

Virginia Department of Education

Students with Disabilities:

Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a resource for educators and parents regarding the use of special test accommodations for students with disabilities. Special test accommodations are frequently referred to as test or assessment accommodations and sometimes, simply as accommodations. In this document, the terms, special test accommodations and test accommodations will be used interchangeably.

This document describes test accommodations that are permitted on state assessments and the selection process recommended for the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and 504 Committee. Information on the procedures and conditions for administration of test accommodations is addressed in Appendix C of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals*. These manuals must be reviewed carefully before test accommodations are provided to students with disabilities and are available on the Virginia Department of Education web-site at:
http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/alternative_assessments/index.shtml.

Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations

Test accommodations provide students with disabilities access to state assessments and a means to demonstrate their knowledge and skill on academic content. Test accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment which result in an adjustment to how the test is presented or how the student responds to test items. Although test accommodations do not alter the content assessed or the meaning of the resulting scores, they do provide equal access to the assessment for students with disabilities. When used appropriately, test accommodations reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability without impacting learning expectations or providing an unfair advantage.

Test accommodations may not alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or answer option. Further, test accommodations may not provide verbal or other prompts or suggestions that clue, hint at, or give away the correct response to the student. Any test accommodations based solely on the potential to enhance student performance beyond providing equal access are considered inappropriate and therefore are not permitted.

Test accommodations must be related to the student's disability and based on the individual's needs. Generally, accommodations are the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. Although accommodations for instruction and assessments are integrally intertwined, it is critical to note that some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, yet inappropriate and not permitted for use on state assessments.

Test accommodations provided to students should adhere to the following principles:

- Accommodations should enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessments to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- Accommodations must be based upon individual student need and not upon the category of disability, level of instruction, or program setting.
- Accommodations must be justified and documented in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Accommodations should be aligned with and part of daily instruction.
- Accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during the administration of a state assessment.
- Accommodations should foster and facilitate independence for students, not create dependence.
- Only accommodations listed in the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals* or approved in writing through the Virginia Department of Education Special Assessment Accommodation Request procedure may be used on tests that are a part of the Virginia Assessment Program.

A Four Step Process for the Selection and Use of Test Accommodations¹

Step 1: Expect Students with Disabilities to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards

Legislation aimed at accountability and the inclusion of all students is designed to ensure equal access to grade-level content standards. Educators and parents should expect students with disabilities to participate in the general curriculum and learn grade-level academic content. Providing effective accommodations during instruction and assessments is critical to achieving this important expectation.

Step 2: Select State Assessment Options

To assure students with disabilities are engaged in grade-level instruction and assessments, every IEP Team or 504 Committee member must be knowledgeable about the Standards of Learning (SOL) and state assessment options available to students with disabilities. Information on state assessment options available to students with disabilities is provided in *Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Assessment Participation*. This document is available on the Virginia Department of Education's Web site at: <http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/index.shtml>

The SOL assessments must be considered by the IEP Team or 504 Committee before alternate/alternative assessments are considered. SOL tests are available in two formats: online and paper. All students are required to take the online version of the SOL tests with the exception of students who meet one of the criteria established for paper testing (see Appendix A of this document).

Although many students with disabilities will be able access the SOL assessments without accommodations, others will require test accommodations to address their disabilities and individual needs.

Step 3: Select Accommodations for State Assessments

Test accommodations should be considered and discussed separately for each assessment required for the student's grade level or course. Only accommodations needed by the student, due to the disability, to access the assessment should be selected. They should not be broadly assigned across all assessments. Providing accommodations that are not required by the student to access the test may actually interfere with student performance and adversely impact student achievement as measured by assessments. IEP Teams and 504 Committees must consider the following:

- whether the recommended accommodations are necessary for the purpose of accessing the assessment;
- previous experience with and usefulness of the recommended accommodations; and

¹ Adapted from Christensen, L., Carver, W., VanDeZande, J., & Lazarus, S. (2011). *Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities (3rd ed.)*. Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers.

- whether the recommended accommodations affect the integrity or security of the assessment. If an accommodation impacts test integrity or security, it is not permitted on state assessments.

When selecting accommodations for state assessments for a student, it is important to determine which accommodations are permitted for the specific assessment. Tables listing test accommodations for the Writing and Non-Writing assessments are provided in Appendix D of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals*. The use of an accommodation that is not permitted is considered a testing irregularity which may result in invalidation of the student's score and may require re-testing. Accommodations not listed in the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals* may not be used for SOL testing without prior approval from the Virginia Department of Education through the Special Assessment Accommodation Request process. Additional information regarding this process is available on p. 19 of this document.

Note: Some adjustments to testing conditions are available to all students, including students with disabilities. These adjustments are not considered accommodation. A list of adjustments available to all students is provided in Appendix B.

Step 4: Administer Accommodations During State Assessments

Plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accommodation. Ensure that there is ample time for the student to learn to use the accommodation during instruction so that the student is familiar and comfortable with the accommodation when state assessments are administered. Students must be provided with practice in using the selected accommodations before they are used during the state tests.

