

Assessments Friday Focus Webinar Series 2026-2027

Accessibility for Achievement Assessments-Meeting Transcript



Klepk, Sabiha

Good afternoon, everyone. Once again, happy Friday. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Sabiha Klepk. I am the Accommodations and Accessibility Specialist. I am with the Alternate Assessment Team, but I actually work with all of our assessment teams here at ADE.

Our webinar today will be going over accessibility for our achievement assessments. So that's AASA, AzSCI, ACT Aspire, as well as ACT.

Before we get started, just something to note, AI note takers are not permitted into the Friday Focus webinars. A recording as well as a PowerPoint presentation will be posted on our statewide assessments webinar website following each webinar. If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail us at testing@azed.gov.

So our agenda for today, we're going to take a look at our tiered approach to accessibility as well as go over our accommodated forms, the request process, we'll touch on ACT accommodations, practice and sample tests, as well as testing supports, universal tools that are available to

our students taking statewide assessments, as well as the equation editor, and then we'll end with important dates and some resources. If you have any questions, feel free to enter them into the chat. In order to protect student confidentiality, we just ask that you sent direct specific questions regarding individual students to our testing inbox.

So the three tiers of accessibility provides a general framework of the accessibility supports available for students. Tiers one and two are available for all students and do not require an accommodations request, while tier 3 includes accommodations for students with an IEP or 504 plan. We'll explore some examples of what each tier looks like.

On the next slides.

So tier one is our universal test administration conditions. They do not require an accommodations request. Again, they're available to every student. They may vary between subjects and assessments. So, for example, the calculator is going to be available for parts one of AASA Math grade 7 and 8, but that would not be available

for the lower grades. So just as an example there, we have an entire list in our accommodations manual on our website, with examples, but as you see here, some other examples include having a familiar test administrator, using magnification, and using hearing assistive technologies for our students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Tier 2, again, universal tools also do not require an accommodations request, and they're available to all students taking the ELA math and science computer-based tests. The availability of the tools cannot be turned off. And again, the tools will vary between subjects and assessments. Some examples of what the students can change within the testing environment include changing the background and foreground color and using answer masking as well as a line reader mask.

Tier 3, these are accommodations. So, these are provisions made in how a student accesses the test to demonstrate their learning, but that does not alter the validity of the test constructs, score interpretation, reliability, or security of the tests. The goal of accommodations, of course, is to remove barriers to test taking.

while maintaining the rigor of the assessment. And for this reason, modifications are not permitted on statewide assessments. With that, please keep in mind some instructional accommodations may not be appropriate for assessment due to the aforementioned test constructs.

So the available special paper version or SPV tests we have include paper, large print, as well as braille. For AASA ELA reading braille is available in both uncontracted and contracted.

for reading and then for math, it is math and science contracted braille.

So for AASA, AzSCI, ACT Aspire, you'll want to use the special paper version request form if your students require any of these special paper version tests. That request form window opened on Monday, and it is open until February 5th of 2027.

Of course, we encourage you to submit those early to allow us to process them and make sure we have the proper inventory and that so that those materials arrive on time. And Candis did just put the request form link in the chat. Thank you, Candis.

ACT accommodations are submitted directly to ACT with one exception. If you have a student at a CBT school and they require an SPV paper test and that they do not require any additional accommodations, then you would submit that request to ADE. If your student requires paper and then another accommodation on the ACT, then you would submit that directly to ACT.

Important to note, SPV responses must be key entered exactly as the student

recorded on the SPV test booklet into TestNav by a qualified test administrator and by the end of the applicable test window. If the test responses are not entered in TestNav by the end of the window, the responses will not be scored.

And there will be more directions available. So, you can refer to the test administration directions. If you have questions about key entering, we do walk through that process step by step.

For ACT Aspire, braille and large print are available. These SPV tests must be administered within the PBT test window, so it's important to note that. So, if you have a student taking the SPV test, that also applies to the need for those test responses to be entered correctly by the end of the PBT test window. Again, you're going to abide by the same practices, recording exactly what the student recorded on their test by a qualified test administrator, and making sure that's transferred to the standard answered document.

For AASA, we have American Sign Language videos available for ELA writing as well as math. And then we have ASL available for the entirety of AzSCI. This form also includes closed captioning that can be turned on and off by the student.

Since there's closed captioning there and with the ASL videos, text-to-speech is not available in the ASL test form. You would submit a request for the ASL form via our additional accommodations request form which Candis just put for us in the chat.

