Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

PARCC LEA Support Institute II

January 23, 2015

Agenda

Background and Definitions

Administrative Considerations for All Students

Accessibility Features

Accommodations

Decision-Making Process for Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accessibility Features and

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Objectives for this Session

By the end of this session, participants will be able to...

1 Implement strategies for selecting appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities.

2 Articulate how to provide a justification for these strategies on the IEP, etc.

3 Connect accommodations strategies to the PARCC Personal Needs Profile, and SEDS

Setting the Stage

- Our focus today is on how to ensure a level playing field for all of our students, so that they may all demonstrate their full abilities on this rigorous assessment.

- OSSE is working to make the processes for selecting and implementing accessibility features and accommodations as efficient as possible for LEAs and school-based teams while ensuring that the needs of all students are met.

- Policy decisions and implementation of technical solutions must also take into consideration later than expected guidance from PARCC with regards to their specifications for accessibility features and accommodations.

Summary of the Decision-Making Process for PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations
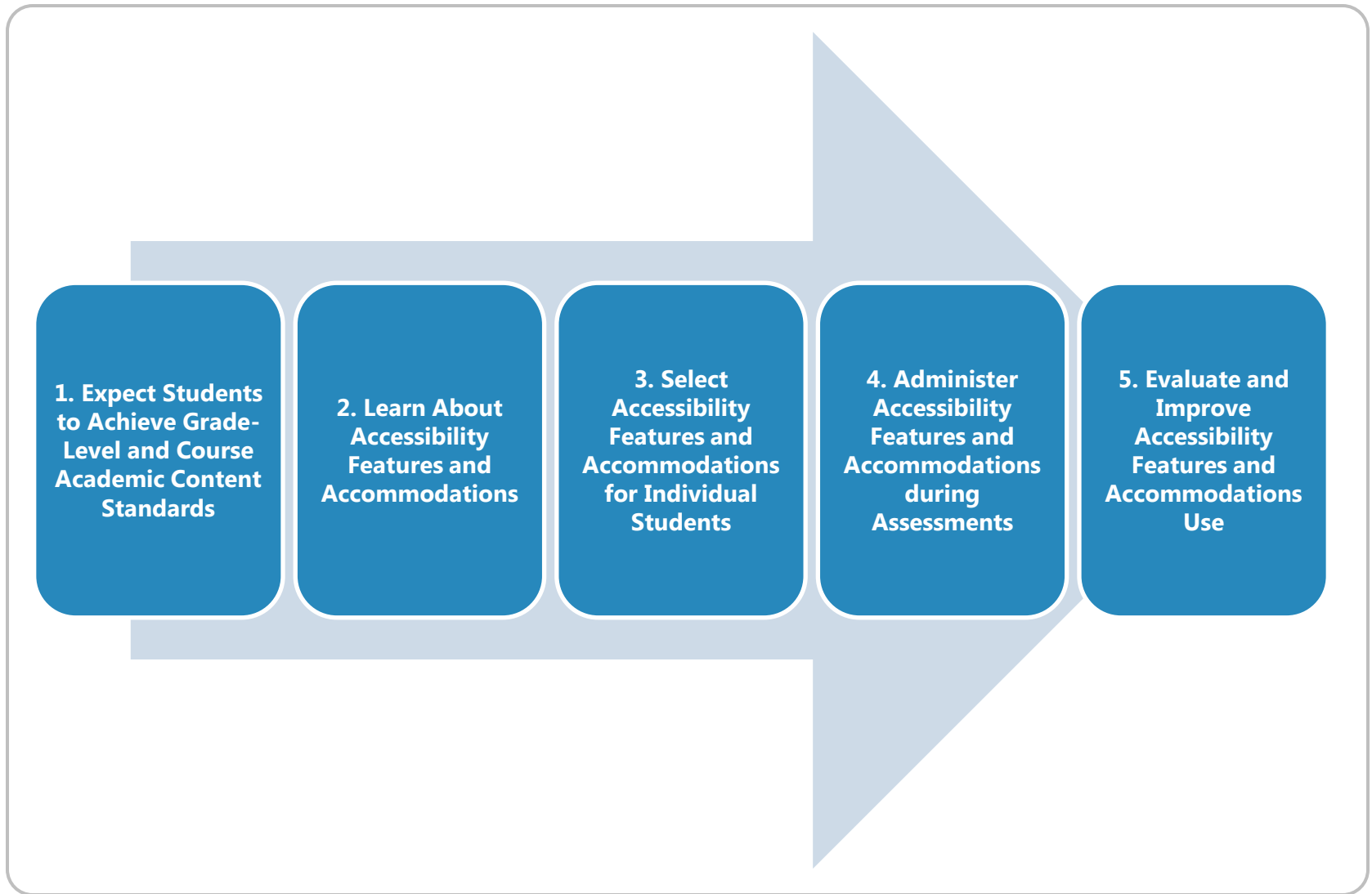
# Participation Guidelines for PARCC Assessments

All students, including students with disabilities and English learners, are required to participate in statewide assessments and have their assessment results be part of the state's accountability systems, **with narrow exceptions** for English learners in their first year in a U.S. school (described in Section 4), and certain students with disabilities who have been identified by the Individualized Education Program team to take their state's alternate assessment.

All other students will participate in the PARCC ELA/literacy and mathematics performance-based and end-of-year assessments.

