

A presentation slide with a blue header and footer. On the left side, there are five brown stars arranged vertically. The main text is centered and reads: "Five Star Accommodations", "Instructional Accommodations for Students with Disabilities", and "Colorado Department of Education Exceptional Student Services Unit". At the bottom right, it says "This PowerPoint was updated 11/14/11" and includes the "cde Colorado Department of Education" logo.

Five Star Accommodations

**Instructional Accommodations
for Students with Disabilities**

**Colorado Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services Unit**

This PowerPoint was updated 11/14/11

cde
Colorado Department of Education

Thank you for taking time to learn more about instructional accommodations for students with disabilities. This PowerPoint has been created as a both an individual learning and a group training tool. Thanks to the original author of the ppt., Dena Bethel, for her work on this training document.

To maximize this learning/training opportunity, please take a moment to download the 2011-12 Colorado Accommodation Manual (5th Edition) located at:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csapa/2011/2011_CO_Accom_Manual.pdf

Whom to Contact

Instructional Accommodations

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Accommodations for State Assessments

Mira Monroe

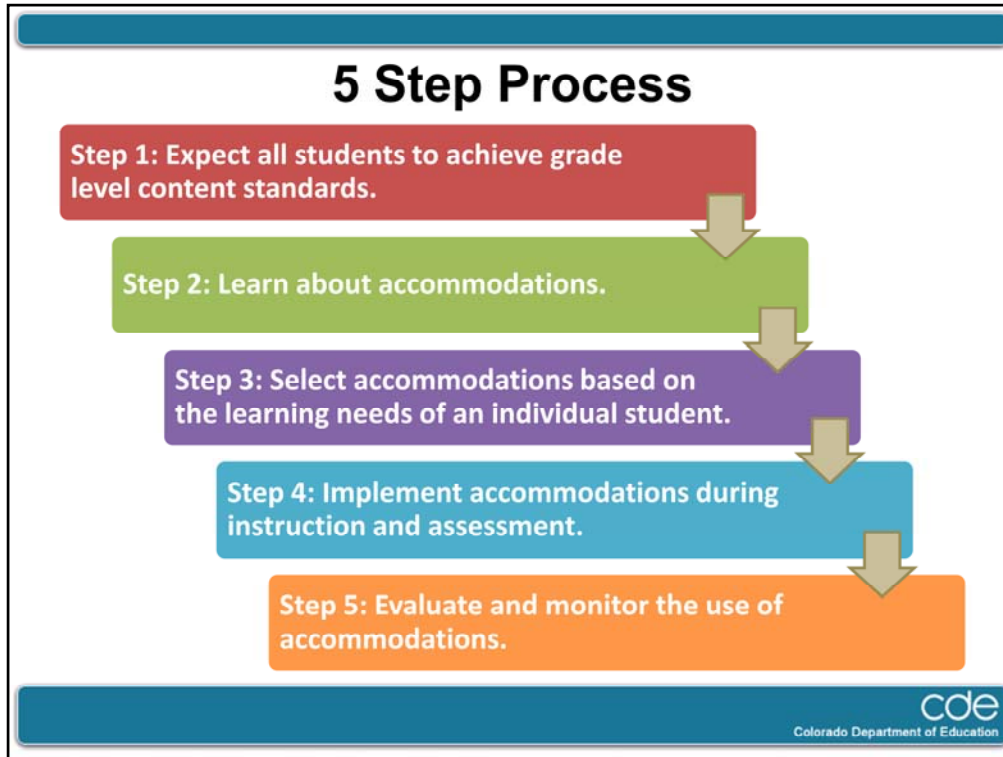
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For questions regarding the selection and implementation of instructional accommodations for students with disabilities, please contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Dr. Anthony is also the contact for questions regarding accommodations specific to progress monitoring tools and/or district-wide assessments.

For questions regarding accommodations allowable the state general and alternate assessments, please contact Mira Monroe at (303) 866-6709 or monroe_m@cde.state.co.us



The 2011-12 *Colorado Accommodations Manual* details a five-step process for Individual Education Program (IEP) Teams to use in the selection, implementation, and evaluation of instructional accommodations. The five step process includes the following:

Step One: Students with disabilities should be expected to achieve grade level content standards.

Step Two: The IEP team should have a firm understanding regarding the categories of accommodations and the specific accommodations in those categories.

Step Three: Accommodations are selected based on the student’s individual learning needs.

Step Four: Educators and/or related service providers assure that accommodations are implemented with fidelity during instruction.

Step Five: There is a process of ongoing evaluation to ensure that the selected accommodations are evaluated as to their effectiveness.

