



# Maryland Accommodations Manual

**Selecting, Administering and Evaluating  
the Use of Accommodations  
for Instruction and Assessment**

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**Lillian Lowery**  
*State Superintendent of Schools*

**James H. DeGraffenreidt, Jr.**  
*President, Maryland Board of Education*

**Martin O'Malley**  
*Governor, State of Maryland*

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## Maryland State Department of Education Contacts

Trinell Bowman	Division of Accountability, Assessment and Data Systems . . . . .	(410) 767-2498 tbowman@msde.state.md.us
Cathy Nelson	Division of Instruction . . . . .	(410) 767-0714 cnelson@msde.state.md.us
Ilhye Yoon	Division of Instruction . . . . .	(410) 767-6577 iyoon@msde.state.md.us
Karen Andrews	Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services . . . . .	(410) 767-0792 kandrews@msde.state.md.us

# Table of Contents

	Page
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	
Maryland Accommodations Manual: An Overview	
The Structure of this Manual . . . . .	1-1
<b>Section 2: Maryland Accommodations Policy Overview</b>	
General Principles for All Maryland Assessment Programs . . . . .	2-1
Participation . . . . .	2-1
Definitions . . . . .	2-1
Accommodated Students . . . . .	2-2
Accommodations Not Specified In This Document . . . . .	2-3
Accommodated Students . . . . .	2-4
Excused Students . . . . .	2-5
Exempted Students . . . . .	2-6
Summary of Accommodating, Excusing, and Exempting Students . . . . .	2-7
<b>Section 3: Maryland Assessment Summary</b>	
Overview . . . . .	3-1
Maryland School Assessment in Reading and Mathematics (MSA) . . . . .	3-2
Maryland School Assessment in Science (MSA Science) . . . . .	3-3
Alternate Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA) . . . . .	3-4
Criteria for Identifying Students with Disabilities for Participation in Alt-MSA . . . . .	3-5
Alt-MSA Prompt Types . . . . .	3-6
Maryland High School Assessment (HSA) . . . . .	3-7
Bridge Plan for Academic Validation (BPAV) . . . . .	3-7
Modified High School Assessment (Mod-HSA) . . . . .	3-8
Criteria for Identifying Students with Disabilities for Participation in Mod-HSA . . . . .	3-9
English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) . . . . .	3-10
<b>Section 4: The Five-Step Process for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities</b>	
Step 1: Setting Expectations — Expect Students with Disabilities to Achieve	
Grade-level Academic Content Standards . . . . .	4-1
Step 2: Learning About Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of	
Students with Disabilities . . . . .	4-5
Step 3: Selecting Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment for	
Individual Students with Disabilities . . . . .	4-8
Step 4: Administering Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment of	
Students with Disabilities . . . . .	4-18
Step 5: Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Use in Instruction and	
Assessment of Students with Disabilities . . . . .	4-23
<b>Section 5: Accommodations Fact Sheets for Students with Disabilities</b>	
Fact Sheet SWD-1 — Presentation Accommodations . . . . .	5-1
Fact Sheet SWD-2 — Response Accommodations . . . . .	5-13
Fact Sheet SWD-3 — Timing and Scheduling Accommodations . . . . .	5-23
Fact Sheet SWD-4 — Setting Accommodations . . . . .	5-29
Fact Sheet SWD-5 — Examples of Accommodations Based on Student Characteristics . . . . .	5-33
Fact Sheet SWD-6 — Dos and Don'ts When Selecting Accommodations . . . . .	5-41
Fact Sheet SWD-7 — Rules for Administering Specific Accommodations . . . . .	5-43

**Section 6: Accommodations Tools for Students with Disabilities**

Tool SWD-1: Access Needs That May Require Accommodations . . . . .	6-1
Tool SWD-2: Accommodations from the Student's Perspective . . . . .	6-3
Tool SWD-3: Assessment Accommodations Plan . . . . .	6-4
Tool SWD-4: Assessment Accommodations Agreement. . . . .	6-5
Tool SWD-5: Logistics Planning Checklist . . . . .	6-6
Tool SWD-6: Accommodations Journal . . . . .	6-7
Tool SWD-7: Application for Approval to Administer the High School Assessments over Multiple Days . . . . .	6-9
Tool SWD-8: Guidance for Provision of the Interpretation/Transliterating Accommodation for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing . . . . .	6-17
Tool SWD-9: Use of Accommodations in the Classrooms . . . . .	6-19
Tool SWD-10: Assessment Accommodations Questionnaire . . . . .	6-20
Tool SWD-11: Parent Input Regarding Accommodations . . . . .	6-21

