

Accessibility Manual for OELPS and OELPA



**FUTURE
FORWARD
OHIO** 

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Revision History

The revision history of this manual helps readers easily identify sections where updates have occurred. Minor changes, such as formatting and grammar corrections, are not included in the revision history.

Page	Section	Description
1	Introduction	Reorganized introductory text for clarity and consistency.
2-3	Intended Audience and Recommended Use	Added links to the accessibility manuals for Ohio's state assessments; updated Figure 1 to be consistent with the framework of accessibility features for Ohio's State Tests.
12	Embedded Designated Supports (Table 4)	Added mouse pointer size and color and related description. This support has been available in prior years but had not been described in the accessibility manual.
15	Embedded Accommodations (Table 6)	Added dictation (speech-to-text) as an embedded accommodation. Previously, only non-embedded speech-to-texts was supported via external assistive technology.
18-20	Domain Exemptions	Reorganized for clarity.
22	Appendix B: Guidelines for Reading Paper-based Test Script	Deleted Appendix B as the Department does not allow read-aloud for the OELPS and OELPA. Audio related to the test items is played from the Test Delivery System for online tests or played from the audio CD for paper tests (paper-pencil, large-print, braille).

Introduction

Through its partnership with the [English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century](#) (ELPA21), the Ohio Department of Education (Department) provides Ohio schools an assessment system for identifying and assessing English learners that reflects the current research and progress made in the field of English language proficiency assessment. ELPA21 and the Department's approach to assessment is rooted in the belief that English learners are valuably diverse; all English learners can make progress toward English language proficiency; and English learners must acquire discipline-specific language practices that enable them to produce, interpret and effectively collaborate on content-related grade-appropriate tasks.

Ohio's English language proficiency assessments include:

1. [Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener \(OELPS\)](#), a diagnostic screener to assist schools in identifying students as English learners in grades kindergarten through high school;
2. [Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment \(OELPA\)](#), a summative test administered annually to English learners in grades kindergarten through high school; and
3. [Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment \(Alt-OELPA\)](#), an alternate summative test administered annually to English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades kindergarten through high school.

All three tests assess students' English proficiency in the language domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The assessments support English learners and their schools and districts by:

- [identifying students as English learners](#) through use of the OELPS;
- monitoring English learners' annual progress in the attainment of English proficiency for academic purposes using the OELPA;
- measuring school district success in meeting [ESSA Title I and Title III accountability benchmarks](#);
- [reclassifying \(exiting\) English learners](#) from English language development services; and
- assessing student's proficiency toward the attainment of the [Ohio Seal of Biliteracy](#).

The Department is committed to providing assessments that measure Ohio's rigorous [English language proficiency standards](#) and that correspond to [Ohio's Learning Standards](#) in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Ohio's English language proficiency assessments are administered to English learners, including those who have disabilities, and recognize that the validity of test results depend on every student having appropriate access to the assessments. Accordingly, this accessibility manual is designed to guide districts' selection and administration of *Administrative Considerations, Universal Tools, Designated Supports, Accommodations, and Domain Exemptions* for individual students to produce valid assessment results.

INTENDED AUDIENCE AND RECOMMENDED USE

The *Accessibility Manual for OELPS and OELPA* is intended for district- and school-level personnel, including Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, 504 Plan teams and assessment staff, as they prepare to administer the OELPS and OELPA. This manual provides information for intervention specialists and related service providers of English learners to use in selecting and administering accessibility features for students who need them. The manual also is intended for assessment staff and education administrators who oversee instructional and assessment decisions.

This manual applies to all students who are administered the OELPS and OELPA. It emphasizes an individualized approach to implementing assessment practices for students who have diverse needs and participate in Ohio's English language proficiency assessments. This manual also supports important instructional decisions about accessibility for students who are administered the OELPS and OELPA. Ohio recognizes the critical connection between accessibility in instruction and accessibility during assessment.

Although Ohio’s state assessments share a common test delivery system and have similar accessibility features, there are differences among accessibility policies and features for Ohio’s English language proficiency assessments and other state assessments. It is important to keep in mind that the same accessibility features may be considered universal in one assessment but designated as an accommodation in another. This manual is for the OELPS and OELPA. For accessibility information on other assessments, refer to this information:

Alt-OELPA. For the Alternate Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (Alt-OELPA), refer to the [Alt-OELPA Accessibility and Accommodations Manual](#)

OST. For Ohio’s State Tests (OST), refer to the [Ohio Accessibility Manual for Ohio’s State Tests](#).

AASCD. For Ohio’s Alternate Assessment for Student with the most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD), refer to the [Appendix B: Accessibility and Accommodations of the AASCD Test Administration Manual](#).