Planning for Test Day

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the accommodations during SOL assessments must be determined. It is important to involve the appropriate personnel to assist with planning the logistics and providing the test accommodations.

School Test Coordinators are responsible for the overall assessment administration in their buildings and should be involved in planning for the provision of the accommodations. Prior to the day of a test, the School Test Coordinator should ensure Test Examiners and Proctors know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. Procedures and conditions for administering the selected accommodations are located in the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals* and must be reviewed to ensure that accommodations are provided appropriately and irregularities and security breaches are avoided. Conditions provided within responses to special assessment accommodation requests must also be met.

The *School Division Personnel Test Security Agreement* and Virginia General Assembly legislation specify procedures that all testing staff must follow to assure test security, standardization, and the ethical administration of assessments, as well as consequences for violation of those procedures. Test Examiners, Proctors, and all staff involved in test administration must adhere to these regulations and practices. Providing a student with an accommodation not documented in the student's IEP or 504 Plan, failing to provide a documented accommodation during a state assessment, and improper administration of an accommodation are considered testing irregularities which may result in invalidation of the student's score and may require re-testing. Refer to the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals* for specific information about testing irregularities and the reporting process.

Copies of the *School Division Personnel Test Security Agreement* and the Virginia General Assembly legislation are also located in Appendix A of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals*.

Test Accommodations Permitted on State Assessments

Test accommodations are grouped in the following categories: time/scheduling, setting, presentation, and response. Time/scheduling accommodations address adjustments in the test schedule and may include accommodations such as breaks or testing during a selected timeframe within the school day. Setting accommodations address adjustments to the physical environment where the test would normally be administered to the student. Presentation accommodations include changes in the format of the test such as large-print or braille or adjustments in how test items are presented to the student. Response accommodations address how the student answers or completes the test items.

A complete list of accommodations is provided on the following page. Additional information about assessment accommodations can be found in the resources listed below which are available on the Virginia Department of Education Website at:

<http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/index.shtml>

- *Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Assessment Participation*
- *Guidelines for Administering the Read-Aloud Accommodation for Standards of Learning Assessments*
- *Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities - Math Aids-Accommodation Code 19*
- *Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities - Assistive Technology Accommodations*

Conditions and procedures required for the administration of test accommodations are available in Appendix C of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manual* on the Virginia Department of Education Website at

http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/test_administration/index.shtml.

Permitted Test Accommodations by Category

Many test accommodations require special procedures and conditions prior to, during, or after the test administration, and careful adherence to all conditions and procedures is paramount to ensuring student access as well as test validity and security. Each test accommodation requiring special procedures and conditions for administration is marked with an asterisk (*) in the chart below. Staff administering SOL tests to eligible students with these accommodations must be familiar with the procedures and conditions detailed in the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual*.

<p>Timing/Scheduling Accommodations</p> <p>Adjust the scheduling of a test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time of day • planned breaks during test * • flexible schedule (multiple test sessions) * • order of tests administration 	<p>Setting Accommodations</p> <p>Adjust the place in which the testing normally occurs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual testing (one-on-one) • special lighting • adaptive or special furniture • test administered in locations with minimal distractions • hospital/home/non-school setting
<p>Presentation Accommodations</p> <p>Adjust the presentation of test material and/or test directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visual aids * (e.g., interactive/electronic whiteboard, colored overlay, tinted screen, magnifying glass, large monitor, screen magnifier, graphic organizers, templates, masks or markers to maintain place) • amplification equipment (e.g., auditory trainer, whisper phone) • large-print test * • braille test * • Plain English version of a <i>Mathematics</i> test • reading directions to students • written directions accompanying oral directions * • reading of test items aloud * • audio version of test items * • interpreting/transliterating directions (e.g., sign language, cued speech) * • interpreting/transliterating test items (e.g., sign language, cued speech) * • specific verbal prompts * 	<p>Response Accommodations</p> <p>Adjust the manner in which students respond to or answer test items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enlarged copy of the answer document * • Examiner records responses * • augmentative communication device * • communication board or choice cards * • braille * • word processor or word processor with speech-to-text * • spelling aids * • English dictionary * • dictation using a recording device • dictation to a scribe * • read back student response * • word prediction software * • calculator or arithmetic tables * • math aids * • calculator with additional functions * • dry erase board * • additional markers, highlighters, colored pens, and/or pencils *

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Descriptions of Permitted Test Accommodations

Timing/Scheduling Accommodations

Since the SOL tests are untimed, considerable flexibility can be provided to ensure that ample time is scheduled and allotted for test completion. Students with disabilities may benefit from administering the test at a time during the school day when the student is most attentive or alert or adjusting the order of the tests offered to provide the best opportunity for the students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skill. *See Appendix C of the Test Implementation Manuals for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.*

Flexible Schedule*

For most students an SOL test can be completed prior to the end of the scheduled school day. However, some students with disabilities, particularly those with disabilities that impact attention, concentration, and stamina, may need adjustments that include planned breaks and/or multiple test sessions. Establishing breaks or scheduling the test over two or more school days may be appropriate for these students (see below).

