

Assistive Technology Guidelines

Updated 2/8/2024

These guidelines provide guidance for schools to determine if certain assistive technology (AT) already in use by students with disabilities may be used and how to test the functionality of certain assistive technology for possible use on the assessments.

Assistive technology may not have embedded grammar check, connect to the internet, or save information. If these features cannot be disabled or monitored closely by an administrator, the device should not be used on an assessment.

The online assessment platform used to deliver assessments (TestNav) is designed to comply with the [World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0, Level AA](#). In order to be compatible with the online assessment platform, browsers and assistive technologies should comply with the W3C's [User Agent Accessibility Guidelines \(UAAG\)](#) and support WCAG 2.0, Level AA and the [Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\) - Accessible Rich Internet Applications \(ARIA\)](#) recommendation from the W3C. All assistive technology that is required to interact with the online assessment platform, but does not conform to W3C standards and guidelines, may present challenges for students during testing.

There are **two** categories of assistive technology for use in assessments.

Category One: Compatible Assistive Technology

The **first** category includes assistive technology that is used by the student to interact directly with the computer-based testing platform. These assistive technologies include standard input devices, such as adaptive keyboards, adaptive mice, and switch interfaces. Third-party applications, such as screen readers are not supported on the DC CAPE Assessments. Schools must confirm the functionality of the devices and software within their technology environment prior to testing by conducting a simulation of the day-of-testing environment. This can be completed in two phases.

Phase I

The Practice Tests are available through the resource support site or the TestNav desktop app. These practice tests are non-secure and provide students with exposure to test content and interactions. There are multiple versions of practice tests available. To test the functionality of assistive technology, select the appropriate practice test within each grade/subject tab.

Note: Phase I is not via a secure student login. It is intended only to provide students with access to gain exposure to content and item interactions within the assessment. Phase II must be completed to confirm functionality in a secure assessment.

Phase II

ADAM will include the capability to verify assistive technologies within the secure versions of the practice tests. The instructions for conducting an infrastructure trial are available in the **Infrastructure Trial Readiness Guide** available through the resource support site.

Verification will require completing the same registration and accommodations in ADAM.

These activities will assist districts, schools, and students to determine whether their assistive technology will interact appropriately with the TestNav assessment platform and whether it can be used successfully during computer-based testing. An infrastructure trial will also allow students to interact and gain familiarity with the actual computer-based interface.

Variability has been found in the compatibility of different assistive technologies with the TestNav app. Because of this, it is required that each user undergo infrastructure trials where the students' AT can be tested in a secure TestNav environment. The intent is to confirm if the assistive technology will interact appropriately with the TestNav assessment platform and whether it can be used successfully during computer-based testing.

NOTE: Browser-based TestNav is not supported. The TestNav desktop app must be used for all secure assessment.

As a result, assistive technologies that rely on browser toolbars or student login for individual student account login will not work in the TestNav desktop app. Examples like Co-Writer and Read&Write must be used as Category 2 External Assistive Technologies or by enabling extensions in the students accommodation in ADAM.

TestNav Technology guidelines provide detailed information on minimum system specifications. The guidelines are available at [TestNav System Requirements](#).

IMPORTANT NOTES about Operating Systems and Assistive Technology use:

- Chromebooks:
 - The only Assistive Technology that can be used on Chromebooks interacting directly with TestNav is ChromeVox—the screen reader embedded within the Chromebook Operating System. Accessibility testing has shown that no barriers exist.
 - Chromebooks cannot be used with any other Assistive Technology interacting directly with TestNav. Chromebook extensions are blocked when in Kiosk mode (Required for secure assessment).
 - Chromebooks can be used as a stand-alone Assistive Technology for response accommodations as defined in the Accommodations Manual. If you plan to use a Chromebook or iPad as a third-party external assistive technology device, contact your state department for additional guidance for administration.
 - Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for Chrome OS include ChromeVox and Sticky Keys.

- macOS and iOS—iPads
 - Must be full size iPads only (no iPad Mini).
 - Refer to TestNav System Requirements to determine supported iOS.
 - VoiceOver for iOS is not allowed for use on the assessments. There is currently no configuration that will provide a barrier-free testing experience for VoiceOver users on iOS systems. The Pearson TestNav and Accessibility teams are working with Apple to include improvements in future releases.
 - Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for macOS and iOS include Voiceover, Sticky Keys, Speak Selection, and Speak Screen.

- Windows
 - Embedded operating system (OS) Accessibility Features must be disabled unless otherwise allowed per the students Individualized Education Program (IEP). If not disabled, they will be active during assessment as they can't be blocked by TestNav. Examples for Windows OS include Windows Narrator, Windows Speech Recognition, and Sticky Keys.

Category Two: External Assistive Technology

The **second** category includes “stand-alone” assistive technology that does *not* interact directly with TestNav and is not accessed on the same device used by the student to complete the computer-based assessment. Instead, this will be used by the student at a separate station during the assessment. Assistive technologies in this category include speech-to-text, augmentative communication, word prediction, self-contained word processors, and other technologies not directly connected to the computer on which the student is being tested. These “stand-alone” assistive technologies do not need to be tested via an Infrastructure Trial and may be used during the, according to the provisions of the accommodations policies. However, they may require an adult test administrator to assist the student with transition between the computer used for assessment and the external assistive technology.

All responses generated on a “stand-alone” assistive technology device must be transcribed verbatim by a test administrator to the student’s computer-based test or into the accommodated answer document. Please refer to the Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation and for Transcribing Student Responses available in the accommodations manual for steps that must be followed when transcribing a student’s response.

NOTE: If stand-alone assistive technologies are used for the assessments, all grammar check, internet access, and stored file functionalities must be disabled.

If you plan to use a Chromebook or iPad as a third-party external assistive technology device, contact your state department for additional guidance for administration. Reference the Accommodations Manual for more detailed instructions.