

**FSA and FCAT 2.0/NGSSS Assessment Accommodations
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
(Updated Spring 2016)**

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – General Information

1. Which assessments will be administered in 2015-2016?

The table below provides details about the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) and the FCAT 2.0/Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) assessments that will be administered in 2015-2016.

	FSA	FCAT 2.0/NGSSS
Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Institutes for Research (AIR) • Subcontractor for materials production: Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) 	Pearson
Standards Assessed	Florida Standards	Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS)
CBT Platform	Test Delivery System (TDS)	TestNav 8
Computer-Based Test Administration (with paper-based accommodations for eligible students with IEPs/Section 504 plans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades 8-10 ELA Writing • ELA Writing Retake • Grades 4-10 ELA Reading • ELA Reading Retake • Grades 5-8 Mathematics • Algebra 1 • Geometry • Algebra 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake • Algebra 1 Retake • Biology 1 • Civics • U.S. History
Paper-Based Test Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades 4-7 ELA Writing • Grade 3 ELA Reading • Grades 3-4 Mathematics 	Grades 5 and 8 Statewide Science Assessment

2. Are all assessments administered on the computer?

No. The following assessments are paper-based test administrations in 2015-2016: Grades 4-7 FSA English Language Arts (ELA) Writing, Grade 3 FSA ELA Reading, Grades 3-4 FSA Mathematics, and the Grades 5 and 8 Statewide Science Assessment. All other assessments are computer-based administrations with paper-based accommodations available for eligible students whose individual educational plans (IEPs) or Section 504 plans indicate a need for a paper-based

format. For information regarding assessments that will be administered on the computer through 2017-2018, see the transition chart available at

<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7048/dps-2014-81b.pdf>.

3. What types of items are on the FSA?

The Florida Standards Assessments are composed of test items that include traditional multiple-choice items, items that require students to type or write a response, and technology-enhanced items (TEI). Technology-enhanced items are computer-delivered items that require students to interact with test content to select, construct, and/or support their answers.

Currently, there are eight types of TEIs that may appear on computer-based FSA ELA assessments and nine types of TEIs that may appear on computer-based FSA Mathematics assessments. For Grade 3 ELA assessments and Grades 3-4 Mathematics assessments, which are paper-based tests in 2015-2016, and for students with an IEP or Section 504 plan that specifies a paper-based accommodation, TEIs will be modified or replaced with test items aligned to the same standard/reporting category that can be scanned and scored electronically.

Beginning in spring 2016, computer-based **and** paper-based Grades 4-10 ELA Reading and ELA Reading Retake will require access to audio/listening stimuli for certain test item(s).

For samples of each of the item types, see the FSA practice tests at <http://fsassessments.org/students-and-families/practice-tests>. For more information on TEIs, see the most current test design summaries posted to the [FSA Portal](#). Click on the About the FSAs tab to access the documents.

4. Do all students with disabilities take FSA assessments?

Any student with a disability participates in the statewide assessment program by taking the FSA with or without accommodations unless the student meets criteria for participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA). An exemption from participation in a statewide assessment may be requested for an extraordinary circumstance or condition per Section 1008.212, Florida Statutes, or for medical complexity per s. 1008.22(10), F.S. All determinations regarding participation in the statewide assessment program must be documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan.

5. Which students are eligible for accommodations on FSA assessments?

A student with a disability is eligible to receive accommodations on FSA assessments if the IEP team or Section 504 plan team determines and documents that the student requires allowable accommodations during instruction, as well as for participation in statewide standardized assessments. The IEP team or the Section 504 plan team should determine which accommodations the student needs, if any. This information must be documented in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. The accommodations are then used regularly in the classroom for daily academic work and assessments. In accordance with testing guidelines, these same accommodations—if proven successful in the classroom and if allowable—may be used during the administration of statewide assessments.

6. What accommodations are allowed on FSA assessments?

The following table provides details about the features and accommodations that are available for the FSA and FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments. Additional accommodations that may be provided are included in the categories of flexible presentation, flexible responding, flexible setting, flexible scheduling, and assistive devices/tools. Allowable accommodations are listed in the test administration manuals published by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment.