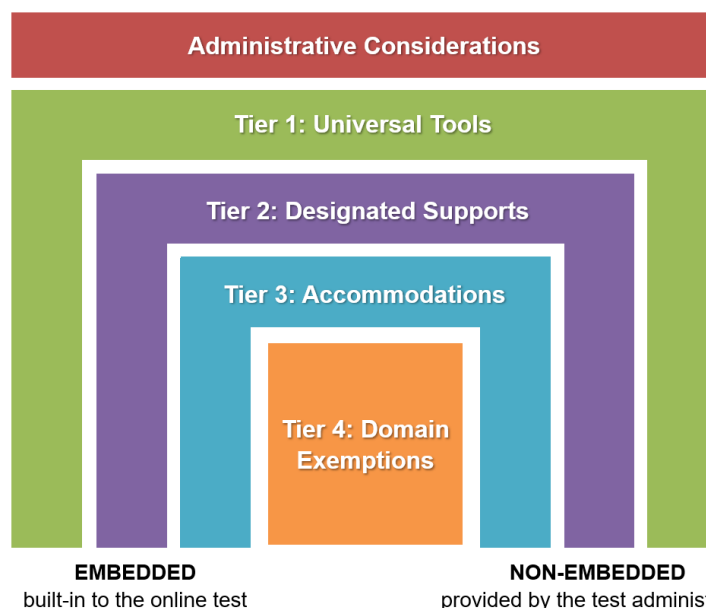
Vendor assessments. For vendors assessments (MAP Tests, Acadience, SAT, ACT, Star, Iowa Tests and others), refer to the accessibility and accommodations information provided by the test publisher.

FRAMEWORK OF ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES FOR OELPS AND OELPA

The framework below depicts a conceptual model of tiered accessibility features for the OELPS and OELPA. The framework recognizes that students may have characteristics and access needs that require the use of accommodations during instruction and assessment. The conceptual model below (Figure 1) highlights:

1. **Administrative considerations**, which support the participation of all students;
2. **Universal tools**, which are supports available to all students;
3. **Designated supports**, which are supports available for individual students that must be assigned to students prior to testing;
4. **Accommodations**, which are supports available to individual students with individualized education programs (IEPs) or 504 plans; and
5. **Domain Exemptions**, which are for students who cannot engage with any of the four language domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking), even with available accessibility features.

Figure 1. Framework of Accessibility Features for OELPS and OELPA



Through a combination of universal design principles and computer-embedded accessibility features, Ohio and ELPA21 have designed an inclusive assessment system by considering accessibility from initial design through item development, field testing and administration of the assessments to all students. Although some students may require accommodations to demonstrate what they know and can do, the computer-embedded accessibility features should reduce the need for accommodations during testing. This ensures more inclusive, accessible and fair testing for students.

Note: To ensure valid scores and test security, only those universal tools, designated supports and accommodations identified in this manual may be used during OELPS and OELPA test administration. These accessibility features yield valid scores when used in a manner consistent with this manual. The use of accessibility features not mentioned in this document could compromise test validity and invalidate student results. Contact the Office of Assessment at statetests@education.ohio.gov or (614) 466-1317 with questions about other accessibility features.

The table below identifies the **embedded features**, provided digitally as components of the online test delivery system, and the **non-embedded features**, provided locally by the school or district.

Accessibility Features of the OELPS and OELPA	
Administrative Considerations	Adjustable lighting, familiar test administrator, frequent breaks, separate or alternate location, small group or individual administration, specialized equipment or furniture, specified area or seating, time of day
Universal Tools <i>Available to all students</i>	Embedded: Amplification, audio support, digital notepad, general directions, headphones, highlighter, keyboard navigation, line reader, mark for review, masking, paginated stimuli and reading mode, strike-through, writing tools, zoom Non-embedded: Blank paper, redirect student to the test, technological assistance with test navigation
Designated Supports <i>Available to all students, but planned in advance and set by the test administrator</i>	Embedded: Color contrast, disable universal tools, mouse pointer size and color, text size/zoom Non-Embedded: Color overlay, external magnification or enlargement device, noise buffer, preferred language translation of directions, specialized paper, student reads test aloud, tactile fidgets/fidget devices, external timer
Accommodations <i>Available to students as documented in their IEP or 504 plan</i>	Embedded: Speech-to-text (dictation) Non-embedded: Assistive technology, braille, large-print test, paper-pencil test, scribe
Domain Exemptions <i>Available to students as documented in their IEP or 504 plan</i>	Domain exemptions are for students who cannot engage with any of the four language domains (listening, reading, writing and speaking) even with available accessibility features. Districts and schools may exempt students from up to three domains if the student’s disability prohibits the student from participating in the stated domains.

RECOGNIZING ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS IN ALL STUDENTS

Students should be familiar with accessibility features **prior to testing** and should have the opportunity to select, practice and use those features in instruction before test day. Students can become familiar with the embedded online features by accessing the practice items available on the [Student Practice Site](#) on the test portal.

Both Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) require states and local education agencies to annually assess the English language proficiency of all English learners in the state enrolled in public schools in grades kindergarten through twelve in the domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking (Sections 1111(b)(2)(G), 1111(b)(1)(F), and 34 CFR § 200.5(a)(2) of the ESEA).

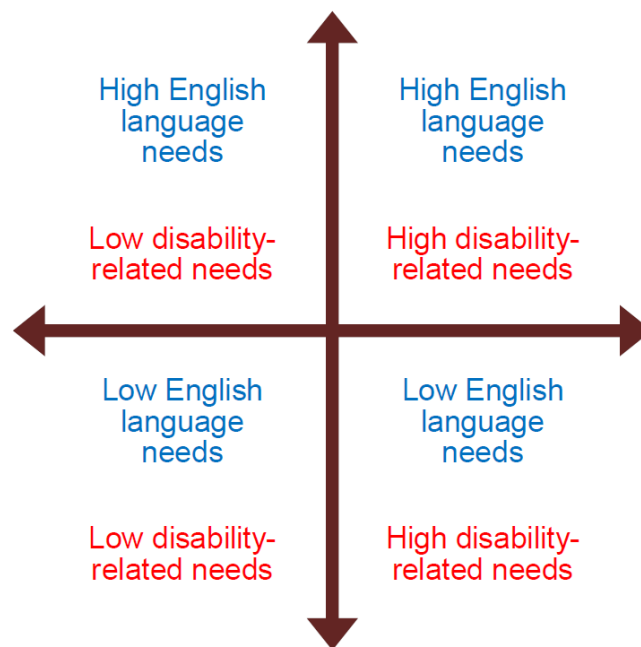
The OELPS and OELPA are designed for all English learners, including those with disabilities. To better understand the student populations served by Ohio's English language proficiency assessment program, educators should consider the following definitions:

