

Review of the Implementation of Accommodations for Students
with Disabilities and Limited Spanish Proficiency Students for
the *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de
Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA)*

June 30, 2012

Katarzyna Razynska, Ed.M.
Loruana Quiñones, M.S, M.Ed.
Ellen Forte, Ph.D.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	i
Review of Accommodations for the PPAA.....	1
Introduction	1
Validity Argument	2
Use of Accommodations	4
Puerto Rico’s Accommodation Policy	5
Methodology.....	6
Sampling.....	6
School Sample	6
Student Sample	7
Protocols and Recording of Student Data.....	7
Results.....	8
Sample Demographics	8
Research Question 1a: What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled IEPs?.....	11
Research Question 1b: How are the frequently-used standard accommodations implemented?.....	14
Extended Time	15
Reader	15
Change in Setting	16
Research Question 1c: What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?	17
Research Question 1d: What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?	21
Summary and Discussion	24
Research Question 1a: What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled students’ IEPs?	24
Research Question 1b: How are the frequently used standard accommodations implemented?	24
Research Question 1c: What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?	25
Research Question 1d: What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?	26
Recommendations	26
Appendix A: Puerto Rico Assessment Accommodations according to Accommodations Manual.....	30
Appendix B: Data Collection Protocol.....	31
Appendix C: Data Collection Guidelines.....	35

List of Exhibits

Exhibit 1. Interpretive Argument (IA) for the PPAA.....	3
Exhibit 2. Standard Allowable Accommodations as Documented by the ROA.....	6
Exhibit 3. Student Sample Demographics by District.....	9
Exhibit 4. Assessment Accommodations as Indicated on the Sampled IEPs by IDEA Disability Category..	10
Exhibit 5. Frequency of Standard and Non-Standard Assessment Accommodations in the Sampled IEPs	11
Exhibit 6. Standard Allowable Accommodations as Indicated in the Sampled IEPs by District*	13
Exhibit 7. Non-standard Accommodations as Indicated in the Sampled IEPs by District*	14
Exhibit 8. Extended Time when Bundled with Other Accommodations.....	15
Exhibit 9. Extended Time Accommodation Implemented Individually or in a Group	15
Exhibit 10. Reader Accommodation when Bundled with Other Accommodations.....	16
Exhibit 11. Reader Accommodation Implemented Individually or in a Group	16
Exhibit 12. Change in Setting Accommodation when Bundled with other Accommodations	17
Exhibit 13. Change in Setting Accommodation by Setting Type	17
Exhibit 14. Alignment of Accommodations between IEP and those Observed During the 2011-2012 PPAA	19
Exhibit 15. District-level Differences in Alignment between Accommodations Listed in the IEP and those Observed During the 2011-2012 PPAA Administration	20
Exhibit 16. Alignment of Assessment Accommodations between Sampled IEPs and Administration during the 2011-2012 PPAA	22
Exhibit 17. District-level Differences in Alignment between Accommodations Listed in the IEP and those Observed During the 2011-12 PPAA Administration	23

Executive Summary

Introduction

Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), all students with disabilities (SWDs) and English learners (ELs)/limited Spanish proficient (LSP) students ¹ must participate in annual academic content assessments in language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and high school and science at least once in each of the grade ranges 3-5, 6-8, and high school. NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) mandate that students with disabilities be provided accommodations as appropriate to allow for their meaningful participation in state assessments; NCLB extends these accommodation requirements to ELs/LSP students. NCLB and IDEIA require that state education agencies establish accommodation guidelines for selecting these accommodations and report publicly the number of students using accommodations during state assessments.

In response to these requirements, the number of students with disabilities and ELs/LSP students who participate in district and statewide assessment programs has greatly increased in recent years, as has the number of students using assessment accommodations (Crawford, 2007). With these increases has come greater scrutiny of the meaning of scores derived from accommodated assessment conditions. When appropriately selected, assessment accommodations for SWDs and LSP ² students should allow these students to more accurately demonstrate their knowledge and skills; however this expectation is often based on assumptions that have yet to be tested adequately by empirical research.

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has a set policy on accommodations to support the annual state assessment *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico* (PPAA) for SWDs and LSP students. However, the PRDE must review the implementation of its accommodations policy to ensure that all students who take the PPAA have the best opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do. This accommodations review includes three components that correspond to the following three evaluation questions:

1. To what extent do the accommodations selected for individual students when taking the PPAA correspond appropriately to the accommodations used in instruction as indicated in students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or, for students with LSP, other evidence of the accommodations used in instruction?
2. To what extent are the accommodations selected for individual students as indicated in their IEPs implemented at the time of assessment?
3. Based on a review of the literature, to what extent are the accommodations frequently used on the PPAA effective at addressing obstacles that may interfere with a student's ability to demonstrate what he or she knows and can do on the PPAA?

¹ These rules relate to students who are not proficient in the language of instruction. These students are English learners (ELs) in US states, the District of Columbia, and US territories and limited Spanish proficiency (LSP) students in Puerto Rico.

² This report interprets the NCLB legislation as it applies to students with limited Spanish proficiency (LSP) as opposed to students with limited English proficiency (LEP).

The present report provides a summary of the findings for the second component of the accommodations review in which researchers addresses the following research question and sub questions:

1. To what extent are the accommodations selected for individual students as indicated in their IEPs implemented at the time of assessment?
 - a. What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled IEPs?
 - b. How are the frequently-used, standard accommodations implemented during the PPAA?
 - c. What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?
 - d. What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?

Methodology

During the 2011-2012 administration of the PPAA, between April 20 and April 24, 2012, teams consisting of the regional coordinators for the PPEA and a special education facilitator carried out a review of the implementation of assessment accommodations throughout all seven districts of Puerto Rico. The PPEA coordinators and special education facilitators are special education specialists who work with Puerto Rico's alternate assessment, and they are trained in evaluating IEPs. The school visits consisted of two steps. First, observers conducted a "walked through" through the school and using the edCount protocol made observations about what accommodations were being administered to each student in the sample. Upon completing this step, the team accessed the IEPs of the students in the sample and used the same protocol to collect information about the assessment accommodations each student in the sample was suppose to receive on the assessment according to their IEP. In some districts observers conducted post-assessment check-ins with the students in the sample to verify what accommodations they received throughout the assessment.

One limitation of the study is that the observations were conducted by PRDE regional personnel, who reported what they observed on test day, and in some cases conducted a check in with the students in the sample to verify which accommodations the students received. While results might be correct, it is important to point out that researchers were not able to confirm whether guidelines for conducting the study were consistently observed. Researchers confirmed that in at least one district, observers did not conduct the full set of observations required by the protocol.

Researchers then analyzed data collected during the review and compared the accommodations that PPEA coordinators observed during the administration of the assessment to information collected from the sampled student IEPs.

Data analysis consisted of examining: 1) which accommodations were indicated in the sampled IEPs; 2) how the most frequently accommodations were implemented during the 2011-2012 test administration; and 3) the alignment between the accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs and those that the PPEA coordinators observed during the assessment. For each student in the sample, researchers considered an accommodation as aligned when the accommodation(s) indicated in the IEP were also observed during the PPAA administration. To understand misalignments in the data, researchers separated accommodations that did not match between the IEPs and the assessment administration

into two different categories. Researchers considered accommodations indicated in the student’s IEP but not observed during the assessment as a type V misalignment, whereas accommodations observed during the assessment but not indicated in the IEP were considered a type VI misalignment³.