The Purpose of the 5 Step Process

- Ensures that:
 - accommodations are provided in order for students to *gain access* to instruction and assessment
 - accommodations are provided to *qualified students*
 - there is a *clear connection* between accommodations used in instruction and assessments

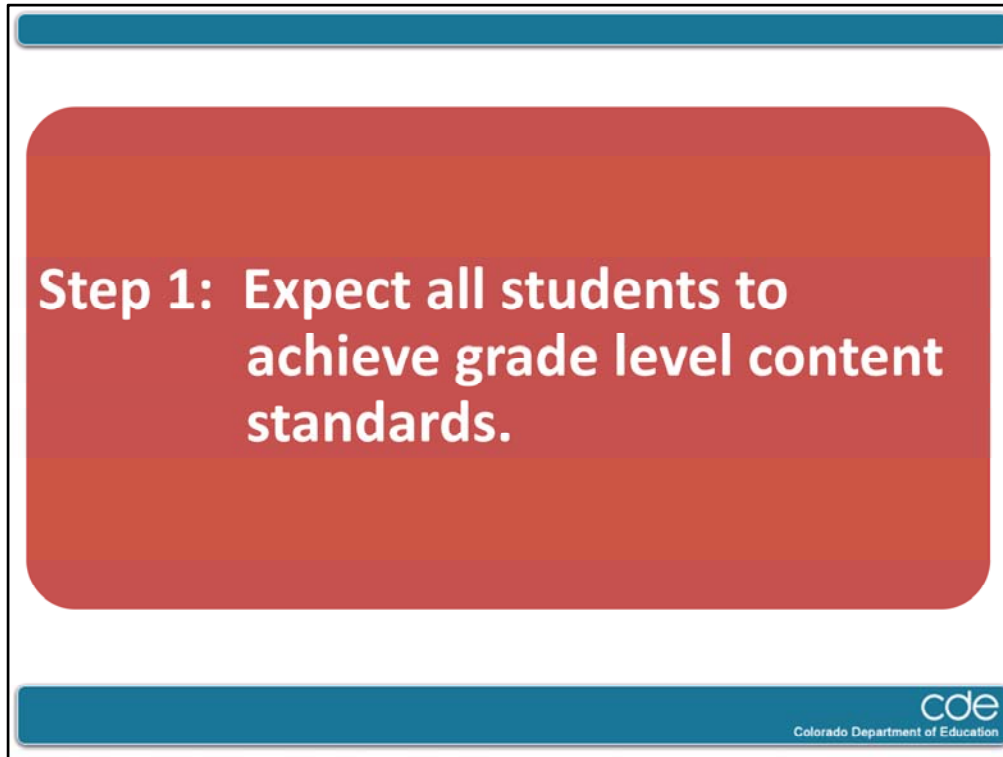
1. Accommodations are meant to provide students with access to the instructional content. Accommodations are not meant to give students an advantage.

For example, a student with an orthopedic impairment that prohibits him from writing may need to use a speech-to-text program. However, a student who is able to write, but does not like to do so, should not be afforded the accommodation of speech-to-text.

2. Accommodations must only be provided to students who qualify for an accommodation. In order to gain an understanding of which students qualify for accommodations, teams will need to utilize the 5 step process.

For example, when a team is asked, “Why does Sara need extra time?”, the team should have evidence that, without extra time on a timed assignment or test, Sara’s language processing disability will interfere with her ability to show what she knows. The team must be defensible that extra time does not give Sara an advantage.

3. There must be a clear connection between instructional accommodations and assessment accommodations. Further, the student must be provided with the accommodation during instruction prior to it being used for assessment purposes. There are many reasons for this model, the first being that students who receive an accommodation only for assessment purposes tend to do worse on an assessment because it is the first time that it has been utilized. Secondly, if an accommodation is only provided for the assessment, it could result in that student’s scores being invalid because it is not an actual measure of the students abilities. For more information about allowable assessment accommodations, please contact Mira Monroe at the contact information noted at the beginning of this presentation.



Step 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade Level Content Standards

With the focus of legislation aimed at accountability and the inclusion of all students comes the need to ensure equal access to grade-level content standards. Colorado Academic Standards are educational targets outlining what students are expected to learn at each grade level. Educators ensure that students work toward grade-level content standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. For students with disabilities, accommodations are provided during instruction and assessments to help promote equal access to grade-level content. To accomplish this goal of equal access:

(a) Every IEP team member should be familiar with content standards and accountability systems at the state and district level. (b) Every IEP team member should know where to locate the Colorado Academic Standards and updates. (c) Collaboration between general and special educators must occur for successful student access.

Most students with disabilities can work toward grade-level academic content standards and most of these students will be able to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met: (A) Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners. (B) IEPs for students with disabilities are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for “learning how to learn”). (C) Appropriate accommodations are provided so students are given the opportunity to access grade-level content.

A small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities may be working toward alternate achievement standards based on extended grade level content standards. The CoAlt will address the expanded benchmarks for administration years 2011-12 and 2012-13. The revised CoAlt will use the current Extended Evidence Outcomes beginning school year 2013-14.

Background Information

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and No Children Left Behind (NCLB) require students with disabilities to participate in state and district assessments
- Colorado law states that all means all regarding assessment
- The majority of students with disabilities will be included in the general curriculum and working towards the same grade level expectations as all students

Step 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade Level Content Standards

Federal and state legislation requires that all students are involved in state and district assessments.

