

Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations – Practices and procedures that allow students with disabilities to learn, have access to, and be tested on the same curriculum as students without disabilities. Accommodations do not change what the student is expected to learn but rather how he or she learns the curriculum. Providing accommodations during instruction and assessment may also promote equal access to the general curriculum. An accommodation is a change that helps a student overcome or work around the disability. These changes are typically physical or environmental changes. Allowing a student who has trouble writing to give his answers orally is an example of an accommodation. This sort of accommodation extends across assignments and content areas.

What are accommodations? Here are a few examples:

- Teacher provides notes/outlines, provides a peer note-taker, allows the use of wider lined paper for written tasks
- Provides highlighted text
- Allows the use of spell-checker or calculator
- Daily agenda checks between home/school, additional progress reports
- Preferential seating, ability to leave room without permission, peer buddy, behavior reward system
- Extended time on assignments, simplification of directions
- Tests read aloud to student
- Verbal or typed response acceptable in lieu of written response
- One-on-one or small group instruction
- Extended time on assignments and/or assessments
- Braille or large print materials
- Slant boards or study carrels
- Oral administration of subject-area tasks that do not assess decoding/reading comprehension

Modifications – A change in what the student is taught or expected to learn that is different from the general education curriculum (**TEKS**). Modifications are only used for students with an IEP; however, not all students with IEPs require a modified curriculum. Modifications are generally connected to instruction and assessment; things that can be tangibly changed or modified. Making the assignment easier so the student is not doing the same level of work as other students is an example of a modification. This change is specific to a particular type of assignment. Making a slight modification to an assignment can drastically improve a student's ability to be academically successful.

What are modifications? Here are a few examples:

- A locally developed course to substitute for a general education course (for example, Life Skills courses or Functional Mathematics instead of Geometry).
- Selected TEKS instead of all of the TEKS for the grade level course (for example, an 8th grader with an IEP may have goals for only 3 of the total number of TEKS required for 8th graders in math).
- Off-level instruction and performance expectations in a general education setting.
- Omitting story problems, using specialized/alternative curricula written at lower level, simplified vocabulary and concepts, alternative reading books at independent reading level
- Tests are written at lower level of understanding, preview tests provided as study guide, picture supports are provided
- Grading based on pass/fail, grading based on work completion
- One-on-one or small group instruction
- Shortened assignments, homework, or assessments
- Modifying tests by reducing the number of answer choices for multiple choice tests, providing word banks for students for fill in the blank, simplifying the content assessed