Findings

- The sample consisted of 11 standard accommodations types (those identified by the record of assessment) and 10 non-standard accommodation types. In total, the sampled IEPs indicated 694 accommodations: 85.9% of them were standard accommodations and 14.1 % were of non-standard accommodations. The three most frequently used accommodations were extended time, change in setting, and reader, comprising 77.0% of the sample.
- The most frequently indicated non-standard accommodations were change in delivery of test directions (6.3%) and the use of a calculator (2.6%). Of the 10 types of accommodations indicated in the IEPs, only three—calculator, visual organizers and equipment to amplify sound—are indicated in the PRDE’s accommodation manual. In total, 10.8% of the accommodations listed in the sampled IEPs did not match accommodations in the PRDE’s accommodation manual.
- There was variation across districts in the standard accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs. The only accommodation consistently used throughout the districts was the extended time accommodation. These findings may indicate regional differences in the administration of certain accommodations, leading to over or under prescription of standard accommodations in some of the districts.
- There was variation across districts in the frequency and type of non-standard accommodations administered in the districts. In each district, the sampled IEPs indicated an accommodation calling for a change in the way test directions are administered, though this accommodation is not listed as allowable in the PRDE’s accommodation manual. These findings may indicate regional differences in the implementation of non-standard accommodations.
- Researchers examined data from observations of the implementation of test accommodations for the three most frequently used accommodation types: extended time, reader and change in setting. Findings confirmed that the bundling of accommodations is a standard practice in Puerto Rico. Researchers also found that the majority of the time, teachers administer these accommodations to several students at a time. The data suggest that the change in setting accommodation is the most inconsistently implemented accommodation. Often times, while observers did not explicitly note a change of setting accommodation, it appeared that teachers inadvertently administered a change of setting in order to administer a different accommodation.
- The data indicated more than 81% alignment between the standard allowable accommodations listed in the sample IEPs and what PPEA coordinators observed during the PPAA administration

³ The numbering of the types of misalignment is in accordance with the nomenclature used in a previous report of accommodation alignment “The Review of Accommodations Selection for Students with Disabilities and Limited Spanish Proficiency Students for the *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA)*”. Type I misalignment refers to accommodations listed as instructional accommodations in the IEP, and not as assessment accommodations, Type II misalignment refers to accommodations listed in the IEP as assessment accommodations, and not instructional accommodations, Type III misalignment refers to assessment accommodations being indicated in a student’s IEP, but not in the ROA, and Type IV refers to accommodations being administered according to the ROA but not being indicated in the student’s IEP.

across the island. Only 4.2% of the accommodations indicated in the IEPs were not observed during test administration. The accommodation with the greatest misalignment was the change in setting.

- The rate of alignment between the non-standard accommodations listed in the sample IEPs and what PPEA coordinators observed during the PPAA administration was lower than that of the standard accommodations. Just over 50% of the non-standard accommodations observed during the PPAA matched the accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs. More than 30% of the accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs were not administered during the PPAA (type V misalignment). Nearly 19% of the accommodations observed during test administration were not indicated in sampled IEPs (type VI misalignment).

Recommendations

Given the findings of this study, researchers offer recommendations in two areas:

1. Provide training to teachers and IEP teams

The PRDE should review its accommodations training practices to ensure that they provide educators with a clear understanding of the process for selecting and recording allowable accommodations for assessment. This training will ensure that accommodations provided to SWDs are based on their individual student needs and not on regional accommodation policies, and should encompass:

- The purpose of accommodations and a clear identification of the standard allowable accommodations. In particular the training should clarify the use of the change in setting accommodation, the implementation of which was found to be the most inconsistent in this study; and
- The rules and regulations related to the selection of assessment accommodations for individual students and specific purposes.

2. Monitor and evaluate policies related to accommodations decisions

The PRDE should monitor the consistency of the alignment between assessment accommodations indicated in student IEPs and those provided to students during the PPAA. Specifically, the PRDE should monitor and evaluate the use of non-standard accommodations across all districts. This study found that several non-standard accommodations that are not aligned with PRDE's accommodation policy were implemented during the 2011-2012 PPAA administration.

The PRDE should conduct accommodations reviews during the assessment window or afterward, and these findings should inform how the COMPU records the use of accommodations for assessment on the IEP. The monitoring activities conducted by the PRDE to review accommodations should involve: 1) direct observation of test administrations and the provision of accommodations on the day of assessment; 2) on-site monitoring visits that include record reviews; and 3) interviews with students, teachers, and administrators about the selection and effectiveness of accommodations.

The PRDE can use this information to inform their policies for accommodations selection and use on a regular basis, to support good decision making, and to provide documentation to meet federal requirements. This evaluation and subsequent reports should: 1) include a timeline of analysis of findings from monitoring and assessment data (empirical evidence); 2) apply existing and new research

related to best practices for accommodations; and 3) include an expert panel review of accommodation guidance and training to support continuous improvement of practices.

Review of Accommodations for the PPAA

Introduction

Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), all students with disabilities (SWDs) and English learners (ELs)/limited Spanish proficient (LSP) students⁴ must participate in annual academic content assessments in language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and high school and in science at least once in each of the grade ranges 3-5, 6-8, and high school. NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) mandate that students with disabilities be provided accommodations as appropriate to allow for their meaningful participation in state assessments; NCLB extends these accommodation requirements to ELs/LSP students. NCLB and IDEIA require that state education agencies establish accommodations guidelines for selecting these accommodations and report publicly the number of students using accommodations during state assessments.

In response to these requirements, the number of students with disabilities and ELs/LSP students who participate in district and statewide assessment programs has greatly increased in recent years, as has the number of students using assessment accommodations (Crawford, 2007). With these increases has come greater scrutiny of the meaning of scores derived from accommodated assessment conditions. When appropriately selected, assessment accommodations for SWDs and LSP⁵ students should allow these students to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills; which should lead to more accurate scores. However, this expectation is often based on assumptions that have yet to be tested adequately by empirical research.

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) defines accommodations as any changes to procedures or practices used to provide equal access to grade-level content for students with special needs. These changes in assessment materials or procedures implemented by the test administrator are intended to increase the accessibility of test content to a specific student population. Their purpose is to eliminate the barriers to the demonstration of academic performance caused by a student's disability or language differences and increase access to academic content, without reducing the expectations for learning (Puerto Rico Department of Education, 2004).

The PRDE has a set policy on accommodations to support the annual state assessment *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico* (PPAA) for SWDs and LSP students. However, the PRDE must review the implementation of its accommodations policy to ensure that all students who take the PPAA have the best opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do. This accommodations review includes three components that correspond to the following three evaluation questions:

1. To what extent do the accommodations selected for individual students when taking the PPAA correspond appropriately to the accommodations used in instruction as indicated in students'

⁴ These rules relate to students who are not proficient in the language of instruction. These students are English learners (ELs) in US states, the District of Columbia, and US territories and Spanish learners (LSP students) in Puerto Rico.

⁵ This report interprets the NCLB legislation as it applies to students with limited Spanish proficiency (LSP) as opposed to students with limited English proficiency (LEP).

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or, for students with LSP, other evidence of the accommodations used in instruction?

2. To what extent are the accommodations selected for individual students as indicated in their IEPs implemented at the time of assessment?
3. Based on a review of the literature, to what extent are the accommodations frequently used during the PPAA effective at addressing obstacles that may interfere with a student's ability to demonstrate what he or she knows and can do on the PPAA?

The accommodations review was implemented in the 2011-2012 school year. The PRDE will use the results of this review to: 1) provide formative feedback so practitioners can make immediate corrections; and 2) inform decisions about training and support for improving the selection and implementation of its accommodations. The PRDE normally conducts extensive monitoring of the PPAA test administration process. District officials visit every school during the test administration period and complete protocols that document how these schools comply with required testing procedures and that all students are participating in the testing process. In addition, regional officials visit each district to ensure that these districts are engaging in their required activities for monitoring and ensuring the security of testing materials.

