator at the conclusion of testing.
- **Step 4.** Immediately upon completion of testing, on the same day, the parent/guardian is notified by telephone with a follow-up in writing that the accommodation was provided/attempted at the start of the test administration, but the student declined the use of the accommodation. Telephone and written follow-up are to be completed by the student’s EL contact, who manages the development of the EL Plan.
- **Step 5.** If the parent/guardian wishes to have the student retested, then this must be documented in writing with the parent’s/guardian’s signature. This documentation must be completed before the parent/guardian knows the test results. A Report of Testing Irregularity must be completed in the OTISS, and the student must be retested using another secure form of the test.

- **Step 6.** The EL team/committee reconvenes to readdress the recommendations for accommodation(s) and the student’s concerns. The EL team/committee may elect to invite the student to attend the meeting. The *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* form (see Appendix A) completed during the test administration should be reviewed at this meeting to inform testing accommodations decisions.

Note: As mentioned in Step 2, a student may decline the use of an accommodation during a testing session. “Decline” is defined as a student’s refusal to use a documented accommodation. For example, a student who has *Test Read Aloud (in English)* and chooses not to engage in the read aloud function on the computer, would be considered declining a documented accommodation. However, students who do not utilize the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation because they finish within the provided testing time, would not be considered declining since they did not need to utilize the additional time.

## **Procedures to Follow When Required Testing Accommodations Have Not Been Provided**

If a student is not provided a required testing accommodation during a test administration, the result may be a misadministration. When a school does not provide a student with a required testing accommodation, (a) the parent/guardian must be notified immediately and (b) a Report of Testing Irregularity available through the OTISS is to be completed. (c) If the parent/guardian signs a statement waiving the right to have the student retested with the required accommodation, the test results from the administration without the accommodation will be used for state and local accountability purposes and student performance placement. This statement waiving the right to retest must be signed before the parent/guardian is informed of the test results. (d) If the parent/guardian signs a statement indicating that the student must be retested with the required accommodation, the superintendent/LEA/charter school test coordinator declares a misadministration, and the affected student is administered another secure form of the test with the required accommodation. This statement of consent to retest must be signed before the parent/guardian is informed of the test results.

## **Procedures to Follow When Testing Accommodations Are Provided That Are Not Required**

If a student is provided a testing accommodation that is not required based on the student’s EL Plan, the result may be a misadministration. When a student is provided with a testing accommodation that is not required, (a) the parent/guardian must be notified immediately, (b) a Report of Testing Irregularity available through the OTISS is to be completed, and (c) an investigation must be conducted to determine if the provision of the accommodation does in fact result in a misadministration. (d) The superintendent/LEA test coordinator declares a misadministration if necessary, and (e) the affected student is administered another secure form of the test without the provision of the accommodation. If after the investigation, a misadministration is not declared, the test results from the administration with the undocumented accommodation will be used for state and local accountability purposes and student performance placement.

## **Invalid Test Results**

Invalid test results must not be included in the student's permanent record or be used for placement decisions or accountability purposes.

## E. North Carolina Accessibility Framework

North Carolina’s *Accessibility Framework* consists of three tiers of accessibility supports that are available to students in instructional and testing situations. The *Accessibility Framework* includes Universal Design Features (components of the test construct to promote access), Designated Features (available for all students regardless of IEP, 504, or EL status), and Accommodations (available *only* to students with a documented need in an IEP, Section 504 Plan, or EL Plan). Educators and specialized teams should utilize this framework when considering both instructional and testing accessibility supports for all students.

### *Universal Design Features*

Universal design features are available to *all* students for accessing instructional or assessment content. Universal design features are accessibility supports that are either embedded and provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology or are nonembedded and provided at the local level.

North Carolina Universal Design Features
Calculator (assessments requiring calculator use only)
Breaks at predetermined intervals
Scratch paper
Pencils with erasers
Graph paper (mathematics tests)
Tests written using Plain English*

\*Plain English is language selected with an emphasis on clarity, brevity, and avoidance of overly complex vocabulary.

### *Designated Features*

Designated features are those features that are available for use by **any** student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or a team of educators) who is familiar with the student’s individual needs. Embedded designated features are provided digitally through instructional or assessment technology, while nonembedded designated features are provided locally.

Designated features must be assigned to a student by trained educators and/or teams using a consistent process as determined at the local level. The use of any of these designated features can be considered as part of a standard test administration. In order to be used during an assessment, students must have experience using the designated features routinely during classroom instruction and with similar classroom assessments. They must not be introduced for the first time during state assessments.

For students with IEPs, Section 504 Plans, or EL Plans, the IEP team, Section 504 committee, or EL team should make decisions on what designated features need to be provided. All designated features must

be identified in the current IEP, Section 504 Plan, or EL Plan before test day.

*Considerations and Instructions for Designated Features*

Educators must use caution when determining the use of designated features as the use of one or more than one may overwhelm or distract particular students. Educators should also consider the needs of the entire class/group being tested to ensure that designated features used by one student will not interfere with the testing experience of any other student in the room. As noted in each assessment guide, all designated features must be provided at the beginning of testing.

The following designated features are approved by the North Carolina Testing Program for use by *all* students.

Online Administrations	Paper/Pencil Administrations
Highlighter Tool	Highlighters
<p>Color Contrast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tool changes background color to provide higher contrast on a computer screen.</li> <li>• The required Online Assessment Tutorial is used to determine a student’s preferred alternate background color.</li> <li>• Options for color contrast include a background of white, yellow, green, gray, or cream with black font or a black background with white font.</li> <li>• This tool must be preselected in the student interface questions (SIQ) on NCTest in order to be available at the time of testing.</li> </ul>	<p>Color Acetate Overlays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A color acetate overlay can change background color to provide the student with higher contrast.</li> <li>• A student may use only <u>one</u> color overlay for testing.</li> </ul>
<p>Adapted Mouse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before testing, test administrators must ensure that any adapted mouse meets the requirements of the NC Testing Program.</li> </ul>	
Online and Paper/Pencil Administrations	
<p>Noise-cancelling Headphones/Ear Plugs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The headphones/ear plugs reduce unwanted ambient and low frequency sounds.</li> <li>• The headphones must not be connected to any device (e.g., Bluetooth/wireless).</li> </ul>	
<p>Adapted Pencil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• larger diameter</li> <li>• modified special grip for a No. 2 pencil</li> <li>• mechanical No. 2 pencil</li> </ul>	
<p>Reading Tracker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tracking tool guides the student’s eyes while reading text.</li> <li>• The reading tracker must be blank/empty on both sides for test administrations.</li> </ul>	

