

Missouri Assessment Program Accommodations Changes for MAP Subject Area Assessments 2005-2006 School Year

Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams must make decisions about how students with disabilities participate in state and district-wide assessments. These decisions include whether a student will participate in the subject area assessments (with or without accommodations) or the alternate assessments that compromise the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). If the IEP team decides the student will participate in the MAP subject area assessments with accommodations, then the team has the responsibility and authority to determine the individual accommodations that a student needs to ensure participation in these assessments.

Accommodations that are determined necessary by the IEP team must be documented in the IEP. DESE has identified a list of common accommodations that might be needed by the students with disabilities. This list is supplied in the DESE publication entitled "State & District-wide Assessments of School Achievement: What IEP Team Members Need to Know." This publication will be posted on the DESE website, and individuals will be notified of its availability via the Special Education Listserv.

The following changes have been made:

- **The use of paraphrasing test questions as an accommodation will invalidate all MAP assessments when it is used, resulting in the student's assessment being reported in "Level Not Determined."**
- **Oral reading for the Communication Arts assessment will invalidate this test, and the student's achievement level will be "Level Not Determined" for accountability purposes.** However, students who have the Communication Arts assessment read to them will generate a student score report. This information can be used to assist in instruction. *An exception exists for the reading of the Communication Arts assessment to students identified as blind/visually impaired who employ oral reading as their primary instructional method. For these students, the assessment will not be invalidated.* All other MAP subject level assessments can be read to a student with a disability and an achievement level will be determined.
- **Use of magnifying equipment, amplification equipment (e.g., hearing aid or auditory trainer), graph paper, and testing with the teacher facing the student are no longer listed as accommodations, although they can still be utilized.** These previous accommodations are

no longer required to be reported as accommodations for the MAP subject area assessments and should not be recorded as "other" on the accommodations list beginning with the 2005-2006 school year.

The decision to invalidate the MAP Communication Arts assessment, if oral reading is used as an accommodation, was based on national and state discussions and examination of MAP data. The following bulleted points outline the rationale for the decision:

- The MAP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for DESE advised at its February 2004 meeting that the practice of reading the Communication Arts assessment to students with disabilities to generate a reading score should be discontinued.
- It would be difficult to gain approval for Missouri's assessment program from the United States Department of Education under No Child Left Behind in the fall of 2005, as scores generated from reading the Communication Arts assessment would not be considered valid.
- The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and other recognized measure of student achievement do not allow reading as an accommodation on Reading/Communication Arts assessments.
- MAP Data indicates that using oral reading as an accommodation on the Communication Arts assessment did not assist school districts in moving their students into higher achievement levels. Of the 4,955 third grade students who had the Communication Arts test read to them in the Spring of 2004 administration, only 790 or 15.9% of these students scored in the top two achievement levels. At grade seven, only 312 of the 6,430 students or 4.9% scored in the top two achievement levels and at grade 11, only 17 of the 3,398 students or .5% scored at these levels.
- The practice of reading the Communication Arts assessment to students with disabilities lowers expectations for these students regarding their ability to learn to read.
- Reading the Communication Arts assessment to students with disabilities make great demands for staff time during test administration but shows very little impact on improving building and district scores.