The PARCC Accessibility System
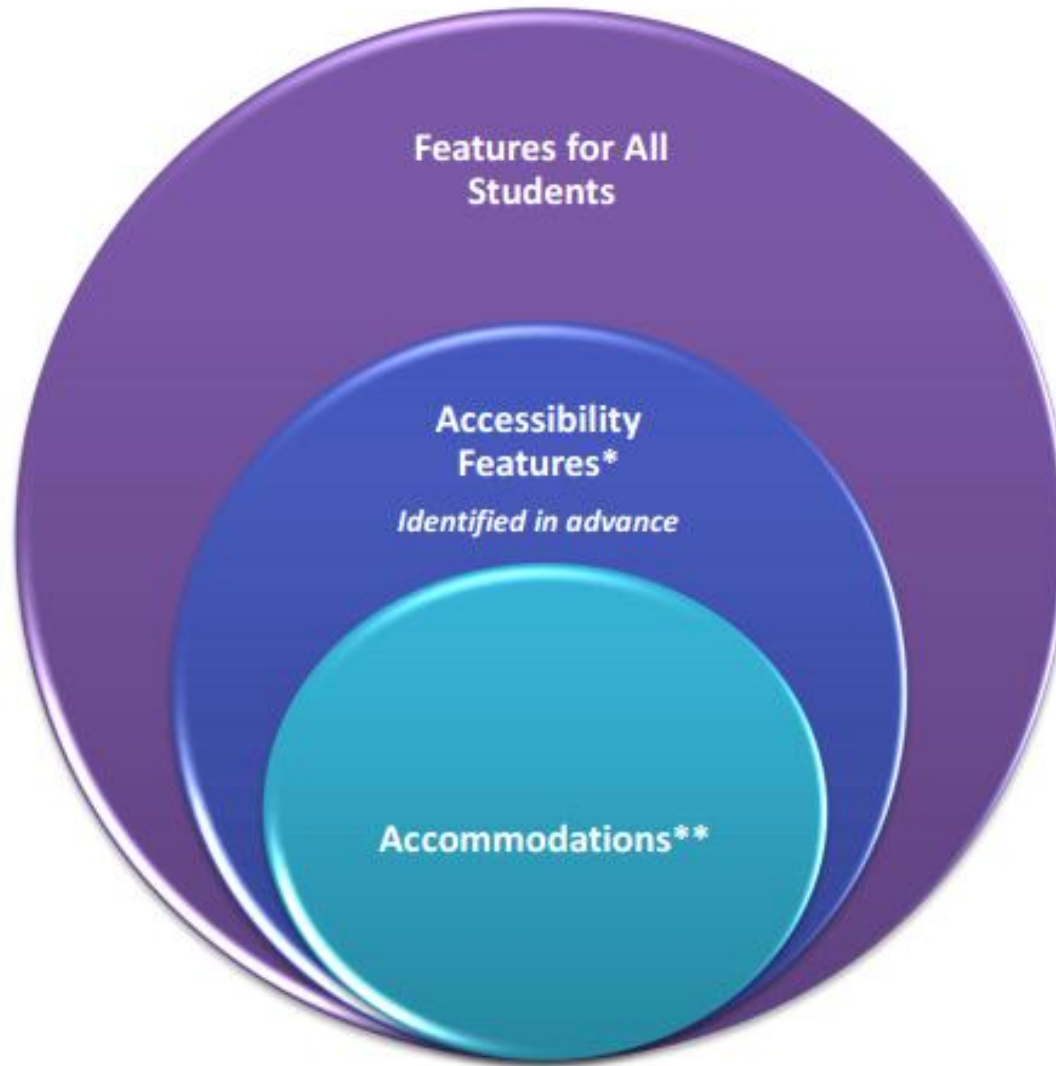
* Available to all participating students
** For students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities

Useful Definitions (How PARCC Defines These Terms)

Student with a disability: One who has been found eligible based on the definitions provided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

English learner: Assessment consortia are currently collaborating to develop a comprehensive definition. Traditionally, English learner students have also been termed "limited English proficient" students and "English language learners."

Former English learner: A student who is no longer classified as an English learner, although progress will continue to be tracked for two years after they have achieved the standards of fluency as identified by the state English proficiency assessment.