**Section 7: The Six-Step Process for Accommodating for English Learners (ELs)**

Step 1: Understanding the Legal Rights of English Learners . . . . .	7-1
Step 2: Setting Expectations — Understanding the Relationship between Language and Content in the Schooling Experience of an English Learner . . . . .	7-4
Step 3: Learning About Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of English Learners . . . . .	7-6
Step 4: Selecting Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Individual English Learners . . . . .	7-9
Step 5: Administering Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment of English Learners . . . . .	7-17
Step 6: Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Used in Instruction and Assessment of English Learners . . . . .	7-20

**Section 8: Accommodations Fact Sheets for English Learners**

Fact Sheet EL-1 — Detailed Documentation for EL Accommodations Permitted on State Content Assessments . . . . .	8-1
Fact Sheet EL-2 — Sample Strategies for Differentiated Instruction and Accommodations Permitted on State Content Assessments . . . . .	8-11

**Section 9: Accommodations Tools for English Learners**

Tool EL-1: Teacher Observation Checklist on Student Access Needs Requiring Accommodations . . . . .	9-1
Tool EL-2: Accommodations from the Student's Perspective . . . . .	9-4
Tool EL-3: Student Assessment Accommodations Agreement . . . . .	9-5
Tool EL-4: School Accommodations Logistics Planning Checklist . . . . .	9-6
Tool EL-5A: Accommodations Documentation for English Learners. . . . .	9-7
Tool EL-5B: Accommodations Documentation for Reclassified English Learners (RELS) . . . . .	9-8
Tool EL-5C: Accommodations Documentation Update for English Learners (ELs) including Refused ESOL Services ELs and RELS. . . . .	9-9
Tool EL-6A: Sample Plan for Elementary School Students Designated as English Learners . . . . .	9-10
Tool EL-6B: Sample Plan for Secondary School Students Designated as English Learners . . . . .	9-13

	Page
<b>Appendix A: This Appendix is no longer in use</b> .....	A-1
<b>Appendix B: IEP Team Decision-Making Process Eligibility Tool for Mod-HSA</b> .....	B-1
<b>Appendix C: IEP Team Decision-Making Process Eligibility Tool for Alt-MSA</b> .....	C-1
<b>Appendix D: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan</b> .....	D-1
<b>Appendix E: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an EL Plan</b> .....	E-1
<b>Appendix F: Emergency Accommodation Form for State Assessments</b> .....	F-1
<b>Appendix G: Quick Reference Guide to Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD)</b> .....	G-1
<b>Appendix H: Quick Reference Guide to Accommodations for English Learners (ELs)</b> .....	H-1
<b>Appendix I: Protocol for the Use of the 2-A: Scribe Accommodation</b> .....	I-1
<b>Appendix J: Protocol for Individuals Providing Verbatim Reading Test Accommodations</b> .....	J-1
<b>Appendix K: Guidance for Selection, Training and Administering the 3-A: Extended Time Accommodation</b> ..	K-1
<b>Appendix L: Academic and Learning Aids Instructional/Assessment Toolkit</b> .....	L-1
<b>Appendix M: Student Accommodation Refusal Form</b> .....	M-1
<b>Appendix N: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: Students with Disabilities</b> .....	N-1
<b>Appendix O: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners</b> .....	O-1
<b>Appendix P: Maryland State Content Assessment/ACCESS for ELLs® Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners with Disabilities ONLY</b> .....	P-1
<b>Appendix Q: Maryland State Department of Education Technical Assistance Bulletins and Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Assessments</b> .....	Q-1
<b>Appendix R: References</b> .....	R-1

# Section 1: Introduction

## Maryland Accommodations Manual: An Overview

This publication has been developed to ensure that:

- participation in assessments is consistent in all Maryland programs, schools, and school systems;
- accommodations are provided to all qualified students; and
- accommodations used in assessments are also used in daily instruction.

