

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WAUPACA

SERIES 300 INSTRUCTION

CODE: 346.3R2

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The rule for testing students with disabilities is under s. PI 16, subchapter III, Wis. Admin. Code and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that, "...no otherwise qualified handicapped individual...shall solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity..."

In testing students with disabilities:

- * Test results may not be used as the sole criterion in exiting students from a special education program or in determining grade promotion, eligibility for courses or programs, eligibility for graduation, or eligibility for participation in post-secondary options.
- * Students who are exempted from the tests may not be penalized in grade promotion, eligibility for courses or programs, eligibility for graduation, or eligibility for participation in post-secondary options.

Process for including or excluding students with Disabilities

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) process is the appropriate vehicle for making decisions regarding a child's educational program for students with disabilities, including the decision to administer standardized tests. The individual accommodation plan (IAP) is the vehicle for these decisions for students with Disabilities. During the IEP process, the IEP team must address issues of current level of performance and program goals. The IEP or IAP should include a statement that a student will or will not participate in the state and district testing programs, the subject or content areas that are appropriate for the student, any modifications in the testing procedure that need to be made, and a justification for the decision. The special education staff must explain this decision to parents and be able to document parent understanding.

During the IEP process, test decisions and modifications to test procedures for all school and district testing should be discussed. The student should have consistent treatment in testing. That is, all school or district achievement or other testing should be administered to the student in the same way.

Criteria or considerations in making the decision for including or excluding students with Disabilities in the testing

The decision to include or exclude any student with Disabilities must be made on an individual, case-by-case basis. No "blanket" inclusion or exclusion of students with Disabilities or categories of disability is allowable. However, certain considerations make the decision more or less reasonable.

Consider the following questions or issues:

- * Is a goal of the student's educational plan to assist the student to master goals and objectives similar to those covered on the WSAS program tests?
- * Is the student exposed to material similar to the material on the test?
- * Is the student's reading level within the range of the reading levels of students in the "regular" educational program? That is, can the student read assigned material that is read by his/her non-disabled peers?
- * Is the student motivated to do well?
- * Is the student motivated to appear to be like his or her non-disabled peers?
- * Are there modifications to the testing procedure that will enhance the student's ability to take the test?

To the extent that answers to the above questions are, "yes," the student should be included in the testing. The most important criterion is the match between the student's instructional program and the content of the test. The more similar the program, the more important it is to include the child in testing and the more difficult it becomes to justify exclusion.

Please note that some parts of the test may be appropriate for a student and some may not. Districts may exclude students with disabilities from certain tests. Students may be exempted from the academic tests and take only the *Career Interest Inventory*. Special handling and test administration may be necessary.

Modifications to testing procedures

Although no modifications may be made to the content of the test itself, there are modifications that can be made to the procedures for administering the test. The modifications that are allowable do not change the test but allow the disabled test-takers to show their true ability in spite of their disability.

The following are examples of allowable modifications:

1. Time modifications
 - * administer the test in shorter sessions with more breaks or rest periods
 - * space testing over several days
 - * administer the test at a time most beneficial to the student
 - * allow the student more time to complete the test (Note: When interpreting the student's test results, this non-standard administration should be borne in mind.)
2. Environment modifications
 - * administer the test in a small group or individual session
 - * allow the student to work in a study carrel
 - * place the student in the room or part of the room where he or she is most comfortable
 - * allow the special education teacher or aide to administer the test

3. Format modifications
 - * use an enlarger for the visually impaired
 - * give more practice tests or examples before the actual test is administered
 - * assist the student to track the test items by pointing or placing the student's finger on the items
 - * use sign language for directions and sample items
 - * allow use of equipment or technology that the student uses for other tests and school work

4. Recording modifications
 - * have someone record the student's responses
 - * use computer board, communications board, tape recorder, etc., to record responses

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of modifications. Special education staff can be helpful in deciding or designing modifications that allow the students to demonstrate their ability.

ADOPTED:

REVISED: 111098

REVIEWED:

LEGAL REFERENCE: PI 8.01 (2) (s), PI 13.03, PI 16, subchapter II, PI 16 subchapter III, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973

CONTRACT REFERENCE:

CROSS REFERENCE:

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The School District of Waupaca does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.