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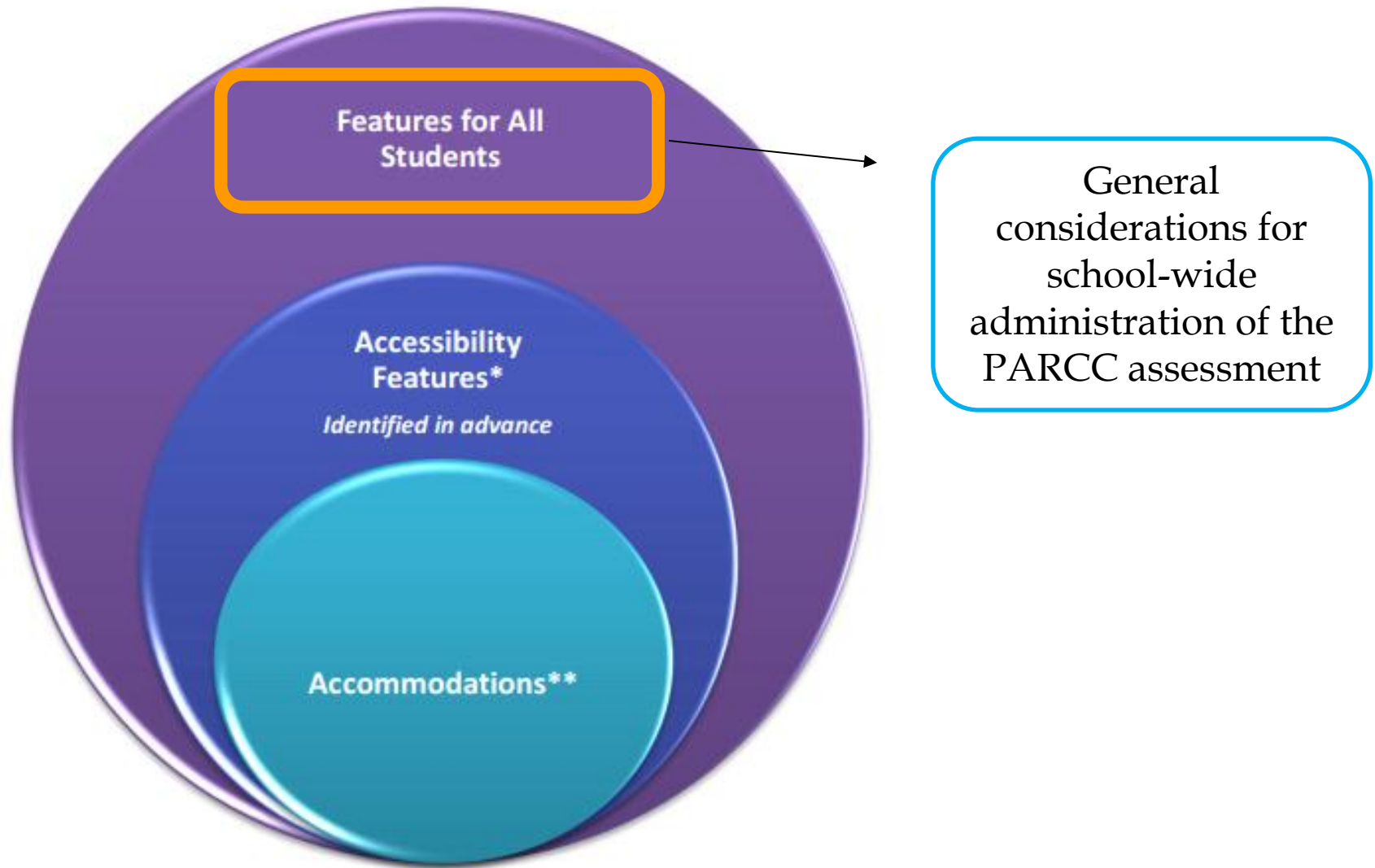**▶ Administrative Considerations for All Students**

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Administrative Considerations for All Students

General considerations for school-wide administration of the PARCC assessment

* Available to all participating students
** For students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities

Administrative Considerations for School-Wide Test Planning

Students are generally tested in their regular classroom following the test administration schedule for the grade and content area being administered.

However, the principal has the authority to schedule students in testing spaces other than regular classrooms, and at different scheduled times, as long as all requirements for testing conditions and test security are met as set forth in the Test Administrator Manuals.

School-based teams (including the IEP team, 504 plan coordinator, or EL team) may determine that any student can receive one or more of the following test administration considerations, regardless of the student's status as a student with a disability or who is an English learner:

- **Small group testing**

- **Frequent breaks**

- **Time of day**

- **Separate or alternate location**

- **Specified area or seating**

- **Adaptive and specialized equipment or furniture**

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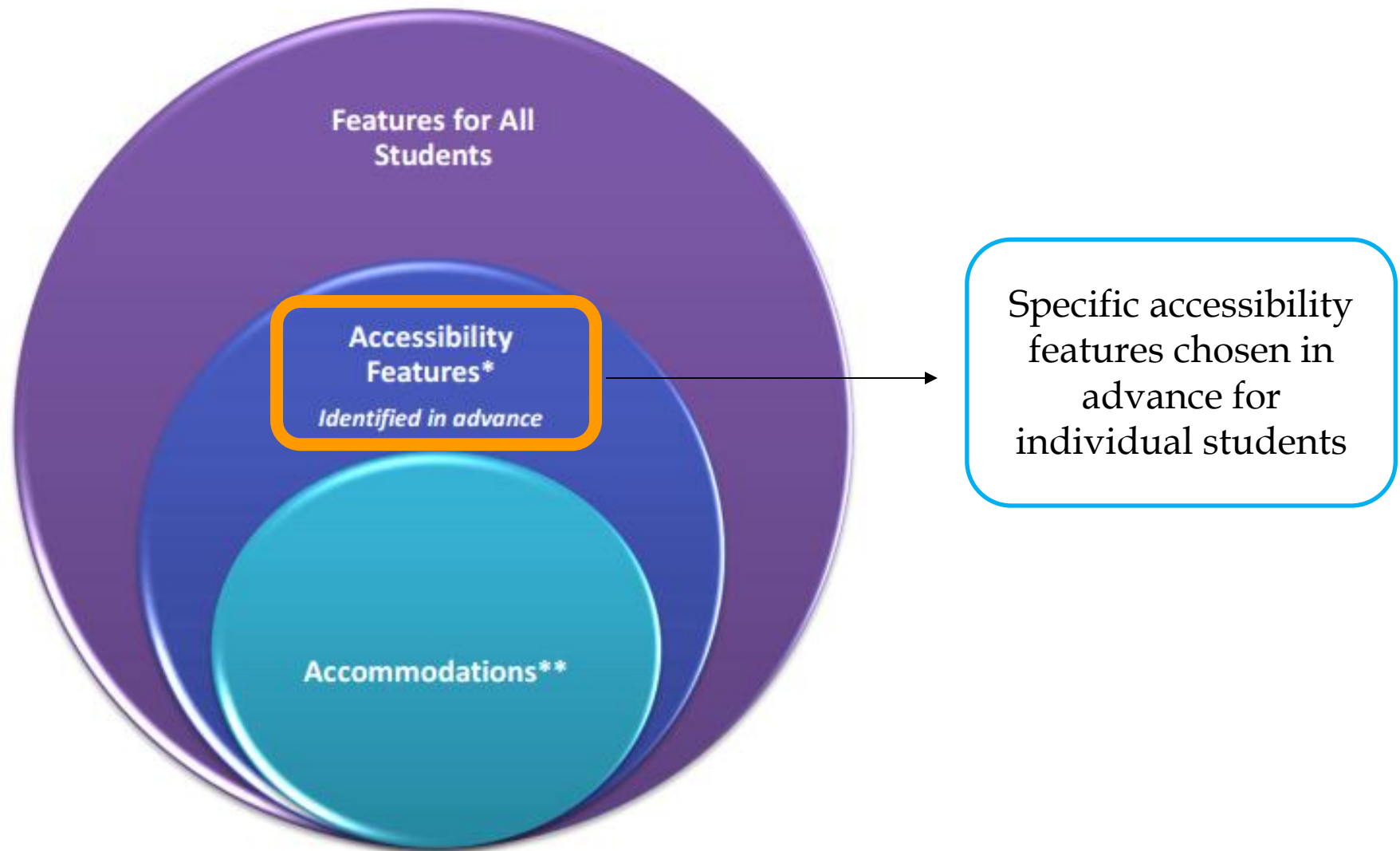
▶ Accessibility Features

