



## Excuse Student from Testing

With few exceptions, all students should take the Reading and Math Achievement Level Tests (ALT). However, ALT may not be an appropriate achievement measure for specific students with specialized educational programs and goals. Also, the physical and emotional requirements of the testing situation (e.g., sustained attention) may make participation unreasonable for certain students.

**A decision to excuse a student from ALT testing implies that the test does not cover meaningful content or skills for that student. This is true if:**

- The student's program of instruction and educational goals are significantly different from the regular course of instruction and student objectives at the school.  
OR
- It is impossible for the student to read and respond to the ALT test items in a meaningful way.  
OR
- Parents request that the student be excused from ALT testing.

*Parents should be part of decisions to excuse students from ALT testing.*

**Admissible reasons to excuse a student from ALT testing include:  
(See Pages 2-5)**



## Exclude Scores from Averages

With few exceptions, all students' ALT scores should be included in summary averages. The ALT should *not* be used simply to give a student "a testing experience." There are many available informal multiple-choice test samples and formats that could be more appropriately used to provide students with such an experience.

**The decision to exclude a student's scores from averages implies that some feature of the testing situation invalidates his/her scores. For example:**

- Someone reads the items on the Reading test to the student. *This accommodation is allowed on the ALT Math test.*  
OR
- The student meets one of the criteria necessary to exclude him/her from testing, but the teacher or parent requests that the student take the test.  
OR
- Something unforeseen occurs during testing that invalidates the student's score.

*Parents should be part of decisions to test students and exclude their scores from summary averages.*

**Admissible reasons to exclude student scores from summary averages include:  
(See Pages 2-5)**





*Before* taking the test, the student exhibits severe test anxiety or non-test-related emotional trauma that impairs his/her ability to take the test. Every effort should be made to allow the student to make the test up at a different time.

*Parents should be notified if this occurs.*

**SEVERE TEST ANXIETY**



*During* testing, the student exhibits severe test anxiety or non-test-related emotional trauma that impairs his/her ability to take the test. Every effort should be made to allow the student to make the test up at a different time.

*Parents should be notified if this occurs.*

**SEVERE TEST ANXIETY**



Parent or guardian submits a written request to the school principal to excuse the student from ALT testing.

## **PARENT REQUEST**



The student meets one of the criteria necessary to excuse him/her from testing as an ESL or Special Needs student. However, the teacher or parent requests that the student take the test so as not to be singled out from his or her peers. Parent or teacher request is submitted to the school principal in writing.

## **PARENT REQUEST**



The student is unable to read, comprehend, and respond to ALT test directions and items in a meaningful way because of his or her English language limitation. *Formal testing through the district ESL office documents the presence and degree of an English-language limitation.* This applies to all ESL students, whether or not they are currently part of a district ESL program. **If you have questions, please call the district ESL Program Assistant at 303-486-4265.**

A student's limited English may not impact all ALT performance. For example, a student who is dominant in a non-English language may not be able to take the Reading test, but may do reasonably well on the Math test.

- **ESL-Lau A.** Monolingual in a non-English language (non-English speaking).
- **ESL-Lau B or Lau C.** Dominant in a non-English language (limited English speaking).

*Parents should be part of decisions to excuse students from ALT testing.*

## **ENGLISH as a SECOND LANGUAGE**



During testing, the student exhibits off-task behavior that invalidates his/her test responses. If teachers prepare students for testing, emphasize the importance of the test, and actively monitor student behavior during testing there will be *very few* exclusions of this nature.

- **Random Marking.** The teacher/proctor witnesses a student randomly marking the test answer sheet (scores *cannot* be excluded because answer sheets “appear to be” randomly marked).
- **Cheating.** The teacher/proctor witnesses a student copying answers from another student's answer sheet.
- **Student Refusal/No Attempt.** The student is unwilling or does not attempt to take or to complete the test.
- **Student Leaves During Testing.** During testing, the student leaves the room and does not finish the subtest. Scores can be excluded from summary averages **on this test only**.

*Parents should be notified if these situations occur.*

## **OFF-TASK BEHAVIOR**



**Most students with mild to moderate disabilities and/or limitations should participate fully in ALT testing.**

A student may be excused from ALT testing if one of the following criteria apply:

- 1) The student's instructional program and goals are significantly different from the school's regular instruction and student objectives.

**AND/OR**

- 2) The severity of the disability makes it impossible to read and respond to ALT items in a meaningful way or to complete the test in a reasonable time.

