

TEST ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES 2003 FCAT



In response to issues raised regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), Governor Jeb Bush signed an executive order creating the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Accommodations and Access for Students with Disabilities. The work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) has resulted in expanded accommodations for students with disabilities, many of these effective in time for the 2003 FCAT administration.

The table below lists test accommodations that were previously allowed in test administrations prior to Spring 2003 as well as the expanded accommodations allowable for the 2003 FCAT. The items in *italics* are currently included in the FCAT test administration manuals and Rule 6A-1.0943(2), FAC. These items are also indicated with a mark in the second column. The third column indicates which of the accommodations are new, based on the recommendations of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Accommodations and Access for Students with Disabilities and included in Appendix D of their final report.

In accordance with Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, school districts may request unique accommodations for individual students. Unique accommodations usually involve alterations of existing test materials, must be regularly used by the student for classroom instruction, and must not alter the underlying content of the assessment. Each unique accommodation must be approved by the Commissioner of Education prior to its use. Examples of unique accommodations in the table below are identified by an asterisk (*).

A. PRESENTATION:	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
<i>VISUAL ACCOMMODATIONS</i>		
<i>Regular print versions of the test may be enlarged through mechanical or electronic means (Item A1).</i>	X	
<i>The district test coordinator may request large print version (A2).</i>	X	
<i>Braille versions may be requested for students who use Braille materials. Some test items may be altered in format for Braille versions of the test as authorized by the Department. Test items that have no application for the Braille reader will be deleted as authorized by the Department. Student performance standards that cannot be assessed in the Braille format will be deleted from the requirements of Section 1008.22, Florida Statutes (A3).</i>	X	
<i>The student may use means to maintain or enhance visual attention to test items (A4.)</i>	X	

Item numbers (e.g., A1) correspond to the complete list of proposed accommodations approved by the State Board of Education on January 21, 2003.

A. PRESENTATION (CONT.):	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
VISUAL ACCOMMODATIONS		
Provide student with a copy of directions read by teacher from FCAT administration script (A5).		X
Mask portions of the test to direct attention to uncovered item(s) (A6).		X
Use colored transparencies/overlays (A7).		X
Secure papers to work area (A8).*		X
Increase spacing between test items (A9).*		X
Fewer items placed on each page (A10).*		X
Positioning tools such as a reading stand (A11).		X
Highlight keywords or phrases in directions to items (A19).		X
AUDITORY ACCOMMODATIONS		
23. Signed or oral presentation may be provided for all directions and items other than reading items. Reading items must be read by the student through visual or tactile means (A23).	X	
Use a reader to read directions and items other than reading items (A24).	X	
Repeat, clarify or summarize test directions (A25).	X	X
Allow student to demonstrate understanding of directions (e.g., repeat or paraphrase) to ensure understanding (A26).	X	X
Use of text-to-speech technology to communicate directions, items other than reading items (A27).		X
Provide verbal encouragement (e.g., "keep working" "make sure to answer every question"); may not be used to cue a student regarding correct/incorrect responses (A28).		X
Use white noise (sound machines) to reduce auditory distractions (A29).		X

B. RESPONDING:	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
ACCOMMODATIONS TO RESPONSE INPUT		
<i>The student may use varied methods to respond to the test, including written, signed and verbal response. Written responses may include the use of mechanical and electronic devices. A test administrator or proctor may transcribe student responses to the format required by the test. Transcribed responses must accurately reflect the response of the student, without addition or edification by the test administrator or proctor (B1).</i>	X	
Dictate responses to proctor (B2).	X	
Use of speech-to-text technology to indicate answers (B3).	X	
Use of computer switch to indicate answers (B4).	X	
Use of computer/alternative keyboard to indicate answers (B5).	X	
Use of pointing device to indicate answers (B6).	X	
Use of other communication devices to indicate answers (B7).	X	
Enter answers directly into test booklet (B8).	X	
Signing responses to interpreter (B9).	X	
Dictate responses into a tape recorder (B10).		X

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B. RESPONDING (CONT.):	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
ACCOMMODATIONS TO RESPONSE INPUT		
Use of special paper such as raised, line, shaded line, or color-decoded for long or short response (would require that responses are then transcribed) (B11).		X
Use of math guides to organize mathematical computation (B12).		X
Use of writing guides (grids) to produce legible answers (B13).		X
Check periodically to be sure student is marking in correct spaces (B14).		X
ACCOMMODATIONS TO RESPONSE PREPARATION		
Calculator for math problems grades 7 and up (B15).	X	
Abacus for all grade levels for students with visual impairments (B16).	X	

C. SCHEDULING:	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
<i>The student may be administered a test during several brief sessions allowing frequent breaks during the testing sessions, within specifications of the test administration manual. Students may be provided additional time for the administration of the test.(C1).</i>	X	
Specific time of the day for specific subtests (C2).		X

D. SETTING:	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
<i>The student may be administered a test individually or in a small group setting. The student may be provided with adaptive or special furniture and special lighting or acoustics (D1).</i>	X	
Special lighting (D2).	X	
Adaptive or special furniture (D3).	X	
Special acoustics such as FM systems to enhance sound or special rooms to decrease auditory distractions (D4).	X	
Increase or decrease the opportunity for movement (D5).		X
Reduce stimuli (e.g., limit number of items on desk) (D6).		X
Other specialized settings (D7).*		X
Administer the test in a familiar place such as the home with a test proctor present and/or by a familiar person (D8).	X (students homebound or hospitalized)	

E. ASSISTIVE DEVICES:	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
<i>The student may use the following assistive devices typically used in classroom instruction:</i>		
<i>If the purpose of the assessment requires complex computation, calculators may be used as authorized in the test administration manual. A calculator may not be used on assessments of basic computation as specified in the test administration manual (E1).</i>	X	

Item numbers (e.g., A1) correspond to the complete list of proposed accommodations approved by the State Board of Education on January 21, 2003.

E. ASSISTIVE DEVICES (CONT.):	CURRENTLY ALLOWED	EXPANDED ACCOMMODATIONS IN RESPONSE TO BRTF
<i>Visual magnification and auditory amplification devices may be used. For students with visual impairments, an abacus may be used (E2).</i>	X	
<i>Technology may be used without accessing spelling or grammar-checking applications for writing assessments and without using speech output programs for reading items assessed. Other assistive technology typically used by the student in classroom instruction may be used provided the purpose of the testing is not violated. Implementation of assistive devices must assure that test responses are the independent work of the student. Unusual circumstances of accommodations through assistive devices must be approved by the Commissioner of Education before use (E3).</i>	X	

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