



PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations: What Special Education and Related Service Staff Need to Know

RECIX CCSS Training Series
February 20, 2014

Advance Organizer



- Briefly review the strategies for increasing access and equity on the PARCC assessments and how the PARCC will be different from current assessments.
- Explore the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual, First Edition, 2013.
- Identify strategies available for increasing accessibility.
- Study recommendations for selecting accommodations for individual students.
- Consider implications for students with disabilities, specifically implications for evaluation, eligibility, IEP development, and intervention.

Resources

- Partnership for the Assessment of College and Career Readiness – First Edition (2013). PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual 2013 – 2014. Achieve, Inc. Washington, DC: PARCC Assessment Consortia
- PARCC Releases Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual; retrieved from <http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-releases-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual>; July 25, 2013.

How will PARCC be different



- **Students** will know if they are on track to graduate ready for college / careers
- **Teachers** will have access to timely data to guide learning and instruction.
- **Parents** will have clear and timely information about student progress.
- **States** will have valid results that are comparable across borders.

Strategies for increasing accessibility



- Providing item developers with clear guidelines for writing items that are **free of bias**, are **sensitive to diverse cultures**, are **stated clearly**, of **appropriate linguistic complexity**, and **consistently formatted**.
- Requiring item developers to use **principles of Universal Design** to allow participation of the widest possible range of students, and increase the likelihood that test questions measure only what they are intended to measure.
- Conducting **bias and sensitivity reviews and statistical procedures** that are designed to detect bias as part of the item development / field testing process.

Strategies for increasing accessibility, continued



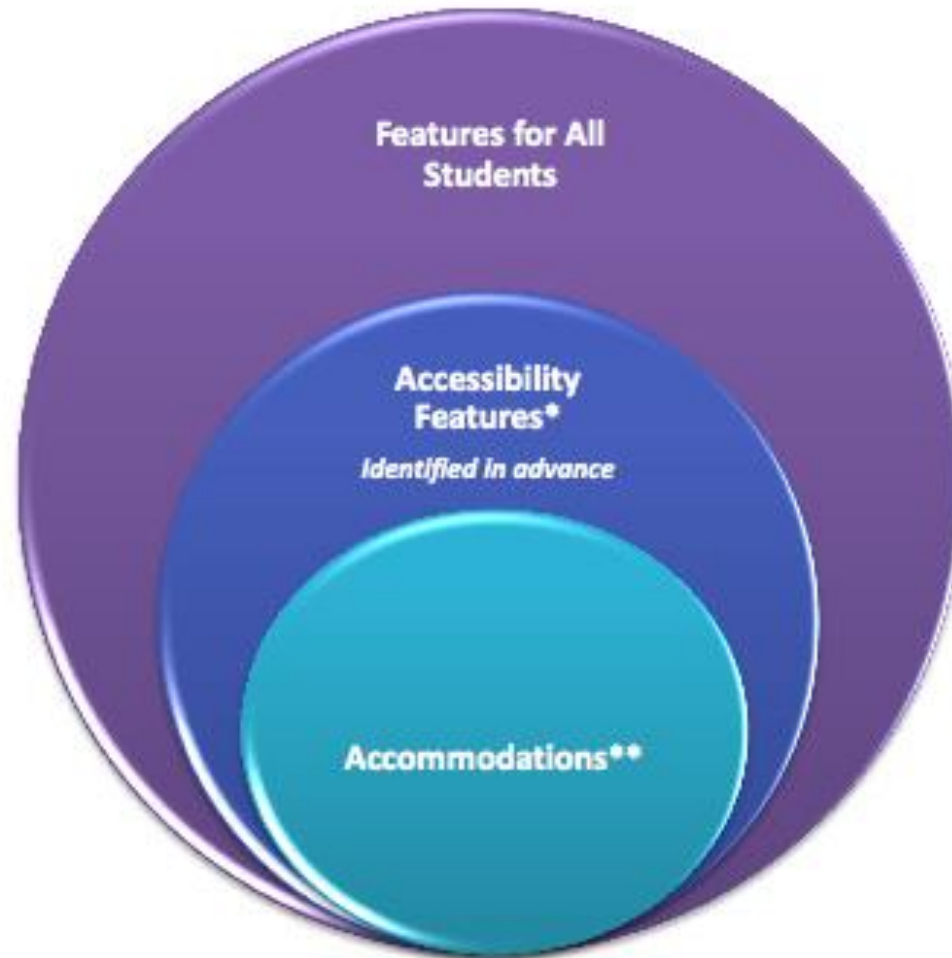
- Developing **common test accommodation and participation policies** for SWDs and ELs.
- Using **technology to provide and increase access** to testing accommodations.
- Conducting **research** to determine factors that promote or hinder accessibility.

