

Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** System Test Coordinators, System Special Education Directors

**FROM:** Martha Reichrath, Ph. D.  
Deputy Superintendent  
Office of Standards, Instruction, and Assessment

**DATE:** August 25, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Guidance for the Assessment of Students with Disabilities Placed in Private Schools or Facilities

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance regarding participation in state assessments for those students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and have been placed by their local school system in private schools/facilities, either in-state or out-of-state. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)(34 C.F.R. 300.146) requires that the IEP developed by the local school system ensure students are receiving instruction based on or aligned with the Georgia curriculum and are participating in all applicable state assessments.

### Applicable Assessments

State Board of Education rule 160-3-1-.07 specifies the required assessments for all Georgia students. Decisions regarding participation in the assessment program for students with disabilities must be documented in the student's IEP. The IEP team must determine: 1) which general assessments the student will be administered based on state requirements, 2) what accommodations are needed for each general assessment, or, 3) if the student is accessing the curriculum through alternate achievement standards and cannot participate in the general state assessment, even with maximum appropriate accommodations. If the student is accessing the curriculum at an entry level and his or her IEP states the student is working towards alternate achievement standards, the student should participate through the alternate assessment.

### Location

For the purposes of these guidelines, the sending system is the Georgia school system in which the student is enrolled and where Full Time Equivalent (FTE) credits are received for the student. When a student has been placed in a private school or facility, either within or outside of Georgia, the sending school system will determine the most appropriate location for assessing the student. The sending system should ensure that all policies and procedures for assessment administration are followed and that the appropriate assessment materials are securely transferred to the assessment location in a timely manner. If the student is assessed by the private school/facility, the private school/facility administrators must return assessment materials to the sending system's test coordinator within three days after completion of the assessment.

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### Scheduling

The sending school system must assure that all testing windows for assessments are honored. These windows may be found in the Georgia Student Assessment Program Student Assessment Handbook (SAH) and/or Examiner's Manual for each assessment. These documents may be accessed on the GaDOE assessment website: [http://www.gadoe.org/ci\\_testing.aspx](http://www.gadoe.org/ci_testing.aspx).

### Supervision

State Board of Education Rule 160-3-1-.07 specifies that only certified personnel who have been trained to administer the specific assessment shall administer Georgia assessments. It is the responsibility of the sending school system to document the certification of the test administrator, the provision of training in the assessments to be administered, and that all steps of the assessment administration and security, as specified in the SAH and/or Examiner's Manual have been followed. Examiners administering Georgia assessments in out-of-state facilities are not required to hold a Georgia education certification. However, the examiner must hold an education certification for the state where the private school/facility is located and receive training in the administration of the assessment. The sending system's Test Coordinator is the point of contact for the private school/facility where the student is administered assessments.

### Accommodations

Testing accommodations, as outlined in the student's current IEP, are to be provided for the student during assessment. The GaDOE will not honor any accommodations that are not authorized as indicated in the current SAH and/or Examiners Manual.

Thank you for your assistance in ensuring a quality assessment program for all students. Please direct inquiries regarding this policy to Deborah Houston in the Assessment Administration Division at (404) 657-0251 or [dhouston@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dhouston@doe.k12.ga.us).

### **cc:**

System Superintendents  
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