

# Nebraska Department of Education NeSA Accommodations for ELLs

2013-14

## Accommodations Training Power Point



# Nebraska Department of Education ELL Testing Accommodations

Providing Nebraska educators with NDE guidance on the appropriate assignment and implementation of ELL accommodations for NeSA tests



## Funding for the NDE ELL Testing Accommodations Training Provided by the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC)



The NDE ELL Testing Accommodations Training Was Designed by  
The George Washington University  
Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (GW-CEEE)

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# Contents

- Part 1:** ELL student characteristics
- Part 2:** Types of testing accommodations available to ELL students
- Part 3:** Assignment of ELL testing accommodations
- Part 4:** Implementation of ELL testing accommodations



# Part 1

# ELL Student Characteristics



# Part 1

## ELL Student Characteristics

### Objectives

1. Understand the diversity that exists within the ELL student population
2. Learn what ELL student data is needed to make NeSA assessment decisions
3. Understand how and why ELL student progress differs
4. Become familiar with whom should serve on the ELL accommodation team at each school



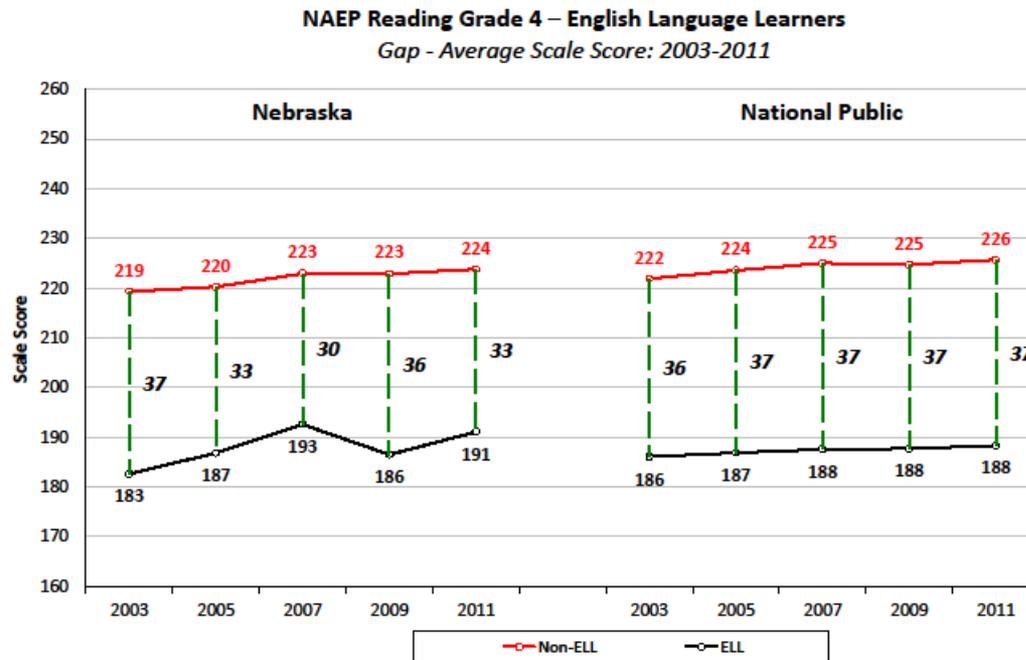
# ELL Student Diversity

General Ways in Which ELL Student Data  
May Vary



# NAEP Reading Grade 4

## Gap in Scale Scores

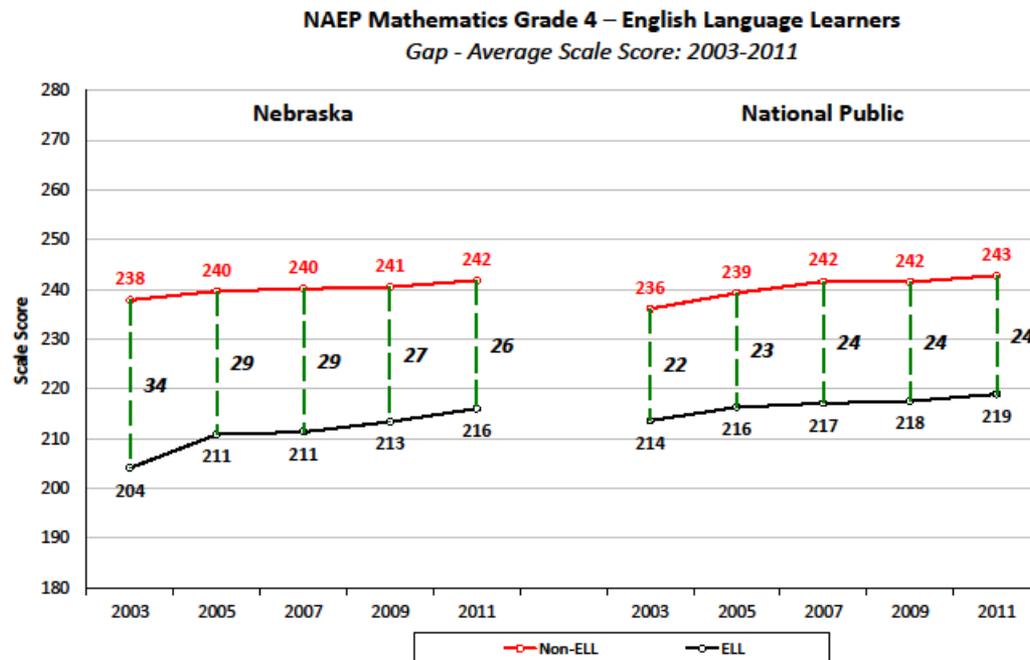


NOTE: The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).



# NAEP Math Grade 4

## Gap in Scale Scores



NOTE: The NAEP Mathematics scale ranges from 0 to 500. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).



# Who are ELL Students?

- ELL students do not belong to a *homogenous* group.
- They vary by factors beyond the shared feature of being in the process of learning English.
  - Age/grade
  - Level of literacy in English and their native language(s)
  - Prior academic schooling; years of formal schooling/interrupted schooling
  - Language of instruction in past/current schooling
  - Other influences found within the native language and country of origin



# ELL Student Achievement Can Vary

## *Rapid* Progress

Newcomers to  
U.S. with strong  
prior schooling

## Average Progress

Newcomers  
with some prior  
schooling

## Minimal Progress

Newcomers  
with limited or  
no prior  
schooling

“Long-term” ELL  
students



# Making *Rapid* Progress: Newcomers to the U.S. with strong prior schooling



# Making **Average** Progress: ELL students with some prior schooling



# Making **Minimal** Progress

Newcomers with limited or no prior schooling (SIFE) and “long-term” ELL students