	FSA Test Delivery System (AIR)	FCAT 2.0/NGSSS TestNav 8 (Pearson)
Computer-Based Features Available to <u>All</u> Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlarge Print Size • Zoom • Color Contrast • Line Reader • Highlighter • Notepad • Answer Choice Eliminator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Text Size • Zoom • Magnifier • Color Contrast • Line Reader • Highlighter • Notepad • Answer Choice Eliminator
Computer-Based Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-to-Speech (TTS) • Masking • American Sign Language (ASL) Videos for audio stimuli 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-to-Speech (TTS) • Masking
Passage Booklet Accommodations (for computer-based tests)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Print Writing Passage Booklet • Large Print Writing Passage Booklet • Regular Print Reading Passage Booklet • Large Print Reading Passage Booklet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Print Reading Passage Booklet
Paper-Based Accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Print • Large Print • Contracted Braille • Uncontracted Braille • One-Item-Per-Page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Print • Large Print • Contracted Braille • Uncontracted Braille • One-Item-Per-Page

7. Is there a separate test platform for computer-based accommodations?

No. Computer-based accommodations are built into AIR’s Test Delivery System for FSA and into the TestNav 8 platform for FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments.

8. What is the deadline for IEPs and Section 504 plans to be updated for students that require accommodations on FSA assessments?

There is no deadline for IEP/Section 504 plan updates. Accommodations should be documented on an IEP/Section 504 plan based on the needs of the student and should not be dictated by testing dates or deadlines. Accommodations should be determined necessary by the IEP/Section 504 plan team for regular use by the student in the classroom as well as on assessments.

9. Can a student with a disability receive an FSA waiver of results?

Yes. Per s. 1008.22(3)(c)2 and 3 and s. 1003.4282(10)(e), a student with a disability may request a waiver of assessment results for the purpose of receiving a course grade or a standard diploma. The student must have participated in the assessment at least once and must meet all other waiver criteria. For more information regarding the waiver, see the Technical Assistance Paper, *Waiver of Statewide, Standardized Assessment Results for Students with Disabilities*, available at <http://info.fl DOE.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7321/dps-2015-16.pdf>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Presentation

10. What is masking?

Masking allows a student to cover portions of a page or item. In the case of answer masking, multiple-choice answer options are covered so that they may be viewed individually.

11. Is oral presentation allowable on FSA? Is there a text-to-speech option?

Yes. The following read-aloud accommodations are available for FSA:

FSA ELA Writing – Students with an oral presentation accommodation on their IEPs or Section 504 plans may have the **directions and prompt** read aloud to them. The Writing Component of the ELA test requires that students read a variety of texts and respond to what they have read. Because this portion of the test assesses reading skills as well as writing skills, the passages may NOT be read aloud to students.

FSA ELA Reading – Students with an oral presentation accommodation on their IEPs or Section 504 plans may have the **directions, test questions, and answer choices** read aloud to them. The Reading passages may NOT be read aloud to students.

FSA Mathematics – All mathematics directions, test questions, and answer choices may be read aloud to students with this accommodation.

For computer-based tests, text-to-speech features will be available on the appropriate read-aloud portions for students who are assigned this accommodation in the system.

12. Can FSA items be translated into American Sign Language?

Yes. Any portions of tests that may be read aloud may also be signed for students with this accommodation.

13. Since FSA ELA Reading items and answer choices can be read, can FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake items and answer choices be read aloud or signed?

No. Allowable oral/signed presentation accommodations for FCAT 2.0 and NGSSS assessments have not changed. Oral and signed presentation may be provided for all directions and for Statewide Science and NGSSS EOC items and answer choices. FCAT 2.0 Reading passages, items, and answer choices may NOT be read aloud or signed. The following table details allowable oral/signed presentation accommodations for FSA and for FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments.

	FSA	FCAT 2.0/NGSSS
	Allowable Oral/Signed Presentation Accommodations?	
Directions	Yes	Yes
Writing Passages	No	n/a
Writing Prompt	Yes	n/a
Reading Passages	No	No
Reading Items	Yes	No
Reading Answer Choices	Yes	No
Mathematics Items	Yes	Yes
Mathematics Answer Choices	Yes	Yes
Science Items	n/a	Yes
Science Answer Choices	n/a	Yes
EOC Items	Yes	Yes
EOC Answer Choices	Yes	Yes

14. Can electronic sign language dictionaries be used?

Yes. Students who use sign language as their primary means of communication may use an English/sign or sign/English translation dictionary. The dictionary must be similar to one used in the instructional setting and may include synonyms and an index but must **not** provide definitions of words. Electronic versions must meet the same requirements without accessing the Internet.

15. How is the listening portion of FSA ELA Reading accommodated for students who are deaf or hard of hearing?

Beginning in spring 2016, ASL videos for audio/listening stimuli will be available for eligible students who require them. Test administrators or proctors may also repeat or sign audio/listening stimuli to eligible students who require these modes of presentation.

