

## Accountability and Testing

All students are to be given the opportunity to receive instruction that will allow them to perform successfully on all state- required tests. North Carolina’s statewide testing policy requires all students with disabilities to participate in the statewide testing program by taking the general state-mandated tests with or without available accommodations or by participating in North Carolina alternate assessment(s) with or without accommodations. To participate in alternate assessments, students must meet eligibility criteria established by the NCDPI.

- 1) **Accountability-** This policy is in accordance with IDEA and ESSA. Results from student performance are reported annually by the NCDPI.
  - a) The purposes of the North Carolina Testing Program, as described in G.S. §115C-174.10, are as follows:
    - i) To assure that all high school graduates possess those minimum skills and that knowledge thought necessary to function as a member of society;
    - ii) To provide a means of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education process in order to improve instructional delivery; and
    - iii) To establish additional means for making the education system at the state, local, and school levels accountable to the public for results.”
  - b) IDEA mandates that all students with disabilities be provided access to the general curriculum. For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, access is provided through the North Carolina Extended Content Standards for the state-adopted North Carolina Standard Course of Study for all assessed content areas (i.e., English Language Arts (ELA)/Reading, Mathematics, and Science). The State Board of Education’s policies regarding the testing of children with disabilities shall:
    - i) provide broad accommodations and alternate methods of assessment that are consistent with a student’s individualized education program and Section 504 (29 U.S.C. § 794)
    - ii) Prohibit the use of state wide tests as the sole determinant of decisions about a student’s graduation or promotion; and
    - iii) Provide parents with information about the Statewide Testing Program and options for children with disabilities.
- 2) **Testing-** One of the functions of state tests is to generate information for the purpose of accountability. Testing accommodations for a IEP or Section 504 student should be based on the student’s accommodations used during the identification and progress monitoring process. If a student needs a testing accommodation, the accommodation must be used every time a student is tested. In order for a testing accommodation to be used for district and state-mandated tests, it must be considered routinely used in the classroom. To be considered as routinely used, the accommodation must be in place for at least 30 calendar days before the test window opens in order for the student to use the accommodation listed on the IEP or Section 504 plan. Testing accommodations should in no way alter the content of the assessment or interfere with the integrity of the test construct. Testing accommodations CANNOT be implemented solely for state-wide assessments. School assignments and tests completed with accommodations should be graded the same way as those completed without accommodations. Accommodations are meant to “level the playing field,” provide equal and

ready access to the task at hand, and are not meant to provide an undue advantage for the student.

- a) Mountain Island Day has designated, grade level, testing blocks to allow for routine classroom testing accommodations to occur throughout the year. This block is predetermined to allow the EC coordinator the ability to schedule for student testing accommodations.
  - b) All students with disabilities participate in the district-wide grade level local and state accountability programs. The North Carolina End-of- Grade and End-of -Course assessments are taken by all students participating in the Common Core State and North Carolina Essential Standards.
- 3) **Extended Time** -Typically, extended test time is considered a reasonable accommodation when a student's disability prevents demonstration of mastery of the tested material within the allotted time. Extended test time is a routine accommodation for students with disabilities when assessment of the student's mastery of content is the main purpose of the testing. Staff should allow extended test time only when the student demonstrates a disability-related need for the accommodation. Requests for extended time to complete all assignments, including tests, quizzes, homework and class work, should not be granted when supportive evidence indicates that the student always completes tests in less than the time allotted and earned mostly A's.
- 4) **Transfer Students**-If a student transfers to MID and has a current IEP from out of state, the IEP team is required to provide comparable services until the student is found eligible in North Carolina and a new IEP is developed.
- 5) **Alternate Assessment**-In order for a student with a disability to participate in a North Carolina alternate assessment, the student must meet the eligibility criteria established by the NCDPI, and the decision to participate in the alternate assessment must be documented in the current IEP. The IDEA and the ESSA require students with disabilities to participate in an alternate assessment, with or without accommodations, if they are receiving instruction through the North Carolina Extended Content Standards.
- a) Students with only Section 504 Plans are not eligible for participation in any of North Carolina's alternate assessments. These students may participate in the standard test administration with or without accommodations as documented in their individual Section 504 Plans.
- 6) **Testing Code of Ethics (State Board policy TEST-010)**- To ensure test results are valid, all school personnel must follow the appropriate procedures for use of the accommodation or alternate assessment for students with disabilities Since IDEA and ESSA require all students with disabilities to participate in the statewide testing program, where appropriate, a local procedure must be established in the LEA to ensure students **with** disabilities who have the appropriate documentation in the current IEP or Section 504 Plan;
- a) participate in the general assessment under standard conditions (i.e., without accommodations)
  - b) participate in the general assessment with testing accommodations; or
  - c) if eligible, participate in a North Carolina alternate assessment (i.e., with or without accommodations).
- 7) **Testing Responsibility**-It is the joint responsibility of MID school personnel, test coordinator, EC staff, faculty and staff to work collaboratively to ensure the following within a reasonable time frame.

