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 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

MICHIGAN Department of Education

Updated: March 2023

NOTE to Reader:

The **Assessment Coordinator Training Guide** is composed 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.

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 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. District and Building Coordinators will also ensure that test administrators provide the appropriate Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations materials to students.

Educators may also find the following resources helpful for making decisions:

■ **M-STEP Guide for Teachers of Students Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing (DHH)**

■ **M-STEP Guide for Teachers of Students Who Are English Learners (EL)**

■ **M-STEP Guide for Teachers of Students Who Have a Visual Impairment (VI)**

How can you determine which Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations are appropriate?

It is important to consider the assessment being administered, mode of assessment, and content area, as not all Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations are available or allowable across all assessments, mode of test administration, or content areas. Once the IEP, 504 Plan, or English Learner instructional team has determined which students are to receive supports, and which accommodations they need, District and Building Coordinators will review the **Supports and Accommodations Guidance Document**, which includes the **M-STEP, MI-Access, SAT, ACT WorkKeys, and WIDA Student Supports and Accommodations Tables**, available on each assessment's web page. This document contains information about all state-allowed Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations for the M-STEP, MI-Access, SAT®, ACT WorkKeys®, and WIDA™ assessments.

The **Student Supports and Accommodations Tables** (see Figures 1 and 2) organize supports by assessment (M-STEP; MI-Access; SAT, PSAT™ 8/9 and PSAT 10; ACT WorkKeys; and WIDA), content area (English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies), support type (Universal Tools, Designated Supports, or Accommodations), mode of test delivery (online or paper/pencil), and means of access (DRC INSIGHT Portal [formerly known as eDIRECT], Secure Site, or bubbled).

Included in the mode of test delivery column is an indication whether a support is available as an **embedded (E)** feature in the online test delivery system, or if it must be provided as a **non-embedded (NE)** external resource. (Detailed definitions of both embedded and non-embedded supports are located under the Key Terms section of this chapter.)

Figure 1 – Student Supports and Accommodations Table : Designated Supports

Universal Tool, Designated Support, or Accommodation description

Mode of delivery

How to access

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Designated Supports - M-STEP English Language Arts (ELA)

No.	Support Type	Mode	How to Access
	Administration of the assessment in an alternate education setting (out of school) with appropriate supervision (e.g., at home when student is homebound, in care facility when it is medically necessary)	Paper/Pencil	
	Administration of the assessment in an interim alternative education setting (out of school) with appropriate supervision (e.g., juvenile facility)	Paper/Pencil	
4	Noise buffers (e.g., ear mufflers, white noise, and/or other equipment to block external sounds)	Paper/Pencil Online (NE)	**B** ❖
6	Text-to-Speech (Items Only, TTS) test questions and answer options in grades 3-8	Online (E)	✓
8	Read aloud (Human Reader) – test questions and answer options read aloud in grades 3-8 by human reader (refer to the Read-Aloud Guidelines document)	Paper/Pencil Online (NE)	**B** ❖
12	Use of auditory amplification devices or special sound systems	Paper/Pencil Online (NE)	❖
13	Use of visual aids (e.g., closed circuit television, magnification devices)	Paper/Pencil Online (NE)	❖
14	Masking	Online (E)	✓
	Use of a page turner	Paper/Pencil	
	Use of non-skid surface that will not damage the answer document or scanning	Paper/Pencil	

For Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations specific to the Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments, refer to the **Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments (K-2) Supports and Accommodations Table and Resources.**

The table is organized by support type (Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations). Each table describes the supports available and includes columns for each content area (Mathematics and ELA). A check mark (✓) in the Mathematics or ELA column indicates that the support is available as a Universal Tool, Designated Support, or Accommodation for that content area assessment.

Figure 2 – Student Supports and Accommodations Table : Universal Tools

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Universal Tools		
Support Type	**Mathematics**	**ELA**
Breaks – within the same day per test session: If the test is **paused** and the break is less than 20 minutes, student does not need original login ticket to restart online test session; if more than 20 minutes, student must use original login ticket to resume test session	✓	✓
Administration of the assessment in an alternate education setting (in school) with appropriate supervision • Bilingual/English as a Second Language setting • Special education setting • In a distraction-free space or alternate location (e.g., a separate room or location within the room)	✓	✓
Assessment directions • Teacher may emphasize key words in directions • Teacher may repeat directions exactly as worded in administrator manual • Student may restate directions in his/her own words • Student may ask for clarification of directions	✓	✓
Scratch paper (collection and secure disposal **required**)	✓	✓
Magnifier – embedded in the delivery engine	✓	✓
Color choice – embedded in the delivery engine	✓	✓
Contrasting color – embedded in the delivery engine	✓	✓

Note: Human Voice Audio (HVA) is a standard way in which mathematics and ELA reading passages, test questions, and appropriate answer options are presented to students in Grades K and 1.

How are Designated Supports and Accommodations selected and/or assigned to students?

Based on the mode of administration and assessment type, supports and accommodations have different means of access. Always refer to the **Student Supports and Accommodations Tables** located in the **Supports and Accommodations Guidance**

Document for these assessments, to determine how to access supports.

The **Student Supports and Accommodations Tables for M-STEP, MI-Access, SAT, ACT**

WorkKeys, and WIDA utilize a coding system to describe how supports and accommodations are accessed for Michigan assessments (see Figure 1). In the **How to Access** column of this document, one or more of four symbols will be displayed next to M-STEP and MI-Access assessment-allowable supports.

- ✓ A check mark indicates a feature that must be set by the Test Administrator in the DRC INSIGHT Portal prior to testing

- ◉ A dark circle indicates the material must be ordered or downloaded through the MDE Secure Site

- ❖ A diamond shape indicates that the support must be recorded in the DRC INSIGHT Portal as something the student will be using

- **B** An upper case B indicates that this support should be bubbled on the paper/pencil student answer document when used

The 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** on the WIDA assessment web page in the Student Supports and Accommodations section, 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 during testing.

  For more information about how to select accommodations in WIDA AMS, refer to 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 four 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 must 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 Designate Supports and Accommodations in the DRC INSIGHT Portal, 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 Designated Supports and 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, refer to 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 majority of supports students might use that are allowable on state assessments are listed in the **Student Supports and Accommodations Tables** for M-STEP, MI-Access, SAT, ACT WorkKeys, and WIDA, which are found in the **Supports and Accommodations Guidance Document**. 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, 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, refer to the **SAT Coordinator Manual**, available on the MME web page and the College Board – Michigan website.

Note: 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 should be faded.

The OEAA provides some tools that educators can use for evaluation purposes. Schools can also develop their own observation 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.

■ When preparing for assessments, educators can also use planning documents such as the **M-STEP Accommodations Worksheets** for each grade, which can be found by selecting the Recording and Tracking Resources link under the Student Supports and Accommodations heading.

■ 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 five 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 use in these situations. For more information, refer to the **Supports and Accommodations Guidance Document**.

- For more information on supports and accommodations for students, review the MDE **Supports and Accommodations Webinars**.

Key Terms

- **Embedded** vs. **non-embedded** Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations:

  » An **embedded** support is a Universal Tool, Designated Support, or Accommodation that is a feature in the online test delivery system (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 for the students 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 in addition 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.