*In either case, formal testing by district Student Achievement Services or a written IEP or ILP substantiates the severity of the disability/condition and describes the student's individualized program/goals.*

Most students with the following disabilities meet one or both of the criteria described above.

- **S.L.I.C.** (Significantly Limited Intellectual Capacity)
- **Multiple Disabilities.**
- **Autism.**
- **Traumatic Brain Injury.**
  
- **Other.** Non-participation in the ALT *may* be appropriate for students with other types of severe disabilities or conditions if they meet criteria (1) and/or (2) described above.

*Parents should be part of decisions to excuse students from ALT testing.*

**If you have questions, please call the district Student Achievement Services office at 303-486-4235.**

**STUDENTS WITH  
SPECIAL NEEDS**



The teacher can modify the ALT testing situation in almost any way in order to make it possible for the student to participate (see the last page of this document for a list of allowable accommodations). The only disallowed modification is to read Reading ALT items aloud to the student. *The student has a written IEP or ILP that stipulates reading test items from a Reading test to the student.*

The following test modification invalidates a student's scores on the ALT:

- **Reading test items aloud from the Reading ALT to student.**

*Parents should be part of decisions to exclude student scores from summary averages.*

**MODIFIED TESTING  
CONDITIONS**

**Modification** - A testing condition that violates test norming conditions and thus invalidates a student's test scores. This is most applicable with ITBS or other norm-referenced testing, where testing conditions must reflect conditions under which the test was normed.

**Accommodation** - An adjustment to the testing condition or environment that allows a student to participate fully in testing but does not violate test norming conditions.

Most testing accommodations are allowed on the district Achievement Level Tests (ALT). These accommodations need not be documented. *Scores for tests taken under these conditions should be included in summary averages.*

- If large group settings are inappropriate or distracting, teachers may administer the test in small group or individual sessions.
- Teachers may request large-print test or Braille test editions and/or answer sheets from each school's Special Education/Vision/Hearing representative no later than one month prior to testing. A teacher or teaching assistant must transfer the student's responses to a standard-sized test answer sheet.
- Students may use certain devices normally used in the course of their instructional day:
  - ✓ Visual magnifiers,
  - ✓ Auditory amplification devices,
  - ✓ Pencil grips,
  - ✓ Noise buffers.
- In some cases, it is permissible for students to mark answers in the test booklet. A teacher or a teaching assistant must transfer the student's answers to a standard-sized test answer sheet. This accommodation should be used judiciously (i.e., for students with tracking problems) due to the cost of disposing of and replacing marked test booklets.
- Teachers may present test directions with videotape, audiotape, or by signing.
- Teachers may read Math test items and test responses aloud to a student. *(This is not a permissible accommodation on the Reading test).*
- Students may respond to items orally while a scribe marks answers on the test answer sheet.
- Teachers may administer subtests in different sequence and/or in multiple sessions.
- Teachers may allow as much time as is necessary for the student to complete the test.

*Students should be tested in an environment and in an atmosphere  
that promotes their best performance.*

## **TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS ALLOWED ON THE ALT**



# District Achievement Level Tests (ALT): Student Test Participation Guide



With few exceptions, all students should take the ALT in the manner prescribed in the ALT Teacher Administration Guide and the district assessment program. Wherever possible, decisions about student participation in these tests should be made well before the actual test administration and with the informed consent of the student’s parents.

Documentation for non-participation must be included on the Test Control Sheet and sent with the test answer sheets to the Office of Assessment & Evaluation. This document provides criteria and explanations for the “Excuse Student from Testing” and “Exclude Test Scores from Averages” categories listed on the Test Control Sheet.

|                  |   |  |
|------------------|---|--|
| <b>PAGE 1</b>    | <b>Overview of “Excuse Student from Testing”<br/>Overview of “Exclude Scores from Averages”</b> |  |
| <b>PAGES 2-5</b> | <b>Admissible Reasons to “Excuse...” or “Exclude...”</b>  |  |
|                  | <i>Excuse from Testing</i>  | <i>Exclude from Averages</i>           |
| <b>PAGE 2</b>    | <b>Severe Test Anxiety</b>  | <b>Severe Test Anxiety</b>             |
| <b>PAGE 3</b>    | <b>Parent Request</b>   | <b>Parent Request</b>                  |
| <b>PAGE 4</b>    | <b>English as a Second<br/>Language</b>   | <b>Off-Task Behavior</b>               |
| <b>PAGE 5</b>    | <b>Students with<br/>Special Needs</b>  | <b>Modified Testing<br/>Conditions</b> |
| <b>PAGE 6</b>    | <b>Testing Accommodations Allowed on the ALT</b>  |  |