All learners are general education students first. The general education curriculum is the instructional curriculum for all learners. For learners with disabilities, accommodations may be a tool to ensure access to the general education curriculum.

Basic Assumptions

- All students with disabilities are provided with instruction which is targeted on the grade-level standards in all content areas
- Students with disabilities have access to the same content taught to all students
- The State of Colorado has high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities

Step 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade Level Content Standards

In order to reduce the achievement gap seen in state-assessment data for students with disabilities and to begin the discussion around the use of accommodations to assist with lessening this gap, we must have basic assumptions around the educational services available to students with disabilities.

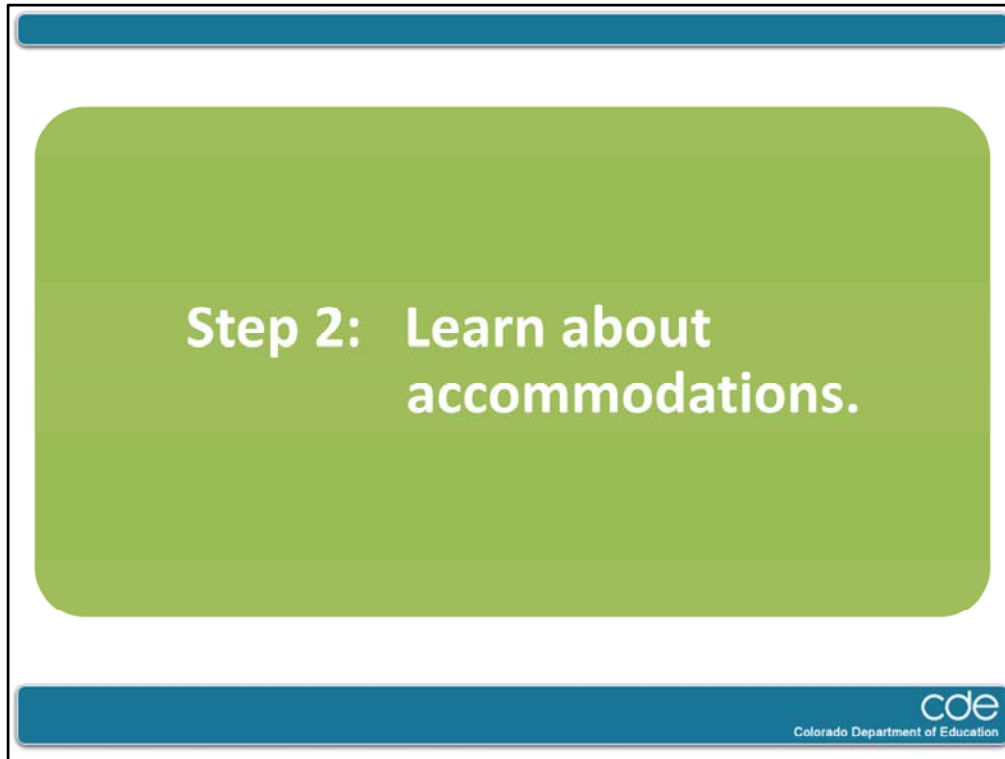
All students, including students with disabilities, should be receiving instruction that is based on the grade-level content standards in all academic areas. Students with disabilities should have access to the same content taught to all students within the general education setting. Students who have access to quality content based instruction often perform better in the classroom and on state and district assessments.

How to Achieve High Expectations

- Be familiar with state and district content standards in order to provide access for students with disabilities.
- Develop IEP goals and, as needed objectives, which include content area goals.
- Ensure teachers know how to differentiate the curriculum to meet the learning needs of each student.

Step 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade Level Content Standards

To locate the Colorado State Academic Standards, please go to:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/CoAcademicStandards.html>



Step 1: Expect All Students to Achieve Grade Level Content Standards

With the focus of legislation aimed at accountability and the inclusion of all students comes the need to ensure equal access to grade-level content standards. Colorado Academic Standards are educational targets outlining what students are expected to learn at each grade level. Educators ensure that students work toward grade-level content standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. For students with disabilities, accommodations are provided during instruction and assessments to help promote equal access to grade-level content. To accomplish this goal of equal access:

- Every IEP team member should be familiar with content standards and accountability systems at the state and district level
- Every IEP team member should know where to locate the Colorado Academic Standards and updates.
- Collaboration between general and special educators must occur for successful student access
- Most students with disabilities can work toward grade-level academic content standards and most of these students will be able to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met:
 - (a) Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by state standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
 - (b) IEPs for students with disabilities are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction (e.g., specific reading skills, strategies for “learning how to learn”).
 - (c) Appropriate accommodations are provided so students are given the opportunity to access grade-level content.

A small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities may be working toward alternate achievement standards based on extended grade level content standards. The CoAlt will address the expanded benchmarks for administration years 2011-12 and 2012-13. The revised CoAlt will use the current Extended Evidence Outcomes beginning school year 2013-14.

