



## 615 TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS, MODIFICATIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS FOR IEPs, SECTION 504 PLANS, AND LEP **EL IDENTIFIED** STUDENTS

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to provide adequate opportunity for students identified as having individualized education program (IEP), Rehabilitation Act of 1973, § 504 (504) accommodation, and/or **English Learner (EL)**-limited English proficiency (LEP) needs to **participate in statewide assessment systems designed to hold schools accountable for the academic performance of all students.** ~~meet the graduation requirements of basic skills testings and graduation required assessments for diploma (GRAD) tests.~~

### II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

~~A. The school district will utilize the existing annual review of IEPs or 504 accommodation plans to review, on a case by case basis, the extent of student participation in basic skills testing and GRAD testing. For students subject to GRAD testing, the student's IEP or 504 accommodation plan must identify one of the following decisions for each subject area of GRAD:~~

- ~~1. the student is expected to achieve the statewide standard with or without testing accommodations resulting in a "pass" or "p" notation on the record when achieving a passing score; or~~
- ~~2. the student is expected to achieve the statewide standard at an individually modified level of difficulty, resulting in a "pass" or "p" notation on the record when achieving the modified level. A Minnesota alternative assessment must be used when an IEP team chooses to replace the GRAD. Adoption of modifications for a student must occur concurrently with the adoption of transition goals and objectives as required by Minn. Stat. § 125A.08(a)(1). The IEP or 504 accommodation plan must define an appropriate assessment of the statewide standard at a modified level of difficulty. Achievement of the individually modified standard shall be certified only through documented student performance of the defined assessment.~~

~~Students subject to GRAD testing also must be tested under standard conditions as specified by the developer of the test except those students whose IEP or 504 accommodation plan specifies other decisions consistent with the above stated~~

requirements.

~~B. Students with LEP needs must be identified and accommodations made for students subject to basic skills testing. Students subject to GRAD testing are required to pass the GRAD if they have been enrolled in any Minnesota school for at least four consecutive years. An English language learner (ELL) student who first enrolls in a Minnesota school in grade 9 or above who completes the coursework and any other state and district requirements to graduate within a four year period is not required to pass the GRAD.~~

**A. Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)**

1. The school district will utilize the existing annual review of IEPs or 504 plans to review, on a case-by-case basis, and determine how a student with a disability will participate in statewide testing.
2. Participation decisions will be made separately for mathematics, reading, and science. The assessment options are the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and the MTAS.

**3. Eligibility Requirements**

a. The following requirements must be met for a student with a significant cognitive disability to be eligible for the MTAS:

- (1) The IEP team must consider the student's ability to access the MCA, with or without accommodations;
- (2) The IEP must review the student's instructional program to ensure that the student is receiving instruction linked to the general education curriculum to the extent appropriate. If instruction is not linked to the general education curriculum, the IEP team must review the student's goals and determine how access to the general curriculum will be provided;
- (3) The IEP team determined the student's cognitive functioning to be significantly below age expectations. The team also determined that the student's disability has a significant impact on his or her ability to function in multiple environments, including home, school, and community;
- (4) The IEP team determined that the student needs explicit and intensive instruction and/or extensive supports in multiple settings to acquire, maintain, and generalize academic and life skills in order to actively participate in school, work,

home, and community environments;

(5) The IEP team must document, in the IEP, reasons the MCA is or is not an appropriate measure of the student's academic progress and how the student would participate in statewide testing.

b. MTAS participation decisions must not be made on the following factors:

(1) Student's disability category;

(2) Placement;

(3) Participation in a separate, specialized curriculum;

(4) An expectation that the student will receive a low score on the MCA;

(5) Language, social, cultural, or economic differences;

(6) Concern for accountability calculations.

## B. Alternate ACCESS for ELs

1. The school district will utilize the existing annual review of IEPs or 504 plans to review, on a case-by-case basis, and determine how an identified EL student with a disability will participate in statewide testing.