- 1) **English learners** are students who meet the following federal definition: the term "English learner," when used with respect to an individual, means an individual –
 - (A) who is aged 3 through 21;
 - (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
 - (C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
 - (ii) (I) who is a Native American or Alaskan Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
 - (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
 - (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
 - (D) whose difficulties in Speaking, Reading, Writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual –
 - (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in Section 1111(b)(3);
 - (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
 - (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.
- 2) **English learners with disabilities** are English learners who have a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Those with an IEP may be identified as having one or more categories of disability (autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment and deafness, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, specific learning disability, speech language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment and blindness).

All English learners with disabilities enrolled at an Ohio public school are required by law to participate in Ohio's annual summative English language proficiency assessments (the OELPA or, if eligible, the Alt-OELPA). Schools must provide appropriate accommodations in accordance with a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan. The IEP team for an English learner with a disability should include at least one person who is an expert in English language acquisition and who is familiar with the student's English language development goals. The IEP team is responsible for determining how an English learner with a disability will participate in Ohio's English language proficiency assessments. Annually, the IEP team determines whether the student will participate in the OELPA or the Alt-OELPA and determines what accommodations and/or domain exemptions must be provided during testing.

To ensure English learners with disabilities receive appropriate accessibility features and accommodations, IEP team members should consider the degree of each student’s language- and disability-related needs. As shown in Figure 2, accessibility and accommodation decisions should be individualized based on the language- and disability-related challenges faced by English learners with disabilities. Students with high English language needs and low disability-related needs will require more language-based supports while their counterparts with high disability-related needs and low English language needs will require more supports that remove disability-related barriers. At the same time, students with high English language needs and high disability-related needs will benefit from more intensive language- and disability-related supports while students with low English language needs and low disability-related needs will require fewer supports that alleviate language- and disability-related assessment challenges.

Figure 2. English Language and Disability Related Needs Affecting Accessibility and Accommodation Decisions.



From “Accommodations Manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of English language learners with disabilities,” by Shyyan, Christensen, Touchette, Lightborne, Gholson, and Burton, 2013. Reprinted with permission.

Section I: Administrative Considerations

WHAT ARE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS?

Administrative considerations are decisions made about a student’s testing environment. Schools may administer the OELPS and OELPA in spaces other than classrooms and at different scheduled times if the test security conditions are met and the test is administered during the test window. For example, a test administrator may consider testing students who are easily distracted in a large group setting in a small group or individual setting. In general, changes to the timing, setting or conditions of testing are left to the discretion of the principal, test coordinator or test administrator.

Table 1. Administrative Considerations

Administrative Considerations	Description
Adjustable lighting	Lighting in the testing location is adjusted to meet the needs of the student by dimming or brightening the lights. Lighting should be adequate for test administrators to monitor students taking the test.
Familiar test administrator	The student is familiar with (knows) the test administrator and/or interpreter.
Frequent breaks	All students may take occasional breaks as needed. <i>Frequent breaks</i> are multiple, planned, short breaks during testing based on a specific student’s needs (for example, the student fatigues easily). Test administrators should ensure test security is maintained during all breaks by pausing the test and/or securely storing paper test materials. Schools should arrange to have staff monitor students during breaks to ensure test security.
Separate or alternate location	The test is administered in a location different than where other students are testing (for example, a different classroom).
Small group or individual administration	A small group is a subset of a larger testing group assessed in a separate location. There is no specific number defined for a small group, but a group of two to eight students is typical. A “group” of one also is allowed. <i>Note:</i> The OELPS must be administered in a one-on-one test session.
Specialized equipment or furniture	This includes providing equipment or furniture such as adjustable desks and seats to ensure the student is comfortable and engaged with the test.
Specified area or seating	The student sits in a specific place in the test setting, such as by the window for natural light or beside the test administrator.
Time of day	The student takes the test during the time that is most beneficial to their performance. Care must be taken to ensure that the student has enough time to complete scheduled testing.

Section II: Universal Tools

WHAT ARE UNIVERSAL TOOLS?

Universal tools are accessibility features that are provided either digitally through the test delivery system (embedded) or non-digitally at the local level (non-embedded). Universal tools are available to all students.

EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

The online OELPS and OELPA include a range of embedded universal tools built into the test delivery system. These features are available to all students. Universal tools for paper-based testing are accessibility features provided externally by test administrators. See [Appendix A: Accessibility Features for Paper-based Ohio's State Tests](#) in [Ohio's Accessibility Manual](#) for paper-based alternatives to the embedded tools.

Table 2 lists and describes each embedded universal tool available on the online assessments. Although these features are available to all students, educators may determine that one or more might be distracting for a particular student, and thus might indicate that the feature should be turned off for the administration of the assessment to the student (see Section II – Designated Supports).