What are Accommodations?

- Definition: Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling which provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities
- Accommodations reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability.
- Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling which provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities. It is important to note that accommodations are designed to provide access and equity, but not to provide students with an advantage. By equity, we mean the accommodation provides a student with the **means** to take information in or to give information out, not to ensure that student is “proficient” per se on an assessment or on a classroom assignment. It means the student is provided with an **opportunity** to get the answer right.

What are Modifications?

- Modifications are changes to or reductions of learning or assessment expectations.
- Examples include:
 - Requiring a student to learn less material
 - Reducing assignments so a student only needs to complete the easiest problems
 - Revising assignments to make them easier (crossing out response items)
 - Giving a student hints or clues to guide him or her to a correct answer

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

It will be helpful to differentiate the term *accommodation* from the term *modification*.


Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations—they provide **access**.

Changing, lowering, or reducing learning expectations is usually referred to as a modification. Modifications can result in greater gaps between students and their peers.

For example, shortening an assignment by having a student do every-other problem on a math assignment is an accommodation (because the student is still practicing all the skills that were taught). Having a student only do the multiplication problems on an assignment that includes multiplication and division problems would be a modification.

Another example of a modification would be if a student with disabilities were given a calculator to compute math problems when all the other students are not allowed to use a calculator and must do their computations with paper and pencil.

Accommodations vs. Modifications	
Accommodations	Modifications
Provide students with the same learning expectations	Reduce learning expectations by decreasing what the student is expected to learn
Ensure that students are able to learn and be measured on the same construct as other students	Change or substitute constructs
Provide students with meaningful assessment scores	Reduce the ability to use scores as reliable measures of student skill in the construct
Designed to provide equity, and to reduce or eliminate the effect of the student's disability within instruction or on assessments	Designed to make it "easier" for the student to complete a learning activity or assessment , not necessarily to show what they know or can do



Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

There are distinct differences between accommodations and modifications as outlined in this chart.

Accommodations provide students with the same learning expectations, ensure that students are able to learn and be measured on the same construct as other students, provide students with meaningful assessment scores, and provide equity and reduce or eliminate the effect of the student's disability in regards to what is being learned or measured.

Modifications, on the other hand, reduce the learning expectations by decreasing what the student is expected to learn. These can cause changes in what is actually being learned. They also reduce the ability to compare the scores on assignments or on tests to those of other students. The purpose of modifications is to make it easier for the student to complete an assignment or assessment. Modifications do not allow the student to show what they know, relative to the assignment or assessment question.

This is not to say that modifications do not have their place. For example, modifications are appropriate to use as an instructional tool to assist the student in the learning process when a new concept is introduced. However, it is imperative that the modification is faded and, if appropriate, substituted with an accommodation.

Accommodations Categories

- **Presentation Accommodations**

- Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multisensory, tactile and visual and through assistive technology.

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

There are four accommodations categories. The first category to be reviewed involves Presentation Accommodations.

Presentation Accommodations are changes to the way in which instructional or test content is presented to a student. These alternate modes of presentation include font size, sign language, picture symbols etc.

Accommodations Categories

- **Response Accommodations**

- Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways, or to solve/organize problems using an assistive device or organizer

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

There are four accommodations categories. The second category involves Response Accommodations.

Response Accommodations are methods a student uses to provide responses to instructional activities or assessment tasks. Examples of response include producing text either orally to a scribe or using speech-to-text software

Accommodation Categories

- **Setting Accommodations**

- Change the location in which an assignment and assessments are given or change the conditions of the setting

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

There are four accommodations categories. The third category to be reviewed is the Setting Accommodation Category.

Setting and Environmental Accommodations are changes to the location in which an assignment or assessment is given, or the environmental conditions the student needs. Some examples may include the location where a student, sensory tools, ear plugs etc.