This report provides a summary of the findings for the second component of the accommodations review in which researchers address the following research question and subquestions:

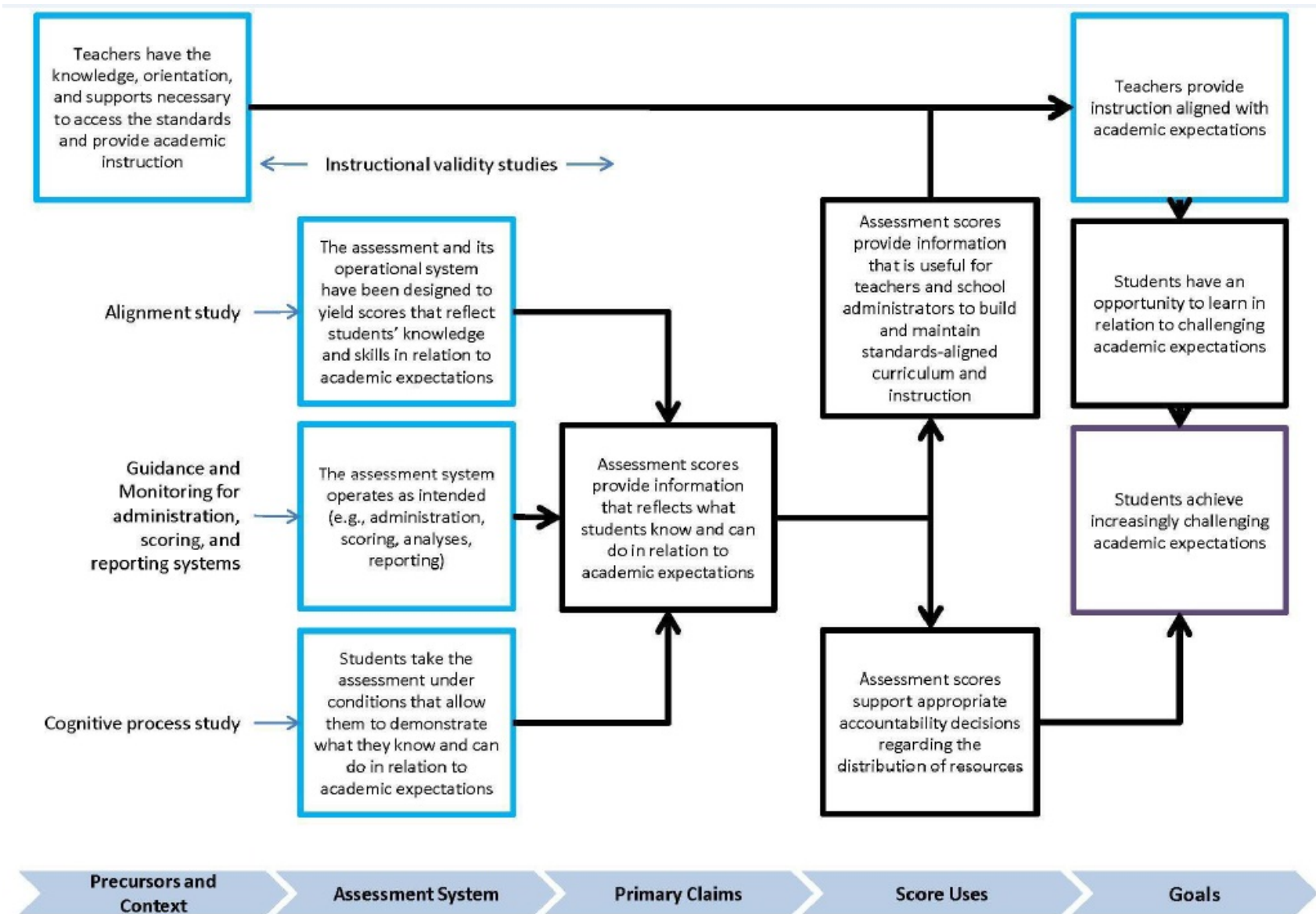
1. To what extent are the accommodations selected for individual students as indicated in their IEPs implemented at the time of assessment?
 - a. What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled IEPs?
 - b. How are the frequently-used standard accommodations implemented during the PPAA?
 - c. What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?
 - d. What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?

To address these questions, the PRDE commissioned a review of accommodations administration practices during the PPAA. The primary unit of analysis for this review is the student, but researchers also analyzed the data at the district and island-wide levels to identify differences in the implementation of accommodations. Such differences may indicate the need for additional training or oversight of the accommodations administration process.

Validity Argument

The PRDE employs an argument-based approach to validity evaluation (Kane, 2006) to ensure that the combined evidence about its assessments contributes to a comprehensive evaluation of critical aspects of the assessment and accountability system. The US Department of Education has recognized the argument-based approach by funding projects to apply this model to state assessment systems. Using this approach, edCount worked with the PRDE to develop a detailed interpretive argument (IA) to identify specific priorities for evaluating the validity of the use and interpretation of PPAA scores (see Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1. Interpretive Argument (IA) for the PPAA



The IA incorporates input from PRDE staff and Puerto Rico teachers who participated in focus groups during the 2009-2010 school year. The IA also addresses the US Department of Education's peer review feedback on the gaps and weaknesses of PRDE's assessment system. Major threats to the validity of the PPAA cut across the range of traditional validity concerns, including the alignment of the assessment with the standards, the quality of administration and scoring, the accessibility of the assessments to all students, and the appropriate interpretation and use of the test scores.

The PPAA accommodations review is represented in the IA under the claim that "students take the assessment under conditions that allow them to demonstrate what they know and can do in relation to academic expectations." This analysis addressed the following assumption that underlies the following claim.

Students are provided with assessment accommodations that have been identified in the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of SWDs.

This study attempted to collect evidence that supports this underlying assumption. The application of accommodations underlies the ability of the assessment system to produce scores that accurately reflect student knowledge and skills in the academic area being tested.

Use of Accommodations

Accommodations are divided into two categories: 1) instructional accommodations used in the classroom to improve SWDs' and second language learners' access to the general education curriculum; and 2) assessment accommodations used to improve accessibility of assessment content to a specific student population, allowing them to access, process, and respond to test items without reducing the learning expectations for the students (Crawford, 2007). Accommodations used during testing should also be used during instruction so that students have the opportunity to experience accommodations prior to using them in a testing situation (Bolt & Thurlow, 2004). Students' lack of familiarity with an accommodation may limit their optimal use of the accommodation on a test. Aligning accommodations for instruction and assessment leads to more effective teaching and learning and should translate into improved outcomes for students⁶(Cox, Herner, Demczyk, & Nieberding, 2006).

IDEIA mandates that for SWDs, accommodations be indicated in the student's IEP. The IEP serves a vital role in assigning accommodations to students and in ensuring that the correct accommodations are available to students during the test(Shriner & DeStefano, 2003; Ysseldyke et al., 2001). In Puerto Rico the *Comité de Programación y Ubicación* (COMPU) team is responsible for student IEPs. Accommodations for LSP students are written into a student's Language Development Plan (LDP) and the *Comité de Revisión de Lenguaje* (CoREL) is the team responsible for outlining the plan and monitoring its progress.

Accommodations are considered fair and reasonable when standardized assessment conditions do not provide an equal opportunity for all students to demonstrate achievement of knowledge and skills (Abedi & Lord, 2001; Acosta, Rivera, Shafer Wilner, & Staehr Fenner, 2008; Butler & Stevens, 2001; Christensen, Carver, VanDeZande, & Lazarus, 2011; Holmes & Duron, 2000). The effectiveness of an accommodation refers to the extent to which: 1) students who are deemed eligible for the

⁶ For the remainder of the report the word accommodations will refer to assessment accommodations, unless otherwise indicated.

accommodation perform better when they use it than when they do not; and 2) performance of students who are deemed not eligible for the accommodation does not change across accommodated and non-accommodated conditions (Kieffer, Lesaux, Rivera, & Francis, 2009; Sireci, Scarpeti, & Li, 2005).

