
5 Star Accommodations: What to look for when only the best will do!

**Georgia Department of Education
Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports
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5 Star Accommodations: Topics to be covered

- **General understandings of accommodations**
- **5 items to look for when reviewing the use of accommodations at a student/school/system level**
 - Decision making by IEP Teams
 - Documentation on IEPs
 - Implementation in the classroom
 - Implementation on state-mandated tests
 - Review of data
- **Implications for training and support**

General Understandings of Accommodations

- **Accommodations are changes in the administration of instruction or an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the instruction or assessment.**
- **Accommodations are part of the IEP**
 - CFR 300.320(6)(i)
 - State Rules 160-4-7-.06(1)(g)

General Understandings of Accommodations

- **Accommodations**

- Do not change the construct intended to be taught or measured
 - As found in the GPS and testing blueprint
 - Understanding the curriculum and construct is imperative
- Do not change the meaning of the resulting scores of evaluation
 - Need to be able to say that the student showed skill in the construct, not just effective in utilizing the accommodation

General Understandings of Accommodations

- **Accommodations**

- Reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability
- Are designed to provide equity, not advantage
 - Not put into place to make sure the student will “pass”
 - Not put into place simply because the content may be “hard”
- **Do not reduce learning expectations**
 - Georgia Department of Education Accommodations Manual

General Understandings of Accommodations

- **There must be a link between the accommodations used in instruction, in classroom assessments, and on state-mandated tests**
- **There are accommodations that may be utilized in the classroom that will not be appropriate/approved for state-mandated tests**

Accommodations Venn Diagram

**Planning -
determining what is
needed in
curriculum through
student data**

**What allows
student to
learn?**

**What allows
student to
show what
they
know?**

**Student
data**

**Curriculum-
allows for
learning while
meeting
expectations**

**What links
instruction
to testing?**

**Testing -
meeting the
construct while
providing access**

5 Star Accommodations: A five step process

- **Decision making by IEP teams**
- **Documentation on IEPs**
- **Implementation in the classroom**
- **Implementation on state-mandated tests**
- **Data collection and review**

Decision-Making by IEP Teams

- **Have IEP teams across the school/system been trained?**
 - Training around both accommodations and AT
 - Training of general and special education teachers
- **Does that training include, and are IEP team members familiar with, the 5 step process for determining appropriate accommodations?**
 - Found in the Accommodations Manual
 - Provides the basis for discussion

Decision-Making by the IEP Team

- **Does training allow IEP team members to be “up to date” with accommodations?**
 - Understanding accommodations vs. modifications
 - Understand the latest Assistive Technology
 - Understand what is appropriate per content
 - Understand what is appropriate for each test

Decision-Making by the IEP Team

- **When an accommodation cannot be utilized on a state-mandated assessment, does the IEP team know how to transition the student from the classroom to the testing accommodation?**
 - Identify the needed skills
 - Identify how the skills will be incorporated into the curriculum
 - Identify the data needed to show growth

Documentation on the IEP

- **Do IEPs show a link from information in the Present Level of Performance (PLP) to the accommodations chosen?**
 - Data reflects classroom and testing results
 - Data in PLP leads to need for accommodations

Documentation on the IEP

- **Do IEPs show a link from classroom accommodations to state-mandated test accommodations?**
 - Those accommodations documented for utilization on tests must be documented for classroom use
 - Not every classroom accommodation is appropriate for the test (based on the construct being assessed)

Documentation in the IEP

- **Do all team members know what accommodations are included in the IEP?**
 - Is information provided to ALL teachers, the student, parents?
 - Do all team members know how to implement the accommodations effectively and consistently?
 - Do ALL team members have input and opportunity to seek support in using the accommodation(s)?

Documentation in the IEP

- **Are IEPs routinely reviewed?**
 - Can any team member ask for support or review of accommodation?
 - Are IEPs written before the end of the previous school year reviewed to ensure the decisions are still valid or necessary?
 - Are reviews of effectiveness of classroom and test accommodations conducted to provide more information for decision-making?