<b>Online and Paper/Pencil Administrations</b>
<p>Preferential Seating within the Regular Classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preferential seating within the regular classroom (i.e., not in a separate setting) may be used for students for the administration of all tests within the North Carolina Testing Program.</li><li>• Preferential seating may be appropriate for students who have difficulty maintaining attention in a group setting, students who use specialized equipment that may be distracting to others, or students with visual impairments who may need special lighting or a seat closer to the front of the room.</li><li>• Preferential seating must be used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments.</li><li>• All preferential seating must be positioned in such a way that no student is able to see another student's test documents.</li></ul>
<p>Adaptive Seating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adaptive seating must be consistent with the seating used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments.</li><li>• Adaptive seating may include, but is not limited to, round tables, standing desks, stability/yoga balls, working on the floor with a clipboard, sitting on a couch, or sitting on a floor mat at a table.</li><li>• All adaptive seating must be positioned in such a way that no student is able to see another student's test documents.</li><li>• All rooms with adaptive seating designated for testing (including those to which students may be relocated) <i>must</i> be approved by the RAC before testing can occur.</li></ul>
<p>Read Aloud Test Directions (in English)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Test administrators can read test directions aloud to students as many times as necessary for students to understand the directions.</li><li>• Test administrators must not omit, revise, interpret, explain, or paraphrase the test directions.</li><li>• Test directions must be read aloud to students <u>as written</u> in the assessment guides.</li></ul>
<p>Redirection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Test administrators may use proximal clues used routinely in classroom instruction, such as a light tap or gesture, to help maintain student engagement and/or redirect a student's attention to the test.</li><li>• Test administrators must be sure that redirection is not used in such a way to reflect whether a student has provided correct or incorrect responses to test items.</li><li>• Redirection must be provided in a consistent manner and must not interfere with the standardization of the test administration.</li></ul>

### Accommodations

Accommodations are available in North Carolina for students with a current IEP, Section 504 Plan, or for students with a current EL Plan. Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that ensure equitable access to instructional and assessment content for students who need them. When accommodations are provided in accordance with the appropriate procedures and a proper test administration, results from the tests are deemed valid.

Specific information about approved accommodations for use on state-mandated tests for ELs can be found in *Section F*.

### Accessibility Framework Decision-Making Support

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) developed the following *Five-step Decision-making Process for Administering Accessibility Supports* to assist in making instructional and testing decisions for students with and without a documented disability. Educators may utilize this process to determine which accessibility supports, if any, are needed by students to maximize benefits from instructional and assessment scenarios.



Shyyan, V., Thurlow, M., Chistensen, L., Lazarus, S., Paul, J., and Touchette, B. (2016). *CCSSO accessibility manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate use of accessibility supports for instruction and assessment of all students*. Washington, DC: CCSSO.

## **F. Testing Accommodations for English Learners: Descriptions and Procedures**

This section provides information about the approved accommodations for use on state-mandated tests in the North Carolina Testing Program. Accommodations designated for state-mandated tests should be consistent with accommodations used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments. It is vital for ELs to receive accommodations on state-mandated tests that allow them to demonstrate their true abilities; however, students must not receive unnecessary, inappropriate, or unfamiliar accommodations.

Accommodations must be assigned selectively and thoughtfully, according to individual student needs and EL team/committee input. The team/committee of school-based individuals who make testing accommodations decisions for ELs should take the following specific student background characteristics into consideration when determining accommodations:

- the student's current level of English proficiency
- the level of previous schooling in the student's home language
- the amount of schooling and instruction the student has received in U.S. schools

Accommodations decision-making teams/committees for individual students are to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the test score.

Accommodations that alter the construct of the test, interfere with the measurement of the construct, or provide inappropriate assistance to the student within the context of the test also invalidate the results of the test. Moreover, provision of accommodations for North Carolina tests that are not specified in this publication may invalidate the results of a given test.

North Carolina testing personnel must refer to the *WIDA<sup>®</sup> ACCESS for ELLs North Carolina Policy and Procedures Guidance for Annual Testing* for information regarding specific policy and guidance on the state-approved test administration procedures and accommodations for the WIDA Screener and the ACCESS for ELLs assessments.



## Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator

Because of their level of language proficiency, some ELs use a word-to-word English/native language dictionary or a word-to-word English/native language electronic translator during classroom instruction and tests. This accommodation is allowed for all North Carolina-developed tests. **It is not approved for the state-mandated WIDA Screener/ACCESS for ELLs English proficiency tests.**

Note: Qualified ELs may apply for the use of an ACT-approved word-to-word bilingual glossary (containing no word definitions). Qualifying students who receive this accommodation will earn college-reportable ACT scores.

### Description

Word-to-word English/native language dictionaries or English/native language electronic translators may be used to assist ELs in translating an unknown word. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the current EL Plan and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during instruction and similar classroom assessments.

An English/native language dictionary or an English/native language electronic translator may be used during state-mandated testing, provided the following requirements have been met:

1. The dictionary or translator is a **word-to-word** or **word-to-phrase** English/native language dictionary or electronic translator that **does not** contain definitions. Word-to-phrase means that the English word may translate into a group of words in the student's native language.
2. The dictionary may not contain diagrams, written notes, formulas, etc.
3. The dictionary must be a published document, not a teacher-made or student-made dictionary.
4. The dictionary or electronic translator must be checked and approved by designated personnel in the school system before testing to ensure that requirements 1–3 are met.  
Note: Any dictionary or translator that is questionable can be submitted to the NCDPI through the RAC for clearance before use in the school or district. The NCDPI will review any materials a LEA or charter school submits. **Use of a dictionary or electronic translator that is not approved is a testing irregularity and may result in a misadministration.**
5. The checked and approved dictionary or electronic translator must be provided to students during the time of state testing.

