Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment Accessibility Manual

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Introduction

Ohio is committed to providing an assessment that best measures rigorous English language proficiency standards that correspond to college- and career-ready content standards in English language arts, mathematics and science. The Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) keeps all English language learners (ELLs) in mind – including those who have disabilities – recognizing that the validity of assessment results depends on every student having appropriate access to the assessment. This accessibility manual was developed to guide the selection and administration of Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations for individual students to produce valid assessment results.

The Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations for the OELPA are in many ways different from those available for Ohio's previous English language proficiency test, the Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA). There are also some differences between OELPA and features available on Ohio's State Tests.

Ohio supports the development of an assessment system for English language learners that reflects the research and progress made in the development of English language proficiency assessments. OELPA's approach to assessment is rooted in the knowledge that English language learners are diverse; all English language learners are capable of making progress toward English language proficiency; and English language learners must acquire discipline-specific language practices that enable them to produce, interpret and effectively collaborate on content-related grade-appropriate tasks.

INTENDED AUDIENCE AND RECOMMENDED USE

The OELPA Accessibility Manual is intended for district and school-level personnel (including community schools) as well as decision-making teams, including individualized education program (IEP) teams, as they prepare for and implement the OELPA. This manual provides information for educators of English language learners, intervention specialists and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering accessibility features for those students who need them. The manual also is intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions that are made in instruction and assessment.

The OELPA Accessibility Manual applies to all students who take the OELPA. It emphasizes an individualized approach to the implementation of assessment practices for students.

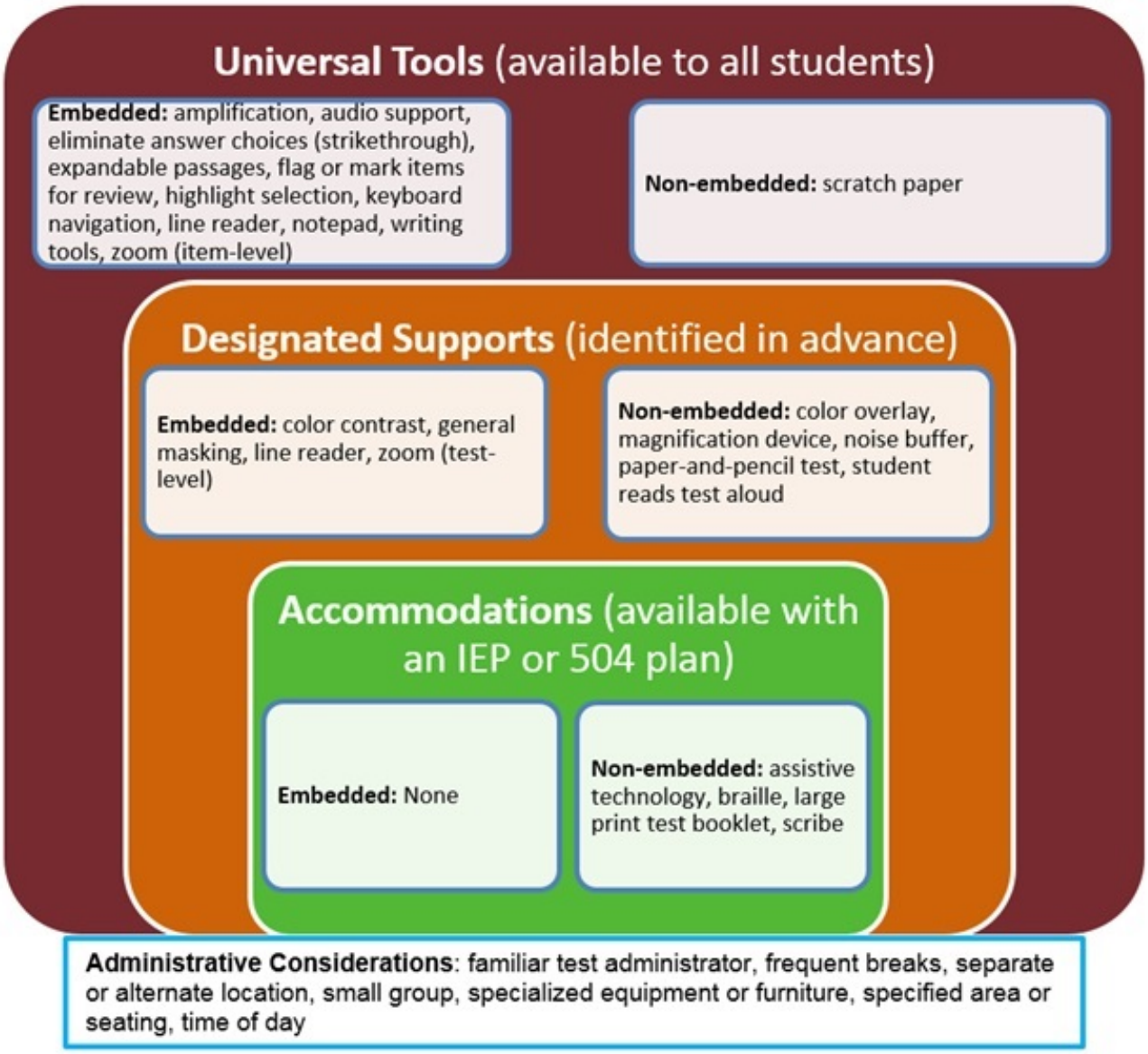
ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The conceptual model, shown in Figure 1, highlights: (a) Universal Tools (supports available to all students), (b) Designated Supports (supports available for individual students that must be assigned to students in advance of testing), and (c) Accommodations (supports available to individual students with individualized education programs or 504 plans). In addition, it shows some of the administrative considerations that support the participation of students in the OELPA.