Implementation in the classroom

- **Are the accommodations are being implemented?**
 - Look for more than “availability” in the classroom
 - Look for consistency within and between classes and teachers
 - Look for reduction or transition when classroom accommodations are not the same as those implemented for testing

Implementation in the classroom

- **Does the student understand and advocate for the accommodations?**
 - Look for student training on reason why and how accommodation will be implemented
 - Support the appropriate behaviors around advocating for use of accommodation within and between classes

Implementation in the classroom

- **Are “unintended” accommodations or modifications avoided?**
 - Are teachers aware of how accommodations can become modifications?
 - Do classroom teachers know the features of AT being utilized as an accommodation to use/disable based on the content and why?
 - Is there a consistent discussion among team members to help alleviate this possibility?

Implementation in the classroom

- **Is data on accommodation effectiveness being collected?**
 - Classroom instruction/assessments made available for review should clearly indicate implementation of accommodation

Implementation on state-mandated tests

- **Is the use of a needed accommodation listed as standard or conditional in the Student Assessment Handbook or Accommodations Manual?**
 - A request can be made for permission to utilize the potential accommodation which is not currently standard
 - Request goes through the system test coordinator and is submitted to the state Assessment Division
 - Request must include why the accommodation is needed and how the student uses the accommodation in the classroom
 - Ensure that they accommodation use does not encroach on the construct
 - Submit as early as possible before state-mandated testing date

Implementation on state-mandated tests

- **Do testing coordinators at the system and school level understand the accommodations to be provided and implementation of those accommodations?**
 - Plan in order to answer the “WH” questions for each test
 - Examiners and classroom teachers can discuss how accommodations are provided

Implementation on state-mandated tests

- **Do all examiners understand the accommodations to be provided and implementation of those accommodations?**
 - Plan in order to answer the “WH” questions for each test
 - Examiners and classroom teachers can discuss how accommodations are provided

Implementation on state-mandated tests

- **Does the student understand the accommodations being provided?**
 - Student understands the answers to the “WH” questions for each test
 - Support appropriate behaviors around advocating for use of accommodations on the tests

Implementation on state-mandated tests

- **Do school-level administration know how accommodations are to be implemented?**
 - Review IEP for consistency within and between tests
 - Review procedures for consistency within and between tests

Review of data

- **Is data being reviewed during the school year?**
 - Does the routine review of accommodations incorporate academic and logistical considerations?
 - Can a review be conducted at any time?
 - Does data include a variety of sources, including the type and frequency of questions about AT?
 - Is data reviewed in light of updates from special education and testing programs?

Review of data

- **Is data reviewed once state-mandated results are received?**
 - Are tests results reviewed for validity?
 - Is data from test administration reviewed to incorporate academic and logistical considerations?

Review of data

- **Is data reviewed with all IEP team members?**
 - Is data documented within Present Level of Performance on IEP?
 - Present Level includes each team member's report of the student's progress, needs and additional support

Review of data

- **Is data reviewed with “an eye toward the future”?**
 - Do IEPs clearly show that the accommodation is still appropriate for the future curriculum and learning?
 - Do IEPs clearly show that the accommodation is still appropriate for future test administrations?

Implications for training and support

What is needed for implementing these steps:

STEP	Training and Support
Decision-making by IEP team	Accommodations Manual Elluminate session
Documentation on IEP	Elluminate sessions
Implementation in the classroom	Elluminate sessions GPAT initiatives/AT Teams
Implementation on the state-mandated tests	Elluminate sessions
Review of data	Accommodations Manual Elluminate sessions

Elluminate Sessions and Materials

- **Elluminate Sessions –**

<http://elluminate.gavirtualschool.org/doe/index.html>

- Developing the IEP – 10/3/07
- Developing Standards Based Individualized Education Programs for SWDs – 12/15/08
- Making Accommodations – Developing decisions for Instruction and Testing – 2/11/08
- Data Collection Workshop – 8/19/08
- Assistive Technology – Consideration and Documentation – 3/24/08
- Testing Conference for Special Education Directors – Part I and Part II – 9/29/08

Eliminate Sessions and Materials

- **Eliminate Sessions** – <http://eliminate.gavirtualschool.org/testing/index.html>
 - Accommodations for SWD & ELL – 10/21/08
- **Presentations** – www.gadoe.org/ci_testing.aspx
 - Accommodations for SWD & ELL
 - Accommodations STC Conference
 - Accommodations New STC Conference
- **Materials** – www.gadoe.org/ci_testing.aspx
 - 2008-2009 Student Assessment Handbook
 - Accommodations Manual

Accommodations Contacts

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