Current empirical research about the effectiveness of accommodations for both SWDs and second language learners is limited and inconclusive. State Education Agencies (SEAs) are free to develop and adopt their own policy on the use of accommodations for general assessments. Allowable accommodations are defined as accommodations which are permitted by a state's accommodation policy and meet the standards of validity and reliability established in the Standards for Educational and Psychological testing (American Education Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council of Measurement in Education, 1999). An allowable accommodation focuses on factors that affect the performance of students who receive it, but which are not themselves the construct being evaluated by the assessment (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006). Changes that can potentially affect the construct being measured by an assessment, and therefore affect the validity of test scores, are called modifications or non-allowed accommodations. Non-regulatory federal guidance prohibits scores obtained by students who use an accommodation that does not maintain the validity of a test score from being counted in school, district, and state participation rates and proficiency scores (Crawford, 2007). Policies on which accommodations are allowable vary from state to state.

Though the importance of alignment between the accommodations indicated in a student's IEP and accommodations they receive during state assessments is "common knowledge," previous research has found discrepancies between assessments accommodations listed in student IEPs and what actually happens on the day of the test (Bottsford-Miller, Thurlow, Evans Stout, & Quenemoen, 2006). One study found that accommodations specified by IEP teams were often not implemented during the assessment (Shriner & DeStefano, 2003). Findings indicated that accommodations such as certain types of assistive technology which are known to be difficult to implement presented challenges, and were not provided on the assessment even though they are called for in IEPs (Rhode Island Department of Education, 2003). Similarly, changes in setting and accommodations that are "personnel-heavy," such as reading items aloud or using a scribe to record answers, were implemented inconsistently, due to a lack of resources (Shriner & DeStefano, 2003; Rhode Island Department of Education, 2003). A commonly found issue with the administration of accommodations was the "bundling of accommodations," by which certain accommodations tended to be administered together whether or not they were prescribed by a student's IEP (Rhode Island Department of Education, 2003; Lazarus, Thompson, & Thurlow, 2006). Studies also found that often if one student in a testing room needs an accommodation (e.g., reader of test directions), the accommodation was provided to everyone in that room (Lazarus et al., 2006). The present study was designed to explore the extent to which assessment accommodations that are prescribed in IEPs of SWDS and LDPs of LSP students are actually provided to students at the time of assessment.

Puerto Rico's Accommodation Policy

According to the 2010-2011 *Manual para el Coordinador de las PPAA*, a document guiding the PRDE regional coordinators during the administration of the PPAA, accommodations written into a student's IEP are considered allowable as long as there is evidence they are used by the student during instruction, and they are in accordance with the *Manual de Acomodos*,⁷ the PRDE's Accommodation

⁷ The *Manual de Acomodos* is adopted and modeled on CCSSO's *Accommodation Manual: How to Select, Administer and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities* (Thompson, Morse, Sharpe, & Hall, 2005).

Manual for SWDs (Puerto Rico Department of Education, 2010). The PRDE’s Accommodation Manual identifies 35 different assessment accommodations for SWDs (see Appendix A); however it does not identify LSP student-specific accommodations. The record of assessment (ROA)—a document collecting information on all students taking the examination along with student accommodation usage—gathers information about 12 standard allowable assessment accommodations for use by SWDs with IEPs and six accommodations for LSP students (see Exhibit 2). SWDs are allowed additional non-standard accommodations on the PPAA, such as the use of a calculator or repeated instructions, as long as they are written into their IEP. However, the PRDE does not collect standardized data about the use of these accommodations.

Exhibit 2. Standard Allowable Accommodations as Documented by the ROA

Accommodations for SWDs	Accommodations for LSP Students
Large print	Extended time
Magnifying equipment	Changes in schedule
Sign language	Read aloud directions
Braille	Highlight directions
Reader	Bilingual dictionary
Scribe	Glossary
Answer in test booklet	
Monitor of test responses	
Change in Setting	
Extended time	
Frequent breaks	

Methodology

During the 2011-2012 administration of the PPAA, between April 20 and April 24, 2012, PRDE personnel trained by edCount staff in conducting observations about accommodations carried out a review of the implementation of assessment accommodation administration throughout all seven regions of Puerto Rico. Observers also collected information from student records (IEPs for SWDs and LDPs for LSP students). Researchers then analyzed data collected during the review and compared the data about the accommodation implemented during the assessment to information collected from the student records.

One limitation of the study is that the observations were conducted by regional PPEA coordinators, who reported what they observed on test day, and in some cases conducted an informal interview with the students in the sample to verify which accommodations the students received. While results may be correct, researchers were not able to confirm whether guidelines for conducting the study were consistently observed. Researchers confirmed that in at least one district, observers did not conduct the full set of observations required by the protocol.

Sampling

School Sample

In December 2011, the PRDE identified one district within each of the seven academic regions to be used in the study. Once PRDE selected the districts, researchers used the 2010-2011 record of assessments (ROA) to make determinations about the school selection per each district. Researchers based the determinations on the frequency and variety of accommodations available per school within the

districts selected. Schools with none or few accommodations were not considered for the review. Researchers generated a list of 35 schools based on the review of the ROA and PRDE staff selected 21 of these schools for inclusion in the sample. The final school sample consisted of three schools from each of the seven districts, including 13 elementary schools, four middle schools, and four “segunda unidad.”⁸ PRDE staff notified the selected schools a day prior to the review that their school could be visited.

Student Sample

Only SWDs with IEPs and LSP students with documented assessment accommodations were eligible to participate in the review. In order to ensure the sample contained a representative variety of accommodations administered during the PPAA, researchers used the 2010-2011 ROA to identify students for the sample. edCount selected the sample for students from grade levels 4-6 and 8 based on their accommodation usage during the 2010-2011 PPAA administration. PRDE regional coordinators selected the student sample for grades levels 3 and 7 since the methods of record keeping do not allow edCount to locate these students based on the 2010-2011 ROA⁹. Researchers and PRDE coordinators identified a maximum of nine students per grade level per school. The number of students per grade level varied significantly depending on how many SWDs with accommodations the school had available. Since the PPAA is only administered once in high school (in grade 11), there were no accurate data about previous years’ accommodation usage for high school students to allow researchers to identify students for the sample. This issue, along with the smaller sampling area and the common practice of high schools opting out of provided accommodations, led researchers not to include high school students in the study.

Originally, researchers identified 421 students for inclusion in the sample. However, 83 of the identified students were not available for the sample, either because they had changed schools or were absent on the day of the test, leaving a total of 338 students in the sample. Furthermore, District 6 only collected information from the students’ IEPs and did not collect information from the ROA about which accommodations were administered during the test; these 34 students were not included in the remaining analyses, leaving a student sample of 304 students. Finally, the sample only captured three LSP students, and only one of these students received testing accommodations, making it impossible to perform any meaningful analysis of accommodation usage for this population. Therefore LSP students were excluded from further analyses, leaving a final student sample total of 301 students.

Protocols and Recording of Student Data

Researchers developed guidelines and a protocol form to gather accommodation data for sampled students (see Appendix B); the protocol form was designed to align with the Puerto Rico IEP to facilitate completion during the school visits. Prior to the visits, researchers trained the PPEA coordinators on the intent of the review, school visit procedures, sampling, and filling out the protocol for each student selected.

Teams consisting of the regional coordinators for the PPEA and a special education facilitator conducted the school site visits to gather data from student records, and observe the administration of the PPAA. The PPEA coordinators and special education facilitators are special education specialists who work with Puerto Rico’s alternate assessment, and they are trained in evaluating IEPs.

⁸ “Segunda unidad” are schools that serve grades K through 9.

⁹ Students in third grade took the PPAA for the first time while students in seventh grade in Puerto Rico move to middle school.

The on-site review consisted of two steps. First, reviewers conducted a “walk through” of the classrooms where each student in the sample was taking the test and completed the protocol, indicating which accommodations the teacher was administering to the student. Upon completing this step, the team accessed the IEPs of the students in the sample. Using the same protocol, reviewers collected information about the assessment accommodations indicated on their IEPs. In some districts observers conducted post-assessment check-ins with the students in the sample to verify what accommodations they received throughout the assessment.

Results

Results are presented for each of the research subquestions, based on observations and IEPs of 301 SWDs (see Exhibit 3) for demographic information about the sample). Researchers coded the names of districts throughout the report, as the purpose of the report is to look at overall regional differences in the administration of accommodations throughout Puerto Rico, rather than evaluate the performance of one particular district in comparison to another.