The NCDPI does not compile a recommended list of dictionaries/electronic translators to be used for this testing accommodation.

It is recommended that students be able to read and write in their native language in order to have access to this accommodation.

## **Considerations and Instructions**

This accommodation may be appropriate for students at any level of English reading proficiency, although the student must use the accommodation on a regular basis and have been taught how to use the dictionary to clarify the meaning of key words, which requires practice and teacher support.

Note: Because of its limited database, the electronic translator may give inappropriate language-to-language translations.

As the purpose of providing a word-to-word English/native language dictionary/electronic translator is to decrease the language barrier, it is inappropriate to also provide a regular English dictionary, which includes definitions and may provide students with an advantage. Moreover, English dictionaries do not provide translations. Use of one during state-mandated testing results in a misadministration.

## Multiple Testing Sessions

**The *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation is approved for all North Carolina-developed tests. The use of testing accommodations should be consistent with those accommodations used routinely during instruction and classroom tests.**

This accommodation is recommended for ELs who have difficulty concentrating for long periods of time because of their level of English language proficiency, have anxiety about testing in English, or rely heavily on the *Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator* accommodation.

### Description

The *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation allows the total test administration time to be divided into minisessions as determined by the individual needs of the student. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the current EL Plan, and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during instruction and similar classroom assessments.

### Consideration and Instructions

#### Scheduling for Only One Test Administration

For students who are required to take only one assessment (e.g., Biology EOC) during a designated testing window, the multiple testing sessions must begin on the same day as the general test administration but may continue beyond the school's schedule for the regular test administration if the EL Plan designates that sessions are to stretch across multiple days.

#### Scheduling for More Than One Test Administration

For students who are required to take more than one assessment (e.g., EOG reading and mathematics) during a designated testing window, the multiple testing sessions for the first assessment must begin on the same day as the general assessment but may continue beyond the school's schedule for the regular test administration if the EL Plan designates the sessions are to stretch across multiple days. If the student requires additional days to finish the first assessment, the student can continue to work on consecutive school days until the assessment is completed. Once the assessment is completed, the multiple testing sessions can begin for the next assessment. For example, if the student begins mathematics on Day 1 and needs additional days to complete the test, he/she can continue working on the mathematics test on Day 2. If the student completes the mathematics test on Day 2, the student can begin the reading test on Day 3.

Please note that every effort must be made to complete the test administration as close to the school's test schedule as possible in order to maintain test security. Additionally, students must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time.

#### End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests

When scheduling multiple testing sessions for the EOG tests, the school and/or LEA should consider scheduling the mathematics test first, followed by the reading test,

because most students who use the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation over multiple days use it on tests that measure reading comprehension. In this way, those who do not need additional days to complete the mathematics test can begin the reading test on the same day as the general test administration.

#### Specific Procedures during the Test Administration and the Role of EL Team/Committee

There are several ways in which this accommodation may be provided. The EL team/committee makes the determination and documents the specifics in the EL Plan before the test administration. The decision must be based on the individual needs of the student. For example, it may be appropriate for the student

1. to begin the test on the same day as the general administration and complete the test on a consecutive school day(s);
2. to begin the test on the same day as the general administration and complete the test on a makeup day;
3. to test for a specified time period (e.g., 15 minutes), then take a break (e.g., five minutes), and then test again for a specified time period, etc.;
4. to complete a predetermined number of test items (e.g., 10 items), then take a break (e.g., three minutes), and then complete the next predetermined set of test items, etc.; and/or
5. to use the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation so as not to disturb other students.

Information from the student's EL Plan regarding specific procedures for the provision of the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation must be available for the test administrator on the day of testing.

When reading the instructions for the regular test administration from the assessment guide, the test administrator must omit any information regarding time limits. Otherwise, the standard instructions located in the guide must be followed.

If the student requires additional time beyond the total time designated in the assessment guide, the EL team/committee should consider the provision of the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation. If the student is not also provided the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation, the student is expected to complete the test within the total test administration time designated in the assessment guide. For the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation, this total test administration time is divided into minisessions based on the decision and documentation of the EL team/committee.

Students with the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation whose testing breaks differ from those designated in the assessment guide must also be provided the *Testing in a Separate Room* (one-on-one or small group) accommodation. Consideration must be taken so that only

students with the same *Multiple Testing Sessions* comprise the small groups using *Testing in a Separate Room* (small group) accommodation.

### Maintaining Test Security During Breaks

In cases in which a student takes an extended break from testing on the same day, (e.g., lunch or five-minute breaks between scheduled minisessions) and does not have the opportunity to communicate with others or to access any electronic devices (e.g., computers, cell phones), the student can go back to previously attempted questions following the breaks.

However, if a student has the opportunity to communicate with others or to access any electronic devices during breaks on the same day **or** continues the test on a subsequent day, then the student cannot go back to previously attempted questions following the breaks. For extended breaks, the test administrator must

- alert students when they have five minutes remaining before the break;
- paper clip students' test books so they cannot return to previously attempted questions (Pages that contain reading selections students will need access to must not be paper clipped; therefore, students must complete the reading selection they are working on and the selection's questions before the break or going to lunch.);
- monitor online students carefully to ensure they do not return to previous items (For online administrations, students will have access to previously completed items when they return from their break.); and
- inform students of this policy and instruct students that they must not discuss specific test questions or information contained within the test with others after they leave the room for breaks/lunch.

For the EOG and EOC mathematics tests, students may not go back and work on calculator inactive items if they received their calculator and were working on the calculator active items at the time of the break/lunch. Students may only check items that were already completed in the calculator active portion of the test.

### North Carolina Online Tests

Students who will be provided the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation during an online test administration must have this option enabled through the SIQ, which must be reviewed and possibly edited in NC Education before the day of the test.

During all breaks, the PAUSE button must be clicked to prevent the online test items from being visible on the computer monitor. Each time the PAUSE button is clicked, the student has sixty (60) minutes to continue the assessment. If the break is longer than sixty (60) minutes, or if the student has completed testing for the day, the test administrator must close NCTest by clicking the EXIT button on the Review or Pause page. The student's responses to test items will be saved. The test administrator must log back into NCTest and launch the test again to allow the student to continue working on the assessment during the next scheduled test session.

