

Accessibility Guidelines for the Delaware System of Student Assessments (DeSSA)

**Use this document to plan for:
Smarter Summative Assessments,
Smarter Interim Assessments,
DCAS Science and Social Studies,
End-of-Course,
DCAS-Alt1**

2015-2016

Delaware Department of Education
Office of Assessment
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

If you have any questions regarding the Accessibility Guidelines for the Delaware System of Student Assessments please contact the Delaware Department of Education, Office of Assessment, at (302) 857-3391.

For questions or additional assistance regarding the online testing system or functioning of accommodations please contact the DeSSA Help Desk at the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

Important Contact Numbers

DeSSA Help Desk	(877) 560-8331
DCAS-Alt1 Help Desk	(877) 206-7039
Delaware Department of Education Office of Assessment	(302) 857-3391

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INTRODUCTION

The 2015-16 *Accessibility Guidelines for the Delaware System of Student Assessments* (hereafter called the “*Guidelines*”) contains the Delaware Department of Education’s policy governing the provision and documentation of universally designed features, test supports and test accommodations to students participating in statewide assessments. Delaware administers the statewide assessments contained in this document to satisfy the requirements of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For more information on the assessments and when they are given, the DeSSA Testing Calendar can be found at <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/domain/111>

This document is divided into five parts:

- I. Accessibility Levels Overview
- II. Students with Disabilities
- III. English Language Learners
- IV. Students with Disabilities who are also English Language Learners
- V. General Education Students Receiving Supports

IDEA, ESEA, and Classroom and Test Accommodations

The USED has published guidance that clearly states that the state is responsible for identifying accommodations that are permissible on the state test, taking into consideration the construct of the test, and that IEP teams must select student accommodations from that list. Best practice dictates that students should only use accommodations on a standardized test that they have been using regularly in the classroom. Neither IDEA nor ESEA requires states to include all classroom accommodations on the list of permissible test accommodations for the test used to satisfy ESEA requirements.

Purpose

This document provides guidelines for making decisions about:

- The inclusion of students with disabilities (SwD), English language learners (ELL), students who are classified as both (SwD/ELL);
- The identification of “General Education with Supports” students. These are students not identified as SwD or ELL that may be better able to demonstrate their achievement of the content standards when provided supports during State assessments;
- The selection and provision of testing accommodations and supports for the types of students mentioned above; and
- The type of assessment in which a student will participate.

Application of Guidelines

The students to which these Guidelines apply:

1. Have disabilities designated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. Qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

3. Are students identified as English language learners by use of the home language survey and the English proficiency assessments; the W-APT test, which is given for screening and placement; and the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS), according to the Delaware and U.S. Department of Education definitions. For more information go to Section III of this document found on page 12 (ELL).
4. Are students with disabilities who are also identified as English language learners, meeting the criteria for both groups according to the Delaware and U.S. Department of Education definitions (SwD/ELL).
5. Are general education students receiving supports in the classroom as part of instruction and assessment, as documented by a school referral a school problem solving team, evaluation for IEP services, 504 plan, or ELL services, or by a classroom teacher with supporting classroom data.

PROCEDURAL CLARIFICATIONS

Refer to the Test Administrator Manuals for the DCAS, Smarter ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, DCAS-Alt1 and Test Information Distribution Engine Manual (TIDE) for technical information regarding the use and preparation for online accessibility features for each of the assessments.

Documented Accessibility Features Must Be Offered

The Department of Education expects that a student's accommodations and supports on the Accessibility Form and entered into TIDE will be available, offered, and provided on the days of testing. Students sometimes refuse to use their accommodations or supports during a test administration; however, the school **must offer** the accommodations and supports that have been documented.

Absence, Suspension, Expulsion, Transfer, Illness, and Withdrawal

Absence, suspension, expulsion, transfer, illness, and withdrawal are treated in the same way for all students. These situations are not addressed by the Accessibility Guidelines.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Accessibility Guidelines

The Delaware Department of Education monitors the implementation of the *Guidelines* as part of efforts to oversee the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and responsibilities under Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The Delaware Department of Education Program Specialist monitors the implementation of the *Guidelines* for English language learners for the Title III ESL/Bilingual and Title I, Part C Migrant Programs.

Selecting the Date When a Student Will Begin to Use Accessibility Features

New accommodations for a student should not be entered into the DeSSA TIDE database until the student is ready to use them on the actual test; however, students need to have adequate experience using the accommodation in their daily classroom experiences in order to use it effectively during the assessment. Therefore, when the team finalizes the selected accommodations for a student, they should also plan:

- The date on which the student will begin using the accommodation in the classroom prior to testing (if they are not already using it); and
- The date and test window on which the student will begin using the accommodation on the assessment. This can be indicated on the cover page of the Accessibility Form.

CHANGING ACCOMMODATIONS OR SUPPORTS DURING TESTING

Embedded Accommodations and Supports

All student accommodations and supports should be verified in DeSSA TIDE (Test Information Distribution Engine) **prior** to launching a student's test, then verified again in the test administrator interface when the student is being checked into a test.