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Accessibility Features

Specific accessibility features chosen in advance for individual students

* Available to all participating students
** For students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities

What are accessibility features?

On the PARCC computer-based assessments, accessibility features are tools or preferences that are either built into the assessment system or provided externally by test administrators.

Accessibility features can be used by any student taking the PARCC assessments (i.e., students with and without disabilities, gifted students, English learners, and English learners with disabilities).

Since the accessibility features are intended for all students, they are not classified as accommodations by PARCC but if they are in an IEP they must be treated as accommodations.

Students should be exposed to these features prior to testing, and should have the opportunity to select and practice using them.

Accessibility features are intended to benefit a wide range of students, and are available to any student at his or her discretion during testing. Practice tests that include accessibility features are being made available for teacher and student use throughout the year.

PARCC Accessibility Features and Corresponding Names in SEDS (1 of 2)

PARCC Accessibility Feature		Name in SEDS	Identify in advance on PNP?
1a	Answer Masking	Markers to Maintain Place or Mask Answer*	Yes
1b	Audio Amplification	Amplification Equipment*	No
1c	Color Contrast (Background/Font Color)	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	Yes
1d	Blank Paper (provided by test administrator)	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1e	Eliminate Answer Choice	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1f	Flag Items for Review	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1g	General Administration Directions Clarified (by test administrator)	Simplification of Oral Directions*	No
1h	General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated as Needed (by test administrator)	Repetition of Directions*	No
1i	Highlight Tool	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No

*Located under "Presentation" in SEDS

PARCC Accessibility Features and Corresponding Names in SEDS (2 of 2)

PARCC Accessibility Feature		Name in SEDS	Identify in advance on PNP?
1j	Headphones or Noise Buffers	Noise Buffer or Headphones*	No
1k	Line Reader Tool	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1l	Magnification/ Enlargement Device	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1m	NotePad	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1n	Pop-up Glossary	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1o	Redirect Student to the Test (by test administrator)	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1p	External Spell Check Device	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No
1q	Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics Assessments	Reading of Test Questions* (math, science, and composition only)	Yes
1r	Human Reader or Human Signer for the Mathematics Assessments	Reading of Test Questions* (math, science, and composition only)	Yes
1s	Writing Tools	*No option in SEDS; Record on PNP only*	No

*Located under "Presentation" in SEDS

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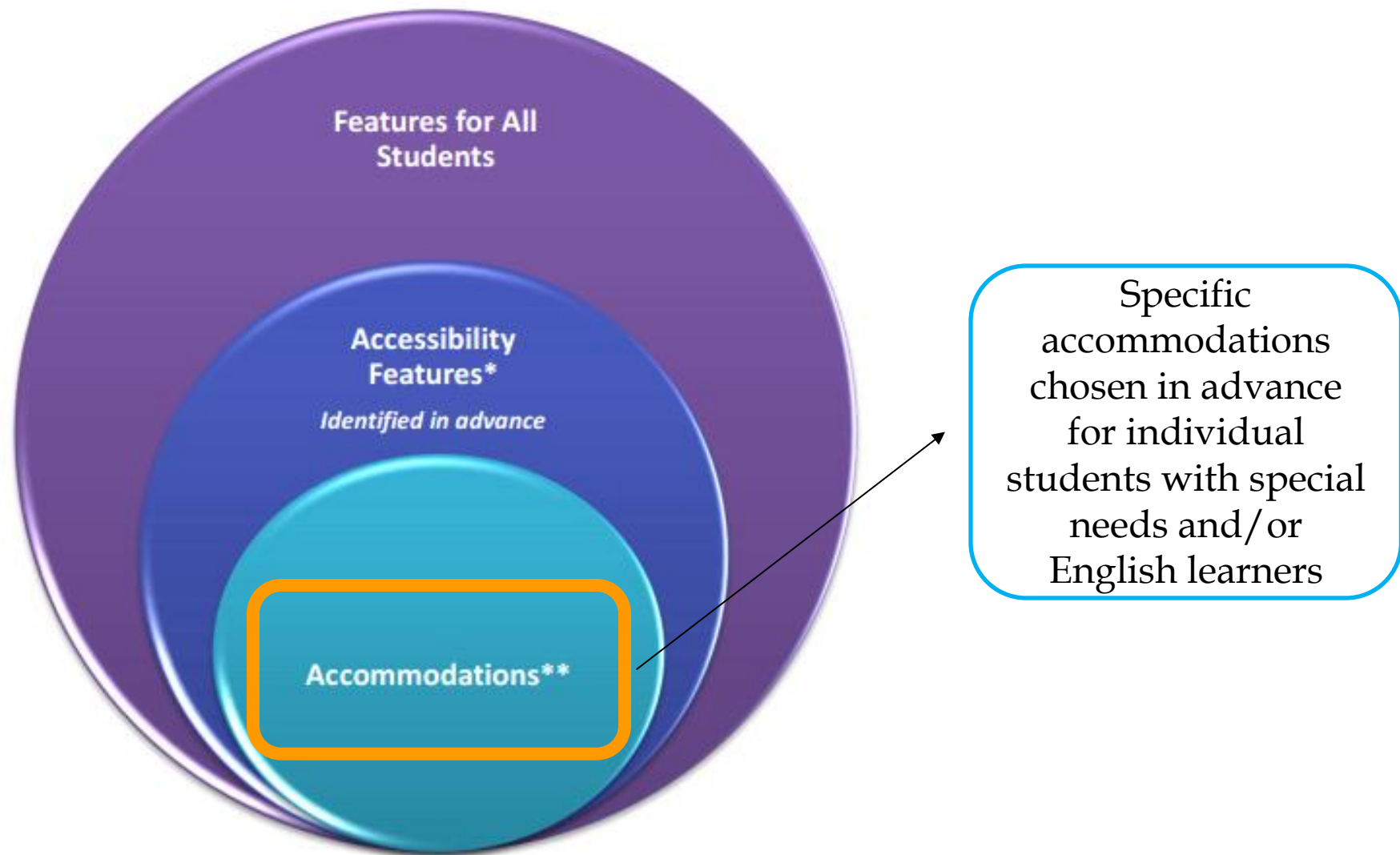
Features for All Students

