

“He Should Get as Much Time as He Wants”: Determining Appropriate Accommodations

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PURPOSE:

Accommodations are adaptations that are made to the environment, curriculum, instruction, or assessment practices in order for students with disabilities to be successful learners and to participate actively with other students in the general education classroom and in school-wide activities.

Accommodations are changes in how a student accesses information and demonstrates learning. Accommodations do not substantially change the instructional level, content, or performance criteria. The changes are made in order to provide a student with equal access to learning and equal opportunity to show what he or she knows and can do.

Modifications are changes in what a student is expected to learn. The changes are made to provide a student opportunities to participate meaningfully and productively along with other students in the classroom and learning experiences.

“Prepare the child for the road, not the road for the child.”

1. DISCRETIONARY OR MANDATORY?

- **Accommodations are mandatory if written in the IEP.**

2. ACCOUNTABILITY:

- **The teacher, not the student, must ensure that the accommodations are provided.**

3. INDIVIDUALIZED ACCOMMODATIONS:

- **The student receiving extended time must receive more time than the other students.**

4. DEALING WITH PARENT REQUESTS:

Three questions:

- **Is the accommodation necessary?**
- **Will the accommodation have a detrimental effect on the student?**
- **If the accommodation is not detrimental to the child, will it cause a hardship to the staff?**

5. PROVIDING ACCOMMODATIONS:

- **Only check accommodations that are necessary for the child to access the curriculum.**

6. IMPLEMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

- **Accommodations do not change the content of the curriculum. Accommodations change how a student accesses information and demonstrates learning.**

7. DOCUMENTING IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Keep samples from each grading period. The samples must reflect that the accommodations were made.**

8. EXTENDED TIME:

- **Extended means “reasonable”, not “unlimited”.**

9. HIGHLIGHTED TEXTS:

- **The purpose of highlighted texts is to emphasize important concepts. The teacher, not the student, must highlight the important concepts.**

10. “AS NEEDED”:

- **The accommodations that are chosen are mandatory. “As Needed” leaves it to the teacher’s discretion. Consequently, do not use the term “as needed” in association with an accommodation.**

11. GIVING THE STUDENT DISCRETION:

- **It is appropriate, however, to give the student the choice to access an accommodation.**

12. STUDENT REFUSAL

- **If the student is refusing the accommodation, the first question to consider is whether the accommodation is necessary. If it is, then the next question to consider is why the student is refusing it. Is the student embarrassed to be treated differently from his/her peers? Is there an alternative to the accommodation that would be appropriate which the student will access?**

13. RECORDED TEXTS:

- **If a student has recorded texts, it is the district's responsibility to make sure that the recorded texts are provided prior to the text's use in class.**

14. REMOVING AN ACCOMMODATION:

- **In order to remove an accommodation, a 504 meeting must be held.**

15. BEHAVIORAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

- **When dealing with behavior, the question that must first be asked is whether the student's behavior is appropriately addressed with the teacher's classroom management strategies used with the entire class. If these are insufficient, then behavioral accommodations can be considered.**

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