Accommodations Categories

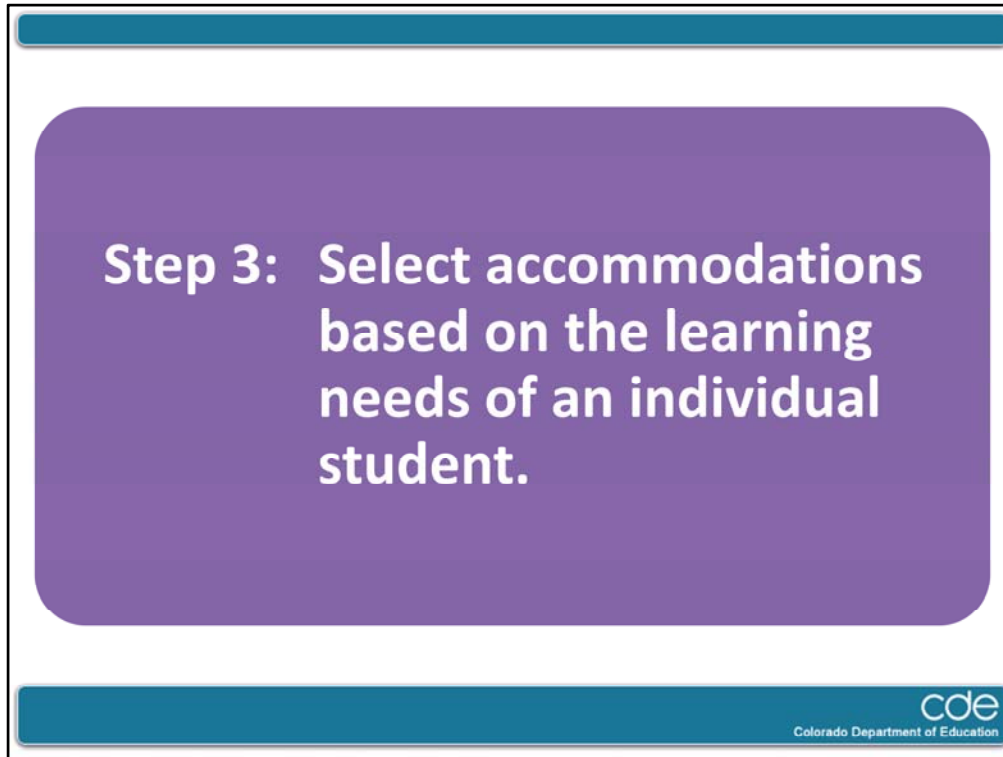
- **Timing/Scheduling Accommodations**

- Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assignment or assessment.
- May also change the way the time is organized

Step 2: Learn about Accommodations

There are four accommodations categories. The fourth category to be reviewed involves Timing and Scheduling Accommodations.

Timing and Scheduling Accommodations are changes in the allowable amount of time or the time of day instruction or assessments are given. These types of accommodations may include extended time or providing key instruction to students in the morning.



Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Effective decision-making about the provision of appropriate accommodations begins with making sound instructional decisions. In turn, making appropriate instructional decisions is facilitated by gathering and reviewing information about the student’s present level of performance in relation to local and state academic standards. In essence, the process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the educational team attempt to “level the playing field” so students with an identifiable need can participate in the general education curriculum.

The selection of accommodations must be a thoughtful process based on data. Educational team meetings that simply engage people in checking accommodation boxes on a document are neither conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor do they advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum. This process must consist of constant feedback and evaluation as to whether an accommodation is appropriate or not, as this might change over time. The student must be involved in the process so he/she understands what the accommodation is and why they need to use it.

Step 3: Getting Started

- Begin with the “end in mind”
- Start with the least intrusive accommodations
- Before selecting accommodations, look through the research
- Section 4 of the manual provides some examples of researched accommodations based on student characteristics

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Work with the student to analyze what needs to be accomplished ... then how to get there. The goal of all accommodations is access to the information. How will the student access the information being presented? What is the least intrusive way for the student to access information?

Involve Students

- Involve students in selecting, using, and evaluating accommodations
- The more input students have in selecting their accommodations, the more likely the accommodations will be used.
- Students should see accommodations as adding value to their daily life — not only in school—but for postsecondary, career, and community life

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

The more students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases. Self-advocacy skills become critical here. Students need opportunities to learn which accommodations are most helpful for them, and then they need to learn how to make sure those accommodations are provided in all of their classes and wherever they need them outside of school.

Instructional Accommodations

- The most common and nationally observed instructional accommodations are listed in Section 3 of the Colorado Accommodations Manual
- This list includes all of the accommodations allowed on TCAP plus others that are not allowed but are appropriate for instructional purposes
- New accommodations are being thought of and used everyday
 - Assistive technology is one example since newer and better technology is constantly being developed

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Section 3 of the Colorado Accommodations Manual details the key areas that will guide the IEP team in making decisions about a student's possible need for certain types of accommodations.

-Student Characteristics: does the student have a sensory impairment(s), orthopedic impairment, speech or language (communication) impairment, a reading-related impairment, a writing-related impairment, etc.

- Characteristic Affecting Setting / Environmental Accommodations: is the student distracted easily by other students, does the student require specialized equipment that may be distracting to others, does the student have sensory impairment(s) that require special lighting and/or acoustics, can the student focus on his or her work in a large group setting, etc.

- Characteristics Affecting Timing and Scheduling: does the student work continuously for the length of time allocated for the standard time for classroom / district / and/or state assessments; does the student use other accommodations or equipment that require more time to complete the task (e.g., braille, scribe, use of a head pointer, etc.), does the student tire easily due to health impairments, does the student have a visual impairment that requires frequent breaks, does the student have a motor disability that effects the rate that he or she can write responses, etc.

Review Current Accommodations

- What accommodations are currently used by the student during classroom instruction and assessments?
- What are the results for classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations were used and not used?
- Are there effective combinations of accommodations?

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

The ultimate decision about whether to use an accommodation rests on the student's preferences and abilities.