Sample Demographics

The sample included 301 students (see Exhibit 3). Researchers identified the IDEA disability categories¹⁰ of the students in the sample (see Exhibit 4). Of the 301 students in the sample, the most common IDEA categories were learning disabilities (54.8%), speech language impairment (15.3%), health impairment (11.0%), and intellectual disability (7.6%). Data on the IDEA disability category were missing for ten students in the sample (3.3%). These findings are in accordance with national occurrences of these disabilities, where learning disability (43%), speech or language impairment (19%), health impairment (11%), and intellectual disability (8%) are the most common disabilities (IDEA data, 2008).

¹⁰ IDEA disability categories: autism, deaf-blindness; deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation; multiple disabilities; orthopedic impairment; specific learning disability, speech language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, and other health impairment.

Exhibit 3. Student Sample Demographics by District

District	Total Students	Female (%)	Male (%)	Elementary School (%)	Middle School (%)
1	65	25.0 (38.5)	39.0 (60.0)	5.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)
2	48	10.0 (20.8)	38.0 (79.2)	39.0 (81.3)	9.0 (18.8)
3	38	8.0 (21.1)	30.0 (78.9)	17.0 (44.7)	21.0 (55.3)
4	41	22.0 (53.7)	19.0 (46.3)	32.0 (78.0)	9.0 (55.3)
5	53	13.0 (24.5)	40.0 (75.5)	42.0 (79.2)	11.0 (20.8)
6*	34	15.0 (44.1)	19.0 (55.9)	19.0 (55.9)	12.0 (35.3)
7	56	19.0 (33.9)	37.0 (66.1)	56.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total	335	112.0	222.0	270.0	62.0

*District 6 only conducted a review of the IEPs and not observations of administered accommodations, and was therefore excluded from all remaining analyses.

Exhibit 4. Assessment Accommodations as Indicated on the Sampled IEPs by IDEA Disability Category

Disability	# Students	Extended Time	Reader	Change in setting	Frequent Pauses	Use of Calculator	Monitor of test responses	Answer in Test Booklet	Scribe	Change in itinerary
Learning Disabilities	165.0 (54.8)	152.0 (50.5)	82.0 (27.2)	61.0 (20.3)	11.0 (3.7)	4.0 (1.3)	9.0 (3.0)	6.0 (2.0)	3.0 (1.0)	1.0 (0.3)
Speech Language Impairment	46.0 (15.3)	43.0 (14.3)	19.0 (6.3)	10.0 (3.3)	4.0 (1.3)	1.0 (0.3)	1.0 (0.3)	2.0 (0.7)	1.0 (0.3)	
Health Impairment (e.g., ADHD)	33.0 (11.0)	32.0 (10.6)	21.0 (7.0)	13.0 (4.3)		2.0 (0.7)	3.0 (1.0)	5.0 (1.7)	2.0 (0.7)	
Intellectual Disability	23.0 (7.6)	23.0 (7.6)	18.0 (6.0)	7.0 (2.3)	2.0 (0.7)	11.0 (3.7)	1.0 (0.3)			
Hearing Impairment	3.0 (1.0)	2.0 (0.7)					1.0 (0.3)			
Emotionally Disturbed	3.0 (1.0)	3.0 (1.0)	2.0 (0.7)	1.0 (0.3)						
Autism	2.0 (0.7)	2.0 (0.7)	1.0 (0.3)							
Visual Impairment	2.0 (0.7)	2.0 (0.7)		1.0 (0.3)						
Multiple Disabilities	1.0 (0.3)	1.0 (0.3)	1.0 (0.3)							
Other (Cerebral Palsy)	3.0 (1.0)	3.0 (1.0)	2.0 (0.7)							
IEP indicates more than one specific disability	10.0 (3.3)	9.0 (3.0)	4.0 (1.3)	3.0 (1.0)						
Missing Data	10.0 (3.3)	10.0 (3.3)	4.0 (1.3)	4.0 (1.3)	2.0 (0.7)					
Total	301.0	282.0	154.0	100.0	19.0	18.0	15.0	13.0	6.0	1.0
		(93.7)	(51.2)	(33.6)	(6.3)	(6.0)	(5.0)	(4.3)	(2.0)	(0.3)

Note: Numbers in parenthesis represent percentages based on total sample (n=301). No students with orthopedic impairment, or deaf blindness were included in the sample.

Research Question 1a:

What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled IEPs?

For assessment accommodations, each student's IEP includes a box where the COMPU team must indicate whether the student takes the PPAA with or without accommodations. The COMPU team then writes in the selected accommodations, referencing the list of 11 standard assessment accommodations in the PRDE accommodation manual: 1) extended time, 2) reader, 3) change in setting, 4) frequent pauses, 5) monitor of test responses, 6) answer in test booklet, 7) scribe, 8) large print, 9) sign language, 10) Braille, and 11) change in itinerary. No student in the sample used the magnifying equipment accommodation listed in the ROA.

In addition to these standard accommodations, the COMPU team indicated 10 non-standard accommodations in the IEPs of the student sample, including: 1) change in delivery of test directions, 2) calculator, 3) individual help, 4) encouragement to begin work, 5) other materials, 6) visual organizers, 7) equipment to amplify sound, 8) oral exam, 9) item reduction, and 10) placement test. In total, researchers identified 21 different types of accommodations in the IEPs of the student sample.

Exhibit 5. Frequency of Standard and Non-Standard Assessment Accommodations in the Sampled IEPs

Type of Accommodation	Frequency	Percentage of IEPs*	Percentage of IEP Accommodations
<i>Extended time**</i>	282	93.7	40.6
<i>Reader</i>	154	51.2	22.2
<i>Change of setting</i>	100	33.6	14.5
Change in delivery of test directions	44	14.6	6.3
<i>Frequent pauses</i>	19	6.3	2.7
Calculator	18	6.0	2.6
<i>Monitor of test responses</i>	15	5.0	2.2
Individual help	15	5.0	2.2
<i>Answer in test booklet</i>	13	4.3	1.9
<i>Scribe</i>	6	2.0	0.9
Encourage to begin work	6	2.0	0.9
<i>Large print</i>	4	1.3	0.6
Other materials	4	1.3	0.6
Visual organizers	3	1.0	0.4
Equipment to amplify sound	2	0.7	0.3
Oral exam	2	0.7	0.3
Item reduction	2	0.7	0.3
Placement test	2	0.7	0.3
<i>Sign language</i>	1	0.3	0.1
<i>Change in itinerary</i>	1	0.3	0.1
<i>Braille</i>	1	0.3	0.1

*Percentages of IEPs are based on the total number of IEPs sampled (n=301) and percentages of IEP assessment accommodations are based on the total number of assessment accommodations indicated across the 301 IEPs (n= 694).

**The 11 standard accommodations are in bold and italicized. Accommodations that are not bold and italicized are the non-standard accommodations written into IEPs by the COMPU teams and not listed in the ROA.

The 301 IEPs in the sample indicated a total of 694 accommodations (see Exhibit 5). Of the 694 accommodations, 596 were standard accommodations (85.9%) and 98 were non-standard accommodations (14.1%). More than two thirds (69.4%) of the IEPs reviewed indicated multiple assessment accommodations for an individual student. Approximately one fourth (26.6%) indicated single accommodations, and very few (4.0%) indicated no assessment accommodation. The sampled IEPs typically indicated two accommodations for each student.

Extended time, change in setting, and reader accounted for 77.3% of all assessment accommodations in the sampled IEPs. The other 22.7% of accommodations indicated were distributed with low frequencies across the remaining 20 accommodation types.

