DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
EDUCATION

Testing Accessibility Features & Administrative Considerations

A Guide for All Students

2017-18

A Guide to the Selection and Identification of Accessibility Features & Administrative Considerations on District of Columbia Statewide Assessments for All Students

Introduction

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) supports the use of appropriate testing accessibility features for all District of Columbia's students (i.e., students with and without disabilities, gifted students, ELs, and ELs with disabilities). Students who take statewide assessment may use a wide array of accessibility features, which are tools or supports that increase access to test content and are available for use by all students who need them.

Similarly, administrative considerations may be granted to any student who may need them, at the discretion of school leaders. Administrative considerations are decisions made about a student's testing environment (i.e., small group testing, special seating arrangements, or frequent breaks).

The 2017-18 Accessibility Features Guide for All Students was created to ensure that:
- Participation in the PARCC Assessments is consistent in all District of Columbia districts, schools, and programs; and
- Appropriate accessibility features are provide to students who need them.

The information and requirements described in this guide apply to all students, i.e., general education students, students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan (504 plan), in all public schools and to students in nonpublic settings whose education is supported by District of Columbia public funding. Information on tools and supports for MSAA, can be found in Part I of this guide. Information on tools and supports for ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, can be found in Part II of this guide.

Additional materials and technical assistance are available to help school personnel become more familiar with information presented in this guide. Please contact the OSSE Division of Data, Assessment, and Research (DAR) for further information at OSSE.Assessment@dc.gov or visit the OSSE Testing Accommodations website.

Overview of District of Columbia Statewide Assessments

The District of Columbia administers multiple assessments annually in accordance with District and federal law. These statewide assessments are an important source of data on students' progress and performance relative to the District's educational standards. The District of Columbia administers a system of Next Generation Assessments (NGA) aligned to the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, which have been adopted by the DC State Board of Education. These assessments are also technology- and computer- enhanced. While this shift has been a major transition, it allows students in the District to demonstrate their knowledge in a more accurate and engaging way. Statewide Next Generation Assessments include:
- Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics
- Alternate Assessments (Multi-State Alternate Assessment [MSAA] in ELA and Mathematics)
- ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English Language Proficiency Assessment

For more information, visit the OSSE Statewide Assessments website.

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 or DC Science assessments. Since the accessibility features are intended for all students, they are not classified as accommodations. Students should be exposed to these features prior to testing, and should have the opportunity to select and practice using them. Even through accessibility features are available to every student, that does not necessarily mean they are appropriate for every student. Consideration should be given to the supports a student consistently uses and finds helpful during instruction and when engaging in individual work.
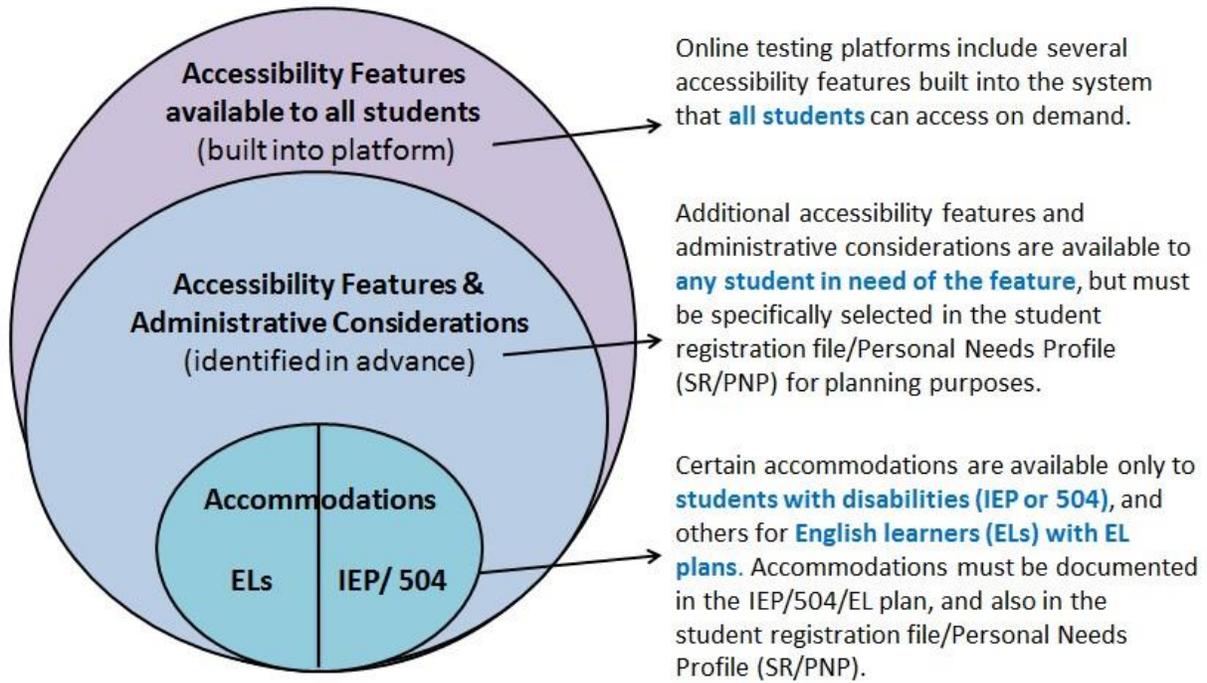
Accessibility features increase access to test content on a particular test, and are available for use by *all students who need them.* Some features are available on demand for all students because they are built into the test platform. These do not need to be identified in advance for test administration planning purposes. Other accessibility features are also available to any student, but only when activated, or 'turned on,' within a student's individual test platform, therefore they must be identified in advance for students who need them.