Thank you.

So just a brief overview of our process here. Again, how do you know if you need to submit an accommodations request? You can refer to our achievement assessments accessibility and accommodations guide manual. There we list out everything that's in tier one and tier 2. So, our universal test administration conditions are universal tools, as well as we have specific accommodations available for students with a disability in the manual. So if your student needs something beyond what's listed there for AASA and AzSCI, then you would submit an additional accommodations request.

So as an overview here, if your student requires an ASL test form, if they are taking, in addition, if you have a student and you're a CBT school and, or a PBT school, excuse me, you're at a PBT school, but you're

your student would perform better or would be better accommodated by taking a CBT test, then you would also submit that via the additional accommodations request form. Our SPV request window and our additional accommodations request window are the same. So again, that opened on Monday, September 14th, and it will

close February 5th.

Some things important to note here for ACT Aspire.

These are the only things that you need to submit for ACT Aspire. Again, that's our grade 9 only cohort 2030. So, if your student requires a special paper version, regular print or large print, braille, if your student requires a full translation in ASL or speech to text.

So as a reminder, speech to text is only available on ACT Aspire, and this requires a paper test and a one-on-one administration, which would have to take place during that PBT test window. If your student requires an ASL full translation, Writing, math, and science are the only units that may have that full translation. And again, that also requires a paper test, a one-on-one administration during that PBT test window. And just as a reminder here, if you have a student that is eligible for alternate assessments, they should not be administered the ACT Aspire.

You do not need to submit any requests for text-to-speech breaks or any universal test administration conditions for ACT Aspire.

So one consideration to make is there is extended time available and it is not needed for ACT Aspire, but you just want to make sure that you both select the extended time as well as text to speech in the student's personal needs profile or the PNP and Pearson access next before placing the student in a test section. It has to be done prior to.

We do have all that outlined in our ACT Aspire Accessibility Supports Guide, but of course, if you have any questions, you can always reach out to us.

So A brief overview. So once the DTC or the pertinent IEP or 504 member submits that, we ask you to review the student's IEP or 504, identify if there are any accommodations that are needed beyond our universal test administration conditions, universal tools, or the accommodations available for students with disabilities. We ask that a current IEP or 504, including the student's SSID, be included with the submission. And as a reminder, all the requests are submitted via secure server, so you do not need to redact any information from the IEP or 504 plan. And it's a very small number of us that would be reviewing the IP or 504.

So the district test coordinator or staff member will submit the request. And again, it's done on a secure server. And we review and provide a decision regarding the request. In some cases, we may need additional information. And so, if that's requested, we just ask that you submit that to us in a timely manner so we can process the requests and just ensure that you have everything set up to properly

administer for your students.

So just some tips here as a reminder, accommodations do differ between assessments. So, you want to make sure you're selecting accommodations that are applicable to the assessment that your student is taking. When we're reviewing our requests, the decision is based on the information provided. So, for example, if you have a transfer student and your team hasn't gotten a chance to really understand the student's needs yet, or if you're unsure about things of what they may need or would just like to provide some background information, that is an important section that you can kind of share of that information not captured in the otherwise captured in the IEP or 504.

So for ACT, again, that's grade 11, or cohort 2028, you will submit the accommodations request directly to ACT through the test accessibility and accommodation system. And the test administration coordinator will ensure the consent to release information to ACT form is signed and kept on file at the school. So, the TAC is who initiates and submits the requests.

And as a reminder here, ACT and ACT Aspire are timed while our other statewide assessments, AASA and AzSCI are untimed. So, if your student requires extra time, it's important in that ACT accommodations request that you specify. So, whether it be double time or triple time or time and a half,

That should be specified in your request and that should also be noted in the student's IEP or 504 plan, the specific amount of time that they need. And we do have an ACT accommodations webinar coming up on October 21st, 2026, at 9 a.m. so, feel free to attend that. That will be led by our ACT team and they will be able to answer your questions and go a little more in depth into what their request process looks like.

As we touched on earlier, if your student only needs SPV, a special paper version paper test, then you may submit that to ACT. But if they need large print or braille or anything else other than SPV paper only, then you can continue to submit that to ACT. As a reminder here, if a student requires and is approved for a large print paper test and you would like, and they would like to use a paper test other instead of using online Zoom, you need to update the student's test delivery format to paper in PAN. That way, ACT knows to send a paper test. Otherwise, the student will need a large print would be using the online Zoom feature within the testing environment.