# Forming the Accommodations Decision-Making Team

Determining ELL students' accommodations for the NeSA content tests is not an individual decision; it's a team decision.

– The team may include:

- ELL teacher
- General education teachers
- School administrators
- School/district coordinators
- The student/parents (as appropriate)



# Evidence-Based Decision Making

## **Demographic information**

- Grade, age
- Number of years in U.S.
- Prior schooling

## **Academic Achievement Information**

- ELDA test scores
- Previous content test performance

## **Current Academic Achievement**

- General education classroom achievement
- Input from general education teachers



# Questions on Part 1



# Resources on ELL Diversity

- Colorín Colorado (2007). **The Diversity of English Language Learners**. (3 pages). Available:  
<http://www.colorincolorado.org/educators/reachingout/diversity>
- Short and Fitzsimmons (2006) **Double the Work**. (83 pages). Available:  
<http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/PDF/DoubletheWork.pdf>
- Colorín Colorado (2007). **Students with Interrupted Formal Education: Resource List**. Available:  
[http://www.colorincolorado.org/web\\_resources/by\\_topic/sife\\_students](http://www.colorincolorado.org/web_resources/by_topic/sife_students)



# Part 2

# ELL Testing Accommodations



# Part 2

## ELL Testing Accommodations

### Objectives

- Identify the importance of providing linguistic accommodations for ELL students
- Identify how NDE accommodations for ELL students provide direct and indirect linguistic support
- Identify which accommodations are appropriate for individual students by content assessment



# What are accommodations and how do they work?



# Central Challenge When Testing ELLs

How do we ensure the ELL is being tested on his/her content knowledge, not his/her English language proficiency?

Research conducted during 80s and 90s found the impact of English language proficiency on ELL test scores could be

- as much as 34% for general verbal test scores
- 17-18% for ELL science test scores, and
- 8% for ELL mathematics test scores.

(Alderman, 1982; Pennock-Roman, 2002)



# How did the practice of accommodating ELL students on large-scale assessments begin?

1. Provision of accommodations to students with disabilities has a long history of practice and research and practice; not so for ELL students
2. Accommodations for ELL students more recently
  - grew out of the “Special Needs” grouping of ELL students with students with disabilities,
  - grew nationally with NAEP efforts to increase ELL participation in mid-1990s, and
  - came into use by SEAs as part of Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA, 1994) and then the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001).