The most frequently indicated non-standard accommodation was a change in the delivery of test directions, which included simplified, repeated, and individual directions (6.3%) and the use of a calculator (2.6%). The other materials accommodations included scrap paper for the student, manipulatives, previously solved problems, and a pen which writes in several colors. Researchers compared the non-standard accommodations indicated in the IEPs to PRDE's accommodation manual for SWDs. Only three of the non-standard accommodations (calculator, visual organizers, and equipment to amplify sound) are indicated as allowable non-standard accommodations. The manual does not mention any of the other non-standard accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs. In total, 75 out of the 98 non-standard accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs (76.5% of the non-standard accommodations, 10.8% of all accommodations in the sample) did not match the allowable non-standard accommodations in PRDE's accommodation manual.

Researchers looked at the district-level differences in the distribution of standard accommodations in the sampled IEPs (see Exhibit 6). The sampled IEPs indicated that the extended time accommodation was fairly evenly distributed across the districts, as was the reader accommodation, though its usage was slightly higher in District 5 (26.6%). The usage of other accommodations varied greatly by district. More than 84% of usage of the frequent pauses accommodation came from District 4, while 100% of usage of the answer in test booklet accommodation came from District 1. There was also great variation in the usage of the change in setting accommodation. Whereas 34.0% of the usage came from District 1, only 2.0% percent came from District 5. District 4 only used four accommodation types (extended time, reader, change in setting, and frequent pauses) where as District 1 used eight accommodation types—almost all types with the exception of low frequency accommodations (large print, Braille and sign language).

Exhibit 6. Standard Allowable Accommodations as Indicated in the Sampled IEPs by District*

Type of Accommodation	# of times accommodation was indicated in sampled IEPs (%)**						
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 7	Total***
Extended time	61.0 (21.6)	47.0 (16.7)	35.0 (12.4)	39.0 (13.8)	50.0 (17.7)	50.0 (17.7)	282 (99.9)
Reader	33.0 (21.4)	25.0 (16.2)	18.0 (11.7)	22.0 (14.3)	41.0 (26.6)	15.0 (9.7)	154 (99.9)
Change in setting	34.0 (34.0)	23.0 (23.0)	12.0 (12.0)	19.0 (18.8)	2.0 (2.0)	10.0 (10.0)	100 (99.8)
Frequent Pauses	2.0 (10.5)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (5.3)	16.0 (84.2)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	19 (100.0)
Monitor of test responses	9.0 (60.0)	2.0 (13.3)	2.0 (13.3)	0.0 (0.0)	2.0 (13.3)	0.0 (0.0)	15 (99.9)
Answer in test booklet	13.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	13 (100.0)
Scribe	5.0 (83.3)	1.0 (16.7)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	6 (100.0)
Large Print	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	3.0 (75.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (25.0)	4 (100.0)
Braille	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)
Sign Language	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (100.0)	1 (100.0)
Change in itinerary	1.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)
Total	158.0 (26.5)	99.0 (16.6)	71.0 (11.9)	96.0 (16.1)	95.0 (15.9)	77.0 (12.9)	596(99.9)

*District 6 only conducted a partial review of accommodations, and was therefore excluded from all analyses.

**Percentages based on total of each accommodation type.

***Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

The non-standard accommodations indicated in the IEPs also varied by district (see Exhibit 7). In District 5 only eight IEPs indicated non-standard accommodations and the only type of non-standard accommodation indicated was a change in the delivery of test directions, whereas in District 3, 26 IEPs indicated non-standard accommodations, including six different non-standard accommodation types. In District 1, six IEPs called for students to be provided encouragement to begin work, an accommodation that was not given in any other district. Similarly, District 1 was the only district to provide visual organizers, an oral exam, and item reduction as accommodations to students. District 3 offered an accommodation to students which observers labeled as a placement test. Researchers were not able to confirm what this accommodation consisted of, and this accommodation only appeared on IEPs from District 3. The only accommodation indicated in every district was the change in delivery of test directions, though the implementation of this accommodation differed from district to district. In District 1, IEPs indicated for students to receive repeated test directions, whereas in District 7, IEPs indicated students should be provided with clear test directions. Also, there was a difference in the

frequency of usage of the calculator accommodation, with only three districts (Districts 2, 3, and 4) providing students with this accommodation.

Exhibit 7. Non-standard Accommodations as Indicated in the Sampled IEPs by District*

Type of Accommodation	# of times accommodation was indicated in sampled IEPs (%)**						Total***
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 7	
Change in delivery of test directions	4.0 (9.1)	11.0 (25.0)	12.0 (27.3)	1.0 (2.3)	8.0 (18.2)	8.0 (18.2)	44 (100.1)
Calculator	0.0 (0.0)	5.0 (27.8)	7.0 (38.8)	6.0 (33.3)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	18 (99.9)
Individual help	1.0 (6.7)	1.0 (6.7)	3.0 (20.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	10.0 (66.7)	15 (100.1)
Encouraged to begin work	6.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	6 (100.0)
Other materials	1.0 (25.0)	1.0 (25.0)	1.0 (25.0)	1.0 (25.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	4 (100.0)
Visual organizers	3.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	3 (100.0)
Equipment to amplify sound	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (50.0)	2 (100.0)
Oral exam	2.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	2 (100.0)
Item reduction	2.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	2 (100.0)
Placement test	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	2.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	2 (100.0)
Regional Totals	19.0 (19.4)	18.0 (18.3)	26.0 (26.5)	8.0 (8.2)	8.0 (8.2)	19.0 (19.4)	98 (100.0)

*District 6 only conducted a partial review of accommodations, and was therefore excluded from all analyses.

**Percentages based on total of each accommodation type.

***Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Research Question 1b:

How are the frequently-used standard accommodations implemented?

In order to answer this research question, researchers looked at observations made and recorded on the protocol by the PEAA coordinators during the 2011-2012 administration of the PPAA. Researchers looked at the most frequently administered accommodations—extended time, reader and change in setting—to get an idea of how test administrators (i.e., teachers) implemented these accommodations. Researchers looked at whether test administrators implemented accommodations as standalone accommodations or bundled them with other accommodations, and whether they implemented the accommodations individually to students, or to a group of students. Researchers also looked at comments left by PPEA coordinators to get an understanding of how teachers implemented the accommodations.

Extended Time

Out of the 289 times PPEA coordinators observed the administration of the extended time accommodation, it was administered as a standalone accommodation 55 times (19.0%; see Exhibit 8). The remaining 234 times (80.9%) this accommodation was bundled with other accommodations. On average, extended time was bundled with at least one other accommodation; it was bundled with the reader accommodation 163 times (56.4%) and with the change of setting accommodation 151 times (52.2%). All three accommodations were bundled together 84 times (29.1%).

Exhibit 8. Extended Time when Bundled with Other Accommodations

Accommodation	n	%*
Reader	163	56.4
Change in setting	151	52.2
Both	84	29.1

*Percentages are based on total usage of the extended time accommodation (n=289)

Researchers also looked at whether test administrators implemented the extended time accommodation individually to students, or in a group setting (see Exhibit 9). About 20% of the time, the accommodation was implemented to students individually, and 61.6% of the time it was implemented to a group of students. For 54 of times that the accommodation was observed, observers did not indicate whether it was administered individually or in groups.

Exhibit 9. Extended Time Accommodation Implemented Individually or in a Group

Implementation	n	%*
Individual	57	19.7
Group	178	61.6
No data available	54	18.7

*Percentages are based on total usage of the extended time accommodation (n=289)

PPEA coordinators left 74 comments about the administration of the extended time accommodation. Based on the comments, the implementation of the accommodation ranged from students taking the exam in the regular classroom with other students to individual administration in a resource room. The majority of the comments indicated that students who needed extended time received the accommodation outside of the regular classroom, in the resource room. Some comments specified that students started taking the exam in the general classroom, and at the end of the administration period were moved to a resource room with other students who needed more time. PPEA coordinators also noted that about nine students in the sample were offered extended time accommodation, but were able to finish the exam in the regular time allotted. Researchers were not able to confirm whether the same was true for any other students in the sample.

