



Guide for IEP/504 Teams Considering the Word Prediction (WP) State Test Accommodation (August 2021)

The Word Prediction (WP) state test accommodation can be applied to test items that require the composition of a short or extended response. For Hawai'i, short and extended response items are only found on the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (ELA) interim and summative assessments. For the summative assessment, such response items are only found on the ELA Performance Task (ELA-PT) Parts I and II. Part I and Part II requires students to compose a short answer and a long-write essay, respectively. The long-write essay measures a student's composition skills against the grade-level ELA Common Core standards for Writing. There are no short or extended response items found in the ELA-CAT, Math, Science (NGSS), or End-of-Course exams.

The Word Prediction accommodation provides a student with a predictive software program that takes what the student types as the first one, two, or three letters of a word and generates a suggested word. This software assists students in recalling and formulating the words that they are searching for when composing their ELA long-write essay response. *For students who have documented motor or orthopedic or severe learning disabilities that prevent them from recalling, processing, or expressing written language, the WP test accommodation helps them with word generation and spelling.* The accommodation requires that the WP program be set to single word prediction. Phonetic spelling functionality and a basic dictionary may also be utilized; however, phrase prediction and expanded dictionaries, such as topic dictionaries and word banks, must be deactivated. WP as a writing support is only available as an accommodation. As such, the Word Prediction state test accommodation is strictly limited to those students with an IEP or 504 Plan.

For more information about the accessibility supports available for state testing: universal tools¹, designated supports², and accommodation³, see the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines \(UAAG\)](#).

This document contains guidelines for the Word Prediction accommodation and is organized into four sections: (I) general principles; (II) legal foundation; (III) critical considerations for teams; and (IV) decision guidance for teams.

¹ Universal tools - available to all students based on student preference and selection. Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided digitally as part of the test system (embedded) or separate from the test system (non-embedded). *Note for Test Coordinators: non-embedded universal tools must be available on site to ensure equitable testing conditions and comparability of results.*

² Designated supports - features that are available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated. Educators, parents/guardians, students or educator teams may be used for decision-making.

³ Accommodations - available only to those students with IEP/504 Plan documentation of need.

Section I: General Principles Regarding State Test Accommodations

The statewide assessments are designed to measure student proficiency and growth over time, curriculum impact and effect, and school achievement and gains. Tests are aligned to standards for learning that are established at the grade-level. Statewide assessments measure our students against those standards and the grade-level expectations for achievement found there. In order to yield valid and comparable results, it is essential that our tests measure what students know and can do when measured to the grade-level standard expectations. In Hawai'i, the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards are used as the metric. For an understanding of how these standards are used as a basis to generate a grade-level proficiency score in writing, refer to the [Smarter Balanced Scoring Guide for English Language Arts Performance Task Full-Write Baseline Sets](#).

The purpose of state test accommodations is to enable students with disabilities to participate “with adjustments that do not alter the assessed construct” and that are “applied to test presentation, environment, content, format (including response format), or administration conditions” (*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, 2014*). State test accommodations are intended to remove obstacles to student demonstration of knowledge and skills resulting from student disability. State test accommodations are not intended to reduce expectations for learning, modify the curriculum, or artificially inflate a student’s test score. **The key for appropriate accommodation provision during statewide assessments is to ensure that the student’s individual needs are met and the assessed “construct” (what a test measures) is not modified or altered.**

Additionally, state test accommodations should:

1. *Not be confused with instructional accommodations that support student learning.* Instructional accommodations may be applied to continue emerging skills or reinforce the acquisition of new skills; however, these accommodations are strategically adjusted or removed in the classroom to monitor and/or assess student progress. Removal of the instructional accommodation during classroom assessment in many cases is the only way to acquire an accurate measurement of the student’s current level of skill.
2. Be shown to specifically overcome a student’s disability. The student should have used the support in the past with success in both classroom assessments and interim assessments that are measuring the same skills (construct). *This evidence should be documented under the Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP) in the student’s IEP/504 Plan.*
3. Be assigned only when supported with substantial evidence of need. Documentation of student disability mediation and classroom use during tests of the same construct must be found in the IEP/504 record. *This evidence should be documented in the “Services or Accommodations and Related Services” and the “Statewide Assessment” pages of the student’s IEP/504 Plan record.*

State test accommodations are different from *modifications*. Modifications are allowances made for IDEA students that provide for adjustment(s) to the curriculum or assessment that change what is to be learned or what is to be measured. Examples of testing modifications that reduce expectations for learning and affect the construct of the test include: 1) simplification, clarification, or explanation of test questions or items; 2) use of spell-checking devices on a test of the student's spelling skills; and 3) use of a calculator on a test of the student's computational skills. While modifications may be used with caution during instruction to support students as they develop their knowledge and skills over time, they are not used in the general summative test.

Section II: Legal Foundation for State Test Accommodations

Under the IDEA, State has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that children with disabilities are provided appropriate accommodations on Title I, Part A assessments, where necessary, as determined on an individualized case-by-case basis by their IEP/504 team.
- Develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. Under 34 CFR §§300.160(b)(2), the State's guidelines must identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

These State guidelines apply to the provision of appropriate accommodations under the IDEA on regular and alternate assessments (34 CFR §300.160 (a)).

Section III: Critical Considerations Before Assigning WP State Test Accommodation for ELA Long-Write Essays

Decisions about assigning the WP state test accommodation should be based on the general principles of state test accommodations presented in Section I and the specific WP guidelines found below.