# Testing Accommodations for ELL Students

- Involve changes to testing procedures, testing materials, or the testing situation in order to allow students meaningful participation in an assessment
- Address the unique linguistic and socio-cultural needs of the student without altering the test construct
- Allow the student to more accurately show what he/she knows and can do, while not providing an unfair advantage over unaccommodated students



# Activity

***Let's take a test together to see  
how accommodations work***





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# Experience How Linguistic Support Accommodations Work

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<http://ceee.gwu.edu>; contact [lwillner@ceee.gwu.edu](mailto:lwillner@ceee.gwu.edu)

# Rúmfræði dæmi

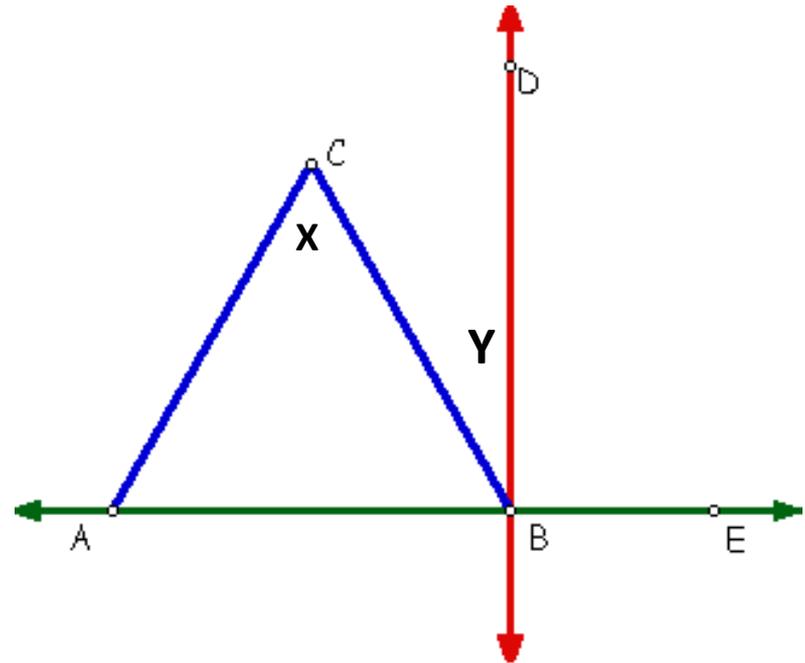
Skoðið eftirfarandi mynd.

$AC = BC$ , horn  $ACB$  er tvisvar sinnum ummál horns  $CBD$  og horn  $DBE = 90$  gráður. Hvað er horn  $Y$ ?

Lausn:

- A)  $Y =$  tvisvar  $X$
- B)  $Y =$  hálf  $X$
- C)  $Y =$  fjórum sinnum  $X$
- D)  $Y =$  fjórðungur  $X$

Útskýrðu:



# Rúmfræði dæmi

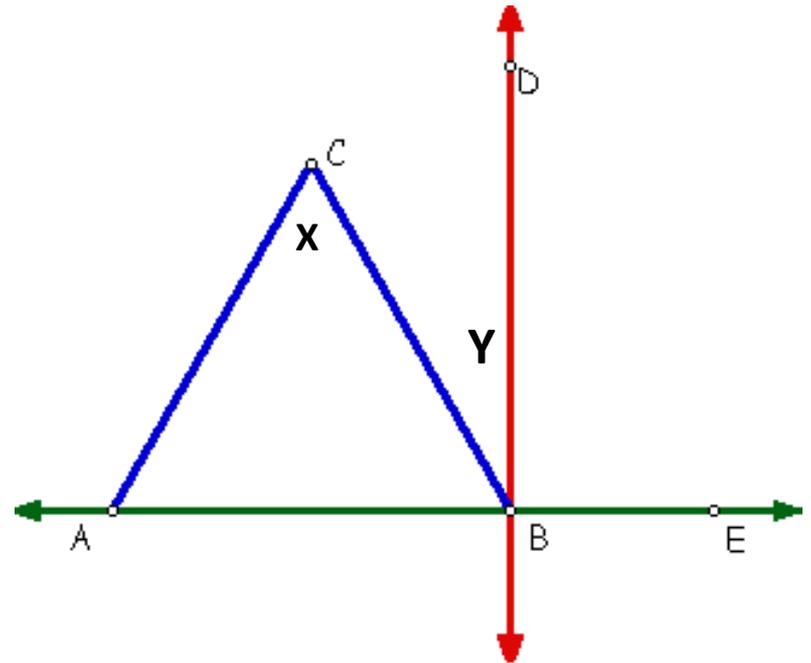
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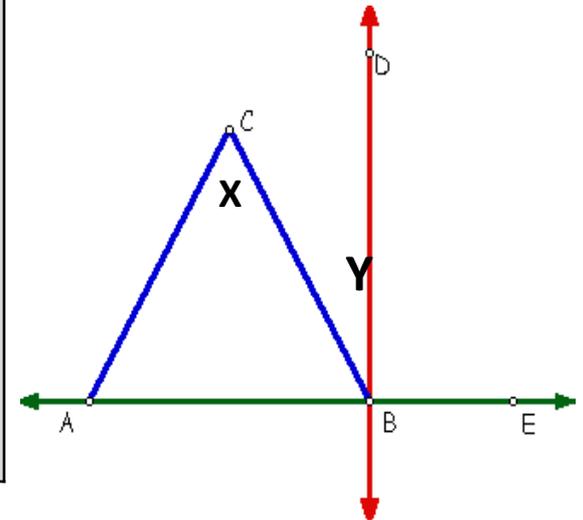
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Útskýrðu:

