



## Guide for IEP/504 Teams Considering the Text-to-Speech (TTS) or Read Aloud (RA) State Test Accommodation (August 17, 2023)

### Appendix A

#### Section I: General Principles Regarding State Test Accommodations

The state assessments are designed to measure student proficiency and growth over time, school performance and, potentially, to inform changes in curriculum and instruction. Tests are aligned to standards for learning adopted by the Board of Education. In Hawai'i, these are the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards for science. State assessments measure our students against those standards and the grade-level expectations for achievement found there.

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 provided to support emerging skills or to reinforce the acquisition of new skills; however, these accommodations are frequently adjusted or strategically removed in the classroom to monitor and/or assess student progress. Removal of the instructional accommodation during classroom assessments, in many cases, is the only way to obtain an accurate measure of the student’s current skills and the impact of interventions.
2. Be shown to be effective in overcoming a student’s disability. The student should have used the support 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, the State has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that children with disabilities are provided appropriate accommodations on state tests (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 IV: Guidance for IEP/504 Teams for Verifying the Need for TTS or RA State Test Accommodation for ELA Reading Passages**

This section provides IEP/504 Teams a tool with a set of questions to help guide the TTS/RA 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 TTS/RA state test 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 TTS/RA state 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.)