

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Glossary

Accommodations changes made in the administration of an assessment to meet the needs of students with special needs

Accountability the systematic use of assessment data and other information to assure those inside and outside of the educational system that schools are moving in the desired direction

Achievement levels expectations for levels of performance. Louisiana's achievement levels are *Advanced, Mastery, Basic, Approaching Basic, and Unsatisfactory*.

Achievement Level Descriptors content- and grade-specific descriptions of student performance at each achievement level

Alignment the process of linking curriculum, assessment, and instruction to standards, benchmarks, and Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)

Analytic scoring the evaluation of student work using multiple dimensions that are each scored separately and then combined for the overall score

Assessment a systematic method of obtaining evidence from tests and other sources, used to draw inferences about characteristics of people or programs for a specific purpose

Assessment system a series of assessments, for example, GEE, LEAP and iLEAP, of student performance at different grade levels, which are based on publicly adopted standards of what is to be taught coupled with expectations of student mastery

Baseline data the initial measures of performance against which future measures will be compared

Benchmark a broad statement of process and/or content that is used as a reference to develop curriculum and to assess student progress

Bias a statistically identifiable difference in test responses from specific groups. A test item is biased when it systematically measures differently for gender, ethnicities, or other identified groups.

Constructed-response item a test item with directions that requires students to generate an answer that is stated in writing or explained by a diagram, a chart, or some other evidence of their thinking

Content standards a description of what a student should know and be able to do through subject matter, knowledge, and proficiencies gained as a result of his or her education

Criterion-referenced test (CRT) an assessment that compares a student's performance to a specific learning objective rather than to the performance of other students

Cut score the critical point for separating scores into achievement level groups based on an established set of criteria

Dimensions of writing the components of the scoring rubric used to evaluate student responses to a writing prompt

Field test an assessment administered to judge the quality of test items. Sets of items are administered to a representative sample of the population to be tested. Then student responses are examined statistically to evaluate the items to determine whether they will be used on an actual test.

Formative assessment the ongoing evaluation of student performance for the purpose of assessing student learning and planning instruction

Grade cluster the grade spans covered in the LEAP and GEE assessments. The grade clusters for Louisiana assessment programs are kindergarten through 4, 5 through 8, and 9 through 12.

Grade-Level Expectation (GLE) a statement that defines what a student should know and be able to do at the end of a given grade level. GLEs add further definition to standards and benchmarks.

Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) a document developed at the school level that describes the accommodations made for a student who qualifies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, also referred to as a Section 504 plan

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) a document developed by the school level committee that prescribes the educational program designed to meet the specific needs of a student who meets federal special education guidelines

Inter-rater reliability the degree to which different scorers agree on the score to be assigned to a test response

Item an individual question or exercise in an assessment or evaluation instrument

Key Concepts descriptions of important content emphasized in the assessment

LEP abbreviation for limited English proficiency. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) identifies these students as those whose difficulties with the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet a state’s proficient level of achievement on state assessments.

Multiple-choice item a test item that consists of an interrogatory stem with answer choices. Students are required to select the correct answer from several choices. This kind of item is also referred to as a selected-response item.

NCLB the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001, known as No Child Left Behind

Raw score a person’s observed score on a test, that is, the number correct

Reliability the extent to which an assessment yields consistent results

Rubric a scoring guide for open-ended questions or performance tasks. A scoring rubric contains a description of the requirements for varying levels of success in response to the task.

Sample test items examples of the kinds of test items that appear on a test such as LEAP and GEE

Scaled score derived scores to which raw scores are converted by numerical transformation, for example, conversion of raw scores to percentile ranks or scaled scores

Standard a broad statement of expectations for student learning

Standard setting the process for determining the cut point for each achievement level

Standardized tests tests that are administered and scored in a uniform manner from student to student and from place to place. Standardization helps make it possible to compare scores across situations.

Standards-based tests a criterion-referenced test that consists of items aligned with a pre-established set of content standards, for example, Louisiana’s content standards and benchmarks

Stimulus material the part of a test item that provides information needed to complete the item, for example, illustrations, maps, charts, and graphs

Strand categories within particular content areas. Because strands are interrelated, they should be integrated, rather than taught in isolation. For this reason, a test item may assess more than one strand.

Summative assessment a culminating evaluation of a student's performance designed to give information on the student's level of achievement

Test blueprint a document, usually in the form of a chart, representing the distribution of items for each standard or strand for a content area assessment

Test security procedures followed to safeguard high-stakes tests so that all students have equal exposure to the test materials and equal opportunities for success. If test security is violated, then some students can be placed at an unfair advantage or disadvantage. When this happens, test validity is violated.