Table 2. Embedded Universal Tools Available to All Students

Universal Tool	Description
Amplification	The student raises or lowers the volume controls, as needed.
Audio support	<p>The student uses this feature to hear pre-recorded audio of most tasks. Except for the text in drag-and-drop answer choices and the text in a word bank, audio support is available for the following. Students may replay the embedded audio support as many times as needed (unlimited replays):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Speaking</i> – most tasks have audio support for most (but not all) components; • <i>Listening</i> – all tasks have audio support for all components; • <i>Writing</i> – all tasks have audio support for all components except for inline editing tasks; and • <i>Reading</i> – audio support is available only for read-along tasks and for all kindergarten tasks and items. <p>Online tests: Human read-aloud is not permitted for online tests. All parts of the test that could be read are presented as prerecorded audio from the test delivery system.</p> <p>Paper tests: In cases where a student cannot take the online OELPS or OELPA and instead takes a paper version, the student will receive audio support via the test administrator and an audio CD. The test administrator must follow the script in the <i>Directions for Administration Manual</i>, a secure document included with the paper test materials. The test administrator will read aloud the script when instructed to do so and play the audio CD included with the paper test materials. The test administrator script and audio CD provide the same audio support that is available in the online version of the test. The test administrator may not read any part of the test that is not specifically indicated in the script.</p>
Digital notepad (“Global Notes”)	The student uses this feature as virtual “scratch paper” to make notes or draft written responses. Notes saved in the digital notepad are available for the entire test unless

Universal Tool	Description
	they are deleted or not saved by the student. The notes are not available after submitting a test.
General directions	The test administrator must read the general test directions before starting all test administrations and must not deviate from the script. After the test administrator has read the directions, students may ask for the directions to be repeated or clarified. General directions may be translated or signed. General directions include the scripted information for students that comes before the test starts. Once students have begun the test, only the test directions may be repeated or clarified.
Headphones or earbuds	The student may use headphones or earbuds to access pre-recorded audio on the assessment. Students must use headphones if tested in a group setting. Students with hearing impairments may use personal FM systems. For more information on additional assistive technology devices and software for use on OELPS and OELPA refer to <i>Appendix D: Assistive Technology Guidelines</i> of Ohio's Accessibility Manual .
Highlighter	The student uses this digital tool for marking desired text, items or response options with the color yellow. Highlighted text remains available throughout the test as long as the test session remains active.
Keyboard navigation	The student navigates the test by using a keyboard (for example, using the arrow keys). This feature varies depending on the test device used by the student.
Line reader	<p>The student uses an on-screen tool to highlight lines of text as they read text. The line reader can be provided in <i>Classic</i> and <i>Enhanced</i> versions, depending on student preference or need. Line reader settings can be changed and disabled entirely in TIDE and the Test Administrator (TA) Interface.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with attention difficulties or reading disabilities may benefit from assistance provided by the line reader. This tool helps to track where the student is in a passage while reading.</p>
Mark for review	The student electronically “flags” or “bookmarks” items to review later. Items marked for review are not saved when the student moves on to another step of the OELPS or another domain test of the OELPA.
Masking	<p>The student can cover an area of the item that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting so they can focus on certain elements of the item or task. The student may uncover anything masked when ready. The area remains masked when the student moves to another item in case the student goes back to the previous item, though masking is not saved after ending the test session or submitting the test.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with attention difficulties may benefit from masking answer choices that may be distracting during the assessment. This feature also may be needed by students with print disabilities or visual impairments.</p>
Strikethrough (Answer choice eliminator)	<p>The student electronically crosses out answer choices on multiple-choice items, usually choices that do not appear correct to the student.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with attention difficulties may benefit from striking through answer choices that may be distracting during the assessment. This feature also may be needed by students with print disabilities (including learning disabilities) or visual impairments.</p>

Universal Tool	Description
Writing tools	The student uses writing tools to format and edit written responses, such as cut and paste, copy, underline, italicize, bold and undo/redo.
Zoom	Students use the zoom out and zoom in buttons to decrease and increase the size of the text and graphics on their screen. This feature allows students to view the test content in a magnified form on an as-needed basis. Maximum zoom is about 300 percent depending on the device. (Large-print paper tests are described in Section IV: Accommodations of this manual.)

NON-EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

Table 3. Non-embedded Universal Tools Available to All Students

Universal Tool	Description
Blank/Scratch paper	<p>Test administrators must provide blank paper to students upon request. The student receives one sheet of paper (or more as needed) with a pencil, pen or marker. Students may use whiteboards and markers instead of paper. In all cases, test administrators must collect and securely destroy used paper and erase markings on whiteboards at the end of each test to maintain test security.</p> <p>The student can use an assistive technology device to take notes instead of scratch paper if the device is compatible with the online test platform. Test administrators must ensure that all the notes taken on an assistive technology device are deleted after the test. See <i>Appendix D: Assistive Technology Guidelines</i> of Ohio's Accessibility Manual for information about assistive technology.</p>
Redirect student to the test	Test administrator redirects the student's attention to the test.
Technological assistance with test navigation	<p>Students without the necessary computer skills may have the test administrator help with mouse point-and-click, drag-and-drop and on-screen tool/button navigation (back, next, submit, start/stop recording, play recording). The test administrator only may assist with the technology as indicated by the student and must not assist with answer selection. Influencing a student's answer selection or response is a test security violation and will invalidate the assessment.</p> <p>On writing items where the student is to compose a written response, a test administrator is not allowed to have the student handwrite responses and expect the test administrator to type them into the writing space. For students who are incapable of typing their own responses, see the "Scribe" non-embedded accommodation.</p>

Section III: Designated Supports

WHAT ARE DESIGNATED SUPPORTS?