There are two categories of accommodations and supports:

1. **Embedded Accommodations and Supports.** *Accommodations that must be delivered by the online system.* For example: Text-to-Speech and Refreshable Braille.
2. **Non-Embedded Accommodations and Supports.** *Accommodations that are provided by the school.* For example: translator, whisper phone or color overlays.

Can an embedded accommodation or support be changed mid-test?

In previous years, accommodations and supports could not be edited while a student was paused in mid-test. In 2015-16, the system has been configured to allow such changes. However, if the test is paused for more than 20 minutes, the student will not be able to access any already-completed items with the edited accommodations. After 20 minutes, the student will only be able to access items from the point in the test at which it was paused.

If an accommodation or support is missing from TIDE, most likely the accommodation or support was not entered into TIDE. At that point it is necessary to pause the student's test and contact the District or School Accommodations manager or District or School Test Coordinator to have edits made to the student's TIDE record.

There are several accommodations, however, which cannot be changed mid-test (more information can be found in the Test Security Manual: Table 4-1). These include:

- American Sign Language (embedded videos)
- Braille
- Closed Captioning
- Permissive mode
- Translations (Glossaries)

If one of these accommodations must be modified mid-test, then the test must be "reset." This is considered a security irregularity, regardless of how many items the student answered prior to the reset. In order to reset a test, the District test coordinator must submit, via SysAid, an incident report requesting a "test reset." A test reset deletes the student's initial attempt and replaces it with a new, unlaunched attempt. The District test coordinator will receive a notification that the test has been reset. The Accommodations manager must edit the student's TIDE record to deliver the updated accommodations or support. *This can be avoided by verifying all accommodations and supports in the TIDE system prior to launching the test.* The student **must** take the reset test opportunity. The same participation rules apply to the reset opportunity as to all other test opportunities.

Can a non-embedded DCAS or EOC¹ accommodation be changed mid-test?

If the incorrect or missing DCAS/EOC accommodation or support falls into the category of non-embedded accommodations or supports, staff may proceed with the test providing the correct accommodations and supports. As soon as possible, the DeSSA TIDE database must be updated to reflect the test accommodations and supports actually delivered to the student.

Note, however, that the student's final test score record will be transmitted to DOE with a record of the accommodations and supports that were active in the vendor's TIDE database during the test administration, whether the student actually used those non-embedded accommodations and supports or not.

2015-16 Test Reset Criteria

Reset criteria for state assessments may result in fewer test resets granted than in previous years. Please refer to the Test Security Manual, and the DCAS and Smarter Test Administration Manuals for the rules regarding test resets.

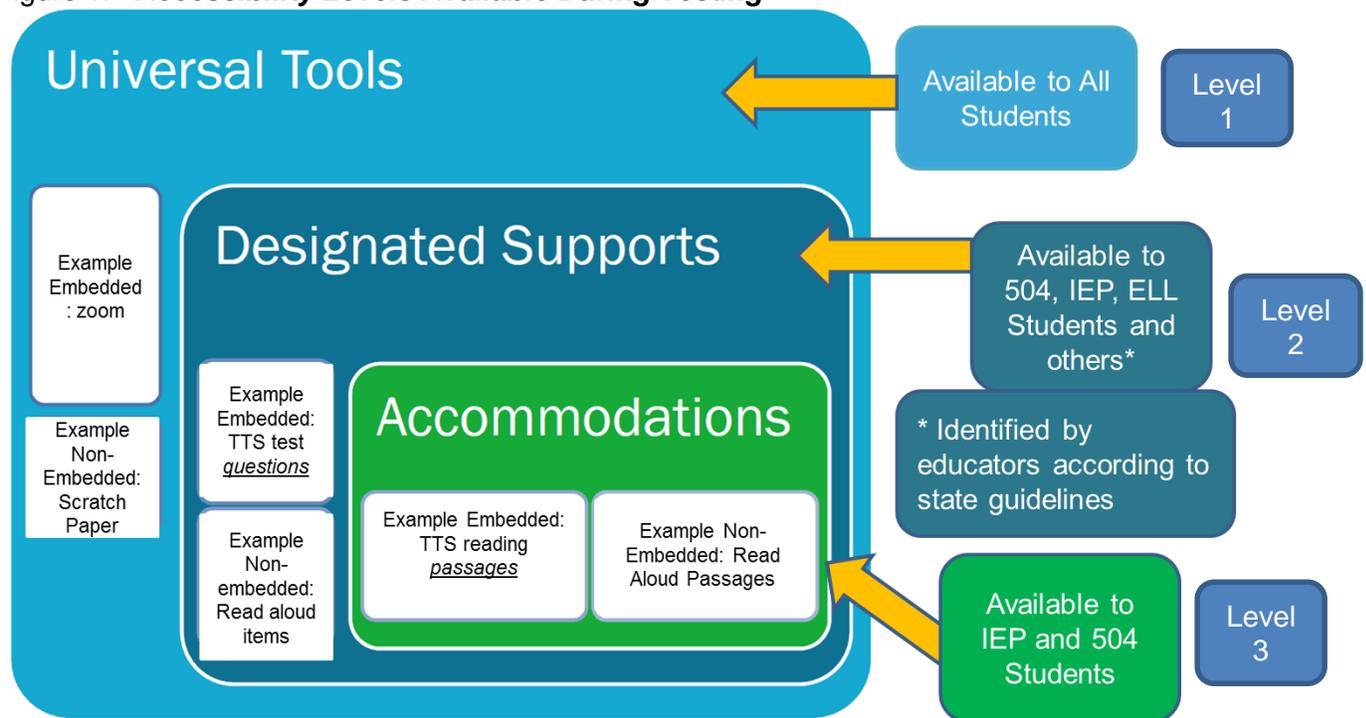
¹ See the Smarter ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Test Administrator Manual for information regarding changes to non-embedded accommodations and supports mid-test.