Test specifications detailed information about an assessment, for example, test blueprint, test design, item types, test description, test content

Writing prompt the topic and explanation provided to students on the English Language Arts test that elicits a response in a given mode: descriptive, narrative, expository, or persuasive

Validity the extent to which an assessment actually measures the content that it is intended to measure

APPENDIX B

Testing Special Populations

Special Education Students and Students with One or More Disabilities According to Section 504

All special education students are to be tested on LEAP and GEE, except those whose IEPs indicate otherwise. All students with one or more disabilities according to Section 504 are to be tested.

A summary of test accommodations that may be used for special education students and for students with disabilities according to Section 504 is given below. All accommodations also must be documented on the IEP or IAP and Verification of Section 504 form for the student to receive them. Full details of allowable accommodations and administration procedures are available in the LEAP and GEE *Test Administration Manual* and in *Bulletin 118*.

- **Braille:** Braille test booklets that include all the items in the regular-print edition of the LEAP and GEE are available. The test administrator must transfer all braille answers to a scorable answer document.
- **Large Print:** The large-print edition is essentially an enlarged version of the regular-print edition of the test. All test items in the regular-print edition of the answer document are included in the large-print test booklet. Students who use the large-print edition mark their answers on the large-print test booklet, which must be transferred by the test administrator to a scorable answer document.
- **Answers Recorded:** If a student is unable to write due to his or her disability, the test administrator must record the student's exact answers on the scorable answer document.
- **Assistive Technology:** Assistive technology, for example, a computer, tape recorder, calculator, abacus, grip for a pencil, visual magnification device, communication device, mask or marker to maintain place, speech synthesizer, or electronic reader, may be provided.
- **Extended Time:** Every student must be given sufficient time to respond to every test item. Time may be adjusted for certain students, such as those who have short attention spans or who may be unable to concentrate for long periods of time on a given task.
- **Communication Assistance:** If warranted by the student's reading level as documented on the IEP or Section 504 Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) and Verification of Section 504 form, communication assistance in signing or cueing modality should be provided for **portions** of the test—**with the exception of the Reading and Responding session of the English Language Arts test.**

- **Transferred Answers:** If accommodations provide for a student to record answers in the test booklet or use braille, large-print, or technological assistive devices, the student's responses must be transferred onto a scorable answer document exactly as the student wrote them.
- **Individual/Small Group Administration:** Tests may be administered to a small group (maximum, eight students) or to an individual requiring more attention than can be provided in a larger classroom. If accommodations affect the standard administration of the test (for example, *Tests Read Aloud*), individual or small group administration **must** be used.
- **Tests Read Aloud:** Students may have **portions** of the tests read to them, **with the exception of the Reading and Responding session of the English Language Arts test.** Although the passages, questions, or multiple-choice items on this part of the test cannot be read aloud, the **directions** may be read aloud.
- **Other:** Any necessary accommodations may be used, but they must be determined by the IEP team or Section 504 Committee and documented on the student's IEP or IAP and Verification of Section 504 form and must not breach test security or invalidate the meaning of the test score or the purpose of the test. Examples of other accommodations include highlighting the task or verbs in the test directions or assisting the student in tracking the test items.

Information for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

The intent of the accommodations for students who are deaf or hard of hearing is to present the instructions in a manner that will allow them to demonstrate skills that have been acquired. The signing modality routinely used in the students' regular classrooms should be considered when administering these tests.

Physical Setting

The physical setting should include verification that students' auditory listening devices are in good repair and are in use during the testing period. Students who depend primarily on lip reading should be seated no more than ten feet from the test administrator.

Use of Signs and Fingerspelling

- Students may have **portions** of the tests signed to them, **with the exception of the Reading and Responding session of the English Language Arts test**. Although the passages, questions, or multiple-choice responses on this session of the test cannot be signed, the **directions** may be signed. Signed administration of tests that measure reading ability makes little sense, since any score so obtained would offer no information about a student's ability and thus be invalid.
- Test items should be signed exactly as written but **not** when the sign would reveal the answer to the question. For example, signing the words in the Vocabulary portion of the English Language Arts test may indicate the correct answer. These words are to be fingerspelled.
- Fingerspelling must **not** be used to administer items that require students to demonstrate the skill of spelling.