mynd	picture; figure
horn	angle
tvisvar	twice
hvað	what
ummál	the measure of
hálf	$\frac{1}{2}$
fjórum sinnum	four times
fjórðungur	$\frac{1}{4}$



# Answer: English Version

Take a look at the following figure.  $AC=BC$ , angle  $ACB$  is twice the measure of angle  $CBD$ , and angle  $DBE=90$  degrees. What is angle  $Y$ ?

## Solutions:

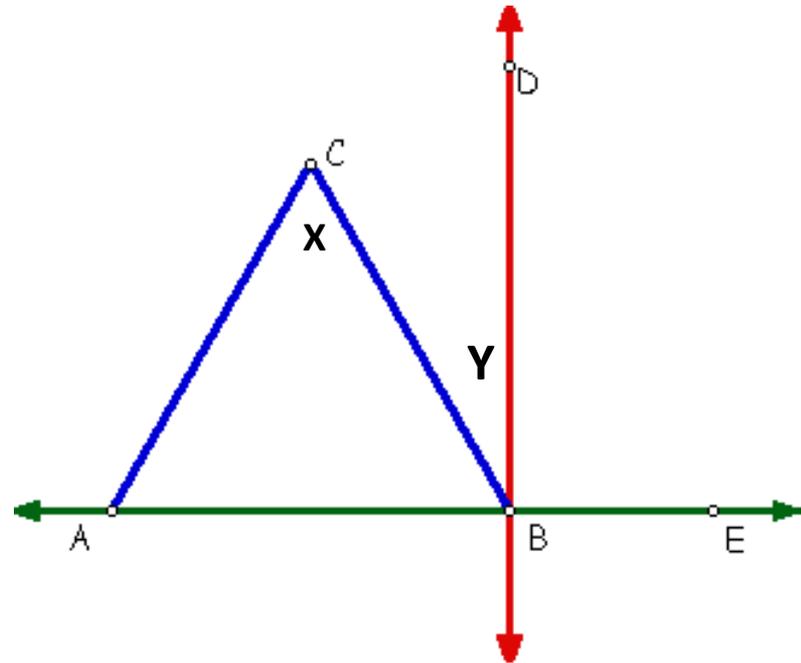
A:  $Y=2X$

B:  $Y=X/2$

C:  $Y=4X$

D:  $Y=X/4$

## Explain:



# Debrief: Think/Pair/Share...

1. How did you solve this geometry problem?
2. How could your teacher have helped you prepare for this test?
3. Which linguistic accommodations offered in today's test supported your performance as a test-taker? Why?



# ELL-Responsive Accommodations Offer...

## Direct Linguistic Support

- Involve adjustments to the text of the assessment with the intent of reducing the linguistic load necessary to access the content of the test
- Can be delivered in English or the student's native language

## Indirect Linguistic Support

- Involve adjustments to the conditions under which a test is taken to allow ELLs to more efficiently use their linguistic resources



Which ELL accommodations are appropriate for each content area?



# Direct Linguistic Accommodations

Accommodation	Math	Science	Reading	Writing
Reads content and test items verbatim to student in English and rereads as needed, includes Text to Speech	✓	✓	Only test items may be read	✓
Translator orally translates content & test items verbatim in native language and rereads as needed	✓	✓	Only test items may be translated	✓
Provide translated audio recording (e.g. audiotape/CD/iPod) of content and test items in English or native language	✓	✓	Only test items may be provided	✓
Provide a translator to translate content and test items into written native language	✓	✓	Only test items may be translated	✓
Provide bilingual word list.	✓	✓		
Provide bilingual dictionary.	✓	✓		✓
Provide commercial English dictionary				✓
Student responds orally in his/her native language. A translator records student responses in English	✓	✓	✓	
Student responds to writing prompt in native language.				✓