Accessibility Features*
Identified in advance

Accommodations**

Specific accommodations chosen in advance for individual students with special needs and/or English learners

* Available to all participating students
** For students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities

General Recommendations on the Use of Accommodations

To the extent possible, accommodations should:

- provide equitable access during instruction and assessments;

- mitigate the effects of a student's disability and/or English language proficiency;

- not reduce learning or performance expectations;

- not change the construct being assessed; and

- not compromise the integrity or validity of the assessment.

- Accommodations are intended to reduce and/or eliminate the effects of a student's disability and/or English language proficiency level; however, **accommodations should never reduce learning expectations by reducing the scope, complexity, or rigor of an assessment.**

Four distinct groups of students may receive accommodations on PARCC assessments.

Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Students with a Section 504 plan who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, have a record of such an impairment, or are regarded as having such an impairment, but who do not qualify for special education services

Students who are English learners

Students who are English learners with disabilities who have an IEP or 504 plan. These students are eligible for both accommodations for students with disabilities and English learners

- Accommodations enable students to participate more fully and fairly in instruction and assessments and to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

- Accommodations should be based upon an individual student's needs rather than on the category of a student's disability, level of English language proficiency alone, level of or access to grade-level instruction, amount of time spent in a general classroom, current program setting, or availability of staff.

- Accommodations should be based on a documented need in the instruction/assessment setting and should not be provided for the purpose of giving the student an enhancement that could be viewed as an unfair advantage.

- Accommodations for students with disabilities should be described and documented in the student's appropriate plan (i.e., either the IEP or 504 plan).

Accommodations

- Accommodations for English learners should be described and documented per your LEA's process

- Students who are English learners with disabilities qualify to receive accommodations for both students with disabilities and English learners.

- Accommodations should become part of the student's program of daily instruction as soon as possible after completion and approval of the appropriate plan.

- Accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during the testing of a student.

- Accommodations should be monitored for effectiveness.

- Accommodations used for instruction should also be used, if allowable, on local district assessments and state assessments.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

PARCC accommodations listed in the following section are intended for...

Students with disabilities who have the accommodation documented in an approved IEP or 504 plan prior to the date of test administration

and

Students who use the accommodation routinely (with rare exceptions) during classroom instruction and locally-administered assessments, both before and after the test is administered.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Type	Definition	Who Can Benefit?
Presentation *Accommodations*	Alter the method or format used to administer a PARCC assessment to a student, by changing either the auditory, tactile, visual, and/or a combination of these characteristics.	Students with disabilities that affect reading standard print, typically as a result of a physical, sensory, cognitive, or specific learning disability.
Response *Accommodations*	Allow students to use an alternative method for providing responses to test items, such as through dictating to a scribe or using an assistive device.	Students who have physical, sensory, or learning disabilities who have difficulties with memory, fine-motor skills, sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization.
Timing and Scheduling *Accommodations**	Change the allowable length of time in which a student may complete the test.	Students who need additional time to process information or write responses or those who use special devices or equipment.

NOTE: For students taking computer-based assessments, accommodations must be identified in advance both in the student's IEP or 504 plan and in the student's PNP (during the test registration process).

* Changes in <u>how the time is organized</u>, such as use of frequent breaks or testing at a specific time of day, are test administration considerations that are available to any student.

Administrative Considerations

SEDS has a fourth type of accommodation: "setting"

With the exception of headphone use, PARCC considers these "setting" accommodations to be *accessibility features* (categorized as administrative considerations)

Remember: if PARCC considers it an accessibility feature but it is an accommodation on the IEP/504, you must treat it as an *accommodation*.

PARCC **Presentation** Accommodation Name	Name in SEDS*
2a Assistive Technology	*IEP teams document use of assistive tech in a separate IEP section, thus it is not listed as an accommodation.*
2b Screen Reader Version for Mathematics	Screen Reader Version for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments**
2c Refreshable Braille Display with Screen Reader Version for ELA/Literacy	Refreshable Braille Display with Screen Reader Version for ELA/Literacy Assessments
2d Hard Copy Braille Edition	Hard-Copy Braille Edition of ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessment
2e Tactile Graphics	Tactile Graphics for Visually Impaired Students**
2f Large Print Edition	Large Print
2g Paper-Based Edition	Paper-and-Pencil Assessments
2h Closed-Captioning of Multimedia on the ELA/Literacy Assessments	Closed-Captioning of Multimedia on the ELA/Literacy Assessments
2i Text-to-Speech for the ELA/Literacy Assessments, including items, response options, and passages	Text-to-Speech for the ELA/Literacy Assessments**

*These accommodations are located in "Presentation" in SEDS.
**This accommodation is intended for a small number of students, see manual for policy.