Similarly, **administrative considerations** may be granted to any student who may benefit from them, at the discretion of school leaders. Administrative considerations are not tied to the testing platform, but rather, are decisions made about a student's testing environment (e.g., small group testing, special seating arrangement, or frequent breaks). School leaders must decide in advance which students need these features, as the school test plan will need to reflect them.

Advance Identification of Accessibility Features

A relatively small number of students will require additional accessibility features for their particular needs (e.g., changing the background or font color on-screen, listening to text-to-speech for the mathematics assessments). Based on the needs and preferences of the individual student, some accessibility features will be selected ahead of time by students in collaboration with educators. Students must practice using these features, either in a classroom or real world application or setting, and these features must also be generally consistent with those provided for classroom instruction and classroom assessments. Not only does the student need to practice using these features, but must also be using them during daily instruction to ensure it is not a feature just used for state testing. Students can decide whether or not to use a pre-selected support, without any consequences to the student, school or LEA.

System of Accessibility Features for Statewide Assessments in the District of Columbia

Online testing platforms include several accessibility features built into the system that **all students** can access on demand.

Additional accessibility features and administrative considerations are available to **any student in need of the feature**, but must be specifically selected in the student registration file/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP) for planning purposes.

Certain accommodations are available only to **students with disabilities (IEP or 504)**, and others for **English learners (ELs) with EL plans**. Accommodations must be documented in the IEP/504/EL plan, and also in the student registration file/Personal Needs Profile (SR/PNP).

Detailed test administration guidance on the accessibility features for all students available for the PARCC assessments can be found in the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual – Sixth Edition.

Accessibility Features, and Administrative Considerations available to all students in the District of Columbia

There are two tables below that outline the accessibility features, and administrative considerations available to all students' takings the PARCC.
- Table 1: PARCC Accessibility Features for All Students
- Table 2: PARCC Administrative Considerations for All Students