16. Can a dual monitor setup be used for a student receiving signed or oral presentation?

Yes. A second monitor, presenting identical information, may be positioned so that the test administrator or proctor can face the student and present the questions.

17. Can students receive oral presentation from a human reader instead of using text-to-speech (TTS)?

If the type of oral presentation is not specified on the IEP or Section 504 plan, the accommodation may be provided by a human reader **or** via the computer-based text-to-speech form. If specified, the accommodation should be provided as documented. As with all accommodations, the manner in which the accommodation is provided should be consistent with its use in the classroom (ensuring that students have sufficient practice and are familiar with the format).

18. Will a passage booklet be available for students who can operate a computer but need to read from a paper document (e.g., for students with eye tracking issues)?

Yes. Reading Passage Booklets will be available for computer-based ELA Reading assessments and for the computer-based FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake. Writing Passage Booklets will also be available for computer-based ELA Writing assessments. FSA ELA Reading Passage Booklets and FSA ELA Writing Passage Booklets will be available in regular print and large print versions. FCAT 2.0 Reading Retake Passage Booklets will be available in regular print only. Passage booklets allow students to read paper-based (hardcopy) versions of the passages while taking the computer-based test.

19. Will students be able to use a paper FSA Mathematics test book and respond on the computer in an identical form?

No. There are differences between the paper-based and computer-based versions of FSA tests. Some of the item types on the computer-based version may be modified or replaced with different items on the paper-based forms.

20. Will students be able to use a planning sheet on the computer-based FSA ELA Writing test?

Yes. Planning sheets will be provided to all students.

21. Will students be allowed to use graph paper as an accommodation if it is on their IEP?

Yes. Blank graph paper is an allowable accommodation and may be used by students during testing if documented on an IEP or Section 504 plan.

22. Can students use mathematics grids or guides during FSA Mathematics tests?

Yes. Blank mathematics grids or guides are allowable accommodations for eligible students to align mathematical computation. The grids or guides must be blank and must **not** include formulas, multiplication tables, etc.

23. Which students are eligible for paper-based accommodations?

A student with a disability who has an IEP or Section 504 plan may be eligible for paper-based accommodations (regular print, large print, braille, one-item-per-page) on computer-based statewide assessments. Decisions regarding accommodations, including eligibility for paper-based accommodations, should be based on determination of a student's needs and should not be made for preferential reasons. The use of computers and mobile devices for instructional engagement and assessment is a fundamental aspect of general education, and the ability to access online environments must be considered. Students with disabilities should be given access to online environments during the educational day, including on assessments, in order to be prepared for college and careers. In addition, students should be given opportunities to practice on computer-based instructional programs and on the computer-based test platforms using the available features and accommodations to determine their effectiveness and appropriateness.

Students who are eligible to receive paper-based accommodations must have an IEP or Section 504 plan that clearly indicates the reason that the computer-based test is not currently accessible or appropriate for the student. Documentation should include:

- Whether or not the student is currently able to use a computer or mobile device to engage in instruction/assessments.
- Accommodations/assistive technology the student needs when using a computer or mobile device.
- Training and services the student needs to successfully use a computer or mobile device in instruction/assessments.
- The type of media/accommodations (e.g., paper, braille) that are necessary if it is determined that the student cannot use a computer or mobile device for the foreseeable future.

Students who are hospitalized/homebound and students who currently reside at Department of Corrections facilities, excluding Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities, are also eligible to receive paper-based test materials.

24. Should a student with an IEP or Section 504 plan receive paper-based test materials if their disability does not warrant the need for paper-based accommodations (a student with ADHD, for example)?

Decisions regarding accommodations should be made by the student's IEP or Section 504 plan team by first considering what the student needs in order to access instruction and assessments in the classroom. Although decision-making regarding accommodations rests with the student's IEP/Section 504 plan team, it is not appropriate for a team to document paper-based

accommodations for reasons other than need (e.g., for preferential reasons). The information that the Department provides regarding eligibility for paper-based accommodations should be used to guide the process so that accommodations decisions are made appropriately.

25. Are one-item-per-page accommodations available?

Yes. The computer-based assessments are designed to display one item at a time. If other criteria exist which negate the use of a computer-based assessment, paper-based one-item-per-page documents are available. Paper-based one-item-per-page documents may be used to provide the following accommodations: one test item per page, fewer test items per page, increased space between test items, true black-and-white print.