Designated supports are the accessibility features (embedded and non-embedded) available to any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators including the parent/guardian and student). Since providing all supports on-screen might distract some students, each designated support must be selected prior to testing based on the individual need and preference of each student by trained educators or teams using a consistent process. Individualizing access needs on the test for each student provides increased opportunities to accurately demonstrate knowledge and skills.

Before testing, students should practice using the designated supports (during instruction when possible and on [OELPA practice tests](#)) and understand when and how to use them. Students may decide whether to use a preselected support without any consequence to the student, school or district.

There are embedded and non-embedded designated supports. **Embedded supports** are those that are available digitally as part of the test delivery system; **they are built in**. All embedded designated supports must be configured in the student test settings prior to testing. They can be enabled by:

1. Uploading a student settings file in [TIDE](#);
2. Marking the features under the “Test Settings” section of the student’s record manually in TIDE; or
3. Selecting the support(s) under “Test Settings” in the Test Administrator Interface before approving the student to test during the test session.

Non-embedded supports are not part of the test delivery system. These supports **are not built-in**, so test administrators must provide them locally.

WHO MAKES DECISIONS ABOUT DESIGNATED SUPPORTS?

Decisions about designated supports should be made by educators (or teams of educators, with parent/guardian and student as appropriate) who are familiar with the student’s characteristics and educational needs. For students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, their corresponding IEP or 504 team should make decisions on what designated supports need to be provided during testing. Decisions should reflect those supports that the student uses during instruction and for other assessments. Student input, particularly for older students, is recommended when making these decisions. [Appendix A](#) includes a planning tool that districts and schools can use to identify the accessibility features for each student.

EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

Table 4. Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description
Color contrast	<p>The test administrator adjusts the text color and screen background color based on the student's need. The color contrast options include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Black text on white background (default) 2. Black text on light yellow background 3. Black text on light blue background 4. Black text on light magenta background 5. Reverse contrast (white text on black background) 6. White text on navy blue background <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with attention difficulties may need this feature to view test content. It also may be needed by students with visual impairments or print disabilities (including learning disabilities). Color selection should be informed by evidence that the text and background color meet the student's needs.</p>
Disable universal tool	<p>This feature disables any universal tool that might interfere with student performance or be distracting. Students may benefit from fewer tools in the Test Delivery System when testing. Many of the embedded universal tools (masking, strikethrough, global notes and line reader) can be turned off. See the TIDE User Guide on the test portal for details about turning student settings on and off.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students who are easily distracted (whether designated as having attention difficulties or disabilities) may be overwhelmed or distracted by some of the universal features. Having evidence of which specific features may be distracting is important for determining which features to turn off.</p>
Mouse pointer size and color	<p>This feature allows the test administrator to adjust the size and color of the mouse cursor as it appears on the student's screen. These options are available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large/extra-large black • Large/extra-large green • Large/extra-large red • Large/extra-large yellow • Large/extra-large white <p><i>Recommendations for Use:</i> Students with visual impairments may need a larger and/or different color mouse pointer.</p>
Text size (zoom)	<p>The text size can be preset to one to four levels larger than the default.</p> <p>Level 0: 100% (default/no zoom) Level 1: 150% Level 2: 175% Level 3: 250% Level 4: 300%</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with visual impairments may need to increase the size of text and other item features beyond the 3x zoom universal feature provided by the test platform. A larger computer screen may be needed for this feature to function effectively.</p>

NON-EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORT

Table 5. Non-embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description
Color overlay	<p>The student can overlay a semitransparent color sheet onto paper-based test content.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> This designated feature works best with black text on a white background. Some colored overlays may change the original color.</p>
External magnification or enlargement device	<p>The student uses external magnification or enlargement devices to increase specific areas of the test. A projector, closed-circuit television, eyeglass-mounted or hand-held magnifiers, electronic magnification systems can be used.</p> <p>If using projector or closed-circuit television to magnify the test, the test must be administered in a separate setting that ensures test security (that is, preventing the projected image from being visible to individuals not taking the assessment).</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with visual impairments may need to increase the size of text and other item features beyond the 3x zoom universal tool provided by the test platform.</p>
Noise buffer	<p>The student uses noise buffers (earphones, earbuds, earplugs) to minimize distraction or filter external noise during testing. Any noise buffer must be compatible with the requirements of the test and allow the student to hear directions from the test administrator and audio support of the assessment.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students who are distracted by external noises within the testing environment may need noise buffers (mufflers, student spacing).</p>
Preferred language translation of directions	<p>This support provides translation of the general test directions, which usually are read by the test administrator in English from the test administration script. Only the general test directions can be translated; item stimuli, test questions, and student responses must not be translated. General test directions can be read aloud or signed by a test administrator who is fluent in the language. Translations may be provided by a human or via the audio files on the portal. The Department provides translations of the general test directions for OELPS and OELPA in Arabic, Somali and Spanish in audio and scripted formats on the test portal. Districts and schools can provide translation in additional languages as needed.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students who have limited English language skills and/or who do not understand how to respond to an item may benefit from translation of directions in their preferred language.</p>
Specialized paper	<p>Students may use grid paper, wide-ruled paper, braille paper, raised-line paper, bold-line paper, bold-line grid paper, colored paper, and other paper provided by the test administrator. The paper must not contain any writing or information that gives the student an unfair testing advantage. Examples of writing or information that are prohibited include but are not limited to: graphic organizers and two-column tables. Students may use whiteboards and markers instead of paper. In all cases, test administrators must collect and securely destroy used paper and erase markings on white boards at the end of each test to maintain test security.</p>