PARCC Accessibility Features for All Students	
Accessibility Feature	**Description**
Answer Masking	*Before Testing:* Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have answer masking selected to activate the feature on the platform. *During Testing:* When answer masking is enabled, multiple choice and multiple select answers will be masked. The student will uncover answer options when ready. The student may disable this feature by selecting, "Disable Answer Masking" in the user drop-down menu.
Audio Amplification	*Before Testing:* The student raises or lowers the volume control, as needed, using headphones. Final volume must be set prior to testing. Student will not have access to volume control in the secure TestNav environment. *During Testing:* Student must be tested in a separate setting if unable to wear headphones. Once the test begins, the volume level cannot be changed.
Bookmark	*During Testing:* The student selects the "Bookmark" icon in the toolbar. The student electronically "bookmarks" items to review later. To remove the bookmark, select the "Bookmark" icon again.
Color Contrast (Background/Font Color)	*Before Testing:* Identification for SR/PNP: Student's SR/PNP must have the student's Color Contrast (Background/Font Color) selected to activate this feature on the platform. *During Testing:* Alternate on-screen background and/or font color is enabled via the SR/PNP based on need or preference. The student may change the color contrast option or disable this feature by selecting, "Change the background and foreground color" in the user drop-down menu.
Blank Scratch Paper	*Before Testing:* Test Administrators must supply at least one page of blank scratch paper (either unlined, lined, or graph) per student, per unit. If graph paper is used during mathematics instruction, it is recommended that schools provide graph paper as scratch paper for mathematics units. Students with visual impairments may also use braille paper, raised line paper, bold line paper, raised line graph paper, bold line graph paper, abacus, or Math Window. *During Testing:* The student uses blank scratch paper (i.e., lined, unlined, or graph) to take notes and/or work through items during testing. Additional pages may be provided as needed. Students are not required to write their names on scratch paper. *After Testing:* Test Administrators are responsible for collecting ALL scratch paper after testing is completed to be securely destroyed. Scratch paper must be securely shredded if it has been used. Schools may reuse unused scratch paper only if paper is completely blank.
Eliminate Answer Choices	*During Testing:* The student selects the "Answer Eliminator" icon in the toolbar. On multiple choice options, a student selects an answer and a red X appears and "crosses out" the answer choice. The student may disable this feature by selecting "Answer Eliminator" in the toolbar again.
General Administration Directions Clarified	*During Testing:* The Test Administrator clarifies general administration directions only. No passages or test items may be clarified.
General Administration Directions Read Aloud and Repeated as Needed	*During Testing:* The Test Administrator reads aloud the general administration directions only. A student may raise his or her hand and request the directions be repeated.
Highlight Tool	*During Testing:* The student electronically highlights text as needed to recall and/or emphasize. The student has the option to remove highlighting over text. The highlighter color option will change depending on the color contrast option selected.
Headphones or Noise Buffers	*Before Testing:* Test Administrator prepares classroom with headphones for participating students.

	During Testing: The student uses headphones or noise buffers to minimize distraction, access embedded text-to-speech, or filter external noise during testing (in addition to when headphones are required for the ELA/literacy assessment). If headphones are used only as noise buffers, do not plug them into the testing device.
Line Reader Mask Tool	*During Testing: The student selects "Show Line Reader Mask" in the user drop-down menu. The student uses an on-screen tool to assist in reading by raising and lowering the tool for each line of text on-screen. The Line Reader can be resized and the size of the reader window can be adjusted. The student may disable this feature by selecting, "Hide Line Reader Mask" in the user drop-down menu.* *The Line Reader includes additional functionality to close the Line Reader window and allow the feature to work as a general masking tool. The mask box can be resized by the student to cover content on the screen as necessary. In addition, the Line Reader window is moveable anywhere within the boundaries of the Line Reader tool.* *The Line Reader Mask box color will change depending on the color contrast option selected.*
Magnification/ Enlargement Device	*During Testing: Browser/Device Magnification: The student can use keyboard shortcuts (e.g., Ctrl+) for PCs or pinch/zoom for tablets to magnify what's displayed on the screen (while preserving clarity, contrast, and color).* *Magnifier: The student can also select "Enable Magnifier" in the user drop-down menu. The student enlarges text and graphics on-screen via a magnification square (200%). The student may disable this feature by selecting, "Disable Magnifier" in the user drop-down menu.*
Notepad	*During Testing: The student selects the "Notepad" icon in the toolbar. The student writes notes using embedded Notepad tool on the ELA/literacy assessments. The student may disable this feature by selecting "Notepad" in the toolbar again.*
Pop-up Glossary	*During Testing: The student is able to view definitions of pre-selected, underlined words by hovering over them. The definition appears in a popup text box.*
Redirect Student to the Test	*During Testing: The Test Administrator redirects the student's attention to the test without coaching or assisting the student in any way. There is no limit to the number of times a Test Administrator can redirect a student back to the test. Examples: Providing reminders to stay on task and focused during the assessments; Providing a visual cue to the student to remain on task.*
Spell Check or External Spell Check Device	*During Testing: The student uses the embedded spell check icon in TestNav to review their written text for errors. If preferred, the student uses an external spell check device. Device may not have embedded grammar check, connect to the internet, or save information.*
Student Reads Assessment Aloud to Self	*Before Testing: The student's SR/PNP must have this feature identified.* *During Testing: The student reads aloud the assessment to him or herself. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting.*
Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics Assessments	*Before Testing: The student's SR/PNP must have text-to-speech selected to activate the feature on the platform. Once a student is placed into a test session, the student will be assigned a form with embedded text-to-speech. Proctor caching is strongly encouraged. If this content is not cached, it may present challenges for the student during testing. Volume level must be determined prior to testing; once the test session begins, the volume level cannot be changed. The student will not have access to volume control in the secure TestNav environment.* *During Testing: The student selects the "Text-to-Speech Player" icon on the toolbar on the right side of the screen. The test is read aloud to the student using embedded text-to-speech software. The student may pause and resume the audio. To choose a speed (slow, normal, fast), select the "Text-to-Speech Settings" icon. Once the test begins, the volume level cannot be changed. The student must be tested in a separate setting if unable to wear headphones.*
Human Reader or Human Signer for the	*Before Testing: Student's SR/PNP must have Human Reader/Human Signer selected. A student MUST be manually placed into a Human Reader test session to provide the Human Reader accessibility feature. Refer to the "Managing Test Sessions and Student Classes" guidance on*