Figure 1 also identifies the embedded features (provided as part of the technology platform) and non-embedded features (provided locally).

To protect the validity and administration security of the OELPA, only those accessibility features explicitly identified in this manual should be used during test administration. The use of features that are outside of this document could compromise OELPA validity and invalidate student results.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of OELPA Accessibility Features



Section I: Administrative Considerations

WHAT ARE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS?

Administrators have the authority to schedule students in testing spaces other than classrooms and at different scheduled times, as long as test security conditions are met. For example, an administrator may consider the decision to test students who are easily distracted in a large group setting in a small group or individual setting. In general, changes to the timing, setting or conditions of testing are left to the discretion of the principal or test coordinator.

Table 1. Administrative Considerations

Administrative Considerations	Description
Familiar test administrator	The student knows the test administrator and/or interpreter.
Frequent breaks	All students may take breaks as needed. Frequent breaks refers to multiple, planned, short breaks during testing based on a specific student's needs (for example, the student fatigues easily). During each break, the testing clock is stopped. If the student leaves the room, the test administrator must collect the student's test materials.
Separate or alternate location	The test is administered in a different location than the location where other students are testing (for example, a different classroom).
Small group	A small group is a subset of a larger testing group assessed in a separate location. There is no specific number defined for a small group, but two to eight students is typical. A "group" of one also is permissible.
Specialized equipment or furniture	This includes equipment such as adjustable desks or chairs.
Specified area or seating	The student sits in a specific place in the test setting, such as by the window for natural light or beside the test administrator's desk.
Time of day	The student takes test during time of day most beneficial to his or her performance. Care must be taken to ensure that the student has enough time to complete scheduled testing.

Section II: Universal Tools

WHAT ARE UNIVERSAL TOOLS?

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

EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

The OELPA computer-based assessment includes a wide range of embedded Universal Tools. These features are available to all students as part of the test delivery system. Universal tools for paper-based testing are student strategies or features provided externally by test administrators. See Appendix A - Accessibility Features for Paper-based Ohio's State Tests in Ohio's Accessibility Manual with Appendices for paper-based alternatives to these tools.

Table 2. Embedded Universal Tools Available to All Students

Universal Tools	Description
Amplification	The student raises or lowers the volume control, as needed.
Audio support	For the computer-based test, the student uses this feature to hear embedded pre-recorded audio of most tasks. With the exception of the text in drag-and-drop items and text in word banks, audio support is available for the following: • Speaking – all tasks have audio support for all components; • Listening – all tasks have audio support for all components; • Writing – all tasks have audio support for all components except for inline editing tasks; and • Reading – audio support is available only for read-along tasks and for all kindergarten tasks and items. Human read-aloud is not permitted for computer-based tests. All parts of the computer-based test that are allowed to be read are presented in the prerecorded audio. In cases where a student cannot take the computer-based version of the OELPA, the student will receive audio support via the test administrator. The test administrator will follow the test administration script in the Directions for Administration Manual. The test administrator also will use an audio CD included with the testing materials. On the paper-based test, the test administrator with audio CD provide the same audio support that is available in the computer-based version. The test administrator may not read any part of the test not specifically indicated in the test administration script. General guidelines for test administrators reading the paper-based testing script for the OELPA is in Appendix C of this manual.
Eliminate answer choices (strikethrough)	The student uses this feature to cross out and/or eliminate answer choices.
Expandable passages	The student is able to expand each passage so that it takes up a larger portion of the screen as the student reads. The student can then retract the passage to its original size.
Flag or mark items for review	The student is able to flag items for future review during the assessment. Markings are not saved when the student moves on to another test domain or after pausing the test for more than 20 minutes.
Highlight selection	The student uses this digital feature for marking desired text, items or response options with the color yellow. Highlighted text remains available throughout the test as long as the test session remains active.
Keyboard navigation	The student is able to navigate throughout test content by using a keyboard, e.g., arrow keys. This feature may differ depending on the device.
Line reader	The student uses an onscreen tool to assist in reading by raising and lowering the tool for each line of text on screen.
Notepad	The student uses this feature as virtual scratch paper to make notes or record responses. The digital notepad is item-specific and is available through the end of each test domain. Notes are not saved when the student moves on to a different test domain or after pausing the test for more than 20 minutes.
Writing tools	The student uses writing tools to format and edit written responses, such as cut and paste, copy, underline, italicize, bold and undo/redo.