# Indirect Linguistic Accommodations

Test Accommodations for English Language Learners (includes NeSA reading, writing, mathematics, science)	Content Areas			
	Math	Science	Reading	Writing
<b>Indirect Linguistic Support</b>				
Provide extra time for 4 <sup>th</sup> grade NeSA writing test (Other NeSA tests are untimed)	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓
Provide multiple and frequent breaks	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide a flexible testing schedule	✓	✓	✓	✓



# Questions on Part 2



# Part 3

## Assignment of ELL Testing Accommodations



# Part 3

## Assignment of ELL Testing Accommodations

### Objectives

- Identify student characteristics to consider when assigning accommodations
- Identify which direct linguistic and indirect linguistic accommodations are most appropriate for individual ELL students

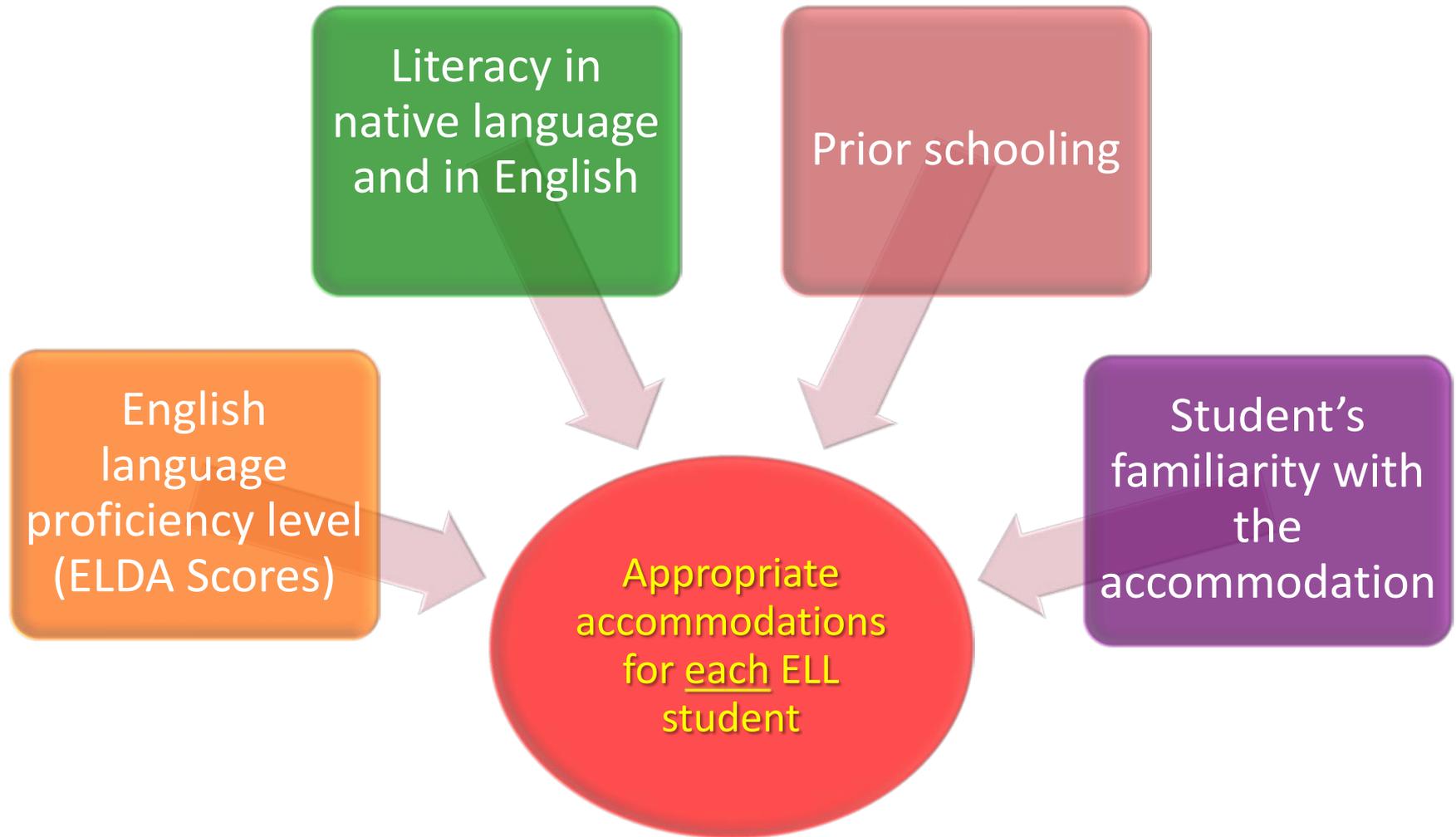


# Guiding Questions for Accommodations Team to Consider

- What support does this individual student need to be able to show what he/she really knows?
- Will the testing accommodation be implemented appropriately so that the construct of the test is not compromised?
- Has the student had prior experience using this accommodation? (Keep in mind that some accommodations are appropriate to use without prior experience.)