The ultimate effectiveness of an accommodation depends on a student's familiarity and opportunity to practice using it in everyday life—in the classroom, at home, and in the community.

Review Current Accommodations

- What difficulties did the student experience when using accommodations?
- What is student's perception of how well accommodations worked?
- What are the perceptions of the parents, teachers, and specialists about how well accommodations worked?
- What do these data indicate?

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Remember that the process of determining accommodations is ongoing and, for some students, may involve a number of “trials” to find the right mix or combination of accommodations.

Questions to Ask When Selecting Accommodations

- What are the student's learning strengths and needs?
- How do the student's learning needs affect the achievement of grade level content standards?

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

It is necessary to work with a student prior to the IEP meeting to try out a variety of accommodations in the classroom, based on the impact of the student's disability on learning, in order to figure out what works best. Every student with a disability does not need an accommodation, nor do all students with the same disability need the same accommodations.

Questions to Ask When Selecting Accommodations

- What specialized instruction (e.g., learning strategies, organizational skills, reading skills) does the student need to achieve grade level content standards?
- What accommodations will increase the student's **access** to instruction and assessment by reducing the effects of the disability?

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

The specialized instruction needed by a student is provided by special educators or other special programs available in schools. Accommodations are provided by general educators in consultation with special educators. It is important to remember that accommodations are typically designed to increase access to general education instruction within the general education setting.

Based on These Questions:

Decide whether the student should:

- Continue using an accommodation “as is”
- Use an accommodation with changes
- Have an accommodation discontinued

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

These are three possible outcomes of a review of currently provided accommodations. A student's needs for accommodations can change with growth, time, or changes in instructional settings. For this reason, it is important to regularly review students' needs with regard to accommodations.

Of the Accommodations that Match the Student's Needs, Consider:

- The student's willingness to learn to use the accommodation.
- Opportunities to learn how to use the accommodation in classroom settings.
- Conditions for use on state assessments

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

There are many factors to consider when selecting an appropriate accommodation for a student. The three that are highlighted are key to consider whether a particular accommodation is a match for the student, a match for the classroom setting, and/or is an allowable state assessment accommodation.

What Works

- Allowing students use the accommodation regularly.
- Choosing accommodations for individual students.
- Involving the student in the decision making process around accommodations.

Please see Section 4 of the manual

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Section 4 of the Manual will detail more information.

What Does Not Work

- Checking off every accommodation available on the IEP form, hoping “something” will work.
- Having students try to use unfamiliar accommodations on tests when they haven’t practiced using them in the classroom.
- Please see Section 4 of the manual

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

In essence, the process of making decisions about accommodations is one in which members of the IEP team attempt to “level the playing field” so students with disabilities can participate in the general education curriculum. IEP meetings which simply engage people in checking boxes on a state or local “compliance” document are not conducive to sound decision-making practices, nor do they advance equal opportunities for students to participate in the general education curriculum. Choosing accommodations must be done in a way that ensures constant feedback on whether an accommodation is appropriate or not, as these may change over time

Documenting Accommodations

For students with disabilities:

- On Individual Education Programs
- On 504 Plans

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

For students with disabilities who have an Individual Education Program (IEP): With information obtained from the required summary of the student's Present Level of Educational Performance and Functional Performance (PLEP + FP), the process of identifying and documenting accommodations should be a fairly straightforward event. The PLEP + FP is a federal requirement (IDEA 04) in which IEP team members must state "how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum—the same curriculum as non-disabled children" [Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i) (I)].

Depending on the design and overall format of a typical IEP, there are potentially three areas in which accommodations can be addressed:

1. "Consideration of Special Factors" [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered.
2. "Supplementary Aids and Services" [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes, "aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate."
3. "Participation in Assessments" [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of a student with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

For students with disabilities who have a 504 Plan: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires public schools to provide accommodations to students with disabilities even if they do not qualify for special education services under IDEA. The definition of a disability under Section 504 is much broader than the definition under IDEA. All IDEA students are also covered by Section 504, but not all Section 504 students are eligible for services under IDEA.

Section 504 states: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason other or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." [29 U.S.C. Sec. 794]

Instructional vs. Assessment Accommodations

- Instructional accommodations and assessment accommodations are linked.
- Some accommodations are allowable for use in the classroom, but not for district and state assessments.
- Allowable district and state assessment accommodations must be used in the classroom

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

Students must use accommodations in the classroom in order to be afforded the opportunity to learn and use them comfortably and effectively during assessment.

