

Selecting and Assigning Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Relevant assessments:

All Michigan state assessments:

- **M-STEP**
- **MME**
 - » ACT WorkKeys®
 - » SAT® with Essay
 - » M-STEP (Science and Social Studies)
- **MI-Access**
 - » MI-Access Functional Independence (FI)
 - » MI-Access Supported Independence (SI)
 - » MI-Access Participation (P)
- **WIDA™**
 - » WIDA ACCESS for ELLs
 - » WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs
 - » WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT)
 - » WIDA Screener
- **PSAT™ 8/9 and 10**
- **Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments (K–2)**

- Determining Who Gets Supports
- Determining What Supports
- Assigning Supports
- Nonstandard Supports
- Evaluating Support Effectiveness
- Practical Tips & Key Terms

Assessment Coordinator Training Guide

NOTE to Reader:

The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is comprised of a series of documents published by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to provide information to District and Building Assessment Coordinators regarding their assessment-related roles and responsibilities. This guide provides the resources and knowledge base necessary to establish sound test administration practices and procedures that will allow for the reporting of valid and reliable test results. It will introduce you to Michigan's state assessment systems in general and will link you to the people, trainings, materials, tools, and resources needed throughout the process of coordinating state-provided assessments in your district.

This document is one chapter of the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** series. The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is not meant to replace assessment-specific testing manuals, guides, training resources, or other documentation associated with each assessment program.

The web pages referenced in this document are active links. For the full URLs to these pages, please see the [Assessment Coordinator Training Guide Quick Reference](#) chapter. In that resource you will find an interactive list, along with the full URLs, of the assessment-related web pages you will need to access, as well as:

- A preface for the **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide**, which includes information on how to use the guide
- An interactive **Table of Contents** for the training guide
- A reference list of acronym definitions, and
- Important contact information

It is recommended that you keep the **Quick Reference** chapter readily available for future use.



608 W. Allegan
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Website: www.michigan.gov/oeaa
Email: mde-oeaa@michigan.gov
Phone: 877-560-8378
Fax: 517-335-1186

Intro

This chapter will provide an overview of the process of selecting and assigning supports for Michigan assessments by responding to the following questions:

- ▶ Who should be included in the decision-making process when determining which supports a student is to receive?
- ▶ How can you determine which Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations are appropriate?
- ▶ How are Designated Supports and Accommodations selected and/or assigned to students?
- ▶ What if a student needs a support that is not listed?
- ▶ How is the effectiveness of a support evaluated to determine future implementation?

Who should be included in the decision-making process when determining which supports a student is to receive?



In cases where students have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 Plans, the decision-making process to determine which supports a student needs during instruction is already integrated into the team planning process. However, for a student who does not have an IEP or 504 Plan, a process should be established and applied on an individual basis to determine the appropriate support(s) for the student's needs.

The following people are those who are typically involved in such a process:

- » general education teachers (mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies)
- » special education teachers
- » intervention teachers/specialists
- » bilingual, and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers

- » district and building-level special education administrators
- » counselors, Title I specialists, curriculum directors, and building principals
- » parents
- » students

District and Building Coordinators do not have to be part of the decision-making process, but they must be informed of the specific Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations students will receive. This is because they will be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate support is selected in either the online test delivery system, or on a paper/pencil answer document, and that students are receiving the support they need for the best possible testing experience. They will also ensure that test administrators provide the appropriate Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations materials to students.

- ❖ A diamond shape indicates that the support must be recorded as something the student will be using in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#)
- B An upper case B indicates that this support should be bubbled on the paper/pencil student answer document when used.

Following is a general overview by assessment type on selecting or assigning supports to students:

■ M-STEP, MI-Access, and Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments

- » **Online administration:** Some supports must be assigned in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#) prior to generating the student Test Tickets for the support to be available for the student during testing.
- » **Paper/pencil administration:** Schools administering assessments via paper/pencil may need to order specific materials, such as a Braille form or an enlarged print form. Many materials can be downloaded through a secure website or ordered through the [OEAA Secure Site](#). Means of access will vary depending on the assessment.