Designated Support	Description
Student reads test aloud	<p>The student may read the test content aloud to themselves. The test must be administered in a setting in which the student is distanced from other students so that students cannot hear each other and do not disturb one another, or must be administered in an individual setting.</p> <p><i>Recommendations for Use:</i> Students who are beginning readers may need to hear themselves read to comprehend text. Students who tend to rush through assessments and not read text fully may need to read the test aloud.</p>
Tactile fidgets or fidget devices	<p>The student may use a tool for self-regulation to help with focus, attention, calming, and active listening. Common devices include a fidget spinner, squish ball, or focus cube. The tool must be free of anything that could give an advantage during testing or reveal test content.</p>
Timer (external)	<p>The student may use a timer. There are a variety of timers that students may use, ranging from basic kitchen timers to more complex wearable devices that vibrate or flash at preset intervals or timers with visual clues such as a red covering that disappears as the timer counts down. Students may not use cell phones and devices must not connect to the internet.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> The OELPS and OELPA are untimed tests. There are no state-imposed time limits for students, so long as the student completes testing within the test window. Districts and schools, however, should schedule test administrations with the goal of completing the test the day it is started.</p>

Section IV: Accommodations

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are adjustments to the testing conditions, test format or test administration that provide equitable access during assessments for students with disabilities. The administration of the test should never be the first occasion on which an accommodation is introduced to the student. Accommodations for testing are supports that already are familiar to the student because they are used in the classroom to support instruction. Accommodations only are for students for whom there is documentation of need on an IEP or 504 Plan, so that these students show what they know and can do in English when taking the OELPS or OELPA.

WHO MAKES DECISIONS ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS?

IEP teams and 504 Plan coordinators make decisions about accommodations. For English learners with disabilities, these teams should include an expert in English language acquisition. Decision makers should be familiar with the student’s English language development goals, provide evidence of the need for accommodations, and ensure that accommodations are documented in the student’s IEP or 504 Plan.

The OELPS may be administered outside of the regular school year, as new students enroll in school. In some cases, an IEP or 504 Plan may not yet be in place for the student to be properly screened with accessibility needs in mind. If the district or school discovers that appropriate accommodations on the OELPS were not provided to a student with a disability, the district or school should re-test the student with the appropriate accommodations. If the results of the OELPS with accommodations show that the student is not an English learner, then the English learner designation would be removed.

EMBEDDED ACCOMMODATIONS

Table 6. Embedded Accommodations Available with an IEP or 504 Plan

Accommodation	Description
<p>New for 2023-2024! Speech-to-text (Dictation)</p>	<p>Students can dictate item responses and notes to the speech-to-text tool embedded in the Test Delivery System using their voices as input devices to the computer. The dictated responses are transcribed as text in the item response area or digital notepad. Speech-to-text (dictation) will be auto-punctuated, and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure the accuracy of the transcription, including grammar and punctuation; thus, prior experience with this accommodation is essential.</p> <p>When students have this accommodation turned on, the test must be administered in a one-on-one setting or in a setting in which the student is distanced from other students so that students cannot hear each other and do not disturb one another.</p> <p>The embedded speech-to-text tool does not support verbal system commands such as “back” or “next”. For verbal system command support, students should use a non-embedded speech-to-text device. Also, if students prefer to use their own assistive technology devices to support speech-to-text instead of embedded dictation, they may do so. See <i>Assistive Technology</i> in Table 7 below.</p> <p>Embedded speech-to-text only can be enabled with approval from the Department. Districts and schools must request this accommodation at least 72 hours prior to testing by contacting the Ohio Help Desk at 1-877-231-7809 or ohhelpdesk@cambiumassessment.com</p> <p><i>Recommendations for Use:</i> Students who have motor or processing disabilities or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that makes it difficult to type text using computer keys may benefit from having alternative ways to input their written responses or notes.</p>

NON-EMBEDDED ACCOMMODATIONS

Table 7. Non-embedded Accommodations Available with an IEP or 504 Plan

Accommodation	Description
Assistive technology	<p>The student uses assistive technology, which includes typing on customized keyboards, using a mouse, mouth or head stick or other pointing devices, sticky keys, touch screen, trackball, speech-to-text conversion or voice recognition. Refer to <i>Appendix D: Assistive Technology Guidelines</i> in Ohio's Accessibility Manual for additional information. The Assistive Technology Manual on the test portal offers more information.</p> <p><i>Recommendations for Use:</i> Students who have difficulty manipulating a mouse or standard keyboard may need an alternative device.</p>
Braille Version	<p>The braille version of the test is formatted with a raised-dot code that individuals read with their fingertips. Graphic material (maps, charts, diagrams and illustrations, etc.) is presented in a raised format. Student responses in braille are transcribed into a scorable test booklet or entered in the data entry interface (DEI) per the <i>Directions for Administration</i> included with the braille test materials.</p> <p>Tests are available in contracted braille in Unified English Braille. IEP and 504 Plan teams should base this decision on a student's individual needs only; it should not be applied on a group basis. Students who have a braille version of the test will have portions of the test read aloud by the test administrator and portions played from the audio CD.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPS braille tests must contact the Department at statetests@education.ohio.gov or (614) 466-1317 to determine eligibility to use paper tests and place the order.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPA braille tests must submit a request in TIDE for Department approval.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students who are blind or have low vision may read text via braille. Tactile overlays and graphics may be used to assist the student in accessing content through touch. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.</p>
Large-print paper test	<p>A large-print form of the test for students with a visual impairment who are unable to take the test online even with magnification, zoom and other specialized devices. The font size for the large print form is 18-point on 11" x 17" paper. IEP and 504 Plan teams should base this decision on a student's individual needs only; it should not be applied on a group basis. Students who have a large-print test will have portions of the test read aloud by the test administrator and portions played from the audio CD.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPS large-print paper tests must contact the Department at statetests@education.ohio.gov or (614) 466-1317 to determine eligibility to use paper tests and place the order.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPA large-print paper tests must submit a request in TIDE for Department approval.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students with visual impairments who may not be able to use zoom or magnifying devices to access the test may need a large-print paper test.</p>