PARCC **Presentation** Accommodation Name	Name in SEDS*
2j Screen Reader Version for ELA/Literacy, including items, response options, and Passages	Screen Reader Version for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Assessments**
2k ASL Video for the ELA/Literacy Assessments, including items, response options, and Passages	ASL Video for the ELA/Literacy Assessment
2l Human Reader/Human Signer for the ELA/Literacy Assessments, including items, response options, and Passages	Human Reader/Human Signer for the ELA/Literacy Assessments**
2m ASL Video for the Mathematics Assessments	ASL Video for the Mathematics Assessments
2n Human Signer for Test Directions	Human Signer for Test Directions OR ASL Video of Test Directions
2o Student Reads Assessment Aloud to Themselves	Students Read Assessment Aloud to Themselves

*These accommodations are located in "Presentation" in SEDS.
**This accommodation is intended for a small number of students, see manual for policy.

PARCC Response Accommodations and Corresponding Names in SEDS (1 of 2)

PARCC **Response** Accommodation Name	Name in SEDS*
3a Assistive Technology	*IEP teams document use of assistive tech in a separate IEP section, thus it is not listed as an accommodation.*
3b Braille Note-taker	Braille Note-taker
3c Braille Writer	Braille Writer
3d Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools (on Calculator Sections of Mathematics Assessments)	Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools on Calculator Sections of Mathematics Assessments
3e Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools (on Non-Calculator Sections of Mathematics Assessments)	Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools on Non-Calculator Sections of Mathematics Assessments**
3f ELA/Literacy Selected Response Speech-to-Text	Speech-to-Text, Human Scribe, Human Signer, or External Assistive Technology for Selected Responses on ELA/Literacy Assessments**
3g ELA/Literacy Selected Response Human Scribe	
3h ELA/Literacy Selected Response Human Signer	
3i ELA/Literacy Selected Response External Assistive Technology Device	

*These accommodations are located in "Response" in SEDS.
**This accommodation is intended for a small number of students, see manual for policy.

Accommodations

PARCC **Response** Accommodation Name	Name in SEDS*
3j Mathematics Response Speech-to-Text	Speech-to-Text, Human Scribe, Human Signer, or External Assistive Technology for Selected Responses on Mathematics Assessments* AND Speech-to-Text, Human Scribe, Human Signer, or External Assistive Technology for Constructed Responses on Mathematics Assessments* (both options are in SEDS, but PARCC collapses into one)**
3k Mathematics Response Human Scribe	
3l Mathematics Response Human Signer	
3m Mathematics Response Assistive Technology Device	
3n ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Speech-to-Text	Speech-to-Text, Human Scribe, Human Signer, or External Assistive Technology for Constructed Responses on ELA/Literacy Assessments**
3o ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Human Scribe	
3p ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Human Signer	
3q ELA/Literacy Constructed Response Assistive Technology Device	
3r Word Prediction External Device	Word Prediction External Device**

*These accommodations are located in "Response" in SEDS.
**This accommodation is intended for a small number of students, see manual for policy.

PARCC <u>Timing and Scheduling</u> Accommodations and Corresponding Names in SEDS

PARCC **Timing and Scheduling** Accommodation Name	Name in SEDS*
4a Extended Time	Extended Time
	Extended Time on Test Units
NOTE: NOT permissible on PARCC	Test administered over several days

*These accommodations are located in "Timing and Scheduling" in SEDS.

Accommodations for English Learners

Key Considerations

- Accommodations for English learners should be considered by a group of educators familiar with the student's learning needs, in line with your LEA's policy.

- In cases of English learners with disabilities, at least one person familiar with the language needs of the student should be a participating member of the IEP team (or consult with the 504 coordinator), in order to make effective accommodations decisions.

Accommodations for English Learners

PARCC English Learner Accommodation	Most likely to benefit English learners at this ELP Level		
	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced
Extended time	Highly recommended	Highly recommended	Highly recommended
Word-to-Word Dictionary (English / Native Language)	May not be appropriate	Highly recommended	Highly recommended
Mathematics Response Speech-to-Text	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Mathematics Response Human Scribe			
General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated in Student's Native Language (by test administrator)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
General Administration Directions Clarified as Needed in Student's Native Language (by test administrator)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Online Translation of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish (or other translated languages as needed)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Paper-Based Edition of the Mathematics Assessment in Spanish (or other translated languages as needed)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Large Print Edition of the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish (or other translated languages as needed)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish (or other translated languages as needed)	Highly recommended	Recommended	May not be appropriate
Human Reader for the Mathematics Assessments in Spanish (or other translated languages as needed)			

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Decision-Making Process for Selecting, Using, and Evaluating Accessibility Features and Accommodations

