

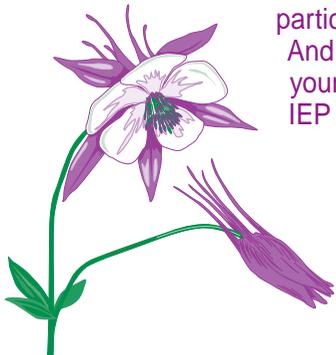
More About Accommodations and Modifications

Q: How will I know if my child needs accommodations, modifications or expanded benchmarks?

A: These decisions will be made through the IEP process. IEP goals and objectives must now show how instruction will allow your child better access to the general curriculum. The IEP team must also make and document decisions regarding the use of appropriate accommodations and modifications. The IEP team will also decide how the student will participate in state and district assessments (either with the general assessment or with alternate assessment systems) and whether accommodations are needed.

Q: How can I help make these decisions?

A: As a parent and IEP team member, review your district's standards and benchmarks in the content areas. Think about what helps your child to learn and to participate. Think about what skills your child may need to learn in order to have access to instruction and to participate in learning. And be ready to share your ideas at your child's IEP meetings.



About Assessment

Q: It seems that my child is always being tested. What is the purpose of all these assessments?

A: Traditionally, assessments are given to students with disabilities to:

- determine their eligibility for special education services
- determine achievement
- determine ongoing learning needs.

Now, the state is using a standards-referenced assessment (CSAP) that describes each student's level of proficiency in meeting the standards. These assessments determine if the school has been successful in teaching all of its students. Teachers can use the results of these state and district assessments to adjust their educational programs to better fit your child's needs.

Q: Are all accommodations that are used during instruction allowed for assessment?

A: Generally, yes, but with an important qualification. Accommodations must not change what is being tested. For example, it would not be appropriate to read a reading test to a student if the test is measuring how well a student reads.

Q: Why should my child take part in the CSAP, CSAP-A or district assessments?

A: When your child takes part in the tests given by the state or district, information about his or her performance will be available and included in the overall picture of the school. This means that educators will be critically aware of the learning needs of your child.

With this information, they'll be able to change instruction to meet your child's learning needs. Even if your child is working on modified or expanded benchmarks, he or she may still participate in the general state and district assessments, or an alternate assessment may be appropriate.

Q: But won't my child be at a disadvantage?

A: No. Accommodations used during instruction can and should be used during testing, if appropriate. The purpose of providing an accommodation is to be sure that a child with a disability is not at a disadvantage during testing. Accommodations will not change a student's overall CSAP score.

For more information about CSAP and CSAP-A visit the CDE website—topic area: assessment at <http://www.cde.state.co.us>

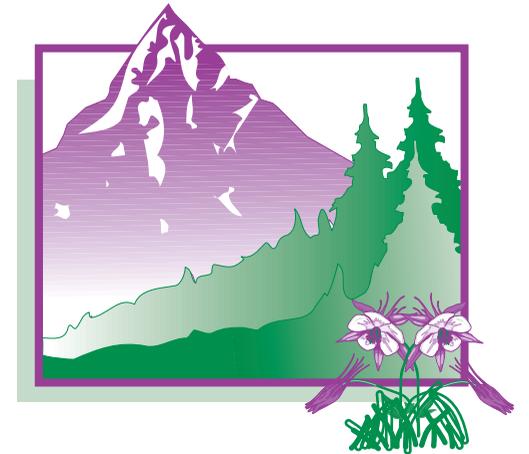


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STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



and the
Colorado
Student
Assessment
Program (CSAP)

Facts for Parents

Colorado's Standards-Based Education system is in place to help all students. This brochure has been developed to enable you, the parent of a child with disabilities, to understand how Standards-Based Education affects your child and what assessment accommodations are available for your child.

- Standards are in place now for 12 subjects (content areas). These are: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Civics, Economics, Foreign Language, Physical Education, Dance, and Visual Arts.
- The Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) and district assessments will be given to establish how students are progressing in relation to standards—and determine how successful schools have been in reaching all their students.
- All students are counted in the state assessment summary report. This includes students with an Individual Education Program (IEP).
- In the Spring of 2001, 4th grade students who did not take the general CSAP for reading and writing will participate in the CSAP-Alternate for literacy.
- In coming years the CSAP-A will be available across grade levels and content areas that the general CSAP assesses.

About Standards

Q: What are standards?

A: Standards spell out what students should know and be able to do through benchmarks developed at each level of their education. Colorado's model content standards were developed by Colorado educators and community members.

Q: My child already has goals and objectives on an IEP. How do these mesh with standards?

A: The goals and objectives on the IEP target a broad spectrum of learning areas, including—but not limited to—academic content. In turn, the academic goals and objectives should be written to make sure that your child develops the skills necessary to learn subject matter based on the standards. This is an opportunity for students with disabilities to have better access to the learning available to all students.

Q: What if the general curriculum to meet standards is not appropriate for my child?

A: Most students with IEPs will need the knowledge and skills taught in the 12 standards content areas. There are a number of ways to meet the expectations for each area—certain accommodations might be provided to your child or the benchmarks of the standard itself might be modified or expanded to allow a child to participate in an individualized manner. General content standards should be the starting point for IEP planning.

About Accommodations and Modifications For Daily Classroom Use

Q: What are accommodations?

A: Accommodations help to “level the playing field”—reducing the effect a disability might have. Accommodations are changes made during instruction and testing that give your child an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills.

Q: What accommodations are typically provided to students with special needs?

A: Accommodations* that can be made in the classroom include changes in:

- **Timing**—giving the student more time or more breaks, or scheduling instruction for a specific time of the day
- **Presentation**—using large print or Braille, using taped materials or reading out loud, using tracking devices, using hearing devices, sign language, or assistive communication devices, etc.
- **Student response options**—using a word processor or calculator, having a recorder write answers, using sign language, assistive communication devices, etc.
- **Setting**—having the child work in a place designed to reduce distractions, using special lighting or furniture, working in small groups or one-on-one.

* Not all accommodations are allowable during CSAP testing.

Q: What are modifications and/or expanded benchmarks?

A: Modifications are used to expand benchmarks to substantially change what a student is expected to know and be able to do. When a student requires expanded benchmarks, the IEP team will determine how students can demonstrate their progress in specific skill areas to meet the standard.

Q: What modifications are typically provided and how are modifications used to expand the benchmarks for students with special needs?

A: Modifications provided during the school day can include changes in the:

- **Expectation** - A benchmark describes the level of knowledge and skill needed to meet standards. Modification means having the student meet a different level of expectation. A student reading significantly below grade level may need to have benchmarks modified to his or her present level.
- **Materials used**—Materials may be needed at a level matching the modified benchmark. A student may need to have materials that use simpler language.
- **Demonstration of knowledge and skills**—A modification of the classroom testing requirements, a reduction of the amount or complexity of assignments, or the provision of assessments designed to test the student specifically on the modified benchmark, may be necessary.

