

Accommodations for English Language Learners in the Administration of FCAT Assessments

Testing Accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs) are required by the State Consent Decree and civil rights laws in accordance with equal access provisions to educational programs, services and activities. Beginning in January 1997, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) has provided testing modifications and accommodations to ELLs who receive services operated in accordance with approved District ELL Plans.

The exact combination of accommodations to be offered to any particular ELL is determined on a case-by-case basis depending upon the needs of the student. As districts embark on FCAT 2012-13 retakes, it is timely to be reminded of the importance of appropriate accommodations to ensure that both direct and indirect linguistic support are offered to accurately assess ELLs' academic and linguistic achievement levels.

FCAT Accommodations

The following ELL modifications are to be considered for FCAT Reading:

1. ELLs may be given **additional time** as necessary to complete the test. However, students must complete each section of the FCAT in one school day. Students must not be permitted to continue testing within a section or session from one day to another.
2. ELLs may be given access to **an English-to-heritage language/heritage language-to-English dictionary**. Such a dictionary would be familiar to the students because of its regular availability in instructional settings. A dictionary written exclusively in the heritage language or English shall not be provided.
3. ELLs may be offered the **opportunity to be tested in a separate room** with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or heritage language teacher acting as test administrator. When the student is not of legal age, the parents shall be informed of this option and shall be asked for their preferences in test administration setting.
4. The ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer student questions about the general test directions in the student's **heritage language**.

Heritage Language Support

For the mathematics sections, the ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer specific questions about a word or phrase that may be confusing to the student because of limited English proficiency but is prohibited from giving assistance that will help the student solve mathematics test questions. A student's questions must not be answered in a way that would lead the student to unmistakably infer the correct answer to a question. When administering the test to a group of students, the teacher may answer questions about directions for the

benefit of the group; questions of clarification from students must be answered on an individual basis without disturbing other students taking the test.

For the communications or reading sections, the ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer student questions about the general test directions in a way that the student would not be unmistakably led to infer the correct answer to any of the questions. The teacher is prohibited from answering student questions about reading passages, the question stems, or answer alternatives. Students may have access to the English-to-heritage language/ heritage-to-English language dictionary, but the student is expected to read the reading passage, the question stems, and the answer alternatives in English.

Florida Writes Accommodations

The following ELL modifications apply to the Writing Assessment Program:

1. ELLs may be given additional time beyond the time limit specified in the test administration manual for administration of the test to non-ELL students. ELLs may also take the test during several brief sessions within one school day. Students must not be permitted to continue testing from one day to another.
2. ELLs may be given access to an English-to-heritage language/heritage language-to-English dictionary. Such a dictionary would be familiar to ELL students because of its regular availability in instructional settings. A dictionary written exclusively in the heritage language or English shall not be provided.
3. ELLs may be given the opportunity to be tested in a separate room with the ESOL or heritage language teacher serving as test administrator. If the student is not of legal age, the parents of the student shall be informed of this particular accommodation and shall be given the opportunity to select the preferred method of test administration.
4. The ESOL or heritage language teacher may answer student questions about the general test directions in the student's heritage language, but the teacher is prohibited from reading the prompt to the student or answering questions about the prompt.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

<http://www.fldoe.org/arra/pdf/43d1FCATAccommodations.pdf>
www.fldoe.org/eae/pdf/fcatteam.pdf

Please find above referenced accommodations in the FCAT 2012 Retakes Manual on page 128.