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MEMORANDUM

TO: District Reading Contacts
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FROM: Barbara Elzie, Interim Executive Director, Just Read, Florida!

DATE: October 28, 2009

SUBJECT: FAIR Accommodations Memo

This document provides an update on the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) accommodations. FAIR accommodations are noted in the K-2 (page 140) and 3-12 (page 71) FAIR Administration Manuals.

Accommodations are provided to students with disabilities and/or English Language Learners to assure that valid results are obtained and an accurate estimate of their skill level is determined. These accommodations are specific to this set of assessments and are aligned with accommodations provided on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). For some students with disabilities, the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading may not be an appropriate instrument. For example, it is unlikely that this instrument would be appropriate for students with significant sensory, cognitive, or language deficits. Examiners should ask themselves the question, "Is it reasonable to administer these measures to this student?" when making a determination regarding assessment of a student with a disability. When the assessments are administered in ways different from both a standard administration and the approved accommodations, the administration would be considered a non-standardized administration and the resulting scores cannot be interpreted with the appropriate interpretive and reporting procedures.

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Tools/Resources for providing FAIR Accommodations:

- ❖ The 3-12 assessment tasks can be completed using the mouse, keyboard, or assistive technology that uses either device. Note: assistive technology that reads or spells any of the task items for students may not be used.
- ❖ For students who regularly utilize the accommodation of highlighting text, a free upgrade from the link below will allow students to highlight portions of the reading comprehension passages in the 3-12 Reading Comprehension task in the following browsers:
 - Internet Explorer
<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/ie6/previous/webaccess/ie5wa.msp>
 - Mozilla Firefox
<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/791>
- ❖ Braille and large print versions of the K-2 FAIR student task cards are available. FAIR K-2 Braille and large print materials have been shipped to all districts who requested them, based upon district responses to a survey provided by the Just Read, Florida! Office. If your district needs FAIR K-2 Braille or large print materials, please contact Kevin Smith at Kevin.Smith@fldoe.org.
- ❖ For the 3-12 Web-based Assessment Module (WAM) of the FAIR, refreshable Braille displays and extended time may be used for the Reading Comprehension task in conjunction with a recorder, who may provide assistance in getting the student logged in and ready to begin this task. Braille Keyboards/Writers may also be used during the administration of the 3-12 Reading Comprehension task. Graphic tags are included for all images that are in the Reading Comprehension task to assist students who are visually impaired. It is not possible to offer paper Braille versions of the 3-12 tasks due to the adaptive nature of the assessments. More information regarding refreshable Braille displays can be found at the following website from the Division of Blind Services: <http://dbs.myflorida.com/assistivetechology/refreshable.php>. The Maze task is time limited; therefore this would not be an appropriate accommodation for Maze.
- ❖ For visually impaired students, screen magnification software is available as an accommodation that can make the Reading Comprehension screen, Maze, and Word Analysis tasks accessible for students who regularly use this software to magnify the screen size. Visually impaired students may also have a recorder enter data. More information regarding this technology can be found at the following website from the Division of Blind Services: <http://dbs.myflorida.com/assistive-technology/screen-enlargement.php>. The text provided for the FAIR assessments may also be enlarged by adjusting the font size within Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox by clicking on the View and Text Size options from the menu bar.
- ❖ Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may access the written text directions by clicking on the “Read Comments” button on the screen for the Reading Comprehension screen and Maze task. The Word Analysis task would not be appropriate for students who cannot access the task auditorily. Deaf and hard of hearing students may have a recorder enter data. Oral or manual interpreters may also be used for students who are deaf or hard of hearing to access spoken language. Deaf and hard of hearing students may also use ASL/English dictionaries and extended time for the Reading Comprehension task, as

these accommodations are also available for FCAT. For the Word Analysis task, however, the use of a dictionary would not be appropriate. Because Maze is time limited, use of a dictionary or extended time would not be appropriate.

- ❖ For ELL students, the same accommodations are available that FCAT offers. Translation dictionaries and extended time are available for the Reading Comprehension task. For the Word Analysis task, however, the use of a dictionary would not be appropriate. Because Maze is time limited, use of a dictionary or extended time would not be appropriate.
- ❖ Students in grades 6-12 who may not be able to access the FAIR due to any potential issue may use the paper/pencil FORF or Maze assessments that may be found at: http://www.fcrr.org/forf_mazes/forf09-10.htm. These assessments may be downloaded and printed, and the passages will change for the three assessment windows. The results will need to be entered through district databases using the Florida Oral Reading Fluency (FORF) and MAZE Procedure as the PMRN will no longer accept FORF or MAZE data.
- ❖ Students in grades 3-5 who may not be able to access the FAIR due to any potential issue may use the Scaffolded Discussion Template passages from the FAIR 3-12 Informal Diagnostic Tool Kit.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work to provide the best assessment possible for teachers and students in Florida. Please feel free to contact Cari Miller at cari.miller@fldoe.org, Kevin Smith at kevin.smith@fldoe.org, Laurie Lee at laurie.lee@fldoe.org, or Melinda Webster at Melinda.webster@fldoe.org or 850-245-0503 if you have questions or if we can provide assistance.

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