

What are some examples of accommodations and modifications?

Accommodations:

- read directions of test to student,
- allow additional time for testing,
- allow student to ask for clarification of test directions,
- turn pages for the student.

Modifications:

- allow use of a spell checker on a computer,
- allow use of a graphing calculator,
- allow student to ask for clarification of test questions,
- allow the test to be read aloud.

The examples above were taken from the **Participation Guidelines** found at www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/modified.html

What can I do to help my child pass the HSGQE?

1. Attend orientation meetings and open houses at school; meet all the staff and teachers involved in your student's education.
2. Know what accommodations or modifications your child needs:
 - Try them out to see which work best.
 - Be sure child is comfortable using them.
3. Be sure accommodations or modifications are listed on the child's IEP or 504 plan.
4. Plan ahead, way ahead!

What vocabulary is used when talking about the HSGQE?

504 Plan—a program designed for students with disabilities as a result of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Accommodation—a change in testing conditions insuring the HSGQE only tests the student's knowledge, and the disability does not become a factor.

Assessment—a test or evaluation. The HSGQE tests for essential skills and content knowledge.

High Stakes—of great importance. Students must pass the HSGQE to receive a diploma.

IEP—Individualized Education Program

Modification—a change in the testing conditions that alters what the test is intended to measure.

Participation Guidelines—a booklet that explains accommodations and modifications used in the Alaska assessment program.

Proficiency—a score on the HSGQE that shows the student has met all the state testing requirements for a diploma.

Transitioning—advancing to high school from middle school.

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Publication Notice: This brochure was released by the Department of Education & Early Development, produced at a cost of \$0.00 per copy in Juneau, Alaska, and paid for with state funds. The department's intent is to inform parents of options to the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination.

High School Graduation Qualifying Examination

Information about Testing for Parents of Children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Guidance for Parents of Ninth Graders Transitioning into High School



What is the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE)?

This examination is the result of many years of intense effort and collaboration among teachers, administrators, and the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development. It tests students' proficiency in state standards established to reflect what high school students should know as a result of their public school experience. The examination includes three subtests: mathematics, reading, and writing. Students must show proficiency on all three subtests to qualify for a diploma.

What must a student do to get a high school diploma?

All students must take and pass the three subtests (reading, writing, and mathematics) of the HSGQE. The first opportunity to take the exam is during the spring semester of their sophomore year. In addition, students must complete all academic requirements established by the school district. The combination of success on the HSGQE and completion of district requirements leads to a high school diploma.

If students do not pass the HSGQE the first time, they may continue taking the exam until they achieve proficiency. Once students are beyond legal school age, they will not receive services from the school district, but they can continue taking the HSGQE indefinitely.

A student's IEP or 504 team will review the requirements with parents or guardians once the school year begins.

What options exist for student's with IEP's or 504 Plans?

The IEP or 504 team should select appropriate accommodations based on the student's needs, and the team must provide documentation and the rationale for the accommodations. These accommodations may be used during all testing sessions of the HSGQE.

Students with IEP or 504 plans take the HSGQE in the spring semester of their sophomore year with or without accommodations.

If the student is not proficient on any one or more parts of the HSGQE, other approaches are available. The Alternative Assessment Program is explained in the **Participation Guidelines** provided by the Department of Education & Early Development at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/modified.html>.

Two Approaches

Modified HSGQE

Most students on an IEP or 504 plan will elect to take the Modified HSGQE, which is the HSGQE given with allowable modifications - changes to the test situation that normally would not be allowed. The IEP or 504 team will determine whether a particular modification should help a student score proficient on the HSGQE. The team must apply to the Department of Education & Early Development for approval. Once approved, modifications may be used whenever the student takes or retakes the HSGQE.

Nonstandardized HSGQE

The Nonstandardized HSGQE requires a student to prepare an extensive collection of work that reflects proficiency in each of the state standards tested on the HSGQE. A state appointed jury scores the work. An IEP or 504 team must certify that a student meets the extensive qualifications outlined in the Participation Guidelines. The Department of Education & Early Development reviews the application for approval. Given the difficulty of the Nonstandardized HSGQE, only a few students take this option.

In some rare and unusual circumstances, the situation might require that a student apply for a waiver from passing the HSGQE requirements. School districts, IEP or 504 teams, and parents or guardians should carefully review the regulations governing waivers. See 4 AAC 06.772, 06.773, and 06.774 at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/forms/>