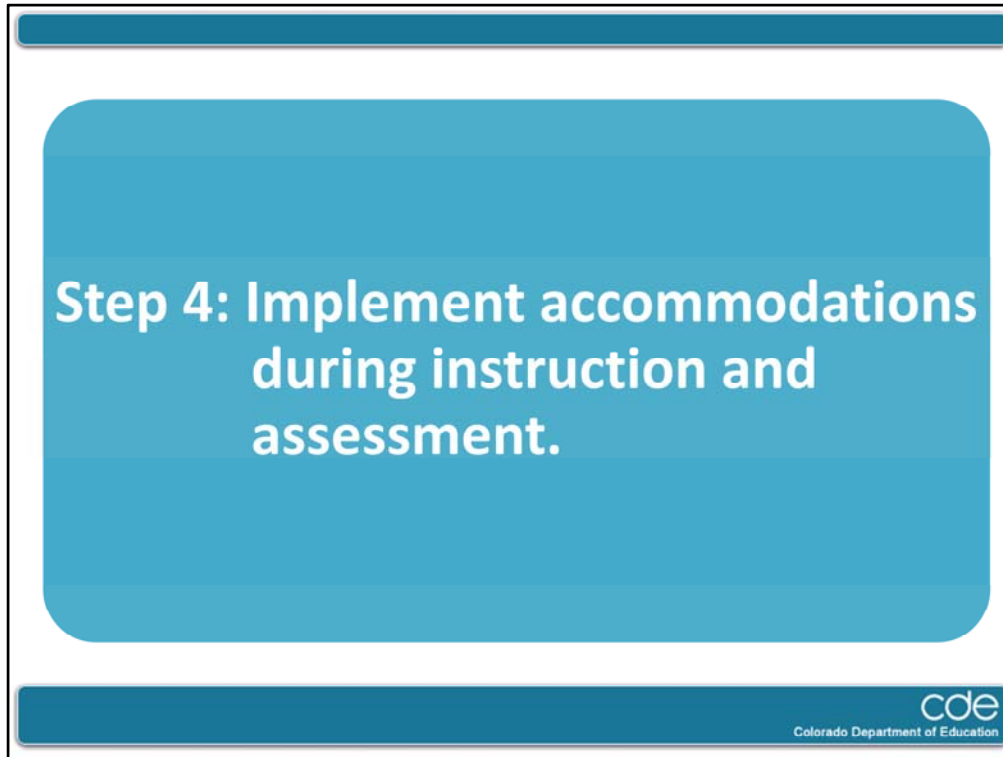
Some instructional accommodations are not appropriate to use on district and state assessments because they interfere with what is being assessed by providing students with an advantage rather than access. Please review carefully the *Colorado Accommodation Manual* for further explanation of allowable accommodation for the state general assessments.

Types of District Assessment Accommodations

- Districts must establish accommodation guidelines for their regular district assessments
- If districts allow the state accommodations for their district assessment it would allow students to practice the accommodation in an assessment setting
- By allowing the same accommodations for state and district assessments, data will be available on the effectiveness of that accommodation in the assessment setting

Step 3: Select Accommodations Based on the Needs of the Student

This training PowerPoint does not cover all the district-level requirements for ensuring that students with disabilities are able to either participate in the regular district-wide assessment with or without accommodations or an alternate assessment to the district-wide assessment.



Step 4: Implement Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment

Plan how and when the student will learn to use each new accommodation. Be certain there is ample time to learn to use instructional and assessment accommodations before an assessment takes place. Teach the student to self-advocate for the accommodation in the classroom setting to ensure that the accommodation is being implemented effectively.

Note: For state assessment purposes, the accommodation must be in use at least three months prior to the administration of the assessment.

Implementation of Accommodations During Instruction

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments. Furthermore, it is the expectation of the State that educators will provide selected accommodations during instruction in order to ensure that best practices are in place for that student with continuous monitoring of the student's needs.

To be effective, instructional accommodations must be implemented:

- consistently
- as written in the IEP
- appropriately for the content areas
- with input from the student
- in conjunction with progress monitoring to determine impact

Step 4: Implement Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment

Accommodations for instruction and assessment must be documented on the student's Individual Education Program.