1. Expect Students to Achieve Grade-Level and Course Academic Content Standards

2. Learn About Accessibility Features and Accommodations

3. Select Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Individual Students

4. Administer Accessibility Features and Accommodations during Assessments

5. Evaluate and Improve Accessibility Features and Accommodations Use
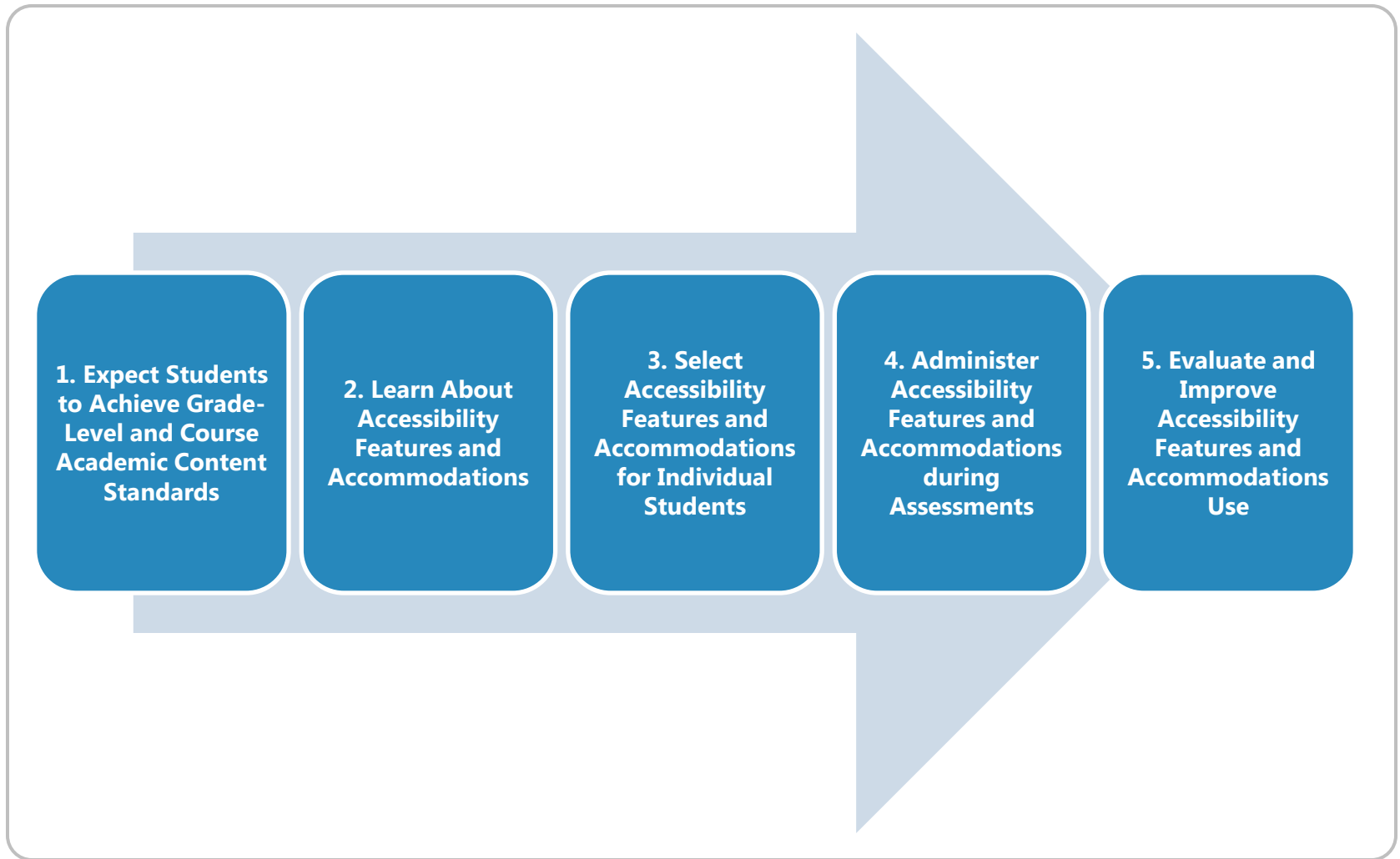
Step 1: Expect Students to Achieve Grade-Level and Course Academic Content Standards

✓ **Include All Students in State Accountability Assessments**

- The ESEA and IDEA require that all students with disabilities be administered state assessments, either with or without accommodations, or through an alternate assessment. The results of those assessments are intended to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of all students.

✓ **Ensure Equal Access to Grade-Level Content**

- The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are educational targets for students to learn at each grade level or course. Teachers should regularly ensure that students are working toward grade-level learning standards by using instructional strategies that are appropriate for each student based on individual needs, strengths, and challenges.

- Providing appropriate accommodations during instruction and assessments is likely to promote equal access to grade-level and course content.

Step 2: Learn About Accessibility Features and Accommodations

✓ **Modifications**, as contrasted with **accessibility features** and **accommodations**, involve changes in the PARCC assessment or in the conditions in which a student takes the assessment that would result in unacceptable changes in what the assessment is designed to measure (e.g., reducing or changing expectations for students), or provide an unfair advantage to a student. Therefore, modifications are not permitted on the PARCC assessments.

✓ **Examples of modifications that would result in invalidated results on PARCC include**:

- Allowing a student to be assessed off grade-level;
- Instructing a student to skip selected items, reducing the scope of assessments;
- Modifying the complexity of assessments to make them easier (e.g., deleting response choices on a multiple-choice assessment so that a student selects from two or three options instead of four);
- Providing hints, clues, or other coaching that directs the student to correct responses;
- Defining vocabulary on the assessment, for non-glossed words, or explaining assessment items;
- Allowing the student to complete an assessment of English language arts in a language other than English; and
- Using a bilingual dictionary that provides definitions (rather than an acceptable word-to-word dual-language dictionary).

Step 3: Select Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Individual Students

> The decision-making process should consider at least the following three factors...