On subsequent test days, the test administrator should navigate to where the student stopped on the previous test day. The test administrator will need to closely monitor to make sure the

student does not go back to a previous day's items. The student must also be given ample warning that testing time is coming to a close on each testing session so he/she may complete any items "flagged" before the end of testing for that day. The student must be informed of these policies before the first day of testing.

## Questions for the EL Team/Committee

The EL team/committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation is appropriate for the student:

1. Does the student typically require extra time over several days to complete classroom assignments and similar classroom assessments?
2. Does the student need additional time to complete the test in addition to taking more frequent breaks or having the test given over multiple days? If so, the EL team/committee should discuss whether *Scheduled Extended Time* should also be documented as an appropriate accommodation.
3. Can the student finish the test within the given time constraints but with more frequent breaks or over multiple days? If so, *Scheduled Extended Time* should **not** be documented as an appropriate accommodation.
4. Does the student routinely use the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation during regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments?
5. Is the student using another accommodation during the administration of the state test that may require the provision of the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation?
6. Should the student be provided the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation?
7. Has there been discussion as to how the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation will be provided to the student during the administration of the state test?

## Scheduled Extended Time

**The *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation is approved for all North Carolina-developed tests. The use of testing accommodations should be consistent with those accommodations used routinely during instruction and classroom tests.**

The North Carolina Testing Program requires all students be allowed ample time to complete the assessments. If a student typically requires more time than his/her peers during classroom assignments and assessments, the EL team/committee may want to address *Scheduled Extended Time* as a possible testing accommodation.

### Description

This accommodation allows the test to be administered during a scheduled extended period of time beyond the time designated in the assessment guide. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the current EL Plan, and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during instruction and similar classroom assessments.

### Considerations and Instructions

#### Role of the EL Team/Committee

*Scheduled Extended Time* may be an appropriate testing accommodation if the EL team/committee determines that, because of the student's level of language proficiency, the student will need additional time to complete the test beyond the time designated in the assessment guide. The EL team/committee determines how this accommodation will be provided and documents the specifics in the EL Plan before the test administration.

Note: For students requiring the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation, the amount of additional time for each assessment should be specified according to the maximum testing time that is designated in the specific assessment guide.

#### Scheduling

Students who are provided the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation may not begin the test administration before the school's scheduled start of the regular test administration. Students must be allowed as much time as they need to complete the test on the scheduled test day. An estimate of the maximum amount of extended time should be documented, to the extent possible, in the student's current EL Plan. This may be in terms of a multiple of the designated administration time (e.g., 1.5 times the designated administration time) or as a specified amount of time (e.g., one [1] hour beyond the designated administration time). The EL team/committee must review the local policy and document the final decision. Students being provided the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation without the additional accommodation of *Multiple Testing Sessions* should have the ability to complete the test **in one day and are thus limited to one school day.**

Any extension of time shall occur at the end of or immediately following the planned testing session during the scheduled testing day. Special arrangements may be needed to accommodate extensions to the general test administration schedule. For instance, if the student is still testing at his/her regularly scheduled lunchtime, arrangements must be made to ensure the student has

the opportunity to eat lunch. (The student should not be able to communicate with peers during this time.) Also, if the student is still testing shortly before school dismissal time, the test administration must end with enough time for the student to be dismissed in his/her regular manner.

### Procedures during the Actual Test Administration

When reading the instructions for the regular test administration from the assessment guide, the test administrator must omit any information regarding time limits. Otherwise, the standard instructions located in the guide must be followed.

### Breaks

Students with the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation should continue to be provided breaks as designated in the assessment guide. The test administrator must not allow students to talk during any breaks. For online testing, students must click the PAUSE button at the beginning of a break.

Students must be allowed to eat lunch during the school day and to travel home at their regularly scheduled time.

### Maintaining Test Security during Breaks

If a student is still testing at his/her regularly scheduled lunchtime, arrangements must be made to ensure the student has the opportunity to eat lunch.

If the student does not have the opportunity to communicate with others or to access any electronic devices (e.g., computers, cell phones) during lunch, the student can go back to previously attempted questions following the break.

Exception: For all North Carolina mathematics tests, students may not go back and work on calculator inactive items if they were working on the calculator active items at the time of the break/lunch. Students may only check items that were already completed in the calculator active portion of the test.

If a student has the opportunity to communicate with others or to access any electronic devices during lunch, then the student cannot go back to previously attempted questions following the break. For extended breaks, the test administrator must

- alert students when they have five minutes remaining before the break;
- paper clip students' test books so they cannot return to previously attempted questions (Pages that contain reading selections students will need access to must not be paper clipped; therefore, students must complete the reading selection they are working on and the selection's questions before leaving the testing area.);
- monitor online students carefully to ensure they do not return to previous items (Students will have access to previously completed items when they return from their breaks.); and
- inform students of this policy and instruct students that they must not discuss specific test questions or information contained within the test with others after they leave the room.



## Questions for the EL Team/Committee

The EL team/committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation is appropriate for the student.

1. Does the student typically require extra time to complete classroom assignments and similar classroom assessments?
2. Does the student routinely use the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation during regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments?
3. Is the student provided another accommodation during the administration of the state test that may require the provision of the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation?
4. Can the student complete the state test with extended time on one day? If not, the *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation should be discussed.
5. Should the student be provided the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation?
6. Has there been discussion as to how the *Scheduled Extended Time* accommodation will be provided to the student during the administration of the state test?

## **Testing in a Separate Room** *(One-on-One or Small Group Test Administration)*

**The *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation is approved for all North Carolina-developed tests. The use of testing accommodations should be consistent with those accommodations used routinely during instruction and classroom tests.**

Because of their level of language proficiency, some ELs need to use much greater concentration for longer periods of time for testing, or they may need to access other state testing accommodations. This may require testing in a separate setting.

### **Description**

The *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation allows a student to take a test in a separate room in a one-on-one or small group administration. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the current EL Plan, and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during instruction and similar classroom assessments.