SECTION I. ACCESSIBILITY LEVELS OVERVIEW

Smarter English Language Arts, Smarter Mathematics, DCAS Science, DCAS Social Studies and EOC Accessibility Levels

Through a combination of universal design principles and computer embedded accessibility features, Delaware has designed an inclusive assessment system by considering accessibility from initial design through item development, field-testing and implementation of the assessments for all students. Although accommodations may still be needed for some students with disabilities and students with disabilities who are English language learners to assist in demonstrating what they know and can do, the computer-embedded accessibility features should minimize the need for accommodations during testing and ensure the inclusive, accessible and fair testing of the diverse students being assessed. The different aspects of Accessibility Features have been separated into different Levels in order to assist in understanding the differences of which students are able to access/use each of the features. Figure 1 shows graphically how each of these levels relate to one another.

Figure 1. **Accessibility Levels Available During Testing**



Level 1: Universal Tools/Features

On the Delaware computer-based assessments, universal tools are features or preferences that are either built into the assessment system or provided externally by test administrators. Universal tools are available for all students taking Delaware’s State Tests. Since these features are available for all students, they are not classified as supports (level 2) accommodations (level 3). Students should be familiar with these features prior to testing and should have the

opportunity to select and practice using them in order to appropriately use these features on test day. Universal tools are intended to benefit a wide range of students and may be used by the student at his or her discretion during testing. In most cases the Test Administrator does not need to do anything for a student to access these (such as “highlighting” text in a passage), but in other cases the Test Administrator may need to ensure a student receives a Universal Feature (such as preferential seating).

The Universal Tool/Features can be indicated on the Accessibility Form found in Appendix A. Level 1 features cannot be entered into TIDE.

It is not required to complete this page in order for a student to receive Universal Tools; however, for some students a team may decide to complete this to ensure a student receives the feature during testing.

Level 2: Designated Supports

A relatively small number of students will require additional features for their particular needs (for example, changing the background or font color). Providing too many tools on screen might distract some students. Therefore, designated features will need to be selected ahead of time based on the individual needs and preferences of the student. Students should practice using these features and understand when and how to use them.

Level 2 features are available to the following students:

- Students who have IEPs or 504 plans
- Students who are identified as English Language Learners
- Students who are identified as English Language Learners and have an IEP or 504 plan
- Students who have been determined to need extra support (“general education student receiving supports”)

Designated supports are divided into two types: 1) embedded designated supports; and 2) non-embedded designated supports. Embedded supports are those that are available as part of the technology platform. They can be enabled by entering the appropriate information into TIDE. Non-embedded supports are not part of the technology platform so test administrators must provide them locally. Both of these can be found on the Accessibility Form located in Appendix A-1. Definitions for each can be found in Appendix A-2.

Level 2 Designated Supports must be entered onto the Accessibility Form and into TIDE for the student to receive the support indicated.

Level 3: Accommodations

While all students can potentially use the universal tools (Level 1) and designated supports (Level 2) embedded within the test, some students may still need further support to access the tests and show what they know. Those students may benefit from testing accommodations. Accommodations are supports that are already familiar to the student because they are being used in the classroom to support instruction.

Level 3 features are available to the following students:

- Students who have IEPs or 504 plans
- Students who are identified as English Language Learners and have an IEP or 504 plan

DeSSA tests accommodations are considered to be adjustments to the testing conditions, test format or test administration that provide equitable access during assessments for students with disabilities. The administration of the assessment should never be the first occasion in which an accommodation is introduced to the student.

To the extent possible, accommodations should:

- Provide equitable access during instruction and assessments;
- Mitigate the effects of a student's disability;
- Not reduce learning or performance expectations;
- Not change the construct being assessed; and,
- Not compromise the integrity or validity of the assessment.

The guidelines provided in this manual are intended to ensure that valid and reliable scores are produced on Delaware's State Tests and that an unfair advantage is not given to students who receive accommodations. Outside of the guidance provided in this manual, changes to an accommodation or the conditions in which it is provided may change what the test is measuring, and will likely call into question the reliability and validity of the results regarding what a student knows and is able to do as measured by the test.