Mathematics Assessments	*Avocet for instructions for manually creating Human Reader test sessions. This will assign all students in the test session the same form as the Test Administrator and will match the Human Reader Script. Students in these sessions cannot have other PNP form supported accommodations such as Text-to-Speech (TTS), American Sign Language (ASL), Closed Captioning (CC), Assistive Technology – Screen Reader, Assistive Technology Non-Screen Reader. Important: Failure to manually place the students in a Human Reader session (specifically identified in PAN) will result in the student receiving a form that differs from the form needed to provide the accessibility feature.* *The Test Administrator will be assigned a separate authorization login to access the same form as all students within the Human Reader session and also receive a secure Mathematics Human Reader Script.* *Identification for SR/PNP* ***During Testing:*** *A Test Administrator (Human Reader or Human Signer) reads aloud to a student using the provided Human Reader Script. The student must be tested in an individual or small group setting. Small groups should only be used if all students are able to work at approximately the same pace. The number of students in a small group is determined at the state level.* ***After Testing****: Human Reader Scripts contain secure item content and should be handled as secure test materials. Test Administrators should return materials to Test Coordinators. Test Coordinators must return the Human Reader Scripts with the nonscorable materials.*
Writing Tools	***During Testing****: The student uses embedded writing process tools for written responses, including copy/paste, bold, italicize, underline, insert bullets, numbered list, undo, redo, and spell check. Writing tools are available in the constructed response items on the ELA/literacy assessment.*

PARCC Administrative Considerations for All Students	
Administrative Consideration	**Description**
Small Group Testing	*Student is tested in a separate location as an individual or with a small group of students with matching accessibility features, accommodations, or testing needs as appropriate. Check individual state policies on the maximum number of students allowed in a small testing group.*
Time of Day	*Student is tested during a specific time of day based on their individual needs (e.g., ELA/literacy in the morning; no testing after lunch).*
Separate or Alternate Location	*Student is tested in a specifically assigned location.*
Specified Area or Setting	*Student is tested in a specialized area or setting (e.g., front of the classroom, seat near the door, library, etc.).*
Adaptive and Specialized Equipment or Furniture	*Student is provided specialized equipment or furniture needed for a successful testing environment (e.g., low lighting; adaptive seat).*
Frequent Breaks	**Guidance on logistics for administrating the PARCC assessments with frequent breaks**: • Medical Breaks: Student takes a break due to pre-existing or sudden onset of a temporary or long-term medical condition. Student's testing time stops. • Individual Bathroom Breaks: Student requests a bathroom break within their overall allotted testing time. Student's testing time does not stop.

| | • In-Chair Stretch Break: Student pauses and stretches. Student's testing time does not stop. |
| | • Other Frequent Breaks, according to state policy. |