NOTE: Students receiving some accommodations are **required** to take the assessment online, even if the school is primarily testing using paper/pencil. For example, a student who requires closed captioning for the **Listening** items of the M-STEP ELA test would need to be assessed online. These students should be identified through the [OEAA Secure Site](#).

■ MME: SAT with Essay, ACT WorkKeys, and M-STEP science and social studies

- » **Online and paper/pencil administration:** Refer to the [ACCESS for ELLs Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement](#) for accommodation specifics.
- » Supports and accommodations materials for the **M-STEP portion of the MME** for social studies and science can be ordered through the [OEAA Secure Site](#).

■ WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Accommodations for the online administration of WIDA ACCESS for ELLs must be selected in the secure [WIDA Assessment Management System \(AMS\)](#) system prior to generating Test Tickets for the accommodation to be available for testing.

For more information about how to select accommodations in WIDA AMS, see the [WIDA AMS User Guide](#).

■ SAT with Essay, ACT WorkKeys, PSAT 8/9, and PSAT 10

- » Refer to the [Supports and Accommodations Guidance Document](#) for allowable supports for the **M-STEP portion of the MME**, the **SAT with Essay**, and the **ACT WorkKeys** assessments

- » Refer to the following documents for more information regarding the accommodations request process for the **SAT, PSAT 8/9, and PSAT 10**:

- **SAT School Day Accommodated Testing Manual:** found on the MDE [MME web page](#) under the **SAT (College Entrance Assessment)** header, and on the [College Board – Michigan website](#)

- **PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10 Coordinator Manuals:** found on the MDE [PSAT web page](#) under the **Current Assessment and Administration** header, and on the [College Board – Michigan website](#)

- » It is important to note that most allowable accommodations for students taking the **SAT with Essay, PSAT 8/9, and PSAT 10** must be requested by the school's **Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator** at least **seven weeks in advance**, using the College Board's [SSD Online Portal](#) system.

The SSD Coordinator also provides Test Coordinators with the **Nonstandard Administration Report (NAR)**. Students approved for testing with accommodations, as well as the appropriate accommodation(s) for each of those students for all College Board

assessments will appear on the NAR. The NAR can be accessed by the SSD Coordinator about 4 weeks prior to the initial test day.

Some students who are College Board-approved for accommodations will test on the initial testing day, while others may test anywhere within the accommodated window. Test Coordinators will need to refer to the **NAR** to organize testing for accommodated students, including when to test, where to test, what materials accommodated students will need, and which scripts are needed.

- » Regarding the **ACT WorkKeys** assessment, unlike College Board, ACT does not require pre-approval for an allowable accommodation prior to test administration. However, it is **required** that documentation in some form, such as a recent IEP or Section 504 plan, be collected and kept on file. For a complete explanation of the documentation guidelines, refer to the **Written Documentation** section of the **ACT WorkKeys Administration Manual for Accommodations and English Learner Supports**.

For more information on accommodated materials, call 877-560-8378 and select the appropriate menu option or send an email to mde-oeaa@michigan.gov.

Detailed instructions for the [OEAA Secure Site](#) are available on the [Secure Site Training web page](#) for the different functions of the Secure Site.

For a detailed tutorial on how to update/select Designated Supports and Accommodations in eDIRECT, please refer to the **Accommodations: Adding, Editing, and Mass-Assigning Mini-Module** video resource in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#). For a more general explanation on how to assign accommodations in the DRC INSIGHT Portal, refer to the **INSIGHT Portal User Guide**, also in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#).

Also, for simple overviews on the systems referenced in this chapter please see the following relevant chapters of this training guide:

- » [DRC INSIGHT Portal Basics](#)
- » [OEAA Secure Site](#)
- » [College Board Systems Used in State Assessments](#)
- » [WIDA AMS Basics](#)

What if a student needs a support that is not listed?



The vast majority of supports students might use that are allowable on state assessments are listed in the **M-STEP, MI-Access, SAT, ACT WorkKeys, and WIDA Student Supports and Accommodations Table**.