*Planned Breaks**

Students who require breaks, but not multiple test sessions, must complete the test in one school day. Planned breaks administered under secure conditions are available for either online or paper tests. Additional information on planned breaks is available in Appendix C of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals*.

*Multiple Test Sessions**

At this time, students who require multiple test sessions, in which the test will be completed in two or more school days, must be administered a paper test. The short-paper component of the *Writing* assessment must be completed in one school day and does not qualify for multiple test sessions; however, the student may be given breaks under secure conditions. As the SOL tests transition to a Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) model, it may be possible for eligible students taking a CAT test to be tested over two days. Should this become possible, school divisions will be notified and provided with the procedures.

Setting Accommodations

The setting in which a student with disabilities is tested may be adjusted to provide the optimal testing environment for the student. Frequently, students who have disabilities that impact attention and processing require settings for testing with minimal distractions or a non-school environment such as a hospital or the student's home. Some students with disabilities may need to be tested individually, particularly if they lose focus by having other students in the same room or if they are using an accommodation such as one with an auditory component that would disturb other test-takers. In addition to adjustments in the location of the test administration,

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

some students with disabilities may require a test setting with adaptive equipment, furniture or special lighting.

Presentation Accommodations

The manner and format of test item presentation is an important access issue for students with disabilities. The test presentation and format should be one that the student has used as a part of regular instruction so the student is familiar with the format well in advance of the SOL test administration. Presentation accommodations are frequently used for students with sensory or processing disabilities. Presentation accommodations described in this section include visual aids, large-print and braille tests, read-aloud/audio accommodations, interpreting and transliterating test items, and providing written directions with oral directions. *See Appendix C of the Test Implementation Manuals for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.*

Visual Aids*

A variety of visual aids may be used to provide access to the SOL test for students with visual impairments and other disabilities. Visual aids may include magnification devices, overlays, tinted screens, templates, masks, and graphic organizers.

Magnification Devices*

Permitted magnification devices may be physical devices or electronic devices that are designed to enlarge test content. Physical devices may include devices such as a magnifying glass or screen placed over the monitor. Electronic magnification devices, such as a closed-circuit television (CCTV), large monitor, an interactive or electronic whiteboard, or an LCD projector which projects the assessment onto a large screen or board, may be used for magnification purposes only. Electronic magnification devices must not save or capture any portion of the SOL test or require the use of software running concurrently with the online test delivery system, TestNav.

Color Overlays or Tinted Screens*

A blank overlay with one color may be used on paper or online tests. Tinted screens are also permitted on online tests. Before a color overlay or tinted screen is used, ensure that the overlay or screen does not distort colors on the test to the point that the student is potentially disadvantaged on test items.

Templates or Masks*

Students with difficulty focusing may benefit from the use of templates or masks which cover text so that the student only sees a portion of a test item at a time. Additionally, a student with a disability may use a marker that helps the student to maintain his/her place while reading test items. These visual aids may be used only on paper tests.

Graphic Organizers*

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Graphic organizers are frequently used by students with disabilities as tools to organize content in a meaningful way. Paper graphic organizers are permitted but must be blank and not contain directions, words, letters, numbers, symbols, color coding, or text of any kind. Similarly electronic software that produces blank templates or graphic organizers may be used by the student electronically or in print, but must not contain directions, words, letters, numbers, symbols, color coding, or text of any kind. If software is used to produce the template, a separate workstation must be used and the software must not provide template libraries, hyperlink functions, or access to the Internet. If available as part of the software or the computer, these functions must be disabled.

Large-Print Test*

The large-print SOL test forms are designed to ensure that students with visual impairments can access test content as documented in the IEP or 504 plan. These forms are enlarged by 166 percent so that the standard 12 point font size of each test item, stem, and answer options are increased to a 20 point font size. Smaller text appearing in other parts of a test item such as the text in graphics, maps, and tables is also enlarged proportionally by 166 percent. This text will be larger; however, it will not be as large as the 20 point font size appearing in the item stem and answer options. A copy of the large-print test is provided in regular print to the Test Examiner or Proctor. Large-print tests are only available in paper format.

Braille Test*

Braille tests are available to students with blindness or visual impairments. Braille tests are only available in paper formats. A copy of the braille test is provided in regular print to the Test Examiner or Proctor administering the braille test.

Read-Aloud Accommodation on *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing Assessments**

Students with disabilities which impact their ability to read may have test items read in English under the read-aloud accommodation. The read-aloud accommodation is available for *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science* and *Writing* assessments as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan. The IEP Team or 504 Committee must determine whether the online audio accommodation or the read-aloud accommodation administered by a Test Examiner is the more appropriate accommodation delivery method for the student for online testing. Special attention must be given to the IEP or 504 Plan for specific accommodations regarding reading the test aloud. For example, a student's accommodation may require the entire test be read or may require having words, questions, or sentences read aloud only when requested by the student. The examiner must read from the examiner's workstation.