### **Considerations and Instructions**

#### Role of the EL Team/Committee and Providing One-on-One or Small Group Test Administration

The EL team/committee must indicate in the current EL Plan whether the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation is to be provided in a one-on-one setting or a small group setting. Specifics regarding the procedure must be documented before the test administration. If the team/committee specifies the test administration is to be one-on-one, the student must receive the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation on a one-on-one basis as part of the regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments. If the team/committee specifies the test administration is to occur in a small group, the team must review the local policy for the definition of a small group. The maximum number of students for a small group test administration is determined at the local level but must be documented in the student's current EL Plan. If the team/committee has specific concerns regarding the number of students in a particular small group test administration, it should document these concerns in the EL Plan.

The EL team/committee must consider whether other accommodations the student will be provided during testing require the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation (e.g., *Test Read Aloud [in English]*, *Multiple Testing Sessions*, *Scheduled Extended Time*). If the other accommodations the student will be provided do require the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation, they too must be documented in the student's EL Plan.

#### Other Environmental Concerns

It may be appropriate for the student to use a study carrel, special furniture, or special lighting during the actual test administration.

#### Scheduling

It is inappropriate to provide certain accommodations to a small group unless all the students in the group are receiving the same accommodations. The principal or his/her designee, usually the school test coordinator, shall assist in locating a separate room for the test administration.

### Procedures in the Assessment Guide

The test must be administered as stated for the regular test administration in the assessment guide unless other accommodations that require modified procedures are provided.

## **Questions for the EL Team/Committee**

The EL team/committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation is appropriate for the student.

1. Does the student typically require a separate room to complete classroom assignments and similar classroom assessments?
2. Is the student being provided another accommodation during the administration of the state test that may require the provision of the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation?
3. Will the student receive this accommodation during the state test administration on an individual basis or in a small group? Has a maximum number or range for the small group been specified in the EL Plan?
4. Does the student require a study carrel, special furniture, or special lighting?

## Student Reads Test Aloud to Self

**The *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation is approved for all North Carolina-developed tests. The use of testing accommodations should be consistent with those accommodations used routinely during instruction and classroom tests.**

This accommodation is recommended for students who, because of their level of language proficiency, need to read printed/computer-based tests and classroom materials aloud to themselves.

### Description

The *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation permits the student to read the test aloud to him/herself during the test administration. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the student's current EL Plan, and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments.

### Considerations and Instructions

**To ensure the validity of the test, students provided the *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation must also be provided the *Testing in a Separate Room (one-on-one)* accommodation. No other students are to be present in the room during the test administration.**

The *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation also applies to students who routinely use a device that allows them to hear themselves read, such as a PVC elbow pipe or other device that directs the sound toward the students' ears. These students may use such a device, but they must follow the same guidelines as other students receiving this accommodation (i.e., *Testing in a Separate Room, one-on-one*).

A test administrator may not (1) correct the student as he/she reads aloud or (2) read all or any part of the test to the student unless the student also has the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation. If the test administrator corrects or reads all or any part of a test that measures reading comprehension to the student, the test results are invalid. North Carolina tests that measure reading comprehension are listed below:

1. BOG 3 Reading Test
2. North Carolina EOG Assessments of Reading (Grades 3–8)
3. North Carolina EOC Assessment of English II
4. NCFEs of English I, English II, and English IV

### Questions for the EL Team/Committee

The EL team/committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation is appropriate for the student.

1. Does the student routinely use the *Student Reads Test Aloud to Self* accommodation during regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments?
2. Will the student use a device (e.g., PVC elbow pipe) while reading the test that allows the student to hear him/herself read?
3. If the student will be provided this accommodation, has the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation been discussed?

## Test Read Aloud (in English)

The *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation is available for specific tests. **Note:** North Carolina does not provide any general assessment or alternate assessment in a language other than English.

**North Carolina Reading Tests** If the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation is provided during the administration of North Carolina tests that measure reading comprehension (i.e., selections/passages, sample questions, test questions, and/or answer choices are read aloud to the student), the test results are invalid. North Carolina tests that measure reading comprehension are listed below:

1. BOG 3 Reading Test
2. North Carolina EOG Assessments of Reading (Grades 3–8)
3. North Carolina EOC Assessment of English II
4. NCFEs of English I, English III, and English IV

**Note:** The EL team/committee must refer to the *Invalid Test Results* subheading in *Section D* of this publication before making the final decision to use accommodations that will invalidate test results.

### Description

The *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation permits the test to be read aloud to a student during the administration of state tests that do not measure reading comprehension. As with all accommodations for North Carolina tests, (1) the use must be documented in the current EL Plan, and (2) the accommodation must be used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments.

**Note:** To ensure the validity of the test, students provided the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation must also be provided the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation (small group or one-on-one), unless the student is testing online and wearing headphones.

### Considerations and Instructions

#### Procedures during the Actual Test Administration and the Role of the EL Team/Committee

The EL team/committee determines if a student needs a test read aloud, and if so, in what manner it will be read aloud. These decisions must be documented in the student's EL Plan.

There are three methods in which a student may have a test read aloud: (1) the test administrator reads the test aloud, (2) a computer reads the test aloud, or (3) a combination of the two methods. The EL team/committee may wish to consider these options when making decisions about what manner tests will be read aloud when using the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation:

- Student is to have every word (including words on maps, tables, graphs, charts, computer screen, etc.) read aloud during the test administration.

- Student is only to have words read aloud upon his or her request.
- Student does not require numbers in mathematics tests to be read aloud.
- Student only requires this accommodation when there is greater content than usual on a test and does not need the accommodation for tests with shorter sentences.

#### Test Read Aloud (in English) with Online Testing

Students provided the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation for online testing can control which portions of the online test are read aloud by clicking a button beside the desired text.

The online audio files for the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation are human vocalizations and not computer-generated modulation. Several different human voices were used to record the audio files, and therefore the human voice and the volume level might differ from item to item within a single test form. If a student is sensitive to either of these conditions, it may be appropriate for a student to have the test administrator read the test aloud or receive a combination of both the computer and the test administrator reading the test aloud.