Universal Tools	Description
Zoom (item-level)	The student can enlarge the size of text and graphics on a given screen. This feature allows students to view material in magnified form on an as-needed basis. The student may enlarge test content by at least four times. The system allows magnifying features to work in conjunction with other accessibility features and accommodations provided.

NON-EMBEDDED UNIVERSAL TOOLS

Scratch paper is the only non-embedded Universal Tool.

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

Universal Tool	Description
Scratch paper	Test administrators must provide scratch paper to students upon request. The student receives one sheet (or more as needed) of scratch paper with a pencil, pen or marker. Scratch paper can be a blank sheet, grid paper, wide-ruled paper, Braille paper, raised-line paper, bold-line paper, raised-line grid paper, bold-line grid paper or colored paper. Graphic organizers of any type may not be provided. Students may alternately use an individual, erasable whiteboard as scratch paper for notes and responses. In all cases, test administrators must collect and securely destroy used scratch paper and completely erase whiteboards at the end of each test domain to maintain test security.

Section III: Designated Supports

WHAT ARE DESIGNATED SUPPORTS?

A relatively small number of students will require additional features, called designated supports, for their particular needs. Providing too many tools on screen might distract some students. Therefore, designated features must 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. Students can decide whether or not to use a pre-selected support, without any consequence to the student, school or district.

Individualizing access needs on the test for each student provides increased opportunities to accurately demonstrate knowledge and skills.

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 in three different ways:

1. By uploading a student settings file in TIDE;
2. By marking the features under the “Test Settings” section of the student’s record manually in TIDE; or
3. Test administrators can select the feature(s) under “Test Settings” in the Test Administrator Interface if approving the student to test during the test session.

Non-embedded supports are not part of the technology platform, so test administrators must provide them locally.

EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

Table 4. Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description
Color contrast	The student is able to adjust the text color and screen background color based on the student's need. The color contrast options, in addition to the default black text on white background, include: 1) Black text on cream background; 2) Black text on light blue background; 3) Black text on light pink background; 4) Yellow text on blue background; and 5) White text on black background. Note: Color contrast options for OELPA do not exactly match those offered on Ohio's State Tests. Students should use the OELPA practice test to determine best options for this feature.
General masking	The student is able to block off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting. Masking allows students to hide and reveal individual answer options, as well as all navigational buttons and menus. The student is able to focus his/her attention on a specific part of a test item by masking.
Zoom (test-level)	The test platform is pre-set to be enlarged for the student before the test begins.

NON-EMBEDDED DESIGNATED SUPPORTS

Table 5. Non-embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description
Color overlay	The student is able to overlay a semitransparent color sheet.
Magnification device	The student adjusts the size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables and graphics) with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows increasing the size to a level not provided for by the zoom universal tool.
Noise buffer	The student uses noise buffers (e.g., earphones or earbuds) to minimize distraction or filter external noise during testing. Any noise buffer must be compatible with the requirements of the test (e.g., allow the student to hear listening items).
Paper-pencil test	The student takes a paper-and-pencil version of the test. If a student is unable to take an online computer-based test, they may have a paper-and-pencil version of the test. Teams should base this decision based on a student's individual needs only and should not be applied on a group basis.
Student reads test aloud	The student reads the test content aloud to self. This feature includes the use of whisper phone. The test must be administered in a one-on-one setting or in a setting in which the student is separated enough from other students that they cannot hear each other and do not disturb one another.

Section IV: Accommodations

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the OELPA and generate valid assessment results for students who need them. Accommodations are for students for whom there is documentation of need on an IEP or 504 plan, so that these students show what they know and can do on the OELPA.

WHO MAKES DECISIONS ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS?

IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators make decisions about accommodations. For English language learners with disabilities, these teams should include an expert in the area of English language acquisition.

EMBEDDED ACCOMMODATIONS

There are no embedded accommodations for the OELPA.

