## NM-MSSA

# Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual (AFAM)

## 2024-2025

NM-MSSA

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# Introduction

## Purpose

The *2024-25 NM-MSSA Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual (AFAM)* provides guidance and valuable planning information to districts and decision-making teams working with students with disabilities and English Learners (ELs) to ensure a fair testing environment for all participating students of the New Mexico Measures of Student Success and Achievement (NM-MSSA) Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.

## Commitment to Accessibility

Cognia® is committed to support the state of New Mexico's guidelines on accessibility in assessments and partners together with NMPED to provide a summative assessment that is for all New Mexico students. The New Mexico Department of Education offers a manual that provides policy and guidelines regarding accommodations, accessibility features, and universal tools – this manual, *NMPED Accessibility & Accommodations Manual: Supporting Students During Assessment*, is available on the NMPED website at https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/accommodations-manuals/.

## Accessibility for the NM-MSSA

Accessibility in testing is crucial for providing all students with equal opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. A selection of accessibility features and accommodations are available to assist students with disabilities with navigating and interacting with the test – including a set of universal tools that are available to all students. The accessibility features, accommodations, and tools that are available vary based on the content area and allows for adjustments to be made to the testing environment or format for paper-based testing (PBT) or computer-based (CBT) testing based on the individual needs of the student.

District Test Coordinators (DTCs), School Test Coordinators (STCs), test administrators (TAs), classroom teachers, special educators, 504 plan coordinators, Individualized Education Program (IEP) team chairs, and school administrators should familiarize themselves with the NM-MSSA features, accommodations, and tools described in this manual to facilitate accessibility supports for students participating in the spring 2025 NM-MSSA Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.
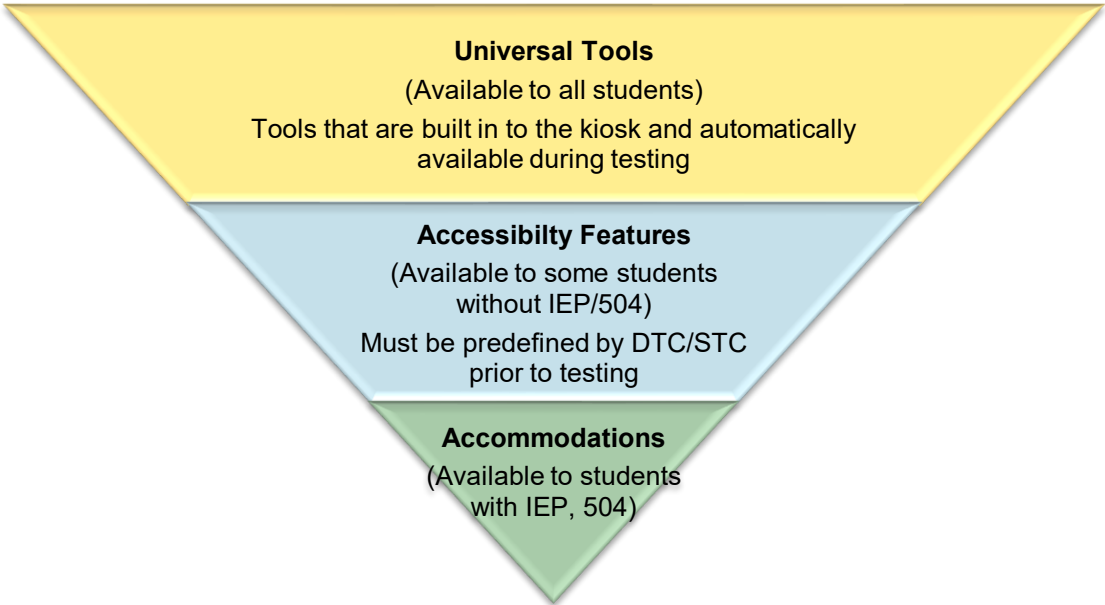
The accessibility features and accommodations described in this manual are also listed in the *2024-2025 NM-MSSA Test Administrator's Manual (TAM)* available on the New Mexico Help and Support website at https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/manuals-nm-mssa-summatives/.