What's included in the Manual



- The Manual is a comprehensive policy document that will support local educators in the selection, administration, and evaluation of accommodations for the assessment of students with disabilities (SWD) and English learners (ELs) on the computer-delivered PARCC End of Year, Performance-Based, and Mid-Year Assessments.
- The Manual provides educators with information on the accommodations which, when used on the PARCC End of Year, Performance-Based Assessment, and Mid-Year Assessment, will result in a valid score for a student.

The PARCC Accessibility System



* Available to all participating students

**For students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities

Embedded supports



- Tool, support, scaffold, or preference that is built into the assessment system that can be activated by **any student**, at his or her discretion.
- Universal Design features expected to benefit a diverse array of students and are available to all students.
- Provided onscreen, stored in a toolbar, or are accessible through a menu or control panel, as needed.
- During assessment, students can choose which embedded supports they need for specific items.

Embedded supports

- Audio amplification
- Blank paper
- Eliminate answer choices
- Flag items for review
- General administration direction clarified (by test administrator)
- General administration directions read aloud and repeated as needed
- Highlight tool
- Headphones or noise buffers
- Magnification / enlargement device
- NotePad
- Pop-up glossary
- Redirect student to test (not embedded)
- Spell checker
- Writing Tools

Accessibility features



- Available to **all students** (i.e., not limited to students with IEPs, 504 plans, or ELs), but will be selected and “turned on” by a school-based educator prior to the assessment, based on each student’s Personal Needs Profile (PNP).
- Based on each student’s individual needs, a PNP is created for the student to ensure that he or she receives appropriate access without the distraction of other tools and features that are *not* required by the student.
- Although a school-based educator will enable specific accessibility features for students, the student will decide whether or not to use the feature. Accessibility features will be readily available on the computer delivered testing platform.

Accessibility features

- Answer masking
- Background / font color (color contrast)
- Line reader tool
- General masking
- Text-to-speech for the mathematics assessment

Accommodations for SWD



- PARCC accommodations are intended **only** for:
 - Students with disabilities who have the accommodation documented in an approved IEP or 504 plan prior to the date of test administration; and
 - Students who use the accommodation routinely (with rare exceptions) during classroom instruction and locally-administered assessments, both before and after the test is administered.

Accommodation categories



- Presentation
- Response
- Timing and scheduling
- Setting



Activity One: Exploring the PARCC accommodations for students with disabilities

- Please take 10 minutes
 - Skim through the accommodation categories. Please read to answer:
 - How is each category defined?
 - Who can benefit from accommodations in each category?
 - Highlight a few examples of accommodations from each category.
 - Discuss your new learnings, questions, and thoughts about possibilities and challenges with those around you.

Emergency Accommodations



- If before or during testing, the school principal determines that a student requires an emergency accommodation, an emergency accommodation form must be completed and submitted to the state for approval.
- This may be appropriate for a student who incurs a temporary disabling condition that interferes with test performance shortly before or within the testing window.
- A copy of the form must be filed in the student's assessment records and a copy must be retained at the state level.

Decision-making process for selecting, using, and evaluating PARCC accommodations



- Step 1. Expect all Students to Achieve Academic Grade-Level Content Standards
- Step 2. Learn About Accessibility Features and Accommodations
- Step 3. Select Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Individual Students
- Step 4. Administer Accommodations During Assessments
- Step 5. Evaluate and Improve Accommodations Use

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Activity Two: Understanding the decision-making process for selecting PARCC accommodations

- *Please take 10 minutes to*
 - *Skim pages 45-51, and*
 - *Discuss your new learnings, questions, and thoughts about possibilities and challenges with those around you.*
- *You may use the questions on the Worksheet to Guide your reading.*

Wrapping it up....We have

- briefly reviewed the strategies for increasing access and equity on the PARCC assessments and how the PARCC will be different from current assessments.
- explored the PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual, First Edition, 2013.
- identified strategies available for increasing accessibility.
- studied recommendations for selecting accommodations for individual students.





Activity Three: Implications for practice

- *Please take five minutes and reflect individually or with another on*
 - *Questions*
 - *Concerns*
 - *Possibilities for practice*
- *Note your thoughts and be prepared to share with the group.*

Next steps...

- Continue to learn about PARCC accessibility features and accommodations through reading and discussion.
- Adopt practices that support your participation in Decision-Making Teams.
- Determine how as related service staff you can support selection, use, and evaluation of accommodations and the development and achievement of annual goals related to PARCC accessibility.
- Document your practices and intervention, and student outcomes.
- Remember this is a collaborative process!



Thank you!