26. What is the process for requesting paper-based accommodations?

Beginning in spring 2015, the Department implemented a process to collect eligibility information for students who require paper-based accommodations. District personnel are responsible for ensuring that documentation for the requested paper-based accommodation(s) appears on student IEPs or Section 504 plans. Each district's assessment coordinator will receive a spreadsheet template and instructions for submitting the eligibility information to the Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment. Student eligibility information must be submitted to FDOE prior to the applicable test administration, **and** orders for paper-based test materials must be submitted via PreID upload or additional order. Spreadsheets should be updated and resubmitted to FDOE whenever additional orders for paper-based test materials are placed.

27. Are unique accommodations available?

Unique accommodations are specialized accommodations that require changes or alterations to existing test materials, presentation, or administration guidelines. Requests may be submitted for such accommodations that are outside of the scope of currently available test materials and/or established test administration procedures. In order to be used during testing, a unique accommodation must be an allowable accommodation that does not negate the validity of the assessment, must be indicated in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan, and must be approved by the Department. Paper-based test materials (regular print, large print, braille, one-item-per-page) are NOT considered unique accommodations and may be provided to eligible students if documented on an IEP or Section 504 plan and included on the district assessment coordinator's spreadsheet submitted to the Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Responding

28. If a student has an accommodation for use of a scribe, should we allow the student to type a response on the computer-based FSA ELA Writing test?

The decision should be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon the individual need of each student. Many times students who are physically unable to write can use a computer or other device to plan their writing and/or produce a response. If it is appropriate, allowing a student to type on his or her own would be the least restrictive option.

Students taking a paper-based FSA ELA Writing test may also use a flexible responding accommodation to provide a typed response. Transcription of the response into the paper-based test is not required. Directions for returning typed Writing responses are included in Appendix A of the FSA ELA Writing Test Administration Manual.

29. Can a student use an eye-gaze communication system on the FSA assessments? The student is Orthopedically Impaired and non-verbal.

Yes. Practice tests in the secure browser should be used to ensure that the type of device the student uses is compatible with the computer-based FSA platform. In general, these are allowable assistive devices for FSA and for FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments.

30. Is there a calculator accommodation for students taking FSA Mathematics tests?

No. A scientific calculator is provided in the test delivery system for Sessions 2 and 3 of FSA Grades 7-8 Mathematics and for Session 2 of FSA EOC Mathematics tests. Handheld scientific calculators may be provided to ALL students during the calculator-allowed session(s). Large key/large display or talking scientific calculators may be provided to students who require them during the calculator-allowed session(s) only. On test sessions that are not approved for calculator use, calculators may **not** be used, even as accommodations.

For the computer-based Algebra 1 Retake EOC and Biology 1 EOC assessments, students may use the built-in calculator in TestNav and/or a handheld four-function calculator. For paper-based Algebra 1 Retake EOC, Biology 1 EOC, and Grade 8 Science assessments, students must be provided a handheld four-function calculator. Large key/large display or talking four-function calculators may be provided to students who require them.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Scheduling

31. Is there a time limit for extended time accommodations?

No, but unless otherwise stated, each test session must be completed within the same school day. A student may be provided extended time to complete a test session. Extended time should be specified on the IEP or Section 504 plan (e.g., 50% additional time, double time, 200% more time) and provided as documented. If a student's extended time accommodation is not specified, the student may be provided additional time up to the end of the school day for a test session.

32. Will the computer-based tests time out?

No. Computer-based test sessions do not time out. The limit of extended time for all computer-based test sessions is the length of the school day. If a student's flexible scheduling/extended time accommodation requires testing over more than one day per session, the student will be required to participate in testing using paper-based test materials so that the student does not review responses to items completed on a previous day or preview items to be answered the following day.

33. A student needs multiple days to complete one session of the assessment. May the student use the computer-based test?

No. Each computer-based test session must be completed within one school day. A student with a flexible scheduling accommodation that requires more than one day to complete a test session must participate in testing using paper-based materials. The student's eligibility for paper-based accommodations (i.e., flexible scheduling that requires multiple days for one test session) should be documented and submitted to the Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment.

34. A student can only participate in testing during certain hours of the morning for short lengths of time. May this student test on the computer?

The student may participate in computer-based assessments if it is determined that the student can complete a test session during the time that he or she tests each day. If the student requires more than one day to complete a test session, her or she must test using paper-based materials. The student's eligibility for paper-based accommodations (i.e., flexible scheduling that requires multiple days for one test session) should be documented and submitted to the Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities – Setting

35. A group of students are accustomed to testing in a small group with the teacher reading aloud every test item to them at the same time. Is this allowable for FSA assessments?