# Universal Tools, Accessibility Features, and Accommodations

## Overview

**Graphic 1: Universal Tools, Accessibility Features, Accommodations**



**Universal Tools**
(Available to all students)
Tools that are built in to the kiosk and automatically available during testing

**Accessibilty Features**
(Available to some students without IEP/504)
Must be predefined by DTC/STC prior to testing

**Accommodations**
(Available to students with IEP, 504)

## Policies

Accessibility, accommodations, and participation decisions will be made by each student's educational team. The team must ensure that the student receives the agreed-upon, allowable accommodation(s) in daily instruction and classroom assessments in the content area throughout the school year in order to use the accessibility features and accommodations during testing.

Students with documented disabilities or specific needs may request accommodations based on their local district guidelines and PED accommodations rules and regulations. The use of each accommodation in daily instruction must have written documentation in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504, or EL plan. Only students on IEP, 504, or EL plans are eligible for accommodations. Students who have achieved fluent English proficiency are not eligible for EL accommodations. Administering a test without IEP-documented accommodations or administering a test with accommodations not documented in the IEP is a testing irregularity that will require an invalidation.

**Ensuring Privacy and Confidentiality**
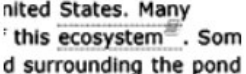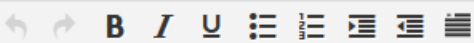
All accommodation requests and implementations should respect the confidentiality of individual test takers. Make sure that all test administrators and proctors comply with test security and confidentiality requirements based on local district policies and NMPED procedures.

For additional PED guidance concerning accommodations on the required summative assessments, refer to the *NMPED Accessibility & Accommodations Manual: Supporting Students During Assessment, 2024–2025,* available on the NMPED website at https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/accommodations-manuals/.

# Universal Tools

[Available in the kiosk and browser.]

**Table 1: Universal Tools**

| Name | Icon | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Answer Eliminator | | Allows the student to cross off an answer option by placing a strike-through over it. |
| Basic / Scientific Calculator | | Allows the student to use either a basic or scientific calculator on calculator portions of the MSSA Mathematics test. |
| Bookmark | | Allows the student to bookmark an item as a reminder to return to it later. |
| Expand Passage | | Allows the student to expand the view of the passage to full screen. |
| Line Reader | | Allows the student to use a guideline tool while reading text. |
| Notepad | | Allows the student to take notes for a question. |
| Popup Glossary | | Allows the student to view definitions of preselected words. |
| Protractor | | Allows the student to use a protractor for certain items of the MSSA Mathematics test. |
| Text Toolbar | | Allows the student to format their text response in text entry items. |
| Ruler | | Allows the student to use a ruler for certain items of the MSSA Mathematics test. |
| Sketch | | Allows the student to sketch anywhere on the screen. |
| Text Highlighter | | Allows the student to highlight text. |
| Zoom | | Allows the student to magnify the screen in increments of 100%, 150%, 200%, or 300%. |

# Accessibility Features and Accommodations – Kiosk/Browser

**Table 2: Accessibility Features and Accommodations – Kiosk/Browser**

[Available in the kiosk or browser.]

| Name | Icon | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Allow Accessibility Mode Testing | N/A | Allows the student to use third-party assistive technology software within the kiosk. (The proctor will be required to enter the proctor password on the Options page to enable Accessibility Mode.) Available in the kiosk only and on Windows operating systems only. |
| Answer Masking | | Allows the student to "hide" an answer option. |
| ASL Videos | | Allows the student to play a video with American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation of the item content. |
| Basic / Scientific Calculator | | Allows the student to use either a basic or scientific calculator on non-calculator portions of the MSSA Mathematics test. Available for grade 8 only. |
| Color Contrast | | Allows the student to select the text and background color of the test screen and content from a list of 12 predefined color combinations. |
| Masking | | Allows the student to hide or mask certain parts of the test. |
| Reverse Contrast | | Allows the student to invert the colors of the test screen. |
| Text-to-Speech (English / Spanish) | | Allows the student to use text-to-speech (TTS). The student can select all or certain text to be read aloud and can set the speed and volume of the read aloud. Available in the kiosk only. |
| Word Prediction (English / Spanish) | | Allows the student to access Co:Writer® word prediction in text entry items. Available in the kiosk only on Windows and MAC operating systems. |

*TTS is available only for Session 2 of the MSSA Language Arts test. If TTS is needed for Session 1 (Reading) of the MSSA Language Arts test, please follow PED's policy procedures found in the *NMPED Accessibility & Accommodations Manual: Supporting Students During Testing* available on the NMPED website at https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/accommodations-manuals.