Reader

PPEA coordinators observed the reader accommodation 165 times; every time test administrators implemented this accommodation, it was bundled with other accommodations (see Exhibit 10). On average, reader was bundled with at least one of two other accommodations. The reader accommodation was bundled with extended time 163 times (98.9%) and with the change of setting accommodation 86 times (52.1%). Researchers were not able to confirm if the remaining 47.8% received the accommodation in the regular general classroom setting, or if the accommodation was in fact

administered in a different setting, but that PPEA coordinators did not note the change of setting accommodation. All three accommodations were bundled together 84 times (50.9%).

Exhibit 10. Reader Accommodation when Bundled with Other Accommodations

Accommodation	n	%*
Extended time	163	98.8
Change in setting	86	52.1
Both	84	50.9

*Percentages are based on total usage of the reader accommodation (n=165)

Researchers also looked at whether test administrators implemented the reader accommodation individually to students, or in a group setting (see Exhibit 11). About 20% of the time, the test administrators implemented the accommodation to students individually, and 77.6% of the time they implemented the reader to a group of students. In five instances where PPEA coordinators observed the accommodation, they did not indicate whether it was administered individually or in groups (3.0%).

Exhibit 11. Reader Accommodation Implemented Individually or in a Group

Implementation	n	%*
Individual	32	19.4
Group	128	77.6
No data available	5	3.0

*Percentages are based on total usage of the reader accommodation (n=165)

PPEA coordinators left 56 comments about the administration of the reader accommodation. The majority of the comments specified that students received the accommodation in groups that ranged from two to 19 students in size. Based on the comments, when test administrators provided the accommodation outside of the regular classroom it was usually provided in the resource room, library, or in the school auditorium. Three PPEA coordinators left comments that the teacher provided the accommodation in the general classroom to one student, with the remaining students who did not require the accommodation in the same classroom. PPEA coordinators also noted that one student received the accommodation even though it was not indicated on the student’s IEP because a special education teacher indicated the student could not read at grade level. Researchers were not able to confirm whether this was a common practice or if it was only applicable to one student in the sample.

Change in Setting

Out of all the standard accommodations in the sample, researchers found data about the change in setting accommodation to be the most inconsistent. There appeared to be some confusion on the part of PPEA coordinators as to what constituted a change of setting, as evidenced by the number of observers who did not indicate observing a change in setting accommodation, but then indicated in other portions of the protocol that they observed a student taking the test in a setting other than the general classroom. Therefore it is possible that more students in the sample actually received this accommodation than indicated throughout the report.

Due to this inconsistency in the data, researchers used evidence that a change of setting accommodation was administered, even if PPEA coordinators did not specifically indicate observing a change of setting on the protocol. For example, many PPEA coordinators did not indicate observing the change in setting accommodation, but instead wrote in that the student received a change in desk

location, or received preferential seating in the classroom. Researchers treated all of these observations as a change in setting accommodation. Also, researchers counted any time PPEA coordinators indicated that an accommodation was administered in a setting other than the general classroom as a change in setting, regardless of whether observers specifically indicated observing a change in setting accommodation. For example, if comments next to the administration of the reader accommodation indicated the teacher provided the accommodation provided in the resource room, researchers treated this as evidence that a change in setting occurred.

Researchers identified the use of the change in setting accommodation 156 times in the data, and in 153 instances (98.1%), teachers administered the change of setting accommodation bundled with other accommodations (see Exhibit 12). On average, change in setting was bundled with two other accommodations. Change of setting was bundled with extended time 151 times (96.8%) and with the reader accommodation 86 times (55.1%).

Exhibit 12. Change in Setting Accommodation when Bundled with other Accommodations

Accommodation	n	%*
Extended time	151	96.8
Reader	86	55.1
Both	84	53.8

*Percentages are based on total usage of the change in setting accommodation (n=156)

Researchers looked at whether students received a change of setting in the regular classroom, or whether the students took the assessment outside of the regular classroom (see Exhibit 13). In 46.2% of the sample, students received a change in desk location. In 39.7% of instances where students received a change in setting, students took the assessment in the resource room, and in 7.7% of instances, students took the assessment in the library. In 6.4% of instances, observers did not indicate where the student took the assessment.

Exhibit 13. Change in Setting Accommodation by Setting Type

Setting Type	n	%*
Change in desk location	72	46.2
Resource room	62	39.7
Library	12	7.7
No data available	10	6.4

*Percentages are based on total usage of the change in setting accommodation (n=156)

Research Question 1c:

What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?

Researchers compared data for the 11 different types of standard assessment accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs to those observed by PPEA coordinators and recorded on the protocol during the 2011-2012 administration of the PPAA (see Exhibit 14). The 301 sampled IEPs indicated 596 standard accommodations; according to the data collected using the protocol, PPEA coordinators observed test administrators implementing 665 standard accommodations to the SWDs in the sample. If researchers observed the same type of assessment accommodation indicated in both a student’s IEP observed by the PPEA coordinator during the PPAA, researchers considered them to be aligned. If an accommodation indicated in the IEP was not observed by the PPEA coordinators and noted in the

protocol, researchers considered it a Type V¹¹ misalignment. If the PPEA coordinators observed the administration of an accommodation, but the accommodation was not indicated in the IEP, researchers considered it a Type VI misalignment.

Results reveal that 81.7% of assessment accommodations indicated in the students' IEPs were aligned to the accommodations that PPEA coordinators observed during the administration of the PPAA. Only 4.2% of accommodations were indicated in the sampled IEPs, but not observed by the PPEA coordinators during test administration (Type V misalignment). About 14.1% of the accommodations that PPEA coordinators observed teachers administering during the PPAA were not indicated in the IEP (Type VI misalignment).

Overall, alignment was high (80% or more) for extended time, reader, monitor of test responses, answer in the test booklet, large print, and change in itinerary. When looking at the accommodations administered to more than one student, the most frequently misaligned accommodation was the change in setting. Of the 100 IEPs in which this assessment accommodation was called for, test administrators provided the accommodation during the assessment 88 times (88.0%). In 12 cases (7.7 % of all the times the accommodation was observed) the accommodation was indicated in the IEP and not provided during the assessment (Type V misalignment); in 68 other cases (43.6% of all the times the accommodation was observed), this accommodation was provided during the assessment but not called for in the IEP (Type VI misalignment). In only 52.4% of the cases in which PPEA coordinators observed this accommodation during test administration was it also indicated in the sampled IEPs.

¹¹ The numbering of the types of misalignment is in accordance with the nomenclature used in a previous report of accommodation alignment "The Review of Accommodations Selection for Students with Disabilities and Limited Spanish Proficiency Students for the *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA)*". Type I misalignment refers to accommodations listed as instructional accommodations in the IEP, and not as assessment accommodations, Type II misalignment refers to accommodations listed in the IEP as assessment accommodations, and not instructional accommodations, Type III misalignment refers to assessment accommodations being indicated in a student's IEP, but not in the ROA, and Type IV refers to accommodations being administered according to the ROA but not being indicated in the student's IEP.

Exhibit 14. Alignment of Accommodations between IEP and those Observed During the 2011-2012 PPAA

Type of Accommodation	Total # of Accommodations	Listed as Accommodation in the IEP	Observed as Used During the PPAA	Aligned Accommodations (%)	Misaligned Accommodations (%)	
					Type V (IEP, not observed)	Type VI (observed, not in the IEP)
Extended time	290.0	282.0	289.0	281.0 (96.9)	1.0 (0.3)	8.0 (2.8)
Reader	172.0	154.0	165.0	147.0 (85.5)	7.0 (4.1)	18.0 (10.5)
Change of setting	168.0	100.0	156.0	88.0 (52.4)	12.0 (7.4)	68.0 (40.5)
Frequent pauses	20.0	19.0	16.0	15.0 (75.0)	4.0 (20.0)	1.0 (5.0)
Monitor of test responses	15.0	15.0	13.0	13.0 (86.7)	2.0 (13.3)	0.0 (0.0)
Answer in test booklet	14.0	13.0	13.0	12.0 (85.7)	1.0 (7.4)	1.0 (7.1)
Scribe	6.0	6.0	4.0	4.0 (66.7)	2.0 (33.3)	0.0 (0.0)
Large print	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.0 (80.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (20.0)
Sign language	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)	1.0 (50.0)
Change in itinerary	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Braille	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total	694.0	596.0	665.0	567.0 (81.7)	29.0 (4.2)	98.0 (14.1)

Note: The percentages of aligned and misaligned accommodations are listed in parenthesis and are based on the total of all the aligned and misaligned accommodations.