The Maryland Accommodations Manual (MAM) presents a five-step process for use in the selection, administration, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of instructional and assessment accommodations for students with disabilities. The MAM also presents a six-step process for English learners. The information in this manual is applicable to

1. students with disabilities (SWD) (that is, students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan) [Refer to Sections 1 through 6 and Appendices B-D, F, G, I, J, K, L, M and N];
2. students who are English learners (ELs) [Refer to Sections 1 through 3, 7 through 9 and Appendices E, F, H, I, J, K, M, O and P]; and
3. students who are ELs and who also have a disability resulting in them having both an EL Plan and an IEP. These students must follow the accommodations as outlined in their IEP (that is, the IEP takes precedence over the EL Plan). Please note that these students are also eligible for EL accommodations that may not be included in the IEP.

This manual also summarizes the statewide assessment programs required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and supersedes all previous editions of this document. The information and requirements described in this manual apply to students in all public schools and to students in non-public settings whose education is supported by Maryland public education funding.

### ***The Structure of this Manual***

The MAM consists of several sections, as follows:

**Section 1: Introduction.** This brief section presents an introduction and overview of the MAM.

**Section 2: Maryland Accommodations Policy Overview.** This section describes the general requirements for accommodating, excusing, and exempting students in Maryland assessment programs.

**Section 3: Maryland Assessment Summary.** This section summarizes the various Maryland State assessment programs. Specific requirements for accommodating, excusing, and exempting students for each program are found in Section 5 (SWD) and Section 8 (EL).

**Section 4: The Five-Step Process for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.** This section outlines a five-step process for implementing accommodations for instruction and assessment for students with disabilities, as follows:

- **Setting Expectations:** Guidance on the process of setting expectations for students with disabilities to achieve grade-level academic content standards.
- **Learning About Accommodations:** Guidance on learning about accommodations for instruction and assessment.
- **Selecting Accommodations:** Guidance on selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual students.
- **Administering Accommodations:** Guidance on administering accommodations during instruction and assessment.
- **Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Use:** Guidance on evaluating and improving accommodation use.

***Section 5: Accommodations Fact Sheets for Students with Disabilities.***

This section consists of seven fact sheets, each describing the specific accommodations available in Maryland for use in instruction and assessment. The first four fact sheets are organized according to the four categories of accommodations: presentation accommodations, response accommodations, timing and scheduling accommodations, and setting accommodations. Fact sheets five through seven provide examples of and guidance for implementing accommodations for assessment and instruction.

***Section 6: Accommodations Tools for Students with Disabilities.*** This section consists of a variety of tools and worksheets which may be used by teachers and other local staff in implementing instruction and assessment accommodations for students with disabilities.

***Section 7: The Six-Step Process for Accommodations for English Learners.***

This section outlines a six-step process for implementing accommodations for instruction and assessment for students who are English learners.

- **Understanding the Legal Rights of English Learners**
- **Setting Expectations:** Guidance on understanding the relationship between language and content in the schooling experience of an English learner.
- **Learning About Accommodations:** Guidance on learning about accommodations for instruction and assessment.
- **Selecting Accommodations:** Guidance on selecting accommodations for instruction and assessment for individual English learners.
- **Administering Accommodations:** Guidance on administering accommodations during instruction and assessment.
- **Evaluating and Improving Accommodations Use:** Guidance on evaluating and improving accommodation use.

***Section 8: Accommodations Fact Sheets for English Learners Permitted on State Content Assessments.***

This section contains two fact sheets. The first fact sheet provides detailed descriptions of the specific accommodations available in Maryland for use in instruction and assessment of ELs. The second fact sheet provides a chart to demonstrate the parallel between differentiated instructional strategies and allowable testing accommodations for English learners.

**Section 9: Accommodations Tools for English Learners.** This section provides a variety of tools and worksheets (EL Accommodations Tools EL-1 through EL-6) which may be used by teachers and other local staff in implementing EL accommodations for instruction and assessment.