The Test Examiner should be familiar with how to read test items appropriately to students. Examiners may use the PearsonAccess Training Center practice tests in audio format and audio Practice Items to hear how tests should be read aloud and to practice reading various types of test

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

items. For more detailed information, refer to the *Guidelines for Administering the Read-Aloud Accommodation for Standards of Learning Assessments* at: www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/guidelines_read_aloud.pdf

Audio Accommodation on *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing Assessments**

The audio accommodation where students listen to professionally recorded versions of the test items for *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing* assessments is permitted for students with disabilities as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan. The student should have practice in using the audio accommodation. Unless the student has experience with using audio, this accommodation may result in a disadvantage rather than providing access.

Read-Aloud Accommodation*

The read-aloud accommodation where Examiners read the test items aloud to a student for *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing* assessments is permitted for students with disabilities as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan. When reading the tests aloud, the Examiner reads the test items from his/her Examiner's workstation and must be careful not to lead the student to the correct answer by intonation or to repeat any part of the test which is not specifically requested by the student. In particular, care must be taken to describe graphics without leading the student to the correct response. Examiners may use the PearsonAccess Training Center practice tests in audio format and audio Practice Items to hear how tests should be read aloud and to practice reading types of test items. For more detailed information on reading items aloud, refer to the *Guidelines for Administering the Read-Aloud Accommodation for the Standards of Learning Assessments* located at the Virginia Department of Education Web site at: www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/index.shtml.

Read-Aloud Guidelines for Computer Adaptive Tests (CAT)*

Test questions presented to students during a computer adaptive test (CAT) are selected by the computer based on the student's response to each question. Because the selection of items is customized for each student, the Examiner/Proctor must read from the student's computer in a one-to-one test session. Follow the Read-Aloud Guidelines for a Computer Adaptive Test provided in Appendix C of the *Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments Test Implementation Manuals*.

Read-Aloud or Audio Accommodation on the *Reading Assessment**

The read-aloud and audio accommodations on the SOL *Reading* assessments are permitted only for students with a visual impairment, including blindness, and those students with a specific disability that severely limits or prevents them from decoding text at any level of difficulty as determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument that was administered by a qualified professional. Students with disabilities who are simply having difficulty reading text and/or are reading below grade-level are not permitted to use the read-aloud or audio accommodation on the statewide *Reading* assessments.

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Note: For the EOC *Reading* test, under certain circumstances, students with disabilities may receive the read-aloud accommodation even though the student has not been determined as eligible by the school division according to the criteria required for the read-aloud accommodation on the *Reading* Assessment. To qualify, the student must meet all of the following criteria:

- the student is retaking the EOC *Reading* test, having failed the previous attempt(s) without using the read-aloud or audio accommodation; and
- the student’s IEP or 504 Plan lists the read-aloud or audio accommodation for other tests; and
- the student receives the read-aloud or audio accommodation in the classroom.

If the student received the read-aloud accommodation on the EOC *Reading* test as a result of meeting these criteria, it will be considered a non-standard accommodation. Refer to the *Non-Writing Test Implementation Manual* for instructions regarding proper coding. If a student passes the EOC *Reading* test using a non-standard accommodation, the student is considered to have passed for the purpose of earning a verified credit toward graduation.

Interpreting/Transliterating Accommodation on *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing* Assessments*

Students who are deaf or have hearing impairments and who normally communicate in sign language or using cued speech may be given access to state assessments using the interpreting/transliterating accommodation provided by a qualified interpreter or transliterator. This accommodation may be provided as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan for *Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing* tests. The Interpreter/Transliterator may interpret/transliterate test directions, sample items, and questions regarding the mechanics of testing directed to and answered by the Examiner. For these content areas, the accommodation may also be provided for test items interpreted/transliterated directly from assessments (paper or online formats including Computer Adaptive Test) or from items read to the student by Test Examiners. The student’s IEP Team or 504 Committee should determine the best method to provide the student with hearing impairments or deafness access to assessment items.

Interpreting/Transliterating Accommodation on the *Reading* Assessment*

Students who are deaf or have a hearing impairment may be considered by school divisions for the interpreting/transliterating accommodation on the *Reading* assessment because of difficulty hearing phonemes, which is a part of the decoding process. Eligibility must be determined by a diagnostic tool or instrument administered by a qualified professional. If a student who is deaf or hearing impaired is found eligible for the interpreting/transliterating accommodation because his/her hearing impairment severely limits the ability to decode text, the test would be administered through an interpreter if that student uses sign language as his/her method of communicating.