✅ **Factor 1**: Student characteristics and learning needs (e.g., disabilities, language proficiency, accommodations used in classroom instruction/assessments to access and perform in academic standards and assessments)

✅ **Factor 2**: Individual assessment characteristics (i.e., knowledge about what tasks are required on PARCC assessments and ways to remove physical and other barriers to students' ability to perform those tasks)
- Ask the following questions:
    - *What are the characteristics of the assessment and what will the tasks and items look like?*
    - *Are the assessment tasks similar to classroom assessment tasks, and does the student have the opportunity to practice similar tasks prior to testing?*
    - *Does the student use an accessibility feature and/or accommodation for a classroom task that is allowed for similar tasks on the PARCC assessments?*
    - *Do other barriers exist that could be removed by using accessibility features and/or accommodations that are not already offered or used by the student?*

✅ **Factor 3**: PARCC accessibility features and accommodations policies that maintain the validity of assessment results.
- *In other words, don't select accommodations that are not allowed and do not use "modifications" (as listed in Step 2).*

Step 4: Administer Accessibility Features and Accommodations during Assessments

✅ Student PNP information should be compiled with the names of students, the accessibility features and/or accommodations they require, test locations, and staff responsible for administering tests with accessibility features and accommodations.

✅ Special educators and English language educators often assist general educators in understanding how to properly provide specific accessibility features and/or accommodations.

✅ **Test administrators** must **know and understand the requirements for providing accessibility features and/or accommodations on PARCC assessments** and correctly administer them so that scores are valid.

✅ Test administrators should also anticipate whether a student will be allowed extra time to complete the test once the official testing time is ended.

✅ For the computer-based PARCC assessments, school or district staff will need to enter data into a student's PNP in advance of testing to enable all necessary accessibility features and accommodations and ensure they are provided on test day.

✅ Finally, it is important to monitor the provision of accessibility features and accommodations on test day to ensure that they are delivered properly and that the technology is operating appropriately.

Step 5: Evaluate and Improve Accessibility Features and Accommodations Use

Questions to Guide Evaluation of Accessibility Features and Accommodation Use at the School and District Levels

1 Are procedures in place to ensure that test administration procedures are not compromised due to provision of accessibility features and accommodations?

2 Are students receiving accessibility features and accommodations as documented in their IEP, 504 plan, English learner plan (if applicable), or other documentation used for English learners?

3 Are procedures in place to ensure that test administrators comply with directions for the administration of accessibility features and accommodations?

4 What is the frequency of use of different types of accessibility features and accommodations?

Step 5: Evaluate and Improve Accessibility Features and Accommodations Use

Questions to Guide Evaluation at the Student Level

1 What accessibility features and accommodations are used by the student during instruction and assessments?

2 What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accessibility features and accommodations are used versus when accessibility features and accommodations are not used?

3 If the student is not meeting the expected levels of performance, is it because he or she is not receiving access to the necessary instruction; did not receive the accessibility feature and/or accommodation; or is using an accessibility feature and/or accommodation that was not effective?

4 What is the student's perception of how well the accessibility feature and/or accommodation worked?

5 What combination of accessibility features and/or accommodations seems to be effective?

6 What are the perceptions of teachers, parents, and others about how the accessibility feature and/or accommodation appears to be working?

7 What difficulties, if any, were encountered in the use of the accessibility feature(s) and/or accommodation(s)?

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▶ **Personal Needs Profiles**

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Personal Needs Profile

The Personal Needs Profile (PNP) is a collection of student information regarding a student's testing condition, materials, or accessibility features and accommodations that are needed to take a PARCC assessment.

What Student Information is Collected and Where

1. Embedded Accessibility features, identified in advance, that need to be enabled *(via PNP File Layout/User Interface).*

2. Embedded Accommodations that need to be enabled *(via PNP File Layout/User Interface).*

3. Externally-provided accessibility features, identified in advance, and accommodations *(via PNP File Layout/User Interface).*

4. Paper-based accommodated forms that required advance shipping *(via Student Registration File).*

Who Collects Information for Student PNPs

1. Students with disabilities: IEP team or 504 plan coordinator
2. English learners: Educator(s) responsible for selecting accommodations
3. English learners with disabilities: IEP team, including educator(s) familiar with the language needs of the student or 504 plan coordinator
4. Students without disabilities and who are not English learners: Team may include:
   1. Student (as appropriate);
   2. Parent/guardian; and
   3. Student's primary educator in the subject of the assessment.

- Students must be registered prior to loading PNP data. PNP data is matched to existing student registrations.

- Separate PNP files must be loaded for PBA and again for EOY (for schools participating in Spring administration, all students must take both the PBA and EOY).

- Separate PNP records must be loaded for each student for ELA and Math.

- PNP data can be uploaded, provided, and updated up to the day prior to the beginning of Test Administration. However, it must be completed prior to Proctor Caching so the appropriate content can be provided for each student.

- Providing PNP data prior to test administration will ensure that students receive appropriate accessibility features that need to be identified in advance and/or accommodations on testing day.

- Basic PNP data exists for all students. However, only data for students requiring accessibility features that need to be identified in advance or accommodations (and in some states the administrative considerations) need to be submitted into PearsonAccess^{next} for each administration.

- Any paper based accessibility feature or accommodation which requires materials to be shipped will need to be requested in the Student Registration File import. (e.g., Large Print, Braille with Tactile Graphics, Human Reader or Human Signer for ELA/L Kits, Paper Test for Online Students, and Spanish Paper Mathematics Assessments).

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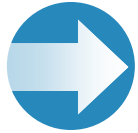
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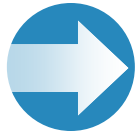
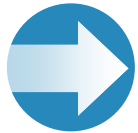Personal Needs Profiles

▶ **Q & A**

More information

For information about SEDS please contact your LEA Special Education coordinator.

For information about English language learner accommodations, contact Katie.Williams@dc.gov (OSSE).

For a complete list of accessibility features and accommodations available for PARCC assessments, refer to the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual. The manual provides greater detail on the material presented today.

Find that manual and more on our webpages at http://osse.dc.gov/service/testing-accommodations.
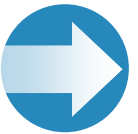
Email us at OSSE.assessment@dc.gov.