# Accessibility Features and Accommodations – Non-Kiosk/Browser

**Table 3: Accessibility Features and Accommodations – Non-Kiosk/Browser**

[Available outside the kiosk and browser.]

| Name | Description |
|---|---|
| Assistive Technology Device Presentation | Accommodation delivered externally. Students may use a range of assistive technologies including devices that are compatible with the online testing platform, and those that are used externally on a separate computer. For students with hearing impairments. |
| Assistive Technology Device Responses | Accommodation delivered externally. Students may use a range of assistive technologies including devices that are compatible with the online testing platform, and those that are used externally on a separate computer. For students with visual, hearing, fine motor, writing, or motor impairments who use special devices for instruction. See the _NMPED Accessibility & Accommodations Manual: Supporting Students During Assessment 2024-2025_ available on the NMPED website for complete list. |
| Braille Notetaker | Accommodation delivered externally that students can be assigned per their IEP. A student who is blind or has a visual impairment may use an electronic-braille note-taker. |
| Braille Writer | Accommodation delivered externally. A student who is blind or has a visual impairment may use a braille writer. |
| Commercial Word-to-Word Dictionary | Accommodation for English Learners delivered externally. Commercially available dictionary gives work in English and desired language. No definitions are provided. |
| Customized Dual Language Glossary | Accommodation for English Learners delivered externally. Displays pre-identified words, customized for New Mexico, in English and desired language. No definitions are provided. |
| Directions in Native Language | Accommodation for English Learners delivered externally. TA reads test directions in student's native language. |
| Headphones as Noise Buffer | Accessibility option delivered externally. Headphones used to access audio in CBT or to minimize distraction/filter external noise. |
| Human Reader | Accommodation delivered externally. TA reads the content in English. (English form must be assigned). Requires a one-on-one administration or small group with the same form. |
| Human Scribe | Accommodation delivered externally. TA reads the content in Spanish (Spanish form must be assigned). Requires a one-on-one administration or small group with the same form. |
| Human Signer | Accommodation delivered externally. A student's response is captured by a scribe and entered into the online testing platform. Requires a one-on-one administration. |
| Human Signer for Test Directions | Accommodation delivered externally. TA signs the content. Requires a one-on-one administration or small group with the same form. |
| Paper Form | Accommodation delivered externally. A student that needs to take the paper-based version of the test per their IEP. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Paper form Braille | Accommodation delivered externally. A student that needs to take the braille version of the test. |
| Paper form Large Print | Accommodation delivered externally. A student that needs to take the large print version of the test. |
| Picture Dictionary | Accommodation for English Learners (EL). Dictionary that provides picture definitions of English words. |
| Pocket Word-to-Word Translator | Accommodation for English Learners (EL). Commercially available pocket word-to-word electronic translator allows user to enter word in English and displays corresponding word in desired language. |
| Refreshable Braille Display with Screen Reader | Accommodation delivered externally. A student who is blind or has a visual impairment takes the assessments using his or her preferred screen reader software with a refreshable braille display. This is available for the NM-MSSA Language Arts and Mathematics summative assessments as well as the math interim assessment only. |
| Screen Reader | Accommodation delivered externally. A student who is blind or has a visual impairment takes the assessments using his or her preferred screen reader software. This is available for the ELA and Math summative assessment as well as the math interim assessment only. |
| Spanish form with Text-to-Speech | Accessibility feature delivered by the test platform. Provides a read aloud of content in Spanish. Includes controls to manage the read aloud. Not intended to support students who are blind. |
| Speech-to-Text | Accommodation delivered externally. External device with voice recognition software that converts student responses to printed text. Student speaks into computer microphone and the computer enters the response. Use with human scribe. |
| Tactile Graphics | Accommodation delivered externally. A student who is blind or has a visual impairment who uses a screen reader or refreshable braille will also need a tactile graphics booklet, consisting only of the graphics portion of test questions, and visual descriptions of pictures and multimedia, where applicable. This is not supported for interim assessments. Indicates the test is being taken by the student using Tactile Graphics. |

# Assigning Accessibility Features and Accommodations

The DTC or STC must assign online accessibility features and accommodations for CBT test takers *before* the start of testing (TAs cannot perform this task). This is done from the Accommodations tab in a student's Portal account. Accommodations and accessibility features listed as *Delivered by the Test Platform* must be assigned *before* a test is scheduled. The accommodations and accessibility features listed as *Delivered Externally* are used for tracking accommodations and features delivered outside of the kiosk or browser.



