

Guidance around Non-Standard Accommodation Request Provided by Toni Wheeler from OSPI

Non-standard accommodation requests are evaluated on three specific criteria:

- 1) Is there current GTSA language that allows or prohibits this?
- 2) Does this accommodation provide an advantage to the user over other test takers?
- 3) Does the accommodation violate what the assessment is measuring for a content/grade?

Non-standard accommodations that are typically approved include those requests where there is existing “allowable” language in the GTSA and the request is seeking a variation in delivery or presentation of the accommodation, or assistive technologies specific to a students.

Examples

- Live signer over embedded ASL videos-This is typically approved with specific guidance that the live signer must use the exact same signs provided in the embedded videos
- Translations for test directions in languages not already provided-This is typically approved as we have numerous languages already available
- Wireless microphone/amplification device- Requests like these are typically approved as they are needed to address a very specific student need. Guidance is given around test setting and ensuring other test takers are not interrupted/disturbed/overhear.

Non-standard accommodations that are denied are found to violate the construct of what is being measured OR they provide an advantage to the user.

Examples

- Non-embedded calculator for non-calculator allowed items- This is denied because the use of a calculator on non-calculator items a) violates what those items are measuring b) would provide an advantage to the student using the calculator over other students for whom the calculator is not being used.
- Sign language in familiar style- This is denied because the use of non-standardized ASL/SEE may provide context or meaning during interpretation to the student giving the student additional information/understanding not available to other test takers.
- Pre-generated graphic organizers for ELA- These are denied because they provide an unfair advantage for the user and violates what is being measured on the ELA full write.

One of the harder ones to evaluate is when the non-standard accommodation request comes in for software or programs like Co-Writer or Read & Write. The state will not approve use of specific software but instead must evaluate the suite of tools available within each software program. Many of those tools are already addressed in the GTSA- word prediction, spell check, etc, but some must be disabled for use during assessment, e.g., word clouds, grammar prediction, etc., as they provide an advantage or violate what is being measured. If submitting a non-standard accommodation request for software programs, districts should submit which specific tools within the software they are seeking to use.