#### Testing in a Separate Room

Students receiving the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation must also receive the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation, unless the student is testing online and wearing headphones. The EL team/committee must determine if the student will take the test in a separate room in a one-on-one or small group administration.

For paper/pencil test administrations, a testing session comprised of a small group must use one test form (i.e., same form letter and form number) for these accommodations at one test site (i.e., classroom). A different form (i.e., a different letter/form number) must be used for each of these sessions within a school.

For online testing, to utilize the computer to provide the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation, the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* option must be selected in the SIQ. When entered into the accommodations data management system, *Test Read Aloud (in English)* will automatically turn on the option for the computer to read the test aloud in the student's SIQ. If this is an option that is not needed for a student, this functionality can be turned off in the SIQ during the verification process. Note: The computer will generate the same test form for all students who have the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation selected in their SIQ. Specifics regarding the procedure must be documented in the EL Plan before the test administration.

## **Guidelines for Test Administrators Reading the Test Aloud**

Information from the student's EL Plan regarding specific procedures for the provision of the <i>Test Read Aloud (in English)</i> accommodation must be available for the test administrator on the day of testing.
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The test administrator must review the regular test administration procedures in the assessment guide before the test administration day and should omit reading aloud general directions that are not applicable for students provided with this accommodation.

For paper/pencil administrations, the test administrator must have a copy of the test to read the instructions and questions to the student. For online test administrations, the test administrator may either read the instructions and questions to the student from the student's computer screen, or the test administrator can use an extra computer monitor set up as a duplicate of the student's monitor. If an extra computer monitor is used, it must be set as a duplicate of the student's monitor and not as a desktop extension.

When reading the test aloud, the test administrator must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The test administrator may repeat the instructions, sample questions, test questions, and answer choices (for state tests that do not measure reading comprehension) as many times as necessary for the student to understand and respond. At no time may the test administrator paraphrase the test instructions or items because these actions will result in a misadministration.
- If reading the entire test aloud, the test administrator must read one test item and its corresponding answer choices and then allow the student to choose an answer before moving on to the next item.
- The test administrator must read each test item and its answer choices in a consistent manner so as to not provide any hints of the correct answer.
- If reading a test item on request, the test administrator should say the item number before reading the item and its answer choices.

### Frames

When necessary, introductory statements for selections, referred to as frames, are included in test books and online for *some* tests of reading comprehension. A frame is included to provide background information about the selection. An example of a necessary frame is one that cites an historical time period for the setting of a selection or additional relevant information not included in the selection. In the event the test administrator reads aloud frames to students during the administration of North Carolina tests that measure reading comprehension, the test results are invalid because the frames provide some information regarding the selection/passage.

### North Carolina Mathematics Tests

The test administrator is to read aloud fractions, greater- and less-than signs, equal signs, exponents, etc., in the same manner they are read aloud when used routinely during classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments. The test administrator must not read aloud information that will provide the student with the answer. For example, a test question asks: Which digit is in the hundreds place in the number 2,345? The test administrator would read the number aloud as “two—comma—three—four—five” instead of “two thousand three hundred forty-five.”



## Procedures for Using Computers to Read Tests Aloud

### Procedures before an Online Test Administration

To utilize the computer to provide the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation, the option must be selected in the student's SIQ. The accuracy of the SIQ must always be verified using the appropriate documentation before testing.

Also before the testing session begins, the test administrator must set the computer's volume to an appropriate level. The volume cannot be modified through the computer once Chromebooks with the NCTest Chrome App or the NC Test Secure Browser has been launched unless there is a volume control feature on the headphones themselves. Volume controls are available on the NCTest iPad App.

### Procedures during the Online Test Administration

To activate the read aloud option, the student must click an audio button. Audio buttons are located adjacent to every block of text for which there are audio files available. Each audio button activates an audio file for that particular block of text. The files are streaming MP3 audio files delivered from the host server when the student clicks the audio button.

### Scheduling

The *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation, when provided through the online testing platform, increases the stress on bandwidth and network connectivity at both the school and LEA level. Significant use of this option may affect LEAs' and/or schools' network performance. Therefore, it is imperative that caution be used when scheduling students with this accommodation within the window. Additional information about this accommodation, including technical requirements, may be found at <http://center.ncsu.edu/nct>.

## Questions for the EL Team/Committee

The EL team/committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation is appropriate for the student, and if so, what method and specific procedures for its provision will be used:

1. Has there been discussion regarding the method (i.e., test administrator reads the test aloud, a computer reads the test aloud, or a combination of the two methods) in which the student will be provided this accommodation during the administration of state tests that do not measure reading comprehension?
2. Does the student routinely use the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation during regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments?
3. Does the student routinely have information read aloud by the computer during regular classroom instruction and similar classroom assessments?
4. Would the student's functioning reading level affect his or her performance on a state test that does not measure reading comprehension?

5. Has there been discussion regarding the specific manner in which the student will be provided this accommodation during the administration of the state test?
6. When test items are read aloud for classroom assessments, is every item read aloud or only items requested by the student?
7. Would the student be comfortable requesting test items be read aloud?
8. If the student will be provided this accommodation, has the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation been discussed?
9. How does the student feel about being tested in a separate room?
10. If the *Testing in a Separate Room* accommodation will be provided, will the test administration be one-on-one or in a small group?
11. If the student is using this accommodation for online testing, is he/she comfortable with wearing headphones? If not, the student must receive the *Testing in a Separate Room* (one-on-one) accommodation.
12. Should the student be provided the *Scheduled Extended Time* or *Multiple Testing Sessions* accommodation?
13. For online testing, does the test administrator require a special setup of an extra computer monitor or other visual device to read the test aloud to the student?
14. If the EL team/committee is considering the provision of the *Test Read Aloud (in English)* accommodation during the administration of a state test that measures reading comprehension, has there been discussion about the test results not being valid?

## G. Monitoring Accommodations

### Introduction

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) requires North Carolina to submit evidence of a system for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of testing accommodations. This system must include the documentation of testing accommodations required, provided, and used. The monitoring ensures required testing accommodations are provided during test administrations and documents the usage of these accommodations by students during testing.