To the extent possible, accommodations should adhere to the following principles:

- Accommodations enable students to participate more fully and fairly on assessments and to demonstrate their knowledge and skills;
- Accommodations should be based upon an individual student's needs rather than on the category of a student's disability, level of English language proficiency alone, level of or access to grade-level instruction, amount of time spent in a general classroom, current program setting or availability of staff;
- Teams should base accommodations on a documented need in the instruction and assessment setting and educators should not provide accommodations in order to give the student an enhancement that others could view as an unfair advantage;
- IEP teams and 504 Plan coordinators should describe and document accommodations for students with disabilities in the student's appropriate plan (i.e., either the IEP or 504 Plan);
- Educators should not introduce accommodations to the student for the first time during testing;
- If allowable, students also should use accommodations used during instruction on district assessments and state tests.

Level 3 Accommodations must be entered onto the Accessibility Form and into TIDE for the student to receive the accommodation indicated.
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Smarter Classroom Activities and Accommodations/Supports

Students who receive, during regular daily instruction, accommodations or supports which are not permitted on the Smarter assessments, may receive these accommodations or supports during the Smarter classroom activities that take place prior to the Smarter ELA Performance Task or the Smarter Mathematics Performance task. These accommodations are permitted during the classroom activity because the activity is not part of the assessment and no test questions are administered.

DCAS-Alt1 Accommodations

DOE will track accommodations use on DCAS-Alt1 in the 2015-16 school year. The policy allows most classroom accommodations to be used during the test.

The DCAS-Alt1 is designed so that many of the supports that a student may need are already built into the assessment design. Any other support or accommodation used by the student in the classroom and needed by the student on the assessment is generally permitted as long as it does not change the construct of the test, and thus, invalidate the test score. **A subset of all the accommodations permitted on the DCAS-Alt1 will be tracked by DOE in the TIDE Database.** Accommodations that are not tracked are still permitted; their use will simply not be tracked in the 2015-16 school year. Most classroom accommodations are still permitted during the test.

If a test administrator is not certain if an accommodation or support is allowable on the DCAS-Alt1, contact the DCAS-Alt1 Help Desk (contact information found at the beginning of this manual).

An increasing number of ELL students are being identified as students with significant intellectual disabilities who will take the DCAS-Alt1. Students who have disabilities who are also ELLs **MUST** be formally identified for BOTH types of services; both types are needed by the student. Some of the resources previously available only to ELLs on the DCAS are now available to ELLs on the DCAS ALT1.

The DCAS ALT1 accommodations form with definitions can be found in Appendix B.

SECTION II. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)

This section will guide Delaware educators through the decision-making process for participation in the statewide assessments for students with disabilities. See Section IV for information about students with disabilities who are also English language learners (SwD/ELL)—page 17.

Use of the Accessibility Form

The Accessibility Form is not intended to replace the “Accommodations and Modifications, Supports, and Services” section of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Accessibility Form should be discussed after the IEP team has already discussed the supports and accommodations that a student needs. After that discussion the team can match the supports and accommodations the student receives during instruction and classroom assessments to those found on the Accessibility Form.

Eligibility

Students who have been formally identified as needing special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act or under section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act are eligible to test with Level 1, 2 or 3 on all or part of the Smarter (ELA/Literacy and Math) and DCAS(Science/Social studies), or accommodations for the DCAS-Alt1.

Students who have been formally identified through the IEP or 504 process but do not have accommodations or assistive devices documented in their plans are not eligible for any accommodations during the statewide assessments. “None” should be selected for each content area and then entered into TIDE.

The decision tree on page 11 summarizes decision-making steps for determining the testing condition under which a student will be assessed.

The Department of Education expects that a student’s accommodations and supports on the Accessibility Form and entered in the TIDE database will be available, offered, and provided on the days of testing.
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Participation in the DCAS-Alt1

The DCAS-Alt-1 is the alternate assessment for students with significant intellectual disabilities. This assessment is administered to approximately 1% of all students assessed in Delaware. The achievement of students in the DCAS-Alt1 is based on alternate achievement standards. Alternate achievement standards allow the use of a different scoring system. Students who participate in the DCAS-Alt1 are working on the same academic standards as their peers; however, they are working on these standards in less complex ways.

To include a student in the DCAS-Alt1, the student’s IEP team must ensure that the student meets all the criteria found in Appendix F. If it is determined that there is sufficient information to support ALL of the criteria, the IEP team should document this decision on the student’s current IEP and sign the DCAS-Alt1 Participation Guidelines (see Appendix F). Students who

do not meet all of the criteria will participate in the Smarter Assessments (ELA/Math) and DCAS (science/social studies), with or without accommodations.

Documentation

The IEP team must clearly document in the student's IEP the basis for its decision. School staff must support the inclusion decision by using current and longitudinal data, such as:

- Performance data across multiple settings in the areas of academics, communication, cognition, social competence, recreation or leisure, domestic community living, and vocational skills.
- Behavioral observations in multiple settings.
- Adaptive behavior.
- Continuous assessment of progress on IEP goals and objectives.