# Research Base: Factors to Consider When Assigning Accommodations



# The First Step: Identify the Student's English Language Proficiency Level

Create an initial list of accommodations for students at beginning, intermediate, and advanced ELP levels.



# Recommended List of Testing Accommodations

## Lower levels of English language proficiency (ELDA Levels 1-2)

- Read aloud content and test items (for NeSA-R, only test items may be read)
- Use written or oral translated tests (for NeSA-R, only test items may be translated)
- Respond orally in native language; translator records responses (not allowed on NeSA-W)
- Allow extra time
- Flexible testing schedule/frequent breaks



# Recommended List of Testing Accommodations

## Intermediate levels of English language proficiency (ELDA Level 3)

- Read aloud content and test items *as needed*  
(for NeSA-R only test items may be read)
- Bilingual dictionary (not allowed on NeSA-R)
- Allow extra time
- Flexible test schedule/frequent breaks



# Recommended List of Testing Accommodations

Advanced levels of English language proficiency  
(ELDA Levels 4-5)

- Bilingual dictionary (not allowed on NeSA-R)
- Allow extra time
- Flexible scheduling/frequent breaks



# The Next Step

## Individualize the List of Accommodations



# Native Language Literacy

- Would a bilingual (word to word) dictionary be appropriate accommodation for a beginning student?

Is the student literate in his/her native language?

- If not, then a dictionary would not be meaningful.
- If yes, then check to see if the student has had experience with dictionaries prior to the test.



# Prior Education

- Has the student's education been interrupted?
  - Even at the Intermediate level, consider whether **oral accommodations** would be useful in addition to written accommodations.
  - Consider offering a bilingual dictionary.



# Age/Grade: Younger Student

- Is the student young and less likely to have developed strong literacy skills in either English or the native language?
  - Would an emphasis on **oral accommodations** be more appropriate?



# Age/Grade: Older Student

- Is the student older and perhaps would be likely to refuse accommodations due to the embarrassment of receiving additional support in front of classmates?
  - Would the student benefit from **testing in a separate setting**?
  - Can the student be included in the process of assigning accommodations to ensure use of the accommodation and the student's understanding of its use?



# Use of Accommodations in Classroom Instruction and Assessment

- Try out the accommodation(s) in the classroom
- Ask the student if the accommodation(s) works
- Adjust and improve the accommodation(s) available to the student
- Unlike classroom accommodations, only the accommodations on the Approved Accommodations document may be used in NeSA testing

## *Note:*

*Some accommodations, such as translations, may be used without prior classroom use. Some, such as reference materials, should **only** be used with prior experience.*



# Summary of ELL Student Characteristics to Consider

1. English language proficiency level
2. Literacy in English and native language
3. Age/grade level
4. Language of instruction in current and past schooling
5. Years of formal schooling



# Prior to Testing Window

- Accommodations team should determine ELL testing accommodations prior to NeSA testing
- Discussions should take place all year among all the team members
- Finalized determinations for ELL testing accommodations should be documented and reviewed each year

# Part 3 Review: True or False



# Part 3 Review: True or False

1. All ELL students should be assigned as many accommodations as possible for NeSA assessments.



# Part 3 Review: True or False

2. NeSA accommodations are allowed on the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA)—the English language proficiency test Nebraska gives ELLs.



# Part 3 Review: True or False

3. A refugee student with low English language proficiency, limited prior schooling, and a low level of literacy in his/her native language might benefit most from **oral support** such having the entire NeSA-M read aloud.



# Part 3 Review: True or False

4. For an ELL student with low English language proficiency, strong schooling, and a high level of literacy in his/her native language, the most effective accommodations on NeSA-M might include all of the ones below:
- **oral support** such as entire test read aloud
  - **a word-to-word bilingual dictionary**
  - **extended time** (sufficient time to use it)



# Part 3 Review:

## True or False

5. A word-to-word bilingual dictionary (and sufficient time to use it) might provide the most effective support on the NeSA –M for an ELL student scoring at ELDA levels 4- 5.