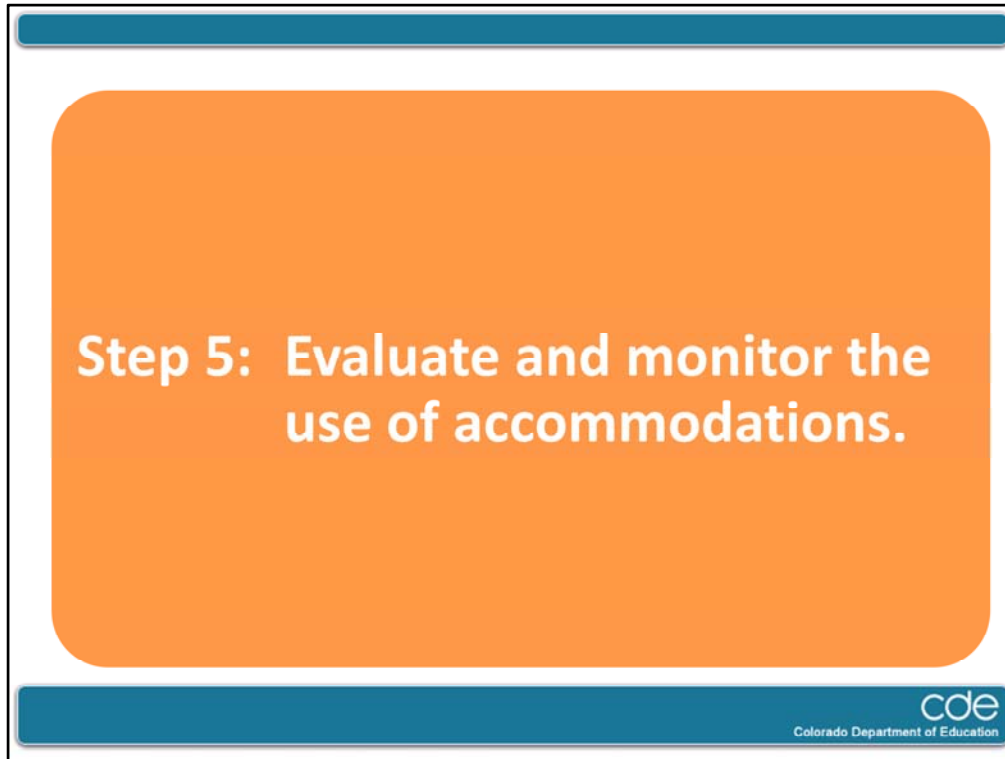
When Administering Accommodations During Instruction

Ensure:

- All teachers understand what accommodations the student needs for what content area during instruction.
- Teachers know how and when the accommodation will be used.
- The logistics are carefully planned, implemented, and evaluated

Step 4: Implement Accommodations During Instruction and Assessment

All staff working with the student should be aware of the student's approved accommodations and the need to implement the accommodations with consistency



Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

The questions detailed in this next section can be used to formatively evaluate the accommodations used at the student level, as well as the school or district levels. School and district-level questions can be addressed by a committee responsible for continuous improvement efforts, while the student-level questions need to be considered by the IEP team. It is critical to stress that formative evaluation is not the responsibility of just one individual. The entire educational team, or IEP team, should contribute to the information gathering and decision-making processes.

Why Evaluate Accommodations?

- To ensure the meaningful participation of all students in instruction and assessment.
- To change the accommodations, if necessary.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the accommodation

Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

Evaluating the effectiveness of the use of accommodations at the district, school, and individual student level is necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students with disabilities in state- and district-wide assessments. The information from evaluation can be used in any number of different ways from identifying questionable patterns of accommodation use to indicating areas in which IEP team members and test administrators need additional training and support.

Evaluating Accommodations

- **How to evaluate**

- Use data from classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and statewide assessments to determine the effectiveness and impact of accommodations

- **How often**

- the evaluation of accommodations should happen frequently throughout the school year

Any changes in accommodations should be documented in the IEP

Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

Data gathered through classroom observation / products / assessments results will provide information about the efficacy of identified accommodations. Student performance data should be gathered regularly to ascertain the student's progress. When there are concerns about the student's progress, the problem solving team should address needed interventions, including possible new accommodations.

Several overarching questions can be asked to assist in the evaluation and improvement of accommodations

- Is the student making progress toward grade-level standards through the use of the accommodation?
- Does the accommodation continue to meet the student’s educational needs?
- If the student is not meeting the expected level of performance, what are the possible explanations?

Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

The educational team should continually probe the results of the above three questions and make adjustments to the student’s needed accommodations, as appropriate.

Questions: At the Student Level

- Do the data show that the accommodation is effective?
- What accommodations are used by the student in the classroom and on assessments?
- What are the results of classroom assignments and assessments when accommodations are/are not used?

Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

These questions are designed to evaluate the use of accommodations and how they effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities. This information can be obtained from asking some basic questions about the use of accommodations, both at the “level” of the school or district (e.g., a systems perspective) or of the individual (i.e., student). The student-level questions are those which need to be considered by the IEP team.

Questions: At the Student Level

- What is the student's perception of how well the accommodation worked?
- What seemed to be effective combinations of accommodations?
- What are the difficulties encountered in the use of accommodations?

Step 5: Evaluate and Monitor the Use of Accommodations

Evaluation of the use of accommodations can be accomplished through observations, notes, or anecdotal reports from the student's teachers, parents, and other members of the IEP team, including students themselves. Evaluation is not conducted to "prove" whether an accommodation has been effective. Rather, it is an approach that is used to monitor progress and promote continuous improvement. The focus is on using the information to make changes that will lead to improvements in student access to instructional and assessment accommodations.

Important Final Notes on Accommodations

- Accommodations do not begin and end in school.
- Students who need accommodations at school will also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education and the work place

Thank you for taking the time to review this training PowerPoint and the referenced Colorado Accommodation Manual.

If you have questions about instructional accommodations for students with disabilities, please be in touch with Dr. Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

For questions about allowable and nonstandard assessment accommodations for the state general and alternate assessments, please contact Mira Monroe at (303) 866-6709 or monroe_m@cde.state.co.us