In October 2009, the USED approved North Carolina's comprehensive plan for monitoring the use of testing accommodations in local school systems. The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services is responsible for conducting all monitoring activities with assistance and participation from the Divisions of Exceptional Children and K–12 Standards, Curriculum and Instruction. North Carolina's Plan for Monitoring State Testing Accommodations is available at the following URL:  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/accom>.

### *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing Form*

In order to meet the accommodations monitoring requirements of the USED, the NCDPI developed the *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* form, available in Appendix A and found online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/accom>. This form must be completed for each student who requires testing accommodations. One form must be completed for each state test for which the student requires testing accommodations, including the regular test administration and any state field tests or special studies.

A portion of the *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* form is completed before testing during the team/committee meeting at which a student's testing accommodations are determined. At this meeting, the testing accommodations documented on the student's EL Plan should be recorded on the form. During the actual test administration, the remainder of the form is completed to document the testing accommodations provided to the student and to record whether and how the student used the accommodations. A copy of the *Review of Accommodations Used During Testing* form is to be filed with the student's accommodations documentation for at least one year to assist the EL team/committee during the next meeting at which accommodations decisions will be made.

### Tracking Required Testing Accommodations and Planning for Test Administrations

In order to electronically track and monitor required testing accommodations, schools must enter testing accommodations data into an accommodations management system (i.e., PowerSchool, ECATS, or an LEA-/charter school-approved third-party application) at the time of the EL team/committee meeting.

The NCDPI will use the submitted data to monitor testing accommodations and provide feedback to LEA/charter schools throughout the school year. In addition, reports available from

these systems may be useful to school and school system test coordinators for local monitoring and for planning and scheduling testing sessions with accommodations.

Reports from the accommodations management systems can be used before testing to verify that the proper testing accommodations have been scheduled for each student. This verification will help ensure the accommodations provided during the test administration mirror what is documented in the student's EL Plan. Once the testing accommodations have been verified, the school test coordinator can use this information to plan small group administrations, if applicable.

## **Documentation of Accommodations Provided**

### Paper/Pencil Tests

After testing, the test administrator or principal's designee is to complete the TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TEST ADMINISTRATOR OR PRINCIPAL'S DESIGNEE AFTER TESTING section of the answer sheet. If a student is provided a testing accommodation during the test administration, the appropriate bubble must be filled. The respondent must code the accommodation(s) provided for each test, as they may be different.

### Online Tests

In NC Education, test administrators must complete the Accoms tab for the appropriate assessment following the online test administration for all students marked in the SIQ as requiring accommodations (i.e., *Multiple Testing Sessions*, *Test Read Aloud [in English]*, and *Other Required Accommodations*).

# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Review of Accommodations Used During Testing

Student Name	
PowerSchool ID	
Case Manager	
Choose one of the following plans (according to order of accommodations documentation).	<input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> Section 504 Plan <input type="checkbox"/> EL Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Transitory Impairment Documentation
Dates of Plan	Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
Test	<input type="checkbox"/> BOG3 <input type="checkbox"/> EOG <input type="checkbox"/> RTA3 <input type="checkbox"/> EOC <input type="checkbox"/> NCFE <input type="checkbox"/> CCRAA <input type="checkbox"/> CTE <input type="checkbox"/> ACCESS for ELLs
Subject/Subtest	

Complete one form per test. Before testing, complete the top of the form and Column 1. During/after testing, complete Column 2. Completed forms should be kept in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) folder and/or Section 504/English Learner (EL)/transitory impairment documentation to be accessible for future reference.

**NOTE:** While the list below includes all state-approved accommodations, some do not apply to students identified solely as ELs. Testing accommodations should be consistent with the accommodations used routinely during classroom instruction and on similar classroom assessments.

Regular Administration       Other Administration

School	
Grade	
Test Date	
Test Administrator	

Column 1: To Be Completed before Testing	Column 2: To Be Completed during/after Testing
Check the required accommodations documented on the student's IEP/Section 504 Plan/EL Plan/Transitory Impairment Documentation.	Was this accommodation <b>provided</b> to the student during testing? Describe the specific details of <b>how</b> this accommodation was provided to the student. Did the student <b>use</b> the accommodation? If yes, <b>how</b> did he/she use it?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Example:</b> <i>Test Read Aloud (In English)</i> Specify: Computer reads test aloud	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Example:</b> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Example:</b> <i>Computer read test aloud while student wore headphones.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Braille Edition Specify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Large Print Edition	
<input type="checkbox"/> One Test Item Per Page Edition	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive Technology Devices Specify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Braille Writer/Slate and Stylus (and Braille Paper)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cranmer Abacus	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dictation to a Scribe	
<input type="checkbox"/> Interpreter/Transliterator Signs/Cues Test	
<input type="checkbox"/> Magnification Devices	
<input type="checkbox"/> Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator ( <b>EL only</b> )	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Marks Answers in Test Book	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Reads Test Aloud to Self	
<input type="checkbox"/> Test Read Aloud (In English) Specify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Testing Sessions Specify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled Extended Time Amount: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Testing in a Separate Room Specify: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Special NCDPI-Approved Accommodation(s) Specify: _____	
Printed name of person completing this portion of the form: _____	Printed name of person completing this portion of the form: _____
Signature of person completing this portion of the form: _____	Signature of person completing this portion of the form: _____
Comments/considerations for next IEP/504/EL/Transitory Impairment team meeting:    	

This form is available in electronic format at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/accom>.

## Appendix B

# Testing Code of Ethics

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### Introduction

In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade-/course-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community leaders and lawmakers* to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

Testing should be conducted in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

#### *Security*

- assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- assuring student confidentiality

#### *Preparation*

- teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- providing an appropriate atmosphere

#### *Administration*

- developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- assuring all students who should be tested are tested
- utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

#### *Scoring, Analysis, and Reporting*

- interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Standardized test scores are only one of the many indicators of how well the student is achieving. Such information should be used in conjunction with all other available information known about a student to assist in improving student learning. The administration of tests required by applicable statutes and the use of student data for personnel/program decisions shall comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics* (State Board of Education policy TEST-010), which is printed on the following pages.

