Assessment Accommodations Use, Participation, and Performance by Students Receiving Special Education Services

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The purpose of this study is to summarize federally submitted data from the 2013-2014 school year to explore accommodation use, participation rates, and proficiency rates for students with disabilities in reading and mathematics state assessments.

Method & Data Sources

Data
Data were obtained from states’ annual performance reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for 2013-14 assessment data. Only students with IEPs were included in the data, which were reported for Reading and Math by grade level (grades 3-8 and high school). The data set provided the following information.

1. #s participating the regular assessment with accommodations
2. #s participating the regular assessment without accommodations
3. #s participating the Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS)
4. #s participating the Alternate Assessment based on Modified Achievement Standards (AA-MASS)
5. #s participating the Alternate Assessment based on Grade-Level Achievement Standards (AA-GLAS)
6. #s proficient and above on the regular assessment with accommodations
7. #s proficient and above on the regular assessment without accommodations
8. #s proficient and above on AA-AAS
9. #s proficient and above on AA-MASS
10. #s proficient and above on AA-GLAS

The following criteria were applied to data clean process.

1. Deleted states did not report the information
2. Deleted states reported cell size less than 3
3. Deleted states reported higher number of students participating the alternate assessments than the regular assessments
4. Deleted the unique states information

Procedures
Assessment participation rates, proficiency rates and % of students using accommodations were calculated at each grade level.

Analysis
Descriptive analyses were conducted, with results presented via graphs.

Participation Rate (PT): The average PT was 97.4% for both Reading and Math. Participation in regular assessments varied due to different rates in alternate assessments.

Proficiency Rate (PF): The average PF was 30.2% (10-85%) in Reading and 24.3% in Math (6~72%); 3 states had 50% or higher rate in Reading (3 states in math).

Accommodations: The range in percentage of students using accommodations varied dramatically. More students used accommodations in Math than in Reading; 8th graders generally received more accommodations than 4th graders. Accommodation use and proficiency rates did not seem to be highly related.

Conclusion
7 of 44 states showed at least an 11 percentage point difference between Reading and Math, which Math having a higher percentage of students using accommodations.

Grade 4 vs. Grade 8
15 states showed a difference greater than 10 percentage point in Reading (Math: 20 states); 11 of 15 states showed grade 8 had higher percentage of students using accommodations in reading than in grade 4 (13 of 20 states in Math).

Participation Rates for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Reading Assessments

Performance Trends for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Reading Assessments

Accommodations Use vs. Performance

Figure 1. Participation Rates for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Reading Assessments

Figure 2. Participation Rates for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Mathematics Assessments

Figure 3. Performance Trends for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Reading Assessments

Figure 4. Performance Trends for Eighth Grade Students with Disabilities on Mathematics Assessments

Figure 5. Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Reading and Mathematics Assessments

Figure 6. Percentage of Grade 8 and Grade 4 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Reading Assessments

Figure 7. Percentage of Grade 8 and Grade 4 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Mathematics Assessments

Figure 8. Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Scoring Proficient or Above and Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Reading Regular Assessments

Figure 9. Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Scoring Proficient or Above and Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Mathematics Regular Assessments

Figure 10. Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Scoring Proficient or Above and Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Mathematics Alternate Assessments

Figure 11. Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Scoring Proficient or Above and Percentage of Grade 8 Special Education Students Using Accommodations in 2013-2014 Mathematics Alternate Assessments