

Testing Accommodations

The Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability provides a list of standard and nonstandard MEAP testing accommodations for students with a disability or for students with limited English proficiency.

In general, the support for a standard or nonstandard testing accommodation must be documented in the student's school records. For students with a disability, documentation usually consists of a Section 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Plan. This documentation must be specific for each test subject administered.

In addition, the Michigan Merit Award Board has approved expanded accommodations for students with limited English proficiency. The expanded accommodations were developed in consultation with districts, schools, and practitioners in the education of children with limited English skills. A district administrator, in consultation with the classroom teacher, usually makes the decision about appropriate accommodations for students with limited English proficiency. Districts with large LEP populations may have a coordinator or specialist at the administrative level assigned this responsibility. In districts with small populations the decision is often the responsibility of the classroom teacher and the district MEAP coordinator. The decision is not whether or not to test a child; it is which accommodation is most appropriate for the child.

The actual list of accommodations is based on a resolution adopted by the Michigan Merit Award Board in March 2003. The list addresses special education and Section 504 students' needs as well as Limited English Proficient (LEP) students' needs.

NOTE: Standard assessment accommodations do not change the construct that the assessment is measuring and do provide a valid score. Nonstandard accommodations do change the construct that the assessment is measuring rendering scores that are not valid and ineligible for the Michigan Merit Award. In addition, students who use nonstandard assessment accommodations are counted as being assessed for the calculation of No Child Left Behind participation rates, but are counted as not proficient when calculating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

All accommodated versions are Form 1 test booklets for each of the MEAP tests. Students taking an accommodated version of a MEAP test must also have a printed copy of a Form 1 test booklet for that subject.

Michigan Merit Award Board Policy on Standard and Nonstandard Accommodations

Resolution 2001-02 establishes standard assessment accommodations for purposes of the Michigan Merit Award. The complete resolution is available on the Michigan Merit Award Web site (www.meritaward.state.mi.us) in the *Options* section, under "Resolutions."

Standard Accommodations

The following test accommodations will be considered "standard accommodations" for Michigan Merit Award purposes:

Accommodations appropriate for LEP students (as well as students with a disability) are noted with a diamond (◆). Items marked with a bullet (●) are only available to students with disabilities.

Scheduling

- ◆ Provision of additional testing time
- ◆ Allowance of frequent or extended supervised breaks
- ◆ Administration of the test at a time most beneficial to the student, with appropriate supervision by a school district professional

Location

- Provision for test administration at home or in a care facility with appropriate supervision by a school district professional
- Provision for distraction-free space or alternate location (e.g., study carrel, front of classroom)
- Placement of student where he/she is most comfortable (e.g., front of room, back of room)
- ◆ Administration of test in an ESL or special education classroom
- Provision for individual test administration (supervised)
- Provision for special lighting
- Provision of adaptive or special furniture
- Provision for freedom to move, stand or pace during an individualized test administration
- Provision of special acoustics
- ◆ Provisions for test administration in a small group setting
- Provision of soft, calming music to minimize distractions

Assistance with Test Directions

- ◆ Reading all directions to the student in English or in the student's native language, provided that the student is receiving native language instruction at least part of the time
- Rereading of directions for each subtask, as required
- Use of directions that have been highlighted
- Simplification of language in directions (paraphrase)
- Emphasis on verbs in directions
- ◆ Provision for student restatement of directions in his or her own words
- Use of sign language or oral interpreters for directions and sample items
- ◆ Clarification of directions by asking students to restate them

Assistance during Assessment

- ◆ Administration of test by ESL staff, special education teacher or similarly qualified person
- ◆ Reading of Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and Writing assessment content and questions to the student in English or in the student's native language, provided that the student is receiving native language instruction, at least part of the time (Note: Reading Parts 2A, 2B or 3 of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation, since these tests are measures of reading or listening to English)

- Signing of assessment content and questions to student except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of page-turner
- Recording of student responses (writing or audiotape)
- Placement of teacher/proctor near student

Equipment and Assistive Technology

- Use of talking calculator (mathematics test only)
- User of sign language to indicate student response, except for constructed-response items
- Use of text-talk converter except for the reading and listening tests (Note: Reading Part 2A, 2B or 3 of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of visual magnification devices
- Use of auditory amplification devices
- Use of masks, overlays or markers to maintain place
- Use of compact disc player with a CD version of tests except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of Braille writer for recording responses
- Use of communications device to indicate responses
- Use of calculator (mathematics assessments only)
- Use of rulers as provided by Michigan Educational Assessment Program
- Use of pencils adapted in size or grip
- Use of list of formulae as provided by Michigan Educational Assessment Program
- Use of noise buffers
- Use of computer or word processing equipment (spell check, thesaurus and grammar check must be disabled)
- ◆ Use of bilingual word-for-word translation dictionary for LEP students (no dictionaries that define or explain words or terms)
- Use of Braille ruler
- Use of acetate colored shield to reduce glare and increase contrast
- Use of voice-activated word processor (except for writing assessment)
- Use of devices or equipment to secure paper to desk

Test Format

- Use of lined or grid paper for recording answers
- Provision of Braille or large-print versions of the assessments
- Permission to mark answers in test booklet, to be transferred to answer folder by teacher or proctor
- Use of computer for task presentation

- Communication of test questions by CD except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of scribe for constructed-response items (student must indicate punctuation and spell all key words)
- Permission to accomplish subtests in different order

Nonstandard Accommodations

Accommodations not on this list will be considered “nonstandard,” and MEAP test scores accomplished by use of nonstandard accommodations will not be considered eligible scores for Michigan Merit Award purposes. Examples of such nonstandard accommodations would include the following:

- Any accommodation not listed as a standard accommodation that violates the Michigan Merit Award Test Administration Ethnic Procedure
- Use of a calculator on any MEAP assessment other than mathematics assessments
- Use of electronic spell checkers, thesaurus or grammar check
- Use of a dictionary, thesaurus or spelling book for mathematics, science, social studies or reading assessments
- The reading or translation of any portion of Part 2A, 2B, or 3 of the ELA test in English or a student’s native language
- Any test administration not directly supervised by a school district professional

Accommodations not included on the Standard Accommodations list, which in the opinion of school officials, parents, teachers or other interested parties do not violate the MEAP Test Administration Ethics policy and do not interfere with the intent of the assessments, may be approved by the Michigan Merit Award executive director, pending review by the Michigan Merit Award Board.

Any student answer folder that has the *Nonstandard Accommodation* circle filled-in will be subject to review.

Audio Versions of the Tests

Only students whose physical, sensory, or perceptual disabilities prevent them from accessing printed materials may use audio versions (compact discs or audiotapes) of the mathematics, science, and social studies MEAP tests. There is no audio version of the Part 1 (Writing from Knowledge and Experience) of the English language arts (ELA) test, as the directions and writing prompts are read aloud to all students. There is no audio version for the reading portion of the ELA test.

If additional audio versions of the tests are needed, the district MEAP coordinator must use the Additional Materials Request Form from the MEAP Test Administrator Manual.

The following instructions are to be used when administering audio versions of the tests:

- The tests must be administered to each student individually, using equipment with a headset and counter, if available.

- Students must have a printed copy of a Form 1 test booklet while they are taking the test. Make sure students indicate the form number as noted in the test directions.
- Audio versions must be used in conjunction with a Form 1 printed test (regular print or large-print), unless the student has a total loss of vision.
- Students may be assisted in playing the audio versions, if necessary, but may *not* be given any help with test items.
- Students who use the audio versions must use standard answer folders, but may be given one of the following options:
 - a) gridding their own answer folders,
 - b) marking answers in their test booklet and having a school staff member transcribe the answers into the answer folders, or
 - c) indicating their responses to a school staff member who will grid the answer folders.
- The test administrator must read the test directions from a *MEAP Test Administrator Manual* to the student. Test directions are also included at the beginning of each audio version, but should be presented by the test administrator first so any questions the student has can be addressed.
- Students should set their audio equipment counters to “0” at the start of each test and should be encouraged to write the counter number in their test booklet whenever there is a question they wish to reconsider later in the testing session.
- The CD Audio Test contains item-by-item CD tracking. Any instructions or test item scenario information is included on the track for the subsequent item. For example, Track 1 contains all test information leading up to and including item 1. Track 2 contains item 2, Track 3 contains item 3, and so on.
- Answer folders for students who used the audio versions of the tests must be packaged and returned with the rest of the answer folders
- Audio versions of the tests are secure materials that must be returned at the end of the testing window. No copies of these materials should be made, downloaded or retained.

Scribes, Tape Recorders, and Brailers

Dictating responses to a scribe or into a tape recorder or Braille is acceptable. Students using one of these accommodations are to include specific instructions about punctuation for the writing test.

If a student uses a tape recorder, scribe, or Braille as an accommodation, a member of the school staff must transcribe his or her response into an answer folder. Spelling, punctuation, indentation, etc., must be transcribed *exactly* as it was in the student’s original response. For students using the Braille version, it is important to grid the “Spec. Ed. – Braille” circle on their answer folder(s). **Grid the “Other” circle on the student answer folder(s) to indicate the student used a tape recorder or scribe as an accommodation. Print the accommodation used on the line provided.**

Word Processors

The use of word processors is only permitted for students with disabilities who need that accommodation as defined in the IEP, Section 504 Plan, or when needed due to the rapid onset of a medical disability. Because the English language arts test assesses use of the conventions of writing, including correct spelling and grammatical usage, students using word processors or word processing software as an

accommodation, must be monitored so that spelling, dictionary, thesaurus, and grammatical software are deactivated. **Grid the “Other” circle on the student answer folder(s) to indicate the student used a word processor as an accommodation. Print the accommodation used on the line provided.**

Word-processed answers do **not** need to be transcribed into an answer folder by school staff. Each word-processed page must be printed and identified with student and test identification information (student name and birth date; student MEAP Internal Tracking (MIT) number; school and district codes and names; testing window, grade, and subject), and inserted into an answer folder that has all required student identification information completed. Do not staple or otherwise attach word-processed pages to the answer folder. ***All answer folders containing word-processed inserts must be shipped in an envelope or box using the bright orange label that is marked “Special Handling/Word Processed,” provided to the district MEAP coordinator. This envelope is to be placed on the top of the first of the school’s return packages for that particular shipment.***

Rapid Onset of a Medical Disability

Prior to MEAP testing, a student may have rapid onset of a medical disability that warrants a MEAP test accommodation. For example,

- A few days prior to testing, a student has broken his or her arm. He or she may need an accommodation, either a word-processor or a scribe.
- A student has recently undergone surgery and is homebound. The student may need to take the test at home with appropriate supervision of a school district professional.

In the case of rapid onset of a medical disability, MEAP asks the school’s principal or guidance counselor to document, for the student’s file, the date and nature of the disability (e.g., broken arm) and a description of the accommodation provided. This is considered a standard accommodation and should be filled in appropriately on the student answer folder.