So it's always important to get our students on the practice test as often as possible.

Here's just a little snippet of our ACT practice test. The link will be in this presentation on this slide as well as on the resources. So, no username or password are required, you just click on practice test below the sign in button. And then this also includes practice tests. ACT has what they call video American Sign Language. So, if your student needs those supports, they can check those out there, as well as getting more comfortable and familiar with the testing environment.

So just some best practices for training. Just some things we've seen while out doing observations in the field. As mentioned previously, it's great to provide numerous opportunities for students to access the practice tests and the sample tests, as well as the student readiness tools.

If you have any issues or needs, please reach out to your district test coordinator and communicate those concerns prior to test administration. If need be, if they need to get in contact with our assessment team, then we can hopefully alleviate or remedy any of the problems that you may be having. Of course, you want to make sure you complete all your test administration trainings, review the TAD, as well as the manuals prior to the testing session.

So these are some testing supports that are available in our testing environment. They are the sample tests and the student readiness tool. So, the student readiness tool includes video tutorials on navigating the tests, including accessibility tools, the different question types the students will encounter, as well as test supports.

All the videos are closed captions. They are also available year-round, and both the sample tests and the student readiness tool can be accessed from home.testnav.com, similar to the ACT practice test, there is no username or password required to access these. The login screen will look a bit different. So, when you go to home.testnav.com, you'll want to select Arizona from the options. Then you'll be taken to this login screen that you see here on the right.

And then you'll want to click mic check and sample tests. Now, if you have students who you want to have practice typing in the username and password, you can do that. You'll still be able to access it. But I know sometimes for students who are taking a statewide assessment for the first time,

I know that sometimes it's helpful for those younger students to practice putting in that username and password.

And as a reminder, when your students are testing, you want to make sure they're using the desktop app and not the test nav sample test website. We definitely run into that issue in the field. Sometimes it's an easy fix once you realize what's going

on, but not always the first thing that comes to mind when you have a room full of students that you're trying to get tested and situated.

ACT Aspire has what they call exemplars and tutorials. Same thing, it is access from home.testnav.com. But here you'll, there'll be a menu on the left-hand side, and you'll just want to select ACT Aspire. Again, no username or password is required. And here you'll click on the exemplars, which appear below the blue sign-in button. So here's an overview of our universal tools. I have included screenshots here. I'm not going to be going over this extensively. My intention behind creating it this way is that we know not everyone is always able to attend. So, if this is something that you can take back to your teams and share, with your fellow teachers or, you know, maybe even at a PD, just to help familiarize the test administrators with everything that's available to students and also for students to know what is available to them. So this is a great thing. Every student has a personal needs profile that can be set up in PAN prior to the testing session. So, if you have a student who you know they're going to need the answer masker and the line reader mask, you can go ahead and just turn that on for them.

So they have it and it's already up and running when they enter the test environment. Of course, they are able to turn off those features and turn them on independently as well in the testing environment. That's just to support that. that you may find useful depending on some of your students who, you know, we know sometimes they get distracted or it's easier just to have everything ready for them to go so they can feel comfortable and ready to do their best.

So in TestNav, this is an example of some of the tools you'll find in the toolbar, which appears in like the middle of that top bar. It can include anything from a notepad, an answer eliminator, where you can, the students can click on the answer and an X will appear to help with their own process of elimination.

And again, it's going to vary between assessments and units within the test.

Of course, the students can review their answer. The neat thing here, it displays the total number of questions, how many they've answered, will appear with an orange circle here and to the left of the question in this drop-down menu.

Take A bookmark as well, if they need to go back, or you know, maybe they they're out of question and it feels like.

They just want to go back and revisit and double check their work.

Definitely encouraged.

The answer eliminator I went into before. Again, these are just instructions, so the

students or test administrators know how to enable them if the student has questions. Highlighter tools are also available. So, this is actually not in the toolbar itself. The students will just do this by selecting the text. One thing to note here, if the student has chosen a different background and foreground color, the highlighter colors may vary.

So, if you notice that difference, that is the reason for that.

The expandable view, a lot of students find helpful, particularly when they're reading the stimulus. So, it's a little difficult to see here, but when you're in TestNav, in the sample tests, you'll see these arrows here that help, that allow you to either expand or collapse the corresponding side. So, if the student wants to focus on the question, they can do that. If they want to focus on the stimuli, they can do that. And then of course, if they want to have the two-column view, they just toggle back.