However, some supports a student uses on a regular basis, or that are documented in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, may be considered **nonstandard**; that is, the support is not an allowable support listed in the relevant **Supports and Accommodations Table**, and the use of that support may invalidate the test results. If a support is needed for a student and is not listed in the documentation for the assessment being administered, please contact the [OEAA via email](#) for directions regarding its potential use. In the email, include the following information:

- » In the Subject line: Accessibility Support Request for (content area)
- » Educator's name, school/district, and contact information

- » A description of the support to be provided
- » An explanation of why the support is needed

It is important to note that, for the SAT College Entrance Exam, some accommodations that are allowable for other Michigan assessments may **not** be allowable for the SAT and are considered "State Allowable – Non-College Reportable." These accommodations will result in a score that may not be used for college entrance purposes, but the student can still be considered as tested in the state accountability system. For more information on accommodation procedures for the SAT, see the **SAT Coordinator Manual**, available on the [MME web page](#) and the [College Board – Michigan website](#).

You should also know, there is no college reporting for PSAT. However, if an accommodation is used and was not approved by the College Board, that student's score will be invalidated.

How is the effectiveness of a support evaluated to determine future implementation?



After testing is completed, schools should evaluate the use of Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations used on assessments. Schools should use a method of evaluation that works best for their staff and students. Examples may include:

- » Observing students and noting their use of the assigned supports and accommodations
- » Conducting post-assessment student interviews

IEP and 504 Plan planning teams should collect and analyze data regarding the use of a required accommodation comprehensively. Such a review would not only consider its use on the state

assessment, but its effectiveness in the classroom on a daily basis. The team would use this information to determine if the support should be continued, modified or its use faded.

The OEAA provides some tools that educators may use for evaluation purposes. Schools may also develop their own observational and interview tools. A sample interview form can be found in **Appendix A** of the [Supports and Accommodations Guidance Document](#), which is located on the M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA web pages under the **Supports and Accommodations** header.

Practical Tips



- Make use of the [Tracking Sheet for Supports and Accommodations, M-STEP, MI-Access and WIDA](#) spreadsheet to keep track of your students' assigned Designated Supports and Accommodations for all Michigan assessments. The tracking spreadsheet is located on the M-STEP, MI-Access, and WIDA web pages under the **Supports and Accommodations** header.
- Educators can also use planning documents such as the **M-STEP eDIRECT Accommodations Worksheets** for each grade, which can be found on the [M-STEP web page](#) > **Student Supports and Accommodations** header > [Recording and Tracking Resources](#) link, when preparing for assessments.
- A more comprehensive form for individual students, **Tool 4: Accessibility Supports in the Classroom**, is also available on all Michigan assessment web pages. This tool tracks different aspects of how a student uses accessibility supports in the classroom and which of these supports may be used on Michigan's assessments.
- OEAA also offers another form, **Tool 5: After-test Accessibility Questions**, which can be used to help gauge how useful and effective accessibility supports are to individual students.
- Some students may benefit from testing individually or in a small group of no more than 5 students, particularly if the students are using supports such as the read-aloud option for paper/pencil assessment that may be distracting to other students. This is considered a Universal Tool. Alternate locations, labs, and classrooms may need to be identified for these situations. For more information, see the Student Supports and Accommodations Table.
- For more information on supports and accommodations for students, please review the MDE [Supports & Accommodations Webinars](#).

Key Terms

- **Embedded** vs. **non-embedded** Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations:
 - » An **embedded** support is a Designated Support or Accommodation that is a feature in the online test delivery system, such as text-to-speech, masking, contrasting color and color choices, or Video Sign Language (VSL), that must be assigned in the DRC INSIGHT Portal or WIDA AMS prior to generating test tickets to be available for the student at the time of testing. To determine which Designated Supports and Accommodations are **Embedded (E)**, see the **Student Supports and Accommodations Table**. Embedded supports are indicated by an “E” and a (✓) check mark in the table. Students should practice using these supports prior to testing in the **Online Tools Training (OTTs)** in the [DRC INSIGHT Portal](#).
 - » A **non-embedded** support is provided by the district or school as an external resource to what is provided through the online test delivery system, such as scratch paper, read-aloud, amplification devices, or scribes. All paper/pencil supports are considered non-embedded.