Switching Between the General and the Alternate Assessment

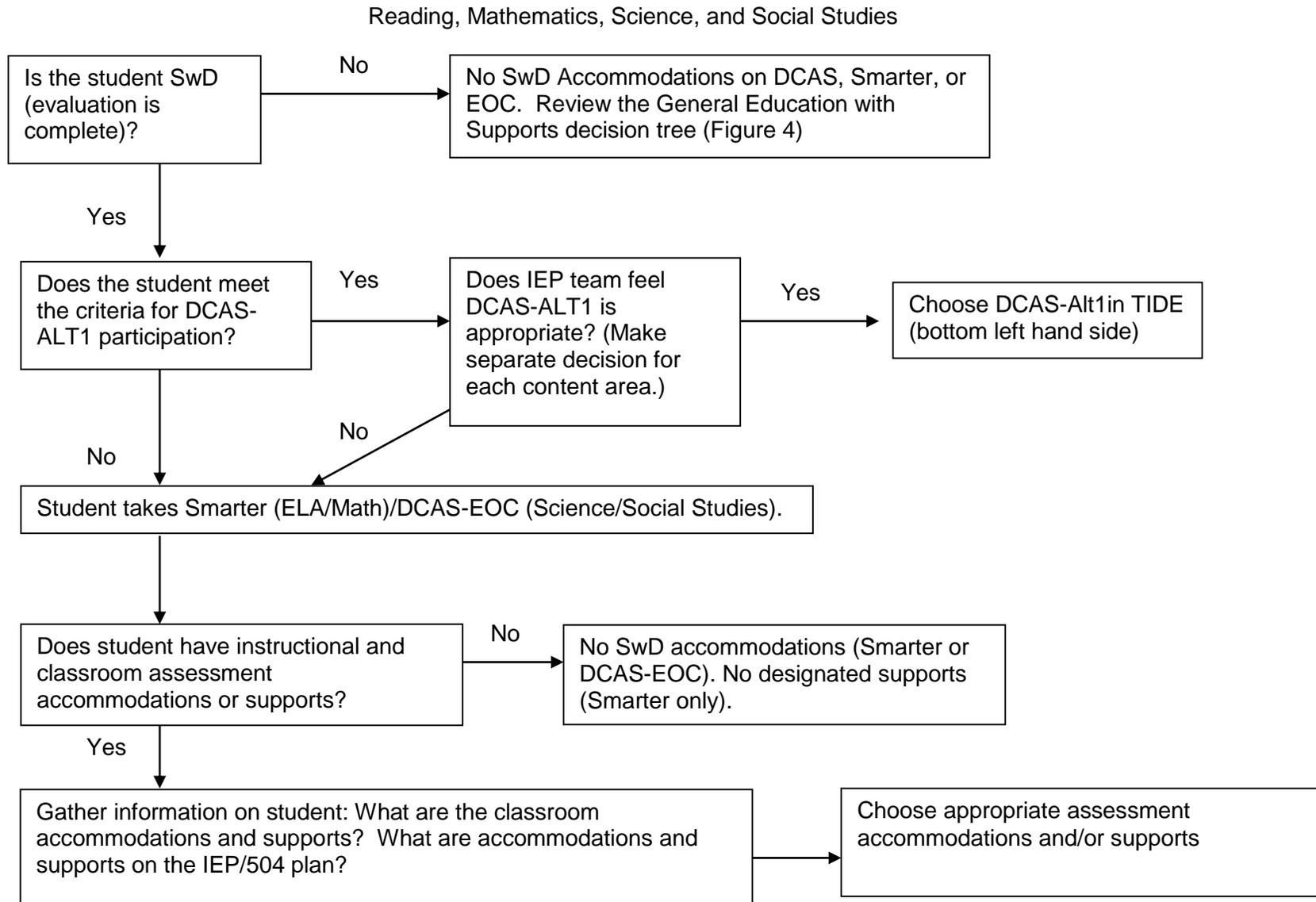
The decision to change a student's participation from Smarter/DCAS to the DCAS-Alt1 must be made and entered into TIDE prior to the opening of the DCAS-Alt 1 spring test window. For example, if a student is moved from the Smarter/DCAS to the DCAS-Alt1, the IEP team must document that determination in the IEP and in TIDE, prior to the opening of the DCAS-Alt1 spring window. If the student is moving from the DCAS-Alt1 to Smarter/DCAS, the IEP team must document that determination in the IEP and in TIDE prior to the opening of the DCAS spring window.

If the student is administered the **DCAS** (science/social studies) or **Smarter** (ELA/Math) in the spring window, the student will not be able to participate in the corresponding **DCAS-Alt1** content area test until the following school year. If the student is administered the **DCAS-Alt1** in the spring window, the student will not be able to participate in the corresponding content area test in **DCAS** (science/social studies) or **Smarter** (ELA/Math) until the following school year.

For students who transfer from out-of-state, the decision should be made in a timely manner to ensure that the student can participate in the most appropriate assessment within the given school year.

The Participation Guidelines must be signed when the decision to have the student participate in the DCAS-Alt1 is made.

Figure 2. Decision Tree for Assessing Students with Disabilities



SECTION III. ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)

This section will guide Delaware educators through the decision-making process for participation in DeSSA for students who are English language learners (ELL).

