

APPENDIX G: Providing the Sign Language Accommodation

Although it is understood that the nature of this accommodation requires individualized delivery in the communication method familiar to the student, individuals providing the sign language accommodation for the ACCESS, PSAT 10, SAT, NGSAs, RICAS, and DLM assessments must follow these procedures during testing to ensure standardization of delivery.

Procedures for Providing the Sign Language Accommodation

- Signers must be trained on test administration policies as indicated in this document and as provided during online or in-person training opportunities provided by the district or school.
- Individuals providing the sign language accommodation must sign the security agreement.
- Signers should use signs that are conceptually accurate, with or without simultaneous voicing, translating only the content that is presented, without changing, emphasizing, or adding information. Signers may not clarify (except for test directions), provide additional information, assist, or influence the student's selection of a response in any way. Signers must do their best to use the same signs if the student requests a portion repeated.
- Signers must sign (or sign and speak when using Sim-Com [Simultaneous Communication]) in a clear and consistent manner throughout the test administration, using correct pronunciation, and without inflections that may provide clues to, or mislead, a student.
- Signers should emphasize only the words printed in boldface, italics, or capital letters and inform the student that the words are printed that way. No other emphasis or inflection is permitted.
- Signers may repeat passages, test items, and answer options as requested, according to the needs of the student. Signers should not rush through the test and should ask the student if they are ready to move to the next item.
- Signers may not attempt to solve problems or determine the correct answer to a test item while signing, as this may result in pauses or changes in inflection that may mislead the student.
- Signers must use facial expressions consistent with sign language delivery and must not use expressions that may be interpreted by the student as approval or disapproval of the student's answers.
- Test Administrators must be familiar with the student's IEP and should know in advance which accommodations are required by the student. Test Administrators must be aware of whether a student requires additional tools, devices, or adaptive equipment that has been approved for use during the test, such as a magnifier, closed circuit television (CCTV), abacus, braille, slate, stylus, etc., and if use of these tools impacts the translation of the test, the signer should be aware of this.
- Upon review of the test, if a human signer is unsure how to sign and/or pronounce an unfamiliar word, the signer should collaborate with a content expert who is fluent in sign language (if available) to determine which sign is most appropriate to use. If the signer is unable to obtain this information before the test, the signer should advise the student of the uncertainty and spell the word.
- When using a sign that can represent more than one concept or English word, the signer must adequately contextualize the word in order to reduce ambiguity. The signer may also spell the word after signing it if there is any doubt about which word is intended.
- Signers must spell any words requested by the student during the test administration.
- **NGSA and RICAS Math Only:** When test items refer to a particular part of the text, the signer must re-sign the lines before signing the question and answer options. For example, the signer should sign, "Question X refers to the following part [paragraph]...", then sign that part to the student, followed by question X and the answer options.

- **RICAS ELA Only:** When test items refer to a particular part of a passage, **the signer cannot sign any part of the passage.** The signer can sign line or stanza numbers for passages before signing the question and answer options. For example, the signer should sign, “Question X refers to the following lines [paragraph]...,” then sign the line or passage numbers, followed by question X and the answer options.
- When signing selected-response items, signers must be careful to give equal emphasis to each answer option and to sign all answer options before waiting for the student’s response.
- When answer options will be scribed, the signer should inform the student at the beginning of the test that if the student designates a response choice by letter only (“B,” for example), the signer will ask the student if they would like the response to be signed again before the answer is recorded.
- If the student chooses an answer before the signer has signed all the answer options, the human signer must ask if the student wants the other answer options to be signed.
- After the signer finishes signing a test item and all answer options, the signer must allow the student to pause before responding. If the pause has been lengthy, the signer should ask: “Do you want me to sign the question or any part of it again?” When signing questions again, signers must avoid emphasizing words not bolded, italicized, or capitalized.

Sign-System-Specific Procedures

Signers must deliver the accommodation in the language or communication mode used by the student according to the student’s IEP.

American Sign Language (ASL)

Signers delivering the accommodation via ASL must use appropriate ASL features (including signs, sentence structure, non-manual markers, classifiers, etc.) while protecting the construct being measured by the assessment. The signer must be careful not to cue the student.

English-Based Sign Systems (PSE, Sim-Com, etc.)

Signers delivering the accommodation via an English-based signing system (PSE, Sim-Com, etc.) must use the features of the communication mode used by the student. Signers delivering the test in English-based signing systems should use the rules of those signing systems (conceptually accurate signs, English word order, etc.), with or without simultaneous voicing.