Information For Limited English Proficient Students

All LEP students are to be tested. LEP students qualify for accommodations **used in their classroom instruction and assessment.**

- **Extended Time:** Every student should be given sufficient time to respond to every test item. Time may be adjusted for students who must process from one language to another.
- **Individual/Small Group Administration:** Tests may be administered to a small group (maximum, eight students) or to an individual requiring more attention than can be provided in a larger classroom. If other selected accommodations affect the standard administration of the test (for example, *Tests Read Aloud*), individual or small group administration **must** be used.
- **Provision of English/Native Language Word-to-Word Dictionary (No Definitions):** LEP students may use either a standard or electronic English/native language word-to-word dictionary (no definitions) on all sessions of the tests. Students may use an English/native language word-to-word dictionary **with definitions** on **only** the English Language Arts **Writing test**.
- **Tests Read Aloud:** Students may have **portions** of the tests read to them, **with the exception of the Reading and Responding session of the English Language Arts test**. Although the passages, questions, or multiple-choice responses on this session of the test cannot be read aloud, the **directions** may be read aloud.
- **Test Administered by ESL Teacher or by Individual Providing Language Services:** Familiarity with the speech patterns of the ESL teacher or the individual providing language services may help the student better understand the test directions or the portions of the test that are read aloud if the student receives the accommodation *Tests Read Aloud*.

Implementing Testing Accommodations— A Planning Checklist for the General Education Teacher

1. Do you know which accommodations are documented on the students' IEPs or IAPs?
 2. Does the student use the accommodations in classroom instruction and assessment?
 3. Have special test materials been ordered (large print, braille, transparencies)?
 4. Have students eligible for the accommodation *Tests Read Aloud* been assigned individual or small-group administration to prevent interfering with the testing of other students?
 5. Are any other students eligible for small-group or individual test administration?
 6. Where will small-group or individual testing take place, and who is the person trained to supervise the student(s) there?
 7. If needed, have trained readers, scribes, and sign-language interpreters been assigned to individual students?
 8. Is necessary special equipment available, and has it been checked for correct operation (for example, word processor, computer, tape recorder, calculator)?
 9. During testing, are you providing all eligible students with the accommodations documented on their IEPs or IAPs and used in classroom instruction and assessment? After testing, did you transfer student responses to scorable answer folders for students using braille, large print, and assistive devices?
 10. Did you record the specific accommodations actually used in testing on the answer folder?
 11. Have students who took makeup tests received the needed accommodations?
- (Verify numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 with the School Test Coordinator.)

Comments and Cautions

Whenever possible, attend IEP meetings for students you teach. Information from the general education teacher is necessary to help the IEP team determine which instructional and classroom assessment accommodations enable a student to demonstrate best what he or she knows and can do.

Individual or small-group administration **must** be used if the accommodations will interfere with the testing of other students (for example, *Tests Read Aloud*). Immediately following testing, all provided accommodations must be marked on scorable answer documents.

Ethical Assessment Practices

Ethical assessment practices relate to actions between test administrators and students taking the test. Unethical practices include coaching students during testing, editing student work, giving clues, paraphrasing, offering additional information, or any other practice that would give students unapproved assistance or provide advantage. Accommodations must never compromise the purpose of the test. For example, a test of reading comprehension cannot be read aloud because that destroys the purpose of the test—to measure reading ability. However, part or all of the Science and other content-area tests may be read aloud to students who are to receive the accommodation *Tests Read Aloud*.

Finally, accommodations must not compromise test security or confidentiality. All policies and procedures regarding test security and processing of test materials must be followed. (See your district and the BESE Test Security Policy as well as *Bulletin 118*.)

APPENDIX C

Scoring Information

Scoring Process for LEAP and GEE

Preliminary Activities to Reader Training

LEAP and GEE include both multiple-choice items and constructed-response items. Constructed-response items appear on the assessments in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science and social studies. These **constructed-response items** require students to apply their knowledge and to solve problems through written communication. Trained readers score hand-written student responses; multiple-choice items are scanned by a machine. The information that follows describes the hand-scoring process used by the Department and the scoring contractor for LEAP and GEE.

For each constructed-response item, with the exception of Writing, a scoring rubric (a guide for scoring the response) that is specific to the test item is developed in concert with the item. These **item-specific rubrics** are based on Louisiana’s general rubrics that are included in the content-specific *Assessment Guides*. The LEAP and GEE items and their rubrics are developed by a test contractor and reviewed by committees of Louisiana educators. For the Writing test, the Louisiana writing rubric is used to score students’ compositions.

Once test items have been approved via several rounds of committee review, they are field-tested on students statewide. The students’ written responses from the field test are used in an activity called **rangefinding**, that is, selecting student responses that represent the range of scores for each constructed-response item. The rangefinding process is briefly described below.

Rangefinding is conducted annually, prior to scoring the field tests and the operational tests. The testing contractor and LDE convene grade- and content-specific committees composed of Louisiana teachers. In rangefinding, each item that appears on the assessment is addressed by the rangefinding committee. The committee reviews each item and its rubric and an array of student responses that represent the range of possible score points. Each participant reads and independently scores the student responses. The committee then discusses their scores to reach common agreement on the score that each response should receive based on the scoring rubric. Only the responses with high levels of agreement are selected for reader training. As a result of this activity, the scoring contractor collects student responses that represent the range of score points for each test item and a rationale for each score point. These student responses, referred to as **anchor papers**, are used to develop scoring guides that include annotations explaining the rationale for the score; the scoring guides are used by the testing contractor to train the readers who score the LEAP and GEE assessments.