Purpose of Word Prediction (WP) State Test Accommodation

The purpose of the WP state test accommodation is to assist students with documented motor or orthopedic disabilities or severe learning disabilities that impact their writing skills. For these students, word prediction (WP) allows them to meaningfully participate in the ELA assessment to demonstrate their composition skills through an external (non-embedded) software program that helps them to draft a short answer or long-write essay. The WP program would allow students to type in the first letters of a word and select from a list of predicted words to complete their short or extended response.

Construct Measured by the ELA Performance Task

A test construct is what a test measures. For example, Parts I and II of the ELA Performance Task (ELA-PT) in the ELA summative assessment measure students' ability to compose an answer or essay in response to a question or writing prompt. The student's response on Part II of the ELA-PT is used to generate a writing score and provides information on how well "students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences" pursuant to the Writing claim in the [Claims for the English Language Arts/Literacy Summative Assessment](#). For specifics on the three traits of writing measured by the ELA-PT across all grade-levels, refer to the ELA summative test blueprints found in the [Smarter Balanced English Language Arts \(ELA\) general assessment](#).

Documented Need for the WP State Test Accommodation

The WP state test accommodation should only be assigned when a student has documented motor or orthopedic disabilities or severe learning disabilities that prevent him/her from composing a short or extended response. For students who struggle with the production of text or recalling, processing, and expressing language, this accommodation is available upon verification to assist with the completion of short answers or long-write essays. In order to receive this accommodation, it is necessary to show:

1. Documentation of significant student need;
2. Consistent student use of WP during essay composition and assessments requiring a short or extended response;
3. Improved student short answers or long-write essays when the WP accommodation is applied; and
4. Student facile familiarity and use of WP to compose a short or extended response across content areas.

Documented Familiarity with WP, Including Student Ability to Review and Edit

If students are to use the WP accommodation for the **long-write essay**, they must know how to work with their software programs, be able to develop planning notes, and review the output generated based upon their word selections. Students should have fluid familiarity with the software and be able to operate it independently as no external assistance is allowed when this accommodation is used while testing.

Section IV: Guidance for IEP/504 Teams for Verifying the Need for WP State Test Accommodation on the ELA Long-Write Essays

This section provides IEP/504 Teams a tool with a set of questions to help guide the WP state test accommodation decision-making process. The questions are intended to support team discussion and to help frame criteria that can serve as supporting evidence when considering student WP accommodation needs. These questions and the answers that are generated may be used to determine when and if there is sufficient evidence of student need supporting the provision of the

WP test accommodation. The intent is for IEP/504 Teams to use the questions found in Table 1 as a starting point from which to engage in dialogue, examine evidence, record data, and indicate the team decision based upon knowledge of the student and the evidence found in the student's IEP/504 Plan. A preponderance of evidence as well as care should be used when making this team decision. (Table 1 is not intended to be a tally sheet.)

Table 1: Questions to Guide IEP/504 Team Decision about the Need for the WORD PREDICTION State Test Accommodation for the ELA Long-Write Essays

The purpose of this table is to guide IEP/504 team discussions about student accommodation need and help generate appropriate decisions and recommendations regarding the WP state test accommodation. The completion of this table is optional.

Questions	Team Response	Evidence/ Comments
1. Is there evaluative information indicating that the student has a motor or orthopedic disability that severely limits his/her ability to type text?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Does the student have a documented motor or orthopedic disability or severe learning disabilities that severely prevent him/her from recalling, processing, or expressing written language? If so, explain.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Does the student always use WP during classroom assignments and/or assessments that involve a short or extended written response?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Is the student able to use the WP software to select words for their essay as well as review, edit, and revise the produced work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Does the student use WP across content area(s) whenever a short or long written response is required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Is there evidence that the student’s composition improves when WP is used by the student to develop their short or extended written response?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Is there an expectation that the student will need the WP accommodation when pursuing post-secondary career opportunities and/or higher education?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
8. Has the student provided input or stated a preference for using WP as a means for producing a short answer or a long-write essay in classroom assignments and assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. Are there additional considerations for recommending the WP test accommodation for this student, specific to his/her unique disability-related needs? If so, explain.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Select the IEP/504 team recommendation below that is decided to be most appropriate for this student.

WP should be recommended for this student at the **accommodation level** with the provision of predicted singular word choices to assist students with completing **the ELA short answer or long-write essay**.

More information is needed before making this decision.

Please list the names and titles of the IEP/504 team and other persons who were part of the state test accommodation decision-making team for the student (use the back if needed).

Name	Title	Date

Follow-up on this decision-making meeting by documenting any selected state test accommodations in the student’s IEP or 504 record, which is stored in the [electronic Comprehensive Student Support System](#) (eCSSS). Refer to the [eCSSS Directions](#) for documenting evidence to support the need for state test accommodations.

If the IEP/504 team makes the decision to recommend the WP state test accommodation for a student, then the School Testing Coordinator (TC) should consult the “Hawaii State Test Accommodations Identification and Request Process for Test Coordinators and School Assessment Teams” document available on the [Accessibility and Accommodations resources page](#) on the [AlohaHSAP.org](#) portal website for guidance to submit state test accommodation requests.

In addition to the documented evidence in the IEPs/504 plans and the consultations with the Exceptional Support Branch and the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design, the Assessment Section verifies state test accommodations in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). As stated in 34 CFR §300.160(b)(2):

The State’s guidelines must identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

The Assessment Section recommends that [test accommodation verification requests](#) be submitted one month prior to the opening of the test window. In all cases, state test accommodation requests should be submitted to the Assessment Section no later than 14 days prior to state (interim or summative) testing.

If you have any questions, please email Elaine Lee at Elaine.Lee@k12.hi.us or call the HIDOE Assessment Section at (808) 307-3636.