# Reminders on Assigning Accommodations

- Follow the state guidelines on accommodating ELL students
- Use a team approach to assigning accommodations
- Consider student characteristics
- Do not give *every* ELL student *every* single ELL accommodation. Accommodations must be matched to student needs.
- **Note: Consider appropriate accommodations for online and paper/pencil NeSA tests.**



# Questions on Part 3



# **PART 4**

# **Implementation of ELL**

# **Testing**

# **Accommodations**



# Part 4

## Implementation of ELL Testing Accommodations

### Objectives

- Understand laws and state guidance on assessing ELLs
- Determine how ELL students participate in the Nebraska State Accountability tests (NeSA)
- Determine ELL students' eligibility for ELL testing accommodations
- Identify ways to implement accommodations allowed on NeSA tests



# Federal Title I Law Requires NDE to Include LEP Students in State Assessments

## Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

- **Improving America's Schools Act (IASA)**  
(U.S. Congress, 1994, Section 1111 [b][3][F][iii])
- **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)**  
(U.S. Congress, 2002, Section 1111 [3][C] [ix][III]).



# Where to Find NDE Guidance

- Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) Approved Accommodations

[http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013\\_NeSA\\_Accommodations.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013_NeSA_Accommodations.pdf)

- Guide for Including and Accommodating English Language Learners (ELLs) in the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) Tests

[http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013-14\\_Guide\\_for\\_Including\\_and\\_Accommodating\\_English\\_Language\\_Learners.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013-14_Guide_for_Including_and_Accommodating_English_Language_Learners.pdf)



# How will the ELL student participate in the NeSA tests?



# State Procedures for Determining Appropriate Testing Participation

**All ELL students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 are expected to participate in NeSA testing with appropriate accommodations.**

Note one exception:

- The district may exempt *recently arrived* LEP students from the NeSA-R for one reporting period.



# Test Yourself

Jorge is a non-English speaker who arrived from El Salvador in January 2011 and is placed in Grade 5. Which NeSA tests will he take?



# And the answer is...

- **Jorge MAY be exempted from**
  - NeSA-R for one testing cycle (once for “recently arrived” in grades 3-8, 11)
- **Jorge MAY NOT be exempted from these NeSA tests**
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Writing
- **However, he should take these NeSA tests with ELL testing accommodations**
  - Native language assessment allowed

# What accommodations are allowed on the NeSA tests?



# Direct Linguistic Test Accommodations

Test Accommodations for English Language Learners (includes NeSA reading, writing, mathematics, science)	Language Levels		
	Beginning (ELDA 1-2)	Intermediate (ELDA 3)	Advanced (ELDA 4-5)
<b>Direct Linguistic Support with Test Directions</b>			
Test administrator reads directions aloud in English or native language and rereads as needed.	●	●	
Test administrator provides written directions in native language.	○		
Test administrator provides translated audio recording of directions in English or native language.	●		
Test administrator simplifies, explains, or clarifies directions in English or native language.	●	●	
<b>Direct Linguistic Support with Content and Test Items</b>			
Test administrator reads content and test items verbatim to student in English and rereads as needed (for NeSA-R test, only test items may be read). Includes text-to-speech feature.	●		
Test administrator provides a translator to orally translate content and test items verbatim in native language and rereads as needed. For NeSA-R test, this applies only to test items.	●		
Test administrator provides translated audio recording (e.g. audiotape/CD/iPod) of content and test items in English or native language. For NeSA-R test, this only applies to test items and should be used in conjunction with the paper/pencil test.	●		
Test administrator provides a translator to translate content and test items into written native language (for NeSA-R, this applies only to test items).	○		
Test administrator provides bilingual word list (allowed on NeSA-M and NeSA-S).	○	●	●
Test administrator provides word-to-word bilingual dictionary (allowed on NeSA-M, NeSA-S, and NeSA-W).	○	●	●
Test administrator provides commercial dictionary (English or bilingual) for NeSA-W test.	○	●	●
Student responds orally in his/her native language. A translator records student responses into online system or regular test booklet in English (not allowed on NeSA writing test).	○		
Student responds to NeSA writing prompt in native language. (NDE provides writing prompts in Spanish for grades 4, 8, and 11.)	○		



# Test Yourself!

Sook is in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She has an ELDA level of 4. She is literate in her native language, Korean, and she is making rapid progress learning English. However, her reading level in English is still below her peers because she struggles learning new vocabulary and understanding complex sentence structures. What types of accommodations might be appropriate for Sook?



# And the answer is...

## Direct Linguistic Support:

- Looking at the chart, we see Nebraska *recommends* Sook receive the accommodation of a **bilingual dictionary**. However, the other accommodations are available as the ELL team determines appropriate.
- Since Sook has some literacy in English but still occasionally struggles with new vocabulary or concepts, she may benefit from **reading aloud (as needed)**; that is, reading aloud when she encounters an unfamiliar word or phrase.