Yes. Students may be administered a test in a familiar place, and a familiar person who has been appropriately trained may administer the test. In addition, oral or signed presentation accommodations may be provided to students in the manner that is regularly used in the classroom.

36. There is one student who needs frequent breaks and disturbs other students. How should this student be tested?

If a student requires an accommodation that may disturb other students, the student should be tested in a separate setting.

37. A student needs a sound machine which creates white noise or music to reduce auditory distractions. Is this allowable during assessments?

Yes. Use of sound machines or approved music is allowable. Devices must be controlled by the test administrator or proctor. Sound machines or approved music may only be played for an entire classroom if all students in the room have the accommodation. If all students in the testing room do not have the accommodation, the student(s) with the accommodation must use headphones/earbuds or should be tested in a separate setting.

38. A student needs a darkened room to increase visibility of the computer screen. Is this allowable during assessments?

Yes. If all students in the testing room do not have the accommodation, the student(s) with the accommodation should be tested in a separate setting.

Accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs)

39. Are ELLs eligible to receive accommodations?

Yes. Students who are identified as ELLs should receive the following accommodations on FSA and FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments:

Flexible Setting – ELLs may be tested in a separate room with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or heritage language teacher acting as test administrator. Parents/guardians must be informed of this option for students not of legal age and shall be given the opportunity to select the preferred method of test administration.

Flexible Scheduling/Additional Time – ELLs may take a test session during several brief periods within one school day and may be provided additional time. Each test session must be completed within one school day.

Assistance in Heritage Language – For specified portions of tests, ELLs may be provided limited assistance by an ESOL or heritage language teacher using the student’s heritage language.

Approved Dictionary – ELLs may use an approved English-to-heritage language and/or heritage language-to-English translation dictionary. The dictionary must provide word-to-word translations only and may not contain definitions or other information. Electronic translation dictionaries that provide word-to-word translations only without access to the Internet may be used.

40. Are ELLs eligible for paper-based accommodations?

No. In order to receive paper-based accommodations, an ELL must also have an IEP or Section 504 plan that identifies the need for paper-based accommodations or reside at a Department of Corrections facility.

41. Can an ELL be exempt from the FSA ELA assessment?

Yes. If an ELL has been enrolled in school in the United States for less than one year (12 months), the ELL may be exempt from FSA ELA Reading **and** FSA ELA Writing. Exempt ELLs must participate in the English proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. All ELLs enrolled in tested grade levels and subjects are expected to participate in mathematics, science, and EOC assessments no matter how long these students have been enrolled in a U.S. school. ELLs exempt from the Grade 10 ELA assessment are not exempt from the requirement to pass the assessment for graduation purposes.

42. How much additional time should an ELL receive on an assessment?

An ELL may be provided additional time up to the end of the school day for a test session. Each test session must be completed within one school day.

43. May test items be read aloud to ELLs?

No. During portions of tests that may be read aloud to students with disabilities, the ESOL or heritage language teacher may provide limited assistance to an ELL **using the student’s heritage language**. This should not be interpreted as permission to read aloud or provide oral presentation of test content in English or in the student’s heritage language. Assistance in the student’s heritage language is limited to answering specific questions about words or phrases that are confusing the student because of limited English proficiency. Questions must not be answered in a way that would assist the student or lead the student to infer correct/incorrect responses.

The following table details allowable assistance in heritage language for FSA and for FCAT 2.0/NGSSS assessments.

	FSA	FCAT 2.0/NGSSS
	Allowable Assistance in Heritage Language?	
Directions	Yes	Yes
Writing Passages	No	n/a
Writing Prompt	Yes	n/a
Reading Passages	No	No
Reading Items	Yes	No
Reading Answer Choices	Yes	No
Mathematics Items	Yes	Yes
Mathematics Answer Choices	Yes	Yes
Science Items	n/a	Yes
Science Answer Choices	n/a	Yes
EOC Items	Yes	Yes
EOC Answer Choices	Yes	Yes

44. Is there a list of approved translation dictionaries?

No. School/district personnel are responsible for ensuring that ELLs have access to English-to-heritage language and/or heritage language-to-English translation dictionaries, such as those made available to ELLs in an instructional setting. Approved dictionaries must provide word-to-word translation only and must not provide definitions in the heritage language or in English.

45. Can electronic translation dictionaries be used?

Yes. Electronic translation dictionaries that may be used during testing must meet the same requirements for approved translation dictionaries (i.e., must provide word-to-word translation only and must not provide definitions or other information) without accessing the Internet.