## Testing Code of Ethics

- (a) This Rule sets out the administrative testing procedures and testing code of ethics and shall apply to all public school employees, including charter school and regional school employees, who are involved in the state testing program.
- (b) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall develop local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher.
- (c) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall instruct personnel who are responsible for the testing program in testing administration procedures. This instruction shall include test administrations that require testing accommodations and shall emphasize the need to follow the directions outlined by the test publisher.
- (d) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall designate the personnel who are authorized to have access to secure test materials. "Access" to test materials by school personnel means handling the materials but does not include reviewing tests or analyzing test items.
  - (1) Persons who have access to secure test materials shall not use those materials for personal gain.
  - (2) No person may copy, reproduce, or paraphrase in any manner or for any reason the test materials without the express written consent of the test publisher.
- (e) The principal shall ensure test security within the school building.
  - (1) The principal shall store test materials in a secure, locked facility. The principal shall allow test materials to be distributed immediately before the test administration.
- (f) Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from required security procedures shall be reported immediately to the principal, school test coordinator, school system (LEA) test coordinator, superintendent/charter school director, and regional accountability coordinator.
- (g) Preparation for testing.
  - (1) The superintendent/charter school director shall ensure that school system (LEA) test coordinators:
    - (A) secure necessary materials;
    - (B) plan and implement training for school test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors;
    - (C) ensure each school test coordinator and test administrator is trained before each test administration on the policies and procedures for conducting a proper test administration and for processing and returning test materials; and
    - (D) in conjunction with program administrators, ensure the need for test accommodations is documented and that accommodations are limited to the specific need.
  - (2) The principal or the principal's designee shall serve as school test coordinator.
  - (3) The principal shall ensure the school test coordinator:
    - (A) maintains test security and accountability of test materials;
      - (1) Before each test administration, the school test coordinator shall accurately count and distribute test materials.
      - (2) Immediately after each test administration, the school test coordinator shall collect, count, and return all test materials to the secure, locked storage facility.



- (B) establishes any needed school policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;
  - (C) identifies and trains personnel, proctors, and backup personnel for test administrations; and
  - (D) encourages a positive atmosphere for testing.
- (4) Test administrators shall be school personnel who have professional training in education and the state testing program.
  - (5) Teachers shall provide instruction that meets or exceeds the state-adopted curriculum standards to meet the needs of the specific students in the class. Teachers may help students improve test-taking skills by:
    - (A) helping students become familiar with test formats using curricular content;
    - (B) teaching students test-taking strategies and providing practice sessions;
    - (C) helping students learn ways of preparing to take tests; and
    - (D) using resource materials such as test questions from test item banks and linking documents in instruction and test preparation.
- (h) Test administration.
- (1) The superintendent/charter school director or superintendent's/charter school director's designee shall:
    - (A) assure each school establishes procedures to ensure all test administrators comply with test publisher guidelines;
    - (B) inform the local board of education of any breach of this code of ethics; and
    - (C) inform school system (LEA) test coordinators and principals of their responsibilities.
  - (2) The school test coordinator shall:
    - (A) assure school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies;
    - (B) implement the school system and local testing policies and procedures to assure all eligible students are tested fairly;
    - (C) ensure trained proctors are assigned to test administrations by the principal; and
    - (D) ensure all testing irregularities are reported to the school system (LEA) test coordinator.
  - (3) Test administrators shall:
    - (A) administer tests according to the directions in the assessment guide and any subsequent updates developed by the test publisher;
    - (B) administer tests to all eligible students;
    - (C) report all testing irregularities to the school test coordinator; and
    - (D) provide a positive test-taking environment.
  - (4) Proctors shall serve as additional monitors to help the test administrator assure that testing occurs fairly.
- (i) Scoring. The school system test coordinator shall:
- (1) ensure each test is scored according to the procedures and guidelines defined for the test by the test publisher;
  - (2) maintain quality control during the entire scoring process, which consists of handling and editing documents, scanning answer documents, and producing electronic files and reports. Quality control shall address at a minimum accuracy and scoring consistency.
  - (3) maintain security of tests and data files at all times, including:
    - (A) protecting the confidentiality of students at all times when publicizing test results; and
    - (B) maintaining test security of answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.
- (j) Analysis and reporting. Educators shall use test scores appropriately. This means that the educator recognizes that a test score is only one piece of information and must be interpreted together with

other scores and indicators. Test data help educators understand educational patterns and practices. The superintendent shall ensure that school personnel analyze and report test data ethically and within the limitations described in this paragraph.

- (1) Educators shall maintain the confidentiality of individual students. Publicizing test scores or any written material containing personally identifiable information from the student's educational records shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.
  - (2) Educators shall release test scores to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with interpretive materials as needed.
  - (3) Staff development relating to testing must enable school personnel to respond knowledgeably to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretive materials.
  - (4) Items and associated materials on a secure test shall not be in the public domain. Only items that are within the public domain may be used for item analysis.
  - (5) Data analysis of test scores for decision-making purposes shall be based upon:
    - (A) disaggregation of data based upon student demographics and other collected variables;
    - (B) examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and
    - (C) examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.
- (k) Unethical testing practices include, but are not limited to, the following practices:
- (1) encouraging students to be absent the day of testing;
  - (2) encouraging students not to do their best;
  - (3) using secure test items or modified secure test items for instruction;
  - (4) changing student responses at any time;
  - (5) interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions or the test items;
  - (6) reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;
  - (7) not testing all eligible students;
  - (8) failing to provide required accommodations during testing;
  - (9) modifying scoring programs including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables;
  - (10) modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores;
  - (11) using a single test score to make individual decisions; and
  - (12) misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.
- (l) In the event of a violation of this Rule, the State Board of Education may, in accordance with the contested case provisions of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, impose any one or more of the following sanctions:
- (1) withhold any applicable monetary incentive awards;
  - (2) file a civil action against the person or persons responsible for the violation for copyright infringement or for any other available cause of action;
  - (3) seek criminal prosecution of the person or persons responsible for the violation; and
  - (4) in accordance with the provisions of 16 NCAC 6C .0312, suspend or revoke the professional license of the person or persons responsible for the violation.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(9)c.; 115C-81(b)(4);  
Eff. November 1, 1997;  
Amended Eff. August 1, 2000.