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Written Directions to Accompanying Oral Directions*

Students with disabilities may need support in following test directions. Students may receive a copy of the bold “SAY,” written directions from the *Examiner’s Manual* or *Supplement to the Examiner’s Manual* to accompany the oral directions that are provided. The written directions provided to the student must be identical to those provided in the *Examiner’s Manuals* or their *Supplements*.

Specific Verbal Prompts*

Students with disabilities who have difficulty focusing on the SOL assessments may receive verbal prompts from the examiner. The only prompts that may be used by the examiner for this purpose are:

“Please continue with your test.”

“Keep working.”

“Keep going.”

“Focus.”

“Stay focused.”

All other verbal prompts must be approved by the Virginia Department of Education using the *Special Assessment Accommodation Request* form before the prompts are used on any SOL tests.

Response Accommodations

Response accommodations provide a variety of means for students to respond or answer test items. These accommodations may provide support for students with physical or sensory disabilities or for those with disabilities that impact memory and/or attention. It is important to remember that even when accommodations are provided, all responses on the assessments must be generated by the student and not influenced by others. *See Appendix C of the Test Implementation Manuals for special procedures and conditions for SOL assessment accommodations.*

Enlarged Copy of Answer Document* (Available with paper tests only)

The student marks responses on an enlarged copy of the answer document.

NOTE: It is the school division’s responsibility to provide the enlarged answer document for the student.

Communication Board, Choice Cards*

Students with disabilities which prevent them from responding verbally, in writing, or with a computer mouse or keyboard, may point or otherwise select their answer choice from those presented on a communication board or choice cards. It is important that the student and the scribe have ample practice with this procedure in the classroom. For online testing, practice tests

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

must be used so that both the student and the scribe are familiar with the level of communication required to complete the technology-enhanced items (TEI).

Examiner Records Responses*

Students who are unable to respond to test items by recording answer choices on a regular or enlarged paper answer document or by selecting the answer online, may respond by using a variety of alternative means including but not limited to: marking the test booklet, responding verbally, pointing or otherwise indicating their answers.

Students participating in online assessments may give the Examiner directions on how to respond to TEI items by responding verbally, pointing or otherwise indicating their answers.

Augmentative Communication Device*, Dictation to a Scribe*

Students with disabilities may use an augmentative communication device or verbally dictate responses to a scribe to complete the short-paper component of the *Writing* assessment, perform mathematic or scientific calculations or record notes in preparation for answering an assessment item in the multiple-choice/TEI component of the *Writing* or *Non-Writing* tests. The examiner must record the student's responses exactly as the student indicates.

Braille*

Blind and low-vision students may use a Braillewriter to respond to the writing prompt/short-paper component of the *Writing* test or to record responses to *Writing* or *Non-Writing* multiple-choice/TEI

Word Processor or Word Processor with Speech-to-Text*, or Augmentative Communication Device*

Short-paper component of the Writing assessment only

Response accommodations for the short-paper component of the *Writing* assessment are available for students who are blind or have visual impairments and who do not use braille, as well as students who have an orthopedic impairment, a specific learning disability, or other disability that interferes with the composing process or prevents them from composing their response within the online test. It allows these students to use a word processor, word processor with speech-to text, or an augmentative communication device to complete the short-paper component of the SOL *Writing* test. To be eligible for this accommodation, documentation must exist indicating the student uses a word processor, word processing device with speech-to text, or augmentative communication device for his/her written work.

Spelling Aids*

Short-paper component of the Writing Assessment only

Students with disabilities are permitted to use approved spelling aids on the SOL short-paper component of the *Writing* assessment only. Spelling aids include spell checkers and spelling dictionaries. A spelling dictionary provides a list of words, but does not include definitions.

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

English Dictionary*

Short paper component of the Online Writing Assessment only

Students who cannot access the online spell check tool or other permitted spelling aid for the short-paper component of the online Writing test may use an English dictionary to check spelling.

NOTE: The English dictionary is only designated as an accommodation on the short-paper component of the online Writing test. For any paper short-paper component of the *Writing* test (2002 and 2010 SOL), the English dictionary is available to all students and should not be designated as an accommodation.

Read Back Student Response*

Short-paper component of the Writing assessment only

Reading a student's short-paper response back to the student is only permitted for students with disabilities and must be documented in the student's IEP or 504 Plan as an accommodation. The IEP or 504 Plan must clearly document whether the student's short-paper response will be read back by the Test Examiner or from a workstation equipped with text-to-speech capabilities. In addition, the read-back accommodation must be used routinely in the student's instruction.

Word Prediction Software*

Short-paper component of the *Writing* assessment only

Students with disabilities may use word prediction/selection software on the short-paper component of the SOL *Writing* assessments. Word prediction/selection is defined as any software providing a student with a selection of single words from student-generated single or multiple keystrokes. For example, a student may type the letter "p." The software will provide the student with a list of single words starting with the letter "p" (e.g., "part," "plane," "plain," "please," "put"). It should be noted that word prediction/selection must be limited to the software providing selections of single words and not phrases, grammatically appropriate options, or other unrelated word choices generated by student keystrokes to predict sentence structure.