Eligibility

Students who have been formally identified as ELLs are eligible to test with accommodations or supports on all or part of the Smarter (ELA/Math) and DCAS (Science/Social studies), or DCAS-Alt1, or be exempted from the Smarter or DCAS-Alt1 ELA tests. See the formal criteria for identifying the ELL student below and on the following page.

An ELL is a student who:

- Was either born in the United States or outside the United States and whose native language is a language other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or
- Is a Native American, or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English proficiency; or
- Is migratory and whose native language is other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- Has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language, which may interfere with the student's opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English, or to participate fully in society.

Criteria for Identifying the ELL Student

The formal process for identification of English language learners requires several steps:

- 1) The completion of the district/charter Home Language Survey through which the presence of languages other than English in the home are pre-screened.
- 2) The administration of the WIDA W-APT diagnostic screener or the WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten students to establish English language proficiency levels. The WIDA website includes the grading/scoring rubric at: <http://www.wida.us/>.
- 3) The results of the WIDA W-APT and WIDA MODEL tests are entered into the DELSIS data system and the student's Limited English Proficient status is changed to "Yes" to complete the process.

After these steps are completed, the student is formally identified as ELL and will maintain this status until he/she becomes fully English proficient (FEP) and exits/transitions out of the ELL program.

ELL students are not eligible for exit/transition out of the ELL program until student reaches a level of Tier C: 5.0 on the annual WIDA ACCESS test.

ELL students who reach a Tier C: 5.0 score are **eligible** for exit/transition, but individual domain scores in reading, writing, speaking, and listening as well as the composite proficiency level

should be reviewed by the district/charter ELL Coordinator and all factors considered before the student is exited/transitioned.

Former ELL students who have been exited or transitioned are federally required to have a two-year monitoring period during which time they may be reclassified as active ELL and returned to the ELL program.

Home Language Survey

The school district must administer the home language survey upon enrollment to all new students entering Delaware schools, regardless of the date or academic term of their arrival. A student who speaks a language other than English as their native language, but who also speaks English, may still have insufficient academic language to be successful without the additional instruction offered through a bilingual/dual language or ESL program. A district's enrollment packet must include a home language survey form asking if a language other than English is spoken in the home or by the student. If the answer is "yes," the student must be tested using the W-APT or ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State).

ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State)

The WIDA ACCESS and ACCESS ALT tests are annual English language development assessments administered in the spring to all English language learners who have been identified through the Home Language Survey and W-APT diagnostic screener. For more information concerning this assessment, contact the Exceptional Children Office at 302-735-4200.

Fully English Proficient Students (FEP)

ELL students who reach a performance level of 5 on the ACCESS Tier C and are exited or transitioned are considered FEP no longer qualify for Level 2 Designated Supports as an ELL student and no longer qualify for supports on the Smarter assessments. They may not receive Level 2 supports on DeSSA tests unless they are identified as a General Education student receiving supports.

ELL Students who have scored PL5 and have been exited/transitioned out of ELL are no longer eligible for ELL accommodations on DCAS-Alt1; they are only eligible for accommodations related to their disabilities.

Fully English Proficient (FEP) students who have been exited or transitioned may not receive the exemption for recently arrived ELL students. Students who receive an ELL exemption are not required to take the Smarter ELA test.

Parent Withdrawals from English as a Second Language or Bilingual Service

Some students are evaluated and have received English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual services but are withdrawn from these services by their parent or guardian. This means that, although these students qualify for ESL or bilingual services, the parent or guardian chooses not to have the students continue to receive ESL or bilingual services.

If a student has been identified, but the parent or guardian withdraws the student from services, the student may still receive testing accommodations or supports, including but not limited to support 9.01 (exemption from the Smarter ELA test). Students must meet the criteria on page 14 in order to have support #9.01.

The decisions regarding which accommodations and supports should be given to a student should be made on an individual basis using the information in these Accessibility Guidelines.

Justifiable Rationale for Selection and Deletion of ELL Accommodations

Best practice dictates that an accommodation may not be introduced for the first time in a testing situation—it must be introduced during instruction and then only used during assessment after the student is comfortable using the accommodation. For example, the accommodation of using a bilingual dictionary would not be appropriate during testing if the student has not been taught how to use one and has not been practicing using a bilingual dictionary. On the cover page of the Accommodations and Supports Form, there is space to identify any new accommodations being used by the student and what sort of practice the student may need before the accommodation or support may be used on a test.

Accommodations and support decisions for ELL students must be made on an individual basis and must be based only on the following:

- information regarding the student’s English Language Proficiency
- information regarding any student disabilities
- scores from student evaluations and assessments
- student’s formative classroom evaluation information
- documented student observation
- documented student preference

Accommodations and support decisions for ELL students must NOT be made based on any of the following:

- a student’s membership in a particular demographic group,
- a particular label that applies to a student, or
- concerns external to the student such as
 - school or district staffing issues,
 - cost to the district of providing the accommodation or support; or
 - other logistic or political concerns.

