

# Selecting and Documenting Appropriate Accessibility Supports

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**The Rule:** The Oregon Accessibility Manual states that universal tools and designated supports are available to all students, although the decision must be based on an assessment of individual student need—while accommodations are only available for students on an IEP or 504 Plan (based on an assessment of individual student need). Test administrators and others involved in assessment must provide for and document all approved accessibility supports for the administration of the assessment to persons with disabilities or special needs. Documentation is important to ensure that as a student moves or transitions from one teacher, school building, or district to the next, there is consistency with accessibility support use and no delay in meeting the student's needs. The following are some promising practices that school districts might consider when selecting and documenting appropriate accessibility supports for individual students.

## Promising Practices:

*Who should be involved in the decision-making process?*

- In order to maintain valid, secure, and ethical testing practices, the decision to provide accessibility supports during testing based on an “assessment of individual student need” should not be done by one person. Instead, it is strongly encouraged that the “assessment of individual student need” be done by a team of individuals who are knowledgeable of the student in question and familiar with testing accessibility supports. The team decision-making process encourages collaboration between multiple expert educators for the benefit of a given student. Members on the various teams (IEP, 504 Plan, Student Study Team) would include many of the following individuals:
  - IEP Team members (administrator/designee, special and general education teachers, specialists, parent, student)
  - 504 Plan Team members (administrator/designee, 504 Plan Coordinator, special and general education teachers, specialists, parent, student)
  - Student Study Team members for students not on IEPs or 504 Plans (administrator/designee, special and general education teachers, specialists, parent, student)
- Schools should have a system in place to inform students of available accessibility supports and allow them to request consideration for use of an accessibility support prior to the start of the testing session. Ideally, this would happen at the beginning of the school year.

*How and when should decisions be made about identifying appropriate accessibility supports?*

- When conducting an “assessment of individual student need” to consider accessibility supports used during state assessment, a team might review the following: the student's strengths, learning needs and challenges, specialized instruction or accessibility supports being provided, and student's willingness to learn and use the accessibility support.
- All necessary accessibility supports should be identified and implemented during classroom instruction prior to the student's participation in the state assessment.
- For more detailed information regarding the selection, administration, and evaluation of accessibility supports, please consult Appendix C of the Oregon Accessibility Manual.

*How should decisions about accessibility supports be documented?*

- IEP and 504 Plan Teams are required to document any decision related to accessibility supports for instruction, class or school testing, and state testing for any student on an IEP or 504 Plan.
- For students not on an IEP or 504 Plan, although it is not required, ODE recommends that decisions related to accessibility support use be documented within the student's cumulative file. The assessment of individual student need might be conducted within a Student Study Team or Grade Level Team meeting.