Calculators with Accessibility Features

Students with blindness or visual impairments frequently need calculators with large keys, buttons, displays and/or talking capabilities. Calculators with these accessibility features are allowed on the Standards of Learning mathematics and science tests as long as they have the same mathematical functions as standard approved calculators; a Special Assessment Accommodation request is not required when the accessible calculator has the same mathematical functions as a standard approved calculator. A list of these standard approved calculators is provided in the *Non-Writing Test Implementation Manual*.

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Calculators and Arithmetic Tables on Non-Calculator Sections of the Mathematics SOL*

Grades 3-7 Mathematics assessments only

Students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria described in the *Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Disabilities* (Appendix D) or the *Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Blindness or Visual Impairments* (Appendix E) forms may use calculators or arithmetic tables on sections of the *Grades 3-7 Mathematics SOL* assessments in which a calculator is not permitted. Arithmetic tables and charts are defined as tools that serve the same function as a simple calculator (e.g., four-function calculator). Examples include multiplication charts, addition charts, subtraction charts, or division charts. In order to use these tools, students with disabilities must be found eligible by their IEP Team or 504 Committee under the calculator accommodation criteria. If the student is determined eligible, the IEP Team or 504 Committee must document the decision on the student's IEP or 504 Plan and maintain a copy of the completed and signed *Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Disabilities* or the *Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Blindness or Visual Impairments* form in the student's educational record.

Calculator with Additional Functions*

Grades 4-8 and EOC Mathematics assessments only

Calculators with additional functions are calculators with mathematical functions designed to accommodate a student's disability. Calculators with additional functions are calculators other than those routinely supplied to students at the level of the specific *SOL Mathematics* tests. Calculators routinely supplied to students are referred to as approved calculators and are listed by test level in the *Non-Writing Test Implementation Manual*.

To prevent the use of calculators with additional functions which exceed those used to accommodate a student's disability, the following guidance must be used when selecting calculators with additional functions for eligible students with disabilities.

PERMITTED

A calculator with additional functions is permitted if the additional mathematical functions are required for the student to access the SOL assessment and are directly related to the student's disability. Both the disability and the corresponding additional functions must be clearly documented in the justification statement of the appropriate *Calculator Accommodation Criteria* form (Appendices D and E). The justification statement should explain the disability as it relates to mathematics and provide a rationale as to why the additional functions are necessary.

NOT PERMITTED

A calculator with additional functions is not permitted if the calculator:

- is not related to the student's disability;
- provides an unfair advantage to the student;
- is designed solely to enhance student performance; or

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

- is designed to compensate for below grade level mathematic skills.

Math Aids*

Mathematics assessments only

Students with disabilities may use approved math aids on *Mathematics* SOL assessments if the accommodation is documented in the student's IEP or 504 Plan as a testing accommodation. Examples of approved math aids include: number line, colored shapes, and fraction circles. For a complete list of both approved and not approved math aids, refer to the document *Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities - Math Aids Accommodation Code 19*, available on the Virginia Department of Education Web site at:

www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/index.shtml

Dry Erase Board *

Test-takers are provided with scratch paper for SOL assessments, however; some students with disabilities may need a surface larger than typical scratch paper. These students with disabilities may use a dry erase board, including a large wall-mounted board.

Additional Highlighters, Colored Pens, and/or Pencils*

All students are provided with one pencil or pen to use with scratch paper. In addition to the pencil or pen, all students may be provided with one single-color highlighter, pencil or pen. Students with disabilities may be provided with additional highlighters, colored pens, and/or pencils including dry erase markers, if the dry erase board accommodation is used. The student may use the additional markers, highlighters, colored pencils, and/or pens in the test booklet or on his/her scratch paper; however these items must not be used anywhere on the student's answer document. The additional markers, highlighters, colored pens, and/or pencils must be provided to the student at the beginning of the session and must be used independently without assistance from the examiner.

*See Appendix C of the appropriate *Test Implementation Manual* for special procedures and conditions for assessment accommodations.

Special Assessment Accommodation Requests

Some students with disabilities may require accommodations beyond those listed in this document to access the SOL assessments. Prior approval from the Virginia Department of Education is required in order to provide these accommodations. The Division Director of Testing or his/her designee should complete the *Special Assessment Accommodation Request* form available on the Virginia Department of Education Web site at:

www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/index.shtml.

A sample of the *Special Assessment Accommodation Request* form is available in Appendix C.

The *Special Assessment Accommodation Request* form must be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education following the directions provided on the form. The request must be submitted prior to the deadline for the appropriate test administration as listed on the form. The accommodations required for each student should be considered early in the school year, in order to meet the requirement that each student has used any requested accommodation(s) instructionally prior to submission of the *Special Assessment Accommodation Request*.