### 2. Eligibility Requirements

a. The student must be identified as EL in MARSS in order to take an English language proficiency assessment.

b. The student must have a significant cognitive disability. If the student has been identified as eligible to take the MTAS in mathematics, reading, or science, the student meets this criterion.

c. For students in grades that the MTAS is not administered (K-2, 9, and 12):

(1) the student must have cognitive functioning significantly below age level;

(2) the student's disability must have a significant impact on his or her ability to function in multiple environments, including

home, school, and community; and

(3) the student needs explicit and intensive instruction and/or extensive supports in multiple settings to acquire, maintain, and generalize academic and life skills in order to actively participate in school, work, home, and community environments.

d. The IEP team must consider the student's ability to access the ACCESS, with or without accommodations.

e. The IEP team must document, in the IEP, reasons the ACCESS is or is not an appropriate English language proficiency assessment for the student.

3. Alternate ACCESS participation decisions must not be made on the following factors:

a. Student's disability category;

b. Participation in a separate, specialized curriculum;

c. Current level of English language proficiency;

d. The expectation that the student will receive a low score on the ACCESS for ELs;

e. Language, social, cultural, or economic differences;

f. Concern for accountability calculations.

### C. EL Students New to the United States

EL students new to the United States will take all assessments, including all academic assessments (math, reading, and science), as well as the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS).

## III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

See the current "Procedures Manual for the Minnesota Assessments" which is produced by ~~can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE's) Minnesota Assessments, General Resources, website at: [http://www.mnstateassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012-13\\_Procedures\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.mnstateassessments.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012-13_Procedures_Manual.pdf).~~ and available through Minnesota Pearson Access Next's website: <http://minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com/policies-and-procedures/>.

#### IV. GRANTING AND DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS, MODIFICATIONS, OR EXEMPTIONS FOR ~~BASIC SKILLS AND GRAD~~ TESTING

See the “General Supports, Linguistic Supports, and Accommodations for Statewide Assessments” chapter in the “Procedures Manual for the Minnesota Assessments” available on Minnesota Pearson Access Next’s website: <http://minnesota.pearsonaccessnext.com/policies-and-procedures/>. See Chapter 5 of the current “Procedures Manual for the Minnesota Assessments.”

#### V. RECORDS

All test accommodations, modifications, or exemptions shall be reported to the ~~District Assessment Coordinator~~ ~~School District Test Administrator~~. ~~The School District Test Administrator~~ ~~The Department of Special Services~~ shall be responsible for ~~documenting~~ ~~keeping a list of all such~~ test accommodations, modifications, and exemptions ~~in IEP and 504 plans.~~ ~~for school district audit purposes.~~ ~~The English Learner Program will be responsible for documenting needed linguistic supports, accommodations, modification, and exemptions for EL students. All accommodations and support needs will be accessible by the District Assessment Coordinator in order to document needs, order needed testing materials, and comply with school district audits.~~ Testing results will be documented and reported ~~by the Department of Program Evaluation, Research and Assessment.~~

*Legal References:* Minn. Stat. § 120B.11 (School District Process)  
Minn. Stat. § 120B.30 (Statewide Testing and Reporting System)  
Minn. Stat. § 125A.08(a)(1) (Individualized Education Programs)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0640-3501.0655 (Academic Standards for Language Arts)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0700-3501.0745 (Academic Standards for Mathematics)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0800-3501.0815 (Academic Standards for the Arts)  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.0900-3501.0955 (Academic Standards in Science)  
~~Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1000-3501.1190 (Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma) (repealed Minn. L. 2013, Ch. 116, Art. 2, § 22)~~  
Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1300-3501.1345 (Academic Standards for Social Studies)  
~~Minn. Rules Parts 3501.1400-3501.1410 (Academic Standards for Physical Education)~~  
~~Eligibility Requirements for the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS),~~  
<https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/groups/educ/documents/hiddencontent/mdaw/mda2/~edisp/006087.pdf>  
~~Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Participation Guidelines,~~  
<https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/groups/educ/documents/hiddencontent/>

[mdaw/mdq5/~edisp/049763.pdf](#)

WIDA's Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Decision Tree,  
<https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Alt-Access-Participation-Criteria-Diagram.pdf>

***Cross References:*** MSBA/MASA Model Policy 104 (School District Mission Statement)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 601 (School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 614 (School District Testing Plan and Procedure)  
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 616 (School District System Accountability)

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