**Appendix A:** This Appendix is no longer in use.

**Appendix B: IEP Team Decision-Making Process Eligibility Tool for Mod-HSA.** This appendix provides the decision-making process and form on which to record the results of IEP Team consideration of a student's participation in the Mod-HSA Assessments.

**Appendix C: IEP Team Decision-Making Process Eligibility Tool for Alt-MSA.** This appendix provides the decision-making process and form on which to record the results of IEP Team consideration of a student's participation in the Alt-MSA.

**Appendix D: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an IEP or 504 Plan.** This form is completed when a Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC) requests the MSDE to consider, for approval, an accommodation beyond those listed in this manual.

**Appendix E: Unique Accommodation Request Form for State Assessments for Students with an EL Plan.** This form is completed when a LAC requests the MSDE to consider, for approval, an accommodation beyond those listed in the manual.

**Appendix F: Emergency Accommodation Form for State Assessments.** If prior to or during testing, the school principal (or principal's designee) determines that a student requires an emergency accommodation. This form must be completed and submitted to the LAC for approval. A copy of this form must be filed in the student's assessment records and a copy must be retained by the LAC at the central office.

**Appendix G: Quick Reference Guide to Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD).** This section contains a summary of the essential accommodations information contained in other parts of the manual. Appendix G is intended for use as an abbreviated section which may be used by local schools and school systems for quick reference to accommodations and accommodations policies. However, a copy of the complete version of this manual must be provided to all staff who work in any capacity with accommodations issues for students with disabilities. These staff members would include IEP Team members, teachers, other school staff and administrators, and school system central office staff.

**Appendix H: Quick Reference Guide to Accommodations for English Learners (ELs).** This section contains a summary of the essential accommodations information contained in other parts of the manual. Refer to Section 7/Step 4 guidance in combination with the detailed guidance in Fact Sheet EL-1 in Section 8 to individualize accommodation support for ELs on the state assessments.

**Appendix I: Protocol for the Use of the 2-A: Scribe Accommodation.** This appendix provides guidance and procedures that test examiners and/or accommodators must follow when providing the scribe accommodation.



**Appendix J: Protocol for Individuals Providing Verbatim Reading Test Accommodations.** This appendix provides guidance and procedures that test examiners and/or accommodators must follow when providing the verbatim reading accommodation.

**Appendix K: Guidance for Selection, Training and Administering the 3-A: Extended Time Accommodation.** This appendix provides guidance that test examiners and/or accommodators should follow when providing the extended time accommodation.

**Appendix L: Academic and Learning Aids Instructional/Assessment Toolkit.** The purpose of the toolkit is to provide a listing of a variety of tools that may assist students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum. The charts provide tools for reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, study and organization and communication and access. The toolkit is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but to provide examples of tools that may be used with students.

**Appendix M: Student Accommodation Refusal Form.** If a student refuses to use an accommodation during testing that is listed in his or her IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Plan, the school should use this form to document in detail the reason(s) for the student refusal.

**Appendix N: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: Students with Disabilities.** This table provides a comparison list of accommodations allowed on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessment versus Maryland State Assessments for students with disabilities.

**Appendix O: Maryland State Assessment/NAEP Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners.** This table provides a comparison list of accommodations allowed on the NAEP assessment versus Maryland State Assessments for English Learners.

**Appendix P: Maryland State Content Assessment/ACCESS for ELLs® Accommodations Crosswalk: English Learners with Disabilities ONLY.** This table provides a comparison list of accommodations allowed on the ACCESS for ELLs® assessment versus Maryland State Assessments for English learners with disabilities.

**Appendix Q: Maryland State Department of Education Technical Assistance Bulletins and Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Assessments.** This appendix provides a list of publications, produced by various Divisions at the Maryland State Department of Education, which provide local school systems with access to current information on assessment and accommodations.

**Appendix R: References.** This appendix contains references and citations to documents which support the information contained in the other sections of the manual.



Throughout this edition of the Maryland Accommodations Manual, attention has been given to addressing issues related to providing accommodations on technology-based assessment platforms. Often, these issues have been marked with the symbol of a computer mouse.

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