



## Text-to-Speech Accommodation for ELA Passages (Nonvisual)

The following questions have been asked about the TTS Nonvisual Checklist and the approval process for the TTS accommodation. It is very important before beginning the checklist for approval that the IEP or 504 team has met and the student meets all of the criteria listed on the [TTS Accommodations Available on the KAP](#) flowchart. If all questions on the flowchart cannot be answered with a 'YES', the student does not qualify for the TTS Accommodation on the ELA passages and the checklist should not be completed for approval.

### Will TTS be approved without an IEP or 504?

- No, the student must have an IEP or 504 Plan in place and meet all criteria from flowchart.

### Is consent needed before using the PAR with a student?

- For students who already have TTS on their IEP, you would not need consent for administering the PAR – the PAR is a system of collecting data to confirm appropriate accommodations. However, if the student does not qualify you would need an IEP amendment with consent if you were removing the accommodation if it specifically indicates that the student will have TTS for ELA passages. If it indicates “if approved by KSDE” or “when it does not invalidate the constructs of the assessment” an amendment would not be necessary. Consent is needed to add the accommodation for a student who previously did not have the accommodation. We do recommend giving parents notice at a minimum with an opportunity to meet if they have questions and want to view the PAR protocol before administering it. This could be a letter that is provided to any student who the district is considering using the PAR with. We provided two examples on page 2 of suggestions that would not require an amendment if the accommodation was not approved.

### Could a student qualify for TTS and get an IEP amendment to accommodations?

- If any change in service to a student's IEP is needed, then yes, there would need to be an amendment made to the IEP. The student would need to meet all other criteria listed on the flowchart mentioned above.

### Some IEP teams, based on previous guidance, have already written this into IEPs. Will IEPs need to be amended now?

- If changes to the IEP are needed, then yes, there would need to be an amendment made to the IEP.
- IEP teams that have determined the text-to-speech accommodation for ELA passages is best for the student, may provide the accommodation even though the student does not meet all criteria for approval. The test will be given a special code to show the accommodation was used,



## TEXT-TO-SPEECH ACCOMMODATION FOR ELA PASSAGES (NONVISUAL)

a student report will be provided, and the score will **not** be considered valid when used for building accountability.

- See 34 C.F.R. 300.160, stating that, under state guidelines, IEP teams are instructed to select only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.
- Example 1: Consistent with the accommodations that Sean is using in the classroom, he will receive the following accommodations on statewide assessments: Simultaneous visual and auditory access to text through the independent use of text-to-speech for all allowable parts of the assessment.
- Example 2: The district will apply for approval of TTS (nonvisual) for the ELA passages on the state assessment. If TTS (nonvisual) is approved the student would receive TTS for the ELA passages, if it is not approved, the student would receive text and test items (Text and Graphics).
- Resource: [Documenting Frequency, Location, and Duration of Accommodations and Modifications on the IEP during the 2020-21 school year](#)
- Resource: [Assuring the Documentation of Frequency, Location, and Duration of Accommodations on the IEP](#)
- Resource: [Considerations for Accessible Educational Materials](#)

If students had TTS on KAP in the past, do we need to administer the PAR with them?

- The requirements for TTS for ELA passages (nonvisual) have changed. Even if the student was provided the accommodation last year, approval is given annually. If the team can answer yes to all the questions on the flowchart, the checklist will need to be submitted for approval again this year.

Is this testing going to need to be completed every year?

- Yes, The Kansas Accessibility Manual page 19 talks about the importance of evaluating the accommodations a student is using on a regular basis. **Accessibility supports must be selected based on the individual student's needs, be used consistently for instruction and assessment, and phased out at the appropriate time to promote independence.** Collecting and analyzing data on the use and effectiveness of accessibility supports are necessary to ensure the meaningful participation of students in districtwide and statewide assessments. This data may reveal questionable patterns of the use of some accessibility supports and inform decisions about the continued use of those supports.



## TEXT-TO-SPEECH ACCOMMODATION FOR ELA PASSAGES (NONVISUAL)

How early can you give the PAR to students? Which grade level?

- The PAR can be given at any time. It starts at a 1<sup>st</sup> grade level, if the student isn't reading at a first-grade level skip the independent/silent reading and see where the student is with a human reader and text reader. The PAR only needs to be administered for approval of TTS beginning at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

What do you use in DIBELS 8th edition to determine independent reading level?

- Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

What do you use in FastBridge to determine independent reading level?

- Use screen to intervention report... dropdown box from Lexile level to grade level

What does the disparity need to be to qualify for read aloud on KAP?

- Approval for TTS is based on many factors and not just a score from the PAR.

What needs to be included in the TTS app from the PAR?

- The percentage the student received on the comprehension questions after listening to the PAR text with a text reader. If the student's score was below 50%, move down grade levels until the student is able to perform at 50% or above.

Would a 4th grader whose independent level is K and level with TTS is 2, would that student qualify?

- This would demonstrate an issue with accessing print. The rest of the requirements must also be met for approval for the accommodation on the ELA state assessment.

Is "non-reader" relative to grade level text? Example - student is in 6th grade but reads at the 2nd grade level independently on a silent read but scores at grade level with a text reader.

- A 'non-reader' is not relative to grade level text. The example you give may demonstrate an access issue and if the other requirements are met, may qualify.

A confusion point for me is that the documentation says (Nonvisual). Is there a separate text to speech checklist for visual students? Or is this the ONLY text to speech checklist form going forward?

- One checklist – blind, visually impaired, and non-reader



## TEXT-TO-SPEECH ACCOMMODATION FOR ELA PASSAGES (NONVISUAL)

We have students with dyslexia that are not on an IEP or 504, however, their SIT plans use TTS in the classroom... will they qualify for TTS without having the IEP or 504?

- No.

How does this play into students with Dyslexia... may not be a 'non-reader', but it is a specific learning disability.

- A student identified as requiring special education due to a specific learning disability does not mean the student is a non-reader. If the student meets the requirements on the checklist and has data to support the student having an issue with accessing printed material they may qualify.

Can all of these assessments for the checklist be given at any time this school year or is there a certain date range we need to adhere to? I know the checklists are due on Jan. 31 and all assessments would need to be given by this date.

- They can all be given at once or across several days – that is a district decision. Data must be from this school year and the form submitted by the end of the day on January 31.

Do I need to have all my teachers trained to give the PAR?

- No, only those teachers that will be giving the PAR to students that meet the criteria for the text-to-speech accommodation will need to be trained.

Do DLM students need to be given the PAR?

- No

Has any research been done on how this impacts students with significant cognitive disabilities?

- Students with a significant cognitive disability should not be given the PAR.

For more information, contact:

Cary Rogers  
Education Program Consultant  
Special Education and Title Services  
(785) 296-0916  
[crogers@ksde.org](mailto:crogers@ksde.org)



Kansas State Department of Education  
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102  
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212  
[www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

The Kansas State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201.