Accommodation	Description
Paper test	<p>The student takes a paper-pencil version of the test. If a student is unable to test online, they may have a paper-pencil test. IEP and 504 Plan teams should base this decision on a student’s individual needs only; it should not be applied on a group basis. Students who have a paper-based test will have portions of the test read aloud by the test administrator and portions played from the audio CD.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPS paper tests must contact the Department at statetests@education.ohio.gov or (614) 466-1317 to determine eligibility to use paper tests and place the order.</p> <p>Districts and schools requiring OELPA paper tests must submit a request in TIDE for Department approval.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Due to cultural considerations or based on an individual disability, some students may be precluded from using the online test. These students may need to take a paper version of the OELPS or OELPA.</p>
Scribe	<p>This accommodation only is for OELPS writing items and the OELPA writing domain test.</p> <p>The scribe accommodation is for students who have a documented significant motor or language processing difficulty or who have had a recent injury and need this as an emergency accommodation (such as a broken hand or arm). The student dictates responses either verbally, using a non-embedded speech-to-text device, augmentative communication device or assistive communication device (picture or word board) or by signing, gesturing, pointing or eye gazing. Grammar checker, Internet and file-storing functionalities must be turned off. The student must test in a separate setting if provided the scribe accommodation.</p> <p>Please refer to Appendix C: Protocol for Scribing and Transcribing Student Responses in Ohio's Accessibility Manual for information about the scribing process. For constructed responses in the writing domain only, students and scribes should follow the section <i>Additional Guidelines for the English Language Arts–Constructed Responses</i> in <i>Appendix C: Protocol for Scribing and Transcribing</i>.</p> <p><i>Recommendation for Use:</i> Students who have documented significant motor or language processing difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that makes it difficult to produce responses may need to dictate their responses to a human, who then writes the student’s responses verbatim either in the online test platform or on paper. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment. For these students, dictating to a scribe is the only way to demonstrate their composition skills.</p>

EXCEPTIONAL REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

The Department will review exceptional requests for students who require assessment accommodations beyond those routinely allowed. Please contact the Office of Assessment at (614) 466-1317 or statetests@education.ohio.gov or to discuss a request.

Section V: Domain Exemptions

Domain exemptions are available for the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) and the Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener (OELPS). Domain exemptions are for students who cannot engage with or access any of the four language domains (listening, reading, writing and speaking) even with available accessibility features. Districts may exempt students from a domain if the student's disability prohibits the student from participating in the stated domain. **Districts may exempt a student from no more than three of the four domains.**

DOMAIN EXEMPTION CRITERIA

In determining which student situation might be applicable for a domain exemption, administrators and teachers must determine that:

1. The student has a documented disability or impairment (IEP or 504 Plan) applicable to the domain;
2. Even with available accommodations, the student cannot engage with (access) the domain; and
3. The IEP or 504 Plan team, in consultation with the educator(s) supporting the student's English language development, have established a need for a domain exemption and documented it in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

Note: When determining domain exemption eligibility, it is essential that the IEP team include participants who have the requisite knowledge of the child's English language development needs.

If all three criteria are affirmed, the district test coordinator or district administrator should register students in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) and indicate domain exemptions under test settings and tools prior to test administration. See the [TIDE User Guide](#) for instructions on configuring test settings.

DOMAIN EXEMPTION GUIDANCE

It is important to understand that a domain exemption is only appropriate when the student is unable to access part of the assessment, which is different than the potential to not score well. A student who can access a domain, even if supporting educators question the soundness of the subsequent scores due to the nature of the student's response(s), are not candidates for domain exemption. For example, a student with a speech impediment that hampers clear articulation but engages in verbal exchange should not be exempted from the speaking domain.

An example of when a domain exemption may be necessary is when a nonverbal English learner who, because of the identified disability and the absence of appropriate accommodations, cannot engage with the speaking portion of the assessment. Another example is an English learner who is deaf or hard of hearing and cannot access the listening test even with appropriate accommodations or devices. This student may qualify for an exemption from the listening domain. The students in these examples are expected to participate in the remaining domains of the test. Exemption from all domains (the entire assessment) is not allowed.

STUDENTS TAKING OELPS WITH DOMAIN EXEMPTION(S)

Students taking the OELPS with one or more domain exemptions who continue beyond Step One (the practice items) will be administered Steps Two and Three of the OELPS.

- **Online tests.** For students taking the OELPS online with domain exemption(s), the system automatically omits items from the exempted domain(s), so long as the exemptions are configured in the student test settings prior to testing.