Criteria for Receiving an Exemption from the Smarter ELA/Literacy or DCAS-Alt1 Reading

If an ELL student receives an exemption, he or she is not required to take the Smarter ELA/Literacy Assessment or the DCAS-Alt1 Reading assessment. Students receiving an exemption should have entered in the accommodations database either Smarter Support #9.01 or DCAS-Alt-1 accommodation #901. The following are the criteria for receiving an exemption from these language arts tests:

1. The student has not been transitioned or exited, e.g., FEP;

2. It is the student's first year of enrollment in U.S. schools.

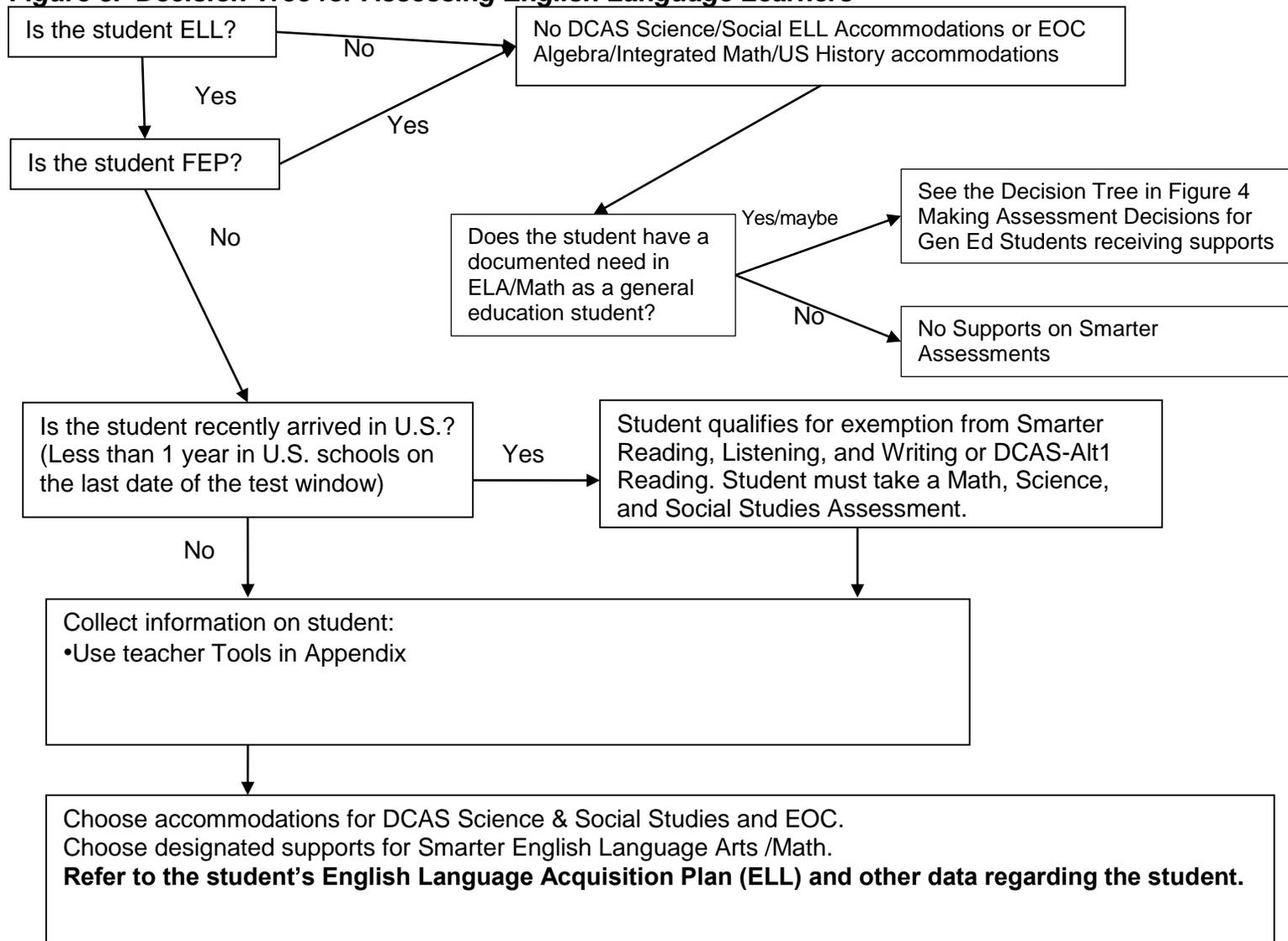
An ELL student is considered to be in the first year of enrollment in U.S. schools (or "recently arrived" if the student's "Immigrant date" (a field in the ELL database) is less than 1 year from the last day of the Smarter ELA test window or DCAS-Alt1 ELA test window (whichever test the student is to take).

What to enter in the "immigrant date" field in the ELL database if the student has entered and withdrawn from U.S. schools to leave the country multiple times: Enter the *most recent* date of enrollment in U.S. schools immediately preceded by at least a 90-day time period out of the U.S. which falls within the academic year (excludes June, July, and August) in the "immigrant date" field in the ELL database.

The decision to grant an exemption is made on an individual basis weighing the factors outlined in these Accessibility Guidelines.