Each request for a special assessment accommodation will be reviewed based upon the need to provide equal access to the SOL test for the student and the need to maintain standardized procedures and test security. Accommodations may be “approved,” “approved with conditions,” or “not approved.” Some accommodations that are approved or approved with conditions may be designated as non-standard accommodations. The Division Director of Testing or his/her designee will be notified as soon as the decision concerning the special assessment accommodation has been made.

If a request for a special assessment accommodation receives an “approved” or “approved with conditions” response, the approval for that accommodation will remain in effect for subsequent SOL administrations for that same student only, if:

- the subsequent SOL assessment is in the same content area(s) as the original approval;
- the student’s continuing need for the same accommodation is documented in the IEP; and
- the conditions specified in the original response will be met.

Appendix A: Criteria for Paper Testing

- The student attends school in a location where a secure network connection or the required technology is not available to access an online test. Such locations include the following: special situations schools; homebound, residential, or hospital placement; night school or Governor's school.
- An accommodation specified in the student's IEP, 504 Plan, or LEP Student Assessment Participation Plan requires a paper test. Examples of accommodations requiring a paper test include large-print test, braille test, and a flexible schedule that requires multiple testing sessions over two or more school days.
- The student has a documented medical condition, such as a seizure disorder, where exposure to a computer will aggravate the student's condition.
- The student's eligibility for paper tests has been established using the *Documentation of Need for Paper Standards of Learning (SOL) Assessment* form (available from the DDOT). The form documents that the use of paper tests is intended only to provide access to the SOL assessments for the following students:
 - Students with disabilities who require other accommodations that necessitate a paper test.
 - Students with medical conditions that render them unable to take an online test.
 - The use of paper tests may not be permitted for the purpose of improving performance.

Appendix B: Testing Conditions Available to all Students

The following adjustments to the conditions under which an SOL test may be administered are available to any student as needed. These adjustments are not accommodations as they may be provided to all students.

ADJUSTMENTS AVAILABLE TO ALL STUDENTS	
Adjustment to Testing Conditions	Examples/Guidance
Group size	Students may be tested individually or in small groups with the size of the group determined by the STC.
Environmental modifications	Students may be tested with modifications to the environment to include amount or type of lighting, noise buffers, and/or the use of a study carrel. The student may not be issued any kind of accessory to modify the environment. Such accessories include but are not limited to: head phones, ear plugs, ticking clocks, egg timers, stress balls, toys, music or “soothing” sounds during testing.
Large diameter pencil, pencil grip	If a large pencil is used on a paper answer document, it must contain #2 lead.
Assistance with directions	Examiners may simplify or clarify the “SAY” directions which are read to students and explain how to take the test. These directions are in the <i>Examiner’s Manuals</i> , and their <i>Supplements</i> . Examiners/Proctors may <u>not</u> provide assistance with directions for test items that are within the student’s test.
Student reading his/her own test out loud	For any student who needs to hear himself or herself read aloud, the student can be tested individually. The student can then read the test aloud without interaction from the Examiner. The student may not be issued any kind of accessory including, but not limited to, a “whisper phone” or recording/playback device.

Appendix C: Special Assessment Accommodation Requests

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Division of Student Assessment and School Improvement 2015 – 2016 Special Assessment Accommodation Request

Directions: The Special Assessment Accommodation Request should be completed by either the Division Director of Testing (DDOT) or a designee. If completed by a designee, the request must be reviewed and approved by the DDOT. When the information requested below is complete, the form must be submitted as a Word document to the Virginia Department of Education through the Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SWSS) Dropbox located at <https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/ssws/> using the following process:

1. **To School Division Field** – Use the drop down menus to select **Virginia Department of Education** and to select the receiver as **Dippold, Lesin**.
2. **CC School Division Field** – Use the drop down menus to select **Virginia Department of Education** and to select the receiver as **Dunkley, Chance**.
3. **Subject Field** – Type in “Special Assessment Accommodation Request” and your school division name.
4. **Select File Field** – Use the drop down menu to select “New.”
5. **File to Upload Field** – Enter the file name, including the full local path, or use the browse button to select the file to be sent.
6. **Click the submit button to send the file to each of the receivers selected.**
7. **Confirmation email** – An email confirming receipt of the Special Assessment Accommodation Request form will be sent to the DDOT. If a confirmation email is not received within 2 business days, please contact student assessment staff at student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2102.

**** Do not submit the Special Assessment Accommodation Request via email, fax or in .pdf format. ****

To ensure adequate review time, requests must be submitted for each administration by the due dates listed below. Submission prior to the deadline is strongly encouraged.

<i>Test Administration</i>	<i>Request Form Deadline</i>
<i>Fall Writing 2015</i>	<i>October 5, 2015</i>
<i>Fall Non-Writing 2015</i>	<i>October 19, 2015</i>
<i>Spring 2016 Writing</i>	<i>February 1, 2016</i>
<i>Spring 2016 Non-Writing</i>	<i>February 22, 2016</i>
<i>Summer 2016 Writing & Non-Writing</i>	<i>April 25, 2016</i>

The Division Director of Testing must document extenuating circumstances in writing if submitting a late request.