- **Paper tests.** For students taking the OELPS on paper (paper-pencil, large-print, or braille) with domain exemption(s), all items from the exempted domain(s) must be skipped manually by the test administrator. No responses to questions from the exempted domain(s) should be entered in the Data Entry Interface. To assist the test administrator to be aware of the domain tested for each question, the domain is marked in parentheses after the question number in the *Directions for Administration*. For example, Practice Question 1 is in the domain of Listening, so the question is marked “Practice Question 1 (L)”. The student should not respond to questions in exempted domain(s), and these items should be skipped.

TEST RESULTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DOMAIN EXEMPTION

OELPS: Students will receive an overall designation of *Proficient* if they receive 4s or 5s on all nonexempt domains (3s or higher if student is taking the OELPS for the Beginning of Kindergarten (OELPS-BK)). Students cannot receive an overall designation of *Proficient* if the district or school fails to test the student in a domain without a valid exemption or the student’s score is invalidated after testing.

OELPA: Students will receive an overall designation of *Proficient* if they receive 4s or 5s on all nonexempt domains. Students cannot receive an overall designation of *Proficient* if the district or school fails to test the student in a domain without a valid exemption or the student’s score is invalidated after testing.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT DOMAIN EXEMPTIONS

1. Q: Can a 504 Plan team exempt a student from a domain on the OELPA?

A: Yes, a student with a 504 Plan may be excused from up to three domains if their disability prohibits the student from participating in the domain. However, it is unusual for a student with a 504 Plan to have a disability severe enough to justify such an exemption. If the student’s disability is significant enough to prohibit participation in a domain, the student likely will have an IEP.

2. Q: Can a student reading multiple grades below their enrolled grade level be excused from the reading domain?

A: A student may be excused from a domain only if they are unable to engage with or access that domain due to their disability and not a lack of instruction or opportunity to learn. For example, it may be appropriate to exempt a student who is blind and cannot read braille from the reading domain. However, an English learner reading below grade level is still a reader and would not qualify for an exemption. In some cases, recently arrived English learners have had no previous language instruction, even in their native languages, and so just may be beginning to develop fundamental reading skills such as phonological awareness or decoding skills. These students would not qualify for a reading domain exemption unless teams have evidence that it is the student’s disability that is causing the student’s inability to access the test and not the lack of previous instruction or opportunity to learn.

3. Q: May a student who qualifies for the reading access accommodation of read-aloud on the state English language arts (ELA) test be excused from the reading domain on the OELPA?

A: The OELPA and the OELPS do not allow a test administrator to read to a student any part of the test that is not already read as part of the standard test administration. If a student is appropriately identified for the reading access accommodation of read-aloud on the general state ELA test, the student would qualify for a reading domain exemption. The accommodation of read-aloud on the general state ELA test is only for a student who is unable to participate in the general state ELA test because their disability severely limits or prevents the student from accessing printed text. Since these students, due to their disability, are virtual nonreaders and are receiving ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions in foundational reading skills, they would qualify for an exemption from reading on the OELPS and OELPA.

4. Q: Would all students who take Ohio’s Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) likely be eligible for exemption from one or more domains?

A: No. A team cannot exempt a student from a domain based solely on cognitive abilities. Some students who take the alternate assessment are readers. Domain exemptions should be determined on a case-by-case basis by the IEP or 504 Plan team.

5. Q: For a student to receive an assessment accommodation, must the IEP team or 504 Plan coordinator document the exemption on the student’s plan?

A: Yes. It is the responsibility of a student’s IEP team or 504 Plan coordinator to determine eligibility and to document the exemption in the IEP or 504 Plan. The IEP team or 504 Plan coordinator should review and document all exemptions in the student’s IEP or 504 Plan before the student begins the OELPS or OELPA. All cases of domain exemptions are subject to monitoring by the Department.

Appendix A: Optional OELPS and OELPA Accessibility Planning Tool

Check any that apply.

Student Name: _____

SSID: _____

Date: _____

Administrative Considerations	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adjustable lighting <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar test administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Separate or alternate location	<input type="checkbox"/> Small group or individual administration <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized equipment or furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Specified area or seating <input type="checkbox"/> Time of day

Universal Tools (pre-checked because they are available to all students unless disabled)		
Embedded Universal Tools		Non-embedded Universal Tools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amplification/Volume <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital Notepad <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General directions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Headphones/Earbuds <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highlighter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keyboard navigation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line reader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark for review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mouse pointer size/color <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paginated stimuli <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strikethrough <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing tools <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zoom	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blank paper/Scratch paper <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Redirect student to the test <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technological assistance with test navigation

Designated Supports	
Embedded Designated Supports	Non-embedded Designated Supports
<input type="checkbox"/> Color contrast <input type="checkbox"/> Disable universal tools <input type="checkbox"/> Zoom in/out (print size levels 0-4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Color overlay <input type="checkbox"/> External magnification or enlargement device <input type="checkbox"/> Noise buffer <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred language translation of directions <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized paper <input type="checkbox"/> Student reads test aloud <input type="checkbox"/> Tactile fidgets/Fidget devices <input type="checkbox"/> Timer (external)

Accommodations (documentation in IEP or 504 plan required)	
Accommodations	Domain Exemption (up to three)
<input type="checkbox"/> Embedded speech-to-text (dictation) <input type="checkbox"/> Assistive technology <input type="checkbox"/> Braille test <input type="checkbox"/> Large-print test booklet <input type="checkbox"/> Paper-pencil test <input type="checkbox"/> Scribe	<input type="checkbox"/> Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Writing