



In light of concerns expressed by the educational community in Indiana and especially concerns noted on this forum, the [Indiana Resource Network](#) (IRN) members below wanted to share the following information regarding accommodations and assessments:

What we know:

- Maintaining high expectations for all students is critical to academic and social success.
- **Students who are consistently provided appropriate accommodations throughout the year will demonstrate higher achievement, regardless of the accommodations allowed on state assessments.**
- [Universal Design for Learning](#) implies an instructional framework of choice and flexibility that is constructed from the ground up to be as accessible as possible to the widest range of learners. This includes the materials, strategies, and assessments, which should all remain highly engaging and accessible for the entire school year.
- [Specially Designed Instruction](#) is, effectively, what makes Special Education services different for the unique needs of individual students. It is required in order to be in compliance with IDEA) and Indiana Article 7, but more importantly, it is essential because the design and delivery of instruction is what will enable students to achieve the highest outcomes. This will vary, by definition, per student need and shouldn't be defined or limited by anything except student need and learning characteristics.
- Fundamental to Special Education, as expressed through IDEA and Article 7, is the understanding that students have "unique needs." Using standard assessment accommodations as a guide for appropriate accommodations throughout the school year may remove the "Specially" from [Specially Designed Instruction](#) and the "Individualized" out of Individualized Education Program.

What we suggest:

- Maintain high expectations and provide instruction of grade level Indiana Academic Standards and/or [Content Connectors](#).
- Provide **appropriate accommodations** consistently during instruction all year long!
- Encourage teachers to have students practice using a variety of accommodations in order to determine which provide the most effective access to, engagement in, and ability to respond to the curriculum for each student.
- Strive to create [Universally Designed Environments and Lessons](#). Contact PATINS at any time for assistance with UDL and accommodations year round through [Assistive Technology](#) and [Accessible Educational Materials](#).
- Be proactive in your communication with parents and families, and especially when you expect changes such as this to represent a difficulty. [INSOURCE](#) is always available to help with guidance and assistance.
- Questions/concerns regarding specific accommodations permitted on state assessments should be directed to the [IDOE Assessment Office](#).



Example 1:

Students in grades 3-5 will not be permitted to use calculator on ILearn. However, if appropriate for individual students, they should certainly have access to calculator technology during classroom instruction and assessments, including both formative and interim assessments (Star Math, NWEA, etc.)

Example 2:

However, substantial evidence exists, which clearly demonstrates students will perform better all around, including on state assessments, when they have access to their uniquely appropriate accommodations all year long. This absolutely includes students who are able to access written content at a much higher grade and comprehension level by reading with their ears.

The [Indiana Resource Network](#) is available and eager to support you!



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