# And the answer is (cont)...

Indirect Linguistic Support				
Test administrator provides extra time for the 4 <sup>th</sup> grade NeSA-W test. NeSA-W 8 and 11 are untimed but if testing session exceeds one day, a paper/pencil test will be needed.	●	●	●	All levels may benefit from extending the time limits of a test to facilitate the additional processing time an ELL student needs to take an assessment in English.
Test administrator provides a flexible testing schedule for NeSA R/M/S. If either of the two testing sessions will exceed one day, paper/pencil test will be needed.	●	●	●	Flexible scheduling may be beneficial in reducing cognitive fatigue as ELLs experience heavy linguistic demands when they are tested in English.
Test administrator provides multiple and frequent breaks during testing time.	●	●	●	Frequent breaks may be beneficial in reducing cognitive fatigue as ELLs experience heavy linguistic demands when they are tested in English.

- Sook is eligible for ALL of the indirect linguistic testing accommodations.
- However, the accommodations team should consider which accommodations would be appropriate for Sook's *unique characteristics*.



# ELL Student Accommodation *Reminders*

- Accommodations team should meet well before NeSA test administration.
- Documentation of accommodations should be kept in students' scholastic record.



# Steps to Increase Effective Usage

- Include the student in the process of assigning accommodations.
- Provide test preparation activities prior to the assessment.
- When appropriate, administer tests in special settings with specialized personnel in small groups or individually.



# Test Administration Practices

- Test administration practices are changes or adjustments in test administration that are appropriate for **all** students. Providing test administration practices should not affect the construct being tested. They are available to all students who could benefit from them and are not considered accommodations.



# Direct Linguistic Support with Test Directions

- These may also appear in the section on Test Administration Practices
- Directions may be read and reread aloud in English or the student's native language
- Directions may be simplified, explained, or clarified in English or the student's native language



# Direct Linguistic Support with Content and Test Items

- Review these accommodations carefully
- Most are specific to a particular content test
- NeSA-R is afforded fewer accommodations—test items, not passages may be read or translated
- Readings must be verbatim with even inflection so no cues are inadvertently given
- Districts may only provide translations in languages other than Spanish—**Spanish translation is provided by NDE**



# Direct Linguistic Support with Content and Test Items, cont.

- Translators should be highly proficient in both languages
- Audio recordings should be read by a native or near native speaker; script should be followed
- Bilingual dictionaries should not contain pictures, definitions, or examples
- Commercial dictionaries with definitions are allowed only on NeSA-W



# Important Note on Native Language Testing

- Under ESEA, LEP students may be assessed in their native language, if necessary, for three years with or without additional accommodations. After that time, all assessments must be conducted in English unless the school district determines, on a case-by-case basis, that assessments in the student's language would likely yield more accurate and reliable information for a period not to exceed two additional years.



# Indirect Linguistic Support

- ELLs may need extra time to process the language of the test
- To avoid fatigue, ELLs may benefit from a flexible testing schedule or more frequent breaks



# Accommodations and Former ELL Students

- Exited students in the two-year Federal monitoring period are eligible to receive testing accommodations
- Most accommodations would not be appropriate for these students, but some may benefit from the use of a bilingual dictionary or extended time
- Former ELL students are not allowed native language testing.

# Questions on Part 4



# References

- Acosta, B., Rivera, C., & Shafer Willner, L. (2008). *Best practices in state assessment policies for accommodating English language learners: A Delphi study*. Arlington, VA: The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education. Available: <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu>.
- Kopriva, Emick, Hipolito-Delgado, and Cameron (2007). Do proper accommodations assignments make a difference? Examining the impact of improved decision making on scores for English language learners. *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 26 (3), 11-20.
- Rivera, C., Acosta, B. & Shafer Willner, L. (2008). *Guide for the refinement of state assessment policies for accommodating ELLs*. Arlington, VA: The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education. Available: <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu>.
- Shafer Willner, L., Rivera, C., & Acosta, B. (2008). *Descriptive study of state assessment policies for accommodating English language learners*. Arlington, VA: The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education. Available: <http://ells.ceee.gwu.edu>.



# Resources

Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) Approved Accommodations

[http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013\\_NeSA\\_Accommodations.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013_NeSA_Accommodations.pdf)

Guide for Including and Accommodating English Language Learners (ELLs) in the Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) Tests

[http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013-14\\_Guide\\_for\\_Including\\_and\\_Accommodating\\_English\\_Language\\_Learners.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/2013-14_Guide_for_Including_and_Accommodating_English_Language_Learners.pdf)

Update: Standards, Assessment, and Accountability (SAA-11) Policies, Practices, Procedures

[http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/SAA\\_11\\_UPDATE\\_COMPLETE.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment/pdfs/SAA_11_UPDATE_COMPLETE.pdf)



# NDE State Web Pages

- Assessment:

<http://www.education.ne.gov/assessment/>

- Title III Web page:

<http://www.education.ne.gov/NATLORIGIN/>



# Contact Information

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