Section I: Student Information

Date of Request:

School Division Name:

Student’s State Testing Identifier (STI):

Test Name:

Test Level: Select one...

Test Mode: Select one...

Date the student is scheduled to take the test indicated above:

Section II: Qualification Questions and Justification Statement

Please provide the following information:

Note: Questions 1 and 2 on the next page must be able to be answered with “Yes” for the VDOE to consider this Special Assessment Accommodation Request.

1. Is the accommodation documented (or will the accommodation be documented) on the student’s IEP/504 Plan? Select one...
2. Has this accommodation been used instructionally with the student? Select one...
3. Provide a clear and concise justification statement in the space below which includes:
 - Student’s disability;
 - Description of instructional accommodations provided to the student;
 - Description of all other test accommodations which will be provided for the assessment(s);
 - Description of the requested accommodation(s) which will be provided for the assessment(s);
 - If the requested accommodation(s) include the use of a commercially available product, please
 - specify product name, version and operating system, if applicable;
 - include a Web address or source for additional information;
 - Explanation of why the student needs the accommodation(s) to access the specific assessment.

Section III: Signatures

Title	Enter First and Last Name	Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
<i>Enter title, name and date below for person completing the Special Assessment Accommodation Request.</i>		
<i>Enter name and date below to verify that the Division Director of Testing has reviewed the Special Assessment Accommodation Request for completeness and accuracy.</i>		
Division Director of Testing		

To be completed by VDOE staff

- Approved**
 Approved with Conditions
 Not Approved

If Approved with Conditions, the following conditions must be implemented.

Appendix D: Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Disabilities

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Student Name	DOB	STI
Test Administration Date	Current Grade	Test
Course Content Teacher		Date

The IEP team /504 committee is considering the student named above for the calculator accommodation(s) checked below:

- Use of a calculator with additional functions (a calculator other than those routinely supplied to students on the Standards of Learning Mathematics (SOL) assessments);
- Use of a calculator on sections of the Standards of Learning Mathematics assessments in which a calculator is not permitted. (SOL Mathematics tests for grades 3-7)

To qualify for these accommodations, a student’s IEP team/504 committee must determine that a student is eligible based on the impact of the student’s disability. Please respond to each of the three questions below. A response of “No” to any question indicates that the student is **NOT** eligible for the calculator accommodation.

Note: This accommodation is not intended for students with disabilities whose skills in performing mathematical calculations are merely below grade level.

- 1) Does the student have a current IEP/504 Plan that documents the student’s disability and the need for a calculator to access the SOL assessment?
 Yes No
- 2) Does the student have a specific disability that involves attention to sequence and /or memory (short term, long term, or active working) that severely limits or prevents mathematical calculation at any level of difficulty?
 Yes No
- 3) As a result of a specific disability, is the student able to perform calculations only with a calculator routinely used in instruction?
 Yes No

If the answers to all three questions is Yes, provide a justification statement in the space provided below describing the student’s specific disability, and

1) the need for a calculator with additional functions in order to access the SOL mathematics assessment.
2) the need for a calculator on sections of the SOL tests in which a calculator is not permitted.

IEP/504 Committee Member Signatures	Date

Appendix E: Calculator Accommodation Criteria for Students with Blindness or Visual Impairments

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Student Name	DOB	STI
Test Administration Date	Current Grade	Test
Course Content Teacher	Date	

The IEP Team /504 Committee is considering the student named above for the calculator accommodation(s) checked below:

- Use of a calculator with additional functions (a calculator other than those routinely supplied to students on the Standards of Learning (SOL) Mathematics tests);
- Use of a calculator on sections of the Virginia Assessment Program Mathematics tests in which a calculator is not permitted. (SOL Mathematics tests for grades 3-7)

To qualify for these accommodations, a student's IEP Team/504 Committee must determine that a student is eligible based on the impact of the student's visual disability. Please respond to each of the three questions below. A response of "No" to any question indicates that the student is **NOT** eligible for the calculator accommodation.

Note: This accommodation is not intended for students with disabilities whose skills in performing mathematical calculations are merely below grade level.

- 1) Does the student have a current IEP/504 Plan that documents the student's disability and the need for a calculator to access the SOL assessment?
 Yes No
- 2) Does the student have blindness or a visual impairment that requires the use of a calculator with special functions?
 Yes No
- 3) As a result of the blindness or visual impairment, is the student able to perform calculations only with a calculator routinely used in instruction?
 Yes No

If the answer to all three questions is Yes, provide a justification statement in the space provided below describing the student's specific visual disability, and

the need for a calculator with additional functions in order to access the Virginia Assessment Program mathematics tests.
the need for a calculator on sections of the SOL tests in which a calculator is not permitted.

IEP Team/504 Committee Members' Signatures

Title	Print Name	Signature	Date