NON-EMBEDDED ACCOMMODATIONS

For information about human read-aloud, see the Audio Support feature in Table 2.

Table 6. Non-embedded Accommodations Available with an IEP or 504 Plan

Accommodation	Description
Assistive technology	The student is able to use assistive technology, which includes such supports as typing on customized keyboards, assistance with using a mouse, mouth or head stick or other pointing devices, sticky keys, touch screen, trackball, speech-to-text conversion or voice recognition. Refer to Appendix D – Assistive Technology Guidelines in Ohio's Accessibility Manual with Appendices for additional information.
Braille	A raised-dot code that individuals read with the fingertips. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams and illustrations) is presented in a raised format. Student responses in braille must be transcribed into a scorable test booklet.
Large print test booklet	A large print form of the test for students with a visual impairment who are unable to take the test online even with magnification, zoom and other specialized devices. The font size for the large print form is 18 point on 11" x 17" paper.
Scribe	This accommodation is for students who have a documented significant motor or language processing difficulty or who have had a recent injury and need this as an emergency accommodation (such as a broken hand or arm). The student dictates responses either verbally, using a speech-to text device, augmentative communication device or assistive communication device (e.g., picture or word board) or by signing, gesturing, pointing or eye gazing. Grammar checker, Internet and stored files functionalities must be turned off. The student must test in a separate setting. Please refer to Appendix C - Protocol for Scribing and Transcribing Student Responses in Ohio's Accessibility Manual with Appendices for more information about the scribing process. For constructed responses in the writing domain only, students and scribes should follow the section *Additional Guidelines for the English Language Arts–Constructed Responses* in Appendix C - Protocol for Scribing and Transcribing.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Optional Scratch Paper Log

Test Administrator's Name: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

#	Student's Name	Number of Sheets Received	Number of Sheets Returned After Assessment

Appendix B: Optional OELPA Planning Tool

Check all that apply.

Administrative Considerations	
☐ Frequent breaks ☐ Separate or alternate location ☐ Small group ☐ Specialized equipment or furniture ☐ Specified area or seating ☐ Time of day	
Universal Tools*	
Embedded Universal Tools	**Non-embedded Universal Tools**
☒ Amplification ☒ Audio support ☒ Eliminate answer choices (strikethrough) ☒ Expandable passages ☒ Flag or mark items for review ☒ Highlight selection ☒ Keyboard navigation ☒ Line reader ☒ Notepad ☒ Writing tools ☒ Zoom (item-level)	☒ Scratch paper * Universal Tools are pre-checked
Designated Supports	
Embedded Designated Supports	**Non-embedded Designated Supports**
☐ Color contrast ☐ General masking ☐ Zoom (test-level)	☐ Color overlay ☐ Magnification device ☐ Noise buffer ☐ Paper-pencil test ☐ Student reads test aloud
Accommodations	
Embedded Accommodations	**Non-embedded Accommodations**
None	☐ Assistive technology ☐ Braille ☐ Large-print test booklet ☐ Scribe

Appendix C: Guidelines for Reading Paper-based Test Script

Qualifications of Test Administrators

- As with all state tests, test administrators must be employees of the school district and hold a license/certificate/permit issued by the Ohio Department of Education.
- The test administrator ideally should be an education professional who is familiar with the student and who is typically responsible for providing this feature in the classroom.
- The test administrator must be trained in accordance with state test administration and security policies and procedures.
- The test administrator should have prior experience in providing read-aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before providing this support to a student during test administration.

Preparation Procedures

- Test administrators must familiarize themselves with the test environment and format of the test in advance of administering the test.
- Test administrators must clearly distinguish between the test content that should and should not be read aloud to students. Reading aloud test content that is not identified in the script will result in a test misadministration and will invalidate the test.
- The test administrator must be aware of whether the student requires additional accessibility features that have been approved for use during the test.

Guidelines for Reading Aloud

- The test environment must be configured in such a way as to ensure that the administration does not interfere with the instruction or assessment of other students not taking the test on paper.
- The test administrator must read test content exactly as written in the script and as clearly as possible.
- The test administrator must communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- The test administrator should avoid gesturing, head movements or any other verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words.
- The test administrator must avoid conversing with the student about test items and respond to the student's questions by repeating the item, words or instructions from the test **verbatim** as needed.
- The test administrator must not paraphrase, interpret, define or translate any items, words or instructions.
- The test administrator should adjust his/her reading speed and volume if requested by a student. When administering the test in a group, the test administrator should read at a speed and volume that meets the needs of all students in the group.

Post-Administration

- The test administrator must not discuss any portion of the test or the student's performance with others.