Text-to-speech is available on ELA Writing, Math, and AzSCI. So, these are just the buttons that you'll find in the text-to-speech player on the right-hand side of the screen when you are in TestNav for our students on the online CBT test. Now if you have a student that's taking the ASL form, in lieu of text-to-speech, we have ASL videos. Again, that menu will appear on the right side of the screen as well. But here's where you can turn on the video.

enable the closed captions and the student is also able to change the speed of which the ASL videos play. So, if you have a student that's maybe newer to ASL, they can slow it down and if they're a little more advanced and they just want to speed it up, they have the ability to do that as well.

The user dropdown menu is located in the right corner, top right corner in Test Nav. This is where you'll find the ability to change background, foreground color, a magnifier, a line reader mask, and answer masking tool as well. And these are just the directions to do that here.

There are several background and foreground colors. One important thing to note here is it does not change the art. So, the art will always be on that white background. So, if your student selects a different color combination and the art doesn't change. That's why it's not meant to change.

Here are instructions with the magnifier. The great thing about the magnifier is it can be used in conjunction with the line reader mask, which we'll see here on the next slide. And here, these are the directions, but let's go to the example. So, if your student wants to focus on a word or a sentence, they can do that, but then if they also need the magnification, they're able to use both of those together. I know some

students also will use the built-in zoom just by using the control plus or control minus.

This is what the answer masking looks like. So, when you turn on answer masking, it will cover all the answer choices up, and then the student can click on the answer choice to reveal it. If they want to cover back up, then they can click on, there's a little tiny eye icon on the far right side and they can just click on that eye and it'll cover it back up again.

Keyboard navigation is available in some supported question types. We've just included the keyboard commands here if that's something that your students benefit from. Some students just prefer to use a keyboard. Some students that maybe have maybe have some fine motor needs may also benefit from that keyboard navigation. So important to touch on here, in math there is an equation editor, and these require the student to solve or construct an equation. They must input their responses by selecting the appropriate number and symbol buttons, and the availability and the types of buttons will vary depending on the complexity of the question, and of course, the grade. So, in some instances, students may need to use fractions or mixed numbers or create an expression. So, this is also on the sample test, very important to get them in front of that. So that way, when they see this box here, they know that they need to either solve an equation or create an expression, or follow the directions there in the question.

So that kind of concludes our universal tools. So, some important dates that we have to remember here. As I've mentioned, our achievement accommodations request window. So again, that's for AASA, AzSCI, and ACT Aspire. That window closes February 5th, 2027.

For ACT, the window opened on September 7th, and depending on which test window your students are testing in, you'll need to abide by the specific deadlines. So, for test window one, the deadline is February 10th of 2027. And for those testing in test window two, it is February 24th, 2027.

So, here's some resources that are available.

As have been mentioned, so these are the links to our assessments homepage, accessibility, as well as to all of the accommodations and accessibility manuals for our tests, and some quick guides to help guide you through the request process. So I will go ahead and take a look at any questions we have.

Feel free to enter any questions in the chat you may have. Again, if you have some student specific questions for you, I encourage you first to look at our achievement

accommodations manuals or the pertinent manual for the assessment your student will be taking. And then you can reach out to us with any student specific questions. I'm not seeing any questions here, but if you have any questions, feel free to enter them into the chat. If you don't have any questions, thank you so much for joining us today. We hope that your school year is off to a great start so far, and we appreciate all the time and effort and energy you put into educating our students.



Middlebrook, Candis

Sabiha, we have a question about ACT. If a student does not require extended time, but does require small groups for ACT, do we need to submit the approval? I will need to check that in the ACT accessibility supports guide and get back to you. I'm also going to drop a link to that guide in the chat as well.



Klepk, Sabiha

Thank you for that question, Heather. Kristen, I also saw that your hand was raised.



Middlebrook, Candis

And just to clarify, we will take the question about the ACT small groups to our ACT team and get guidance and provide that back to you, Heather.



Klepk, Sabiha

Thank you all once again for attending. We will stay on for the next few minutes in case any questions come up. But if you do sign off, we hope you have a lovely weekend.



Middlebrook, Candis

Matt, I see your question. Do we provide name, district, and e-mail for these trainings? I believe that information is captured when you register for the webinar in APLD, and that's where you will get, you'll be marked as attended after this webinar, and we'll get a certificate through that process. If that does not answer your question, please feel free to clarify in the chat.



Klepk, Sabiha

This concludes our webinar for today. Thank you all for attending. Have a great rest of your day.