TAs should ensure that the appropriate assignment of accessibility features and accommodations are in place *prior* to the student completing a question on the test. Modifications made *after* the student has already completed a question are considered changes in test administration that interfere with the comparability of scores. Examples of such modifications include giving students test administration directions that are not included in this manual. Any test in which modifications are provided must be invalidated.

For more details on assigning accommodations and accessibility features, please refer to the *NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide 2024-2025* available on the New Mexico Help and Support website at https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/.

When a student is assigned an accommodation or accessibility feature, these can be adjusted on the Options page after the student has logged in to the test and selected a Session.
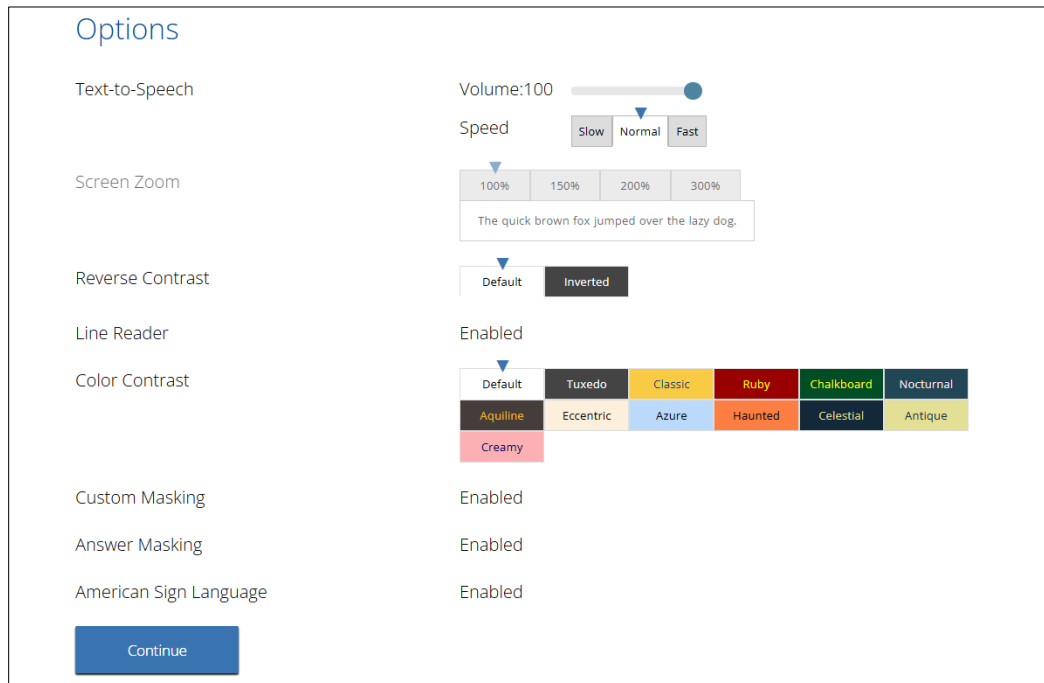


**Text-to-Speech**

When taking the NM-MSSA Language Arts test, text-to-speech (TTS) is only available for Session 2, which covers Language Usage, including Writing Prompts. TTS is not available for Session 1, which covers Reading, where the student is being tested on their ability to read. However, when the student is assigned TTS, the Play button will show in both Sessions, but if the Play button is pressed in Session 1, no TTS will play because there is no TTS available for that session.

Video tutorials for text-to-speech functionality as well as specific online portal tasks such as assigning accessibility features and accommodations are available on the on the New Mexico Help and Support website at https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-tutorials/.

## Tips for Test Takers

Familiarize yourself with all available features, accommodations, and tools in advance of computer-based testing to optimize your testing experience. Cognia offers year-round computer-based practice tests for the NM-MSSA that can be taken in the browser or kiosk to allow you to practice navigating and using the system ahead of testing. When using the kiosk, please make sure the most recent version is installed on the device.

For students taking the paper-based version of the NM-MSSA, please refer to the instructions in the *Test Administrator Manual (TAM)* on how to support the scribing of student responses into the portal. The TAM is available on the on the New Mexico Help and Support website at https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/manuals-nm-mssa-summatives/.

# Additional Support

## Miscommunication Regarding Accommodations

Clarify any misunderstandings before the test date to ensure proper arrangements.