- a) All teachers, IEP teams, and Section 504 committees, including parent(s), guardian(s), and surrogate parent(s), must be informed about the
  - i) State testing requirements at each grade level;
  - ii) Guidelines governing the provision and use of testing accommodations; and
  - iii) Guidelines governing the administration and use of the North Carolina alternate assessments.
- b) Ensure only eligible students with disabilities with the appropriate documentation in current IEPs or Section 504 Plans are provided testing accommodations during the administration of state tests and, in order to ensure valid test results, all state policies are followed.
- c) Only eligible students with disabilities with the appropriate documentation in current IEPs participate in a North Carolina alternate assessment if not participating in a statewide general assessment with or without accommodations.
- d) Have appropriate documentation in a current IEP or Section 504 Plan is to be on file in the event of state audits or monitoring that may be required as part of the Exceptional Children, State Testing, and/or Accountability Programs.
- e) Arrange any special scheduling or other provisions that may be required to accommodate testing students with disabilities.
- f) Ensure appropriate procedures are followed during the administration of state tests with accommodations. Appropriate accommodations are only provided to students with disabilities who have documentation that they are eligible to receive them.
- g) MID will notifying parents/guardians and students before the actual test administration date about the approved accommodations the student will be provided during the actual test administration and the procedures to follow if a student declines to use the approved accommodation(s) during an actual test administration. This information must be documented in the school testing plans.
- h) MID's faculty and staff are to receive training about IDEA, ESSA, and the North Carolina alternate assessments. When the IEP team, using the state eligibility criteria, determines and documents that a student will participate in a North Carolina alternate assessment, the student must participate in the documented alternate assessment unless the IEP team reconvenes and changes the testing requirements.
  - i) Any changes in testing requirements (i.e., change from general assessment to alternate assessment) should not be made unless there are at least one hundred twenty (120) school days before the testing window.
  - i) Parents/legal guardians/students age 18 or older are to be informed when their child will be instructed and evaluated based on alternate academic achievement standards through the North Carolina Extended Content Standards.
- 8) Training of Personnel**-School personnel must receive training on how to use accommodations during instruction. Before testing, training sessions on testing students with disabilities must be conducted by test coordinator for;
  - a) test administrators,
  - b) proctors,
  - c) exceptional children teachers, and
  - d) any other appropriate school personnel who serve students with disabilities on IEP teams and Section 504 teams or who are otherwise involved in administering a state test,

providing accommodations during the administration of a state test, or administering or assisting with the administration of an alternate assessment.

*\*Training related to testing is primarily the responsibility of the test coordinators. However, exceptional children directors, IEP and Section 504 coordinators, and general curriculum specialists are strongly encouraged to participate and assist in developing training for personnel involved in testing students with disabilities. In no case shall a test be administered by an individual who has not participated in training on the administration of state tests, the appropriate use of testing accommodations, or, if applicable, the procedures for administering the alternate assessments.*