Reader Training

The testing contractor who scores LEAP and GEE hires and trains readers for the Louisiana project. Readers who read for Louisiana's testing program must possess the following: (1) Bachelor's degree, (2) strong content-specific backgrounds, (3) demonstrated ability to write, and; (4) demonstrated proficiency in content to be scored.

Once the readers have been selected based on the above criteria and personal interviews, conducted by the Scoring Center Director, the training process begins. Team Leaders (TLs) are assigned to each content by grade. The Scoring Director trains the TLs for approximately three days in the same procedures that TLs will use to train the readers, but at a more comprehensive level due to their responsibility to train the readers. Once the Team Leaders are trained, reader training begins with a presentation and discussion of the scoring guide by the Scoring Director. Next, the readers "practice" by scoring responses in two training sets. The Scoring Director and/or the Team Leaders lead a thorough discussion of each set. Once discussion of each training set has been completed, the readers must demonstrate their ability to apply the scoring criteria by qualifying, that is, scoring with acceptable agreement with the scores that were established in rangefinding with Louisiana educators. If a reader does not qualify on the first qualifying set, he or she must score a second qualifying set. A Reader Training Report is produced for each qualifying set indicating each reader's performance by exact, adjacent, and nonadjacent agreement. Louisiana's standard for reader eligibility is 70% to 80% exact agreement, depending on the score point range of the item. At the end of the qualifying process, any reader who does not qualify to score based on Louisiana's specifications, does not score LEAP and GEE.

As the readers are scoring, they are administered "validity papers" on a regular schedule to ensure that they are consistently scoring with accuracy throughout the project. Validity papers are responses that are inserted into their scoring packets, unknown to the reader. Validity reports are generated from these scored responses; if there is an indication that a reader is drifting from the standard, retraining will occur.

Scoring Procedures

On the LEAP and GEE mathematics test, items are scored on a 0 to 4 point scale. All math items are scored by two readers. On the writing portion of the English language arts test, students' compositions are scored using a six-dimensional writing rubric. Those dimensions are: 1) Composing, 2) Style and Audience Awareness, 3) Sentence Formation, 4) Usage, 5) Mechanics, and 6) Spelling. Written compositions are also scored by two readers. Social studies items are scored on a 0- to 4-point scale; science items include a 4 point item as well as items scored on a 0- to 2-point scale. Science and social studies items are scored by one reader.

If two readers have nonadjacent scores on a student's response, the paper is sent to a Team Leader or the Scoring Director for a third (resolution) reading. The scoring contractor sends quality control reports daily to the Department. LDE staff either approves or questions these reports immediately.

Appendix D

Foundation Skills

Five foundation skills are embedded within the *Louisiana Content Standards* across all grades and all content areas. These skills represent global outcomes for students. Each foundation skill and its description follow.

Communication:

A process by which information is exchanged and a concept of “meaning” is created and shared between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior. Students should be able to communicate clearly, fluently, strategically, technologically, critically, and creatively in society and in a variety of workplaces. This process can best be accomplished through use of the following skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing.

Problem Solving:

The identification of an obstacle or challenge and the application of knowledge and thinking processes, which include reasoning, decision making, and inquiry, in order to reach a solution using multiple pathways, even when no routine path is apparent.

Resource Access and Utilization:

The process of identifying, locating, selecting, and using resource tools to help in analyzing, synthesizing, and communicating information. The identification and employment of appropriate tools, techniques, and technologies are essential to all learning processes. These resource tools include pen, pencil, and paper; audio/visual materials, word processors, computers, interactive devices, telecommunication, and other emerging technologies.

Linking and Generating Knowledge:

The effective use of cognitive processes to generate and link knowledge across the disciplines and in a variety of contexts. In order to engage in the principles of continual improvement, students must be able to transfer and elaborate on these processes. “Transfer” refers to the ability to apply a strategy or content knowledge effectively in a setting or context other than that in which it was originally learned. “Elaboration” refers to monitoring, adjusting, and expanding strategies into other contexts.

Citizenship:

The application of the understanding of the ideals, rights, and responsibilities of active participation in a democratic republic that includes working respectfully and productively together for the benefit of the individual and the community; being accountable for one’s choices and actions and understanding their impact on oneself and others; knowing one’s civil, constitutional, and statutory right; and mentoring others to be productive citizens and lifelong learners.