## Resources for District Test Coordinators

Please refer to the resources available on the NMPED website at
https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/district-test-coordinators/.

## Technical and Customer Support

**Cognia Service Desk**

 **Phone:** 877-676-6722

 **Email:** nmtechsupport@cognia.org

 **Live chat:** Chat Now

## Additional Resources

**NM Help & Support Website**

 https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/

# Appendix A: Universal Tools, Accessibility Features, and Accommodations

| Content Area | Feature (Features available in the iTester platform are highlighted blue. All other features are available outside of the testing platform.) | Universal Tool | Accessibility Feature (Assigned) | Accommodation (IEP, 504) | Accommodation (EL) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Allow Accessibility Mode Testing * | | | x | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Answer Eliminator | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Answer Masking | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | ASL Videos | | | x | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Assistive Technology Device Presentation | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Assistive Technology Device Responses | | | x | |
| Math (calculator unit) | Basic Calculator/Scientific Calculator | x | | | |
| Math (non-calculator unit) | Basic Calculator/Scientific Calculator. Gr8 only | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Bookmark | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Braille Notetaker | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Braille Writer | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Co:Writer | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Color Contrast | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Commercial Word-to-Word Dictionary | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Custom Masking | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Customized Dual Language Glossary | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Directions in Native Language | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Expand Passage | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Headphones as Noise Buffer | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish) | Human Reader | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Human Scribe | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Human Signer | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Human Signer for Test Directions | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Line Reader | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Note Pad | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Paper form | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Paper form Braille | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Paper form Large Print | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Picture Dictionary | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Pocket Word-to-Word Translator | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Pop-up Glossary | x | | | |
| Math | Protractor | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Read Aloud to Self | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Refreshable Braille Display with Screen Reader | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Reverse Contrast | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Rich Text Response Tools | x | | | |
| Math | Ruler | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Screen Reader | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Sketch Tool (zunavailable on constructed response items) | x | | | |
| Mathemathics | Spanish form with Text-to-Speech | | | | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Speech-to-Text | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Tactile Graphics | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Text highlighter | x | | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish) | Text-to-Speech** | | | x | x |
| Math | Text-to-Speech (English or Spanish) | | x | | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Word Prediction | | | x | |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Word Prediction (Embedded) * (English only) | | | x | x |
| Language Arts (English, Spanish), Math | Zoom view (magnifier) | x | | | |

*These are only relevant for students testing on Kiosk.*

**NM-MSSA Language Arts (English & Spanish versions have 2 test sessions: (1) Reading, and (2) Language Usage/Writing Prompt. Text-To-Speech (TTS) is unavailable for Reading, Session 1. TTS is only available for Session 2, Language Usage.*

# Appendix B: Important Resources and References

**Table 4: Important Resources and References**

| Resource | Location |
|---|---|
| **Guides and Training** | |
| *NMPED Assessments Kiosk Installation Guide* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *NMPED Assessments Kiosk User Guide* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *NMPED Assessments Portal User Guide* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *NMPED Assessments Technical Guide for Spanish Language Support* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *NMPED Assessments Technology Guidelines* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *NMPED Assessments Testing with Third Party Assistive Technology* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *CBT Tutorials* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-tutorials/ |
| **Quick Start Guides** | |
| *Creating Classes* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *Scheduling Test Sessions* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *Printing Student Logins* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *Student Interface* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *Practice Site* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-guides/ |
| *Short CBT Video Tutorials** | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/cbt-tutorials/ |
| **Other** | |
| *NM-MSSA Test Administrator's Manual (including test administration scripts)* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/manuals-nm-mssa-summatives/ |
| *NM-MSSA Test Coordinators Manual* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/manuals-nm-mssa-summatives/ |
| *NM-MSSA Universal Tools, Accessibility Features, and Accommodations Table* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/accommodations/ |
| *NM-MSSA Accommodations & Accessibility Features Manual* | https://newmexico.onlinehelp.cognia.org/accommodations/ |
| *NMPED Accessibility & Accommodations Manual* | https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/accommodations-manuals |

*Includes: Text-to-Speech Functionality During Online Testing, Assigning Accessibility Features & Accommodations, Invalidating and Assigning Test Report Codes, Manually Assigning Accessibility Features & Accommodations, Uploading & Exporting Accessibility & Accommodations.