## General

### Test Accessibility

Test Accessibility means ensuring that each student can interact appropriately with the content, presentation, and response mode of the test. Test accessibility policies are based on the goal that assessments should allow all test-takers to demonstrate their knowledge of the content being tested without the format of the assessment, the non-tested language, or the type of response needed to answer the questions being barriers.

To meet this goal, TEA makes Accessibility Features and Designated Supports available on TELPAS and on STAAR paper and online tests to students who use the same or similar features or supports during classroom instruction and testing.

**Accessibility Features and Designated Supports:**
- Must be based on a student need.
- Can change over the course of the student’s year from year to year based on a student need.
- Might be appropriate for classroom use, but NOT be appropriate or allowable on a statewide assessment.
- Policies relating to Accessibility Features or Designated Supports on state assessments should not limit an educator’s ability to develop individualized materials, techniques and/or strategies to support student learning in the classroom.

**Considerations:**
For additional resources relating to Accessibility Features and Designated Supports on state assessments, see the quicklooks posted on the Test Accessibility and Special Education tab of the Lead4ward Resources webpage at: [http://lead4ward.com/resources/](http://lead4ward.com/resources/)

### Accessibility Features

**Accessibility Features available on STAAR, STAAR Spanish, and TELPAS:**
- **Yes**
  - May be provided to students based on their needs.
  - Are available to any student who regularly benefits from the use of these procedures or materials during instruction (although a student cannot be required to use them during testing and there is no need to document their use on a student’s answer document).
  - A student using an Accessibility Feature may need to complete the test in a separate setting in order to eliminate distractions to other students and to ensure that the security and confidentiality of the test are maintained.

**No**
- Are not necessary for every student.
- Are not changes to the performance criteria or the content.
- Are not intended to provide an advantage to a student.
- Should not be provided to a student without evidence of effectiveness from year to year.

**Considerations:**
Students using an Accessibility Feature on a state assessment should have had practice and experience using the feature during instruction. There should be some indication or evidence that the feature benefits the student during assessment.

### Designated Supports

**2 Categories of Designated Supports on STAAR, STAAR Spanish, and TELPAS:**
1. **Designated Supports That May Be Approved Locally**
   - Student meets specific eligibility criteria.
   - Decision to use is made by appropriate campus-level team (i.e., ARD committee, 504 committee, RTI or Student Assistance Team).
   - No Accommodation Request Form required.

2. **Designated Supports Requiring TEA Approval**
   - Appropriate campus-level team (i.e., ARD committee, 504 committee, LPAC, RTI or Student Assistance Team) determines if student meets specific eligibility criteria.
   - Accommodation Request Form must be submitted to TEA.

**Considerations:**
Prior to calendar year 2017, TEA limited the availability of accommodations on state assessments to:
- Students with disabilities; or
- ELL students

In school year 2019-20, many Designated Supports are available to ANY student who meets specific eligibility criteria relating to the student’s needs and the use of the Designated Support during classroom instruction and testing.

### Technology Guidelines

Districts must have procedures in place to prevent the use of personal electronic devices during test administrations.

When districts are using allowed or approved technology, including technology-based accommodations (i.e., Accessibility Features, Designated Supports), the Technology Use Guidelines summarized below for test security and validity must be followed to review the technology prior to its use in an assessment.

Appropriate review requires knowledge of both the TEKS for the specific grade level and subject and the capabilities and functions of the device or software to be used during the assessment. Some technology may be useful during a daily academic setting. This technology cannot be used during a state assessment if it has functionality that creates an assessment concern that cannot be addressed.

District or campus personnel must conduct additional reviews of technology, including technology-based accommodations, after an upgrade or update to determine if it continues to meet TEA guidelines for use during a state assessment.

### Technology Use Guidelines

All technology used during state assessments must adhere to the following guidelines:
1. Test administrators must actively monitor the use of the technology, including technology-based accommodations, during an assessment.
2. For a device or software to be considered appropriate for state assessment use, it must:
   - **be set in a mode that locks the user into a specific software program;**
   - **block the user from accessing functionality that may violate test security, such as:**
     - the ability to send secure test content (e.g., messages, captured images, videos);
     - the ability to send or receive any person-to-person communication about secure test content (e.g., chat, video);
     - the ability to save secure test content.
   - **When using applications on a tablet, laptop, or desktop computer, districts must ensure the application does not provide functionality that compromises the curriculum assessed.**

A training presentation is available on the Accommodation Resources webpage to assist districts in making appropriate decisions about technology-based accommodations for students taking state assessments.