

Equal Educational Opportunities

7-10-AP Administrative Procedure - District Procedures for Testing Accommodations for Standardized Tests

Testing Accommodations

District 113 recognizes that standardized examinations and other high-stakes tests are gateways to educational and employment opportunities. The District is committed to providing standardized test organizations with the documentation necessary to provide accessibility for students with disabilities to demonstrate their aptitude when sitting for these high-stakes exams.

There are differences between testing accommodations and testing modifications. Testing accommodations are meant to remove obstacles to the test-taking process that are presented by the student with a disability without reducing learning expectations. Testing modifications may change or lower the expectations of learning by modifying the process or content of the exam.

Students with Disabilities

Section 504: Under Section 504, the educational team will conduct an evaluation to determine if a student is an individual with a disability defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A student with a disability under Section 504 has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, or concentrating) in need of special education or related aids and services. In determining a substantial limitation of a major life activity, the District gathers data to examine the extent to which the impairment affects the condition, manner, or duration in which the student performs the major life activity and the specific degree to which the impairment limits the major life activity.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): According to IDEA, the educational team will conduct an evaluation to determine if the student is a child with a disability defined by the IDEA. A student is a child with a disability under the IDEA if the student has an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment including deafness, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment including blindness, emotional disability, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and by reason thereof, needs specialized instruction and/or related services.

The Decision-Making Team

For students with an identified disability under Section 504 or the IDEA, a multi-disciplinary team is established to determine if the student needs testing accommodations. This team is often composed of the following individuals depending on the student's needs: student, parent(s)/guardian, general education teacher, special education teacher, school psychologist/504 Coordinator, school counselor, and/or an English Learners professional.

The team will consider all relevant information and decide if the student needs accommodations for tests based on the student's individual deficits. In other words, the IEP or Section 504 plan is limited to those accommodations and/or services that are necessitated by the student's identified disability, not just any accommodations that would benefit the student. When developing the IEP/Section 504 plan, the team will recommend testing accommodations to:

- provide the student with access to the assessment program,
- provide an accurate measure of the standards being assessed, so that appropriate instruction and services can be provided to the student,

- enable the student to demonstrate his/her strengths, knowledge, and skills the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's disability-related impairments (unless those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure), or
- otherwise meet the needs of the student with a disability as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met.

Students *without* a Documented Disability

For a student who does not have a documented disability (i.e. an Individualized Education Plan, a Section 504 Plan) or is not EL, parents/guardians of students requesting accommodations for ACT/College Board exams should share any documentation or concerns with the student's Counselor. Any private evaluations provided to the District will be taken under consideration. When the parent/guardian submits a request for accommodations to ACT for a student with no documented disability, ACT requires a statement from the District on school letterhead advocating for the accommodations. The District will not provide such documentation to ACT if no determination of IDEA or Section 504 eligibility has been made by a District multi-disciplinary team. Testing accommodations are not a means for students to have an advantage or maximize performance.

02/01/22

Township High School District 113