The Department of Education expects that a student's accommodations and supports on the Accessibility Form and entered in the TIDE database will be available, offered, and provided on the days of testing.
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Figure 3. Decision Tree for Assessing English Language Learners



SECTION IV. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE ALSO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

This section will inform the participation decision for students who are dually identified as students with disabilities and as English language learners (SwD/ELL).

Identification of Dually Identified Students (SwD/ELL)

It is very important that all new students be screened as potential ELLs and that if students qualify for both ELL and SwD services, that they be provided both types of service. Students who receive both types of services may receive all three levels of Accessibility Features and supports in the classroom and on state assessments. Educators in many parts of Delaware now frequently encounter students who have learning disabilities and who are also English Language learners. A smaller but growing group of students is the group of students with significant intellectual disabilities that are also English language learners.

Eligibility for Accommodations

The decision trees on pages 11 and 16 give guidance on the steps in the decision regarding identification of and assessment of students with disabilities and English language learners, respectively.

Two groups of educators are involved in selecting instructional and testing accommodations for a SwD/ELL student—the IEP team or 504 Committee and the ELL instructional team. It is recommended that these two groups consult each other, stay in contact, and/or meet as one group to ensure the most informed and appropriate testing accommodations for the student. When the two groups meet in isolation, they may make contradictory decisions about accommodations that cause logistical and preparation problems for the student and the instructors.

Students who are dually identified as SwD/ELL, but withdrawn from ELL services by the parent or guardian, are eligible for ELL accommodations despite the parent's withdrawal from services.

Participation and Exemption Decisions

Students who are dually identified must take content area tests in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies to measure academic achievement and must also take tests in reading, writing, speaking, and listening to measure English language acquisition.

To measure academic achievement, students take either the general assessments or the alternate assessments. The decision regarding whether to take the general test or the alternate test is made separately for each individual content area. SwD/ELLs may be eligible for an exemption from language arts testing if they are recently arrived (see page 14).

The Accessibility Form (found in Appendix A) must be completed for each SwD/ELL student and entered into TIDE. Copies should be placed in the student, district, or school file prior to the administration of the test.

The Department of Education expects that a student's accommodations and supports on the Accessibility Form and entered in the TIDE database will be available, offered, and provided on the days of testing.
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SECTION V. GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS RECEIVING SUPPORTS

Students in this category, “General Education Students Receiving supports” are eligible to receive Level 1 and Level 2 Accessibility Features on the Smarter English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments and DCAS Science and Social Studies and End of Course Assessments. This category of students is not eligible for participation in the DCAS-Alt1 assessment.

Criteria for Identifying a Student as a General Education Student Receiving Supports

Who can identify students?

It is recommended that **more than one educator** participate in the identification of each student who needs supports as well as the selection of supports for the student.

Which students can be identified?

Educators should consider students who are **struggling and at-risk**. Students who are currently **receiving interventions** through the Response to Intervention (RTI) program or have been **referred to the school’s problem-solving team**, may benefit from supports. Additionally, students who have **physical injuries** such as a broken arm may be in need of a support like scribing.

How should level 2 (designated supports) be selected?

Educators should consider the student’s **documented** needs. To select supports that match the student’s documented needs, educators should refer to **data** about student’s performance with and without the support. The data may be **observational** or based on the student’s performance on a curriculum-based **measurement**. Educators should ask – how does the student perform with and without the support? Does the support benefit the student?

In addition to reviewing student data, educators must **consider whether the support is being used during classroom instruction**. Supports should be familiar to the student and used regularly, not only on the assessment. Taking the practice test is a good opportunity for students to try out different supports and to talk with the teacher about whether the support was helpful.

PLEASE NOTE: more supports are not necessarily better for the student. Some supports could make the test harder depending on student’s needs. It is important for support selection to be customized to the student’s needs.

Also, educators should consider each student individually and **refrain from assigning supports on a blanket basis**. For example, an educator should not assign all of his/her students a particular accommodation in the assumption that a designated support benefits all students.

How to Document a General Education Student Receiving Level 2 Supports

Follow these steps after identifying a general education student to receive Level 2 supports:

1. Log in to E-School
2. Go to the Accountability screen.
3. Flag the student “Y” as a general education student receiving supports.
4. Wait overnight for the student’s data to “roll up” to DELSIS.
5. Enter the student’s supports in the TIDE database.

Please contact your E-School support contact with any questions regarding data entry.

After a student has been selected to receive supports on the Smarter assessments as a general education student, the student must be flagged as a member of this group in E-School and DELSIS before the supports can be entered in DeSSA TIDE.

A decision tree illustrating the process of identifying students and selecting supports is shown in Figure 4. Decision Tree for Assessing General Education Students with Supports on Smarter ELA and Math on page 20.

The form needed to review, select, and document designated supports for a student can be found in Appendix A. Notes regarding specific Level 2 supports can be found beginning also in Appendix A.

<p>The Department of Education expects that a student’s supports on the Accessibility Form and entered in the TIDE database will be available, offered, and provided on the days of testing.</p>
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Figure 4. Decision Tree for Assessing General Education Students with Supports on Smarter ELA and Math