An analysis of the district-level differences in alignment of accommodations in the IEP and those observed during the 2011-2012 PPAA administration revealed that observed accommodations tend to be consistently aligned with the IEP throughout the seven districts (see Exhibit 15). District 1 had the highest level of type V misalignment (i.e., accommodations indicated in the IEP were not observed as during test administration) whereas District 7 had the highest level of type VI misalignment (i.e. accommodations observed during test administration were not listed in the sampled IEPs). Districts 2 and 5 had a higher level of type V misalignment, where as Districts 1, 3, 4, and 7 had a higher level of type VI misalignment.

Exhibit 15. District-level Differences in Alignment between Accommodations Listed in the IEP and those Observed During the 2011-2012 PPAA Administration

District	Total # of Accommodations	Listed as Accommodation in the IEP	Observed During the PPAA	Aligned Accommodations (%)	Misaligned Accommodations (%)	
					Type V (IEP, not observed)	Type VI (observed, not in the IEP)
1	173.0	158.0	162.0	147.0 (85.0)	11.0 (6.4)	15.0 (8.7)
2	101.0	99.0	98.0	96.0 (95.0)	3.0 (3.0)	2.0 (2.0)
3	95.0	71.0	93.0	69.0 (72.6)	2.0 (2.1)	24.0 (25.3)
4	111.0	96.0	105.0	90.0 (81.1)	6.0 (5.4)	15.0 (13.5)
5	99.0	95.0	93.0	89.0 (89.9)	6.0 (6.1)	4.0 (4.0)
7	115.0	77.0	114.0	76.0 (66.1)	1.0 (1.0)	38.0 (33.0)
Total	694.0	596.0	665.0	567.0 (81.7)	29.0 (4.2)	98.0 (14.1)

Note: The percentages of aligned and misaligned accommodations are listed in parenthesis and are based on the total of all the aligned and misaligned accommodations; District 6 only conducted a partial review of accommodations, and was therefore excluded from all analyses.

Research Question 1d:**What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?**

Researchers looked at the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as indicated in student IEPs and accommodations that PPEA coordinators observed test administrators implementing during the PPAA (see Exhibit 16). More than 50% of the non-standard accommodations observed during the PPAA matched the accommodations indicated in the student IEPs. There was a higher rate of Type V misalignment for non-standard accommodations than for standard accommodations. Nearly 30% of the accommodations indicated in the IEPs were not administered during the PPAA (type V misalignment). Close to 20% of the accommodations observed as administered were not indicated in student IEPs. The non-standard accommodation with the highest rate of type V misalignment was the individual help accommodation; in 11 out of the 15 instances (73.3%) where a student's IEP that indicated the accommodation, the PPEA coordinator did not observe the administration of the accommodation during testing. The change in delivery of test directions accommodation had a high rate of Type VI misalignment. In 18 of the instances where the PPEA coordinator observed accommodation during test administration, it was not indicated in the IEP (38.3%).

An analysis of the district-level differences in alignment of non-standard accommodations in the IEP and those observed during the 2011-2012 PPAA administration revealed that all six districts had very different patterns of alignment (see Exhibit 17). Whereas 100.0% of the non-standard accommodations indicated in District 2 IEPs matched those that were administered during the assessment, only 26.1% of the accommodations indicated in the IEPs of students in District 5 matched those observed during testing. District 3 had the highest rate of type V misalignment; District 5 had the highest rate of type VI misalignment.

Exhibit 16. Alignment of Assessment Accommodations between Sampled IEPs and Administration during the 2011-2012 PPAA

Type of Accommodation	Total # of Accommodations	Listed as Accommodation in the IEP	Observed During the PPAA	Aligned Accommodations (%)	Misaligned Accommodations (%)	
					Type V (IEP, not administered)	Type VI (administered, not in the IEP)
Change in delivery of test directions	62.0	44.0	47.0	29.0 (46.8)	15.0 (24.2)	18.0 (29.0)
Calculator	21.0	18.0	15.0	12.0 (57.1)	6.0 (28.6)	3.0 (14.3)
Individual help	16.0	15.0	5.0	4.0 (25.0)	11.0 (68.8)	1.0 (6.3)
Encourage to begin work	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Other materials	6.0	4.0	5.0	3.0 (50.0)	1.0 (16.7)	2.0 (33.3)
Visual organizers	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Equipment to amplify sound	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Oral exam	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0 (50.0)	1.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Item reduction	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0 (50.0)	1.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Placement test	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0 (50.0)	1.0 (50.0)	0.0 (0.0)
Total	122.0	98.0	86.0	62.0 (50.8)	36.0 (29.5)	24.0 (19.7)

Note: The percentages of aligned and misaligned accommodations are listed in parenthesis and are based on the total of all the aligned and misaligned accommodations.

Exhibit 17. District-level Differences in Alignment between Accommodations Listed in the IEP and those Observed During the 2011-12 PPAA Administration

District	Total # of Accommodations	Listed as Accommodation in the IEP	Observed During the PPAA	Aligned Accommodations (%)	Misaligned Accommodations (%)	
					Type V (IEP, not observed)	Type VI (observed, not in the IEP)
1	21.0	19.0	17.0	15.0 (71.4)	4.0 (19.0)	2.0 (9.5)
2	18.0	18.0	18.0	18.0 (100.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)
3	26.0	26.0	10.0	10.0 (38.4)	16.0 (61.5)	0.0 (0.0)
4	11.0	8.0	7.0	4.0 (36.4)	4.0 (36.4)	3.0 (27.3)
5	21.0	8.0	21.0	6.0 (26.1)	2.0 (8.7)	15.0 (65.2)
7	25.0	19.0	13.0	9.0 (39.1)	10.0 (43.5)	4.0 (17.4)
Total	122.0	98.0	86.0	62.0 (50.8)	36.0 (29.5)	24.0 (19.7)

Note: The percentages of aligned and misaligned accommodations are listed in parenthesis and are based on the total of all the aligned and misaligned accommodations; District 6 only conducted a partial review of accommodations, and was therefore excluded from all analyses.

Summary and Discussion

Research Question 1a:

What assessment accommodations are indicated in the sampled students' IEPs?

The sample consisted of 11 standard accommodations types and 10 non-standard accommodation types. In total, the sampled IEPs indicated 694 different accommodations: 85.9% of them were standard accommodations, and 14.1 % were non-standard accommodations. The three most frequently used standard accommodations were extended time, change in setting, and reader, accounting for 77.3% of the sample. The most frequently indicated non-standard accommodations were changed in delivery of test directions (6.3%) and the use of a calculator (2.6%).

Out of the 10 types of non-standard accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs, only three types—calculator, visual organizers, and equipment to amplify sound—are indicated in PRDE's accommodation manual, with 10.8% of the accommodations listed in the sample IEPs not listed in the manual. Of these non-standard accommodations, item reduction, oral exam, and individual help should be evaluated to ensure they are not affecting the construct being measured or providing an unfair disadvantage to a student, thereby affecting the validity of the test.

There was district-level variation in the standard accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs. The only accommodation consistently used throughout the districts was the extended time accommodation. All usage of the answer in test booklet accommodation came from District 1, while the majority of the frequent pauses accommodation came from District 4. The sampled IEPs indicated a significant difference across districts in the usage of the change in setting accommodation, with 34.0% from District 1 and only 2.0% from District 5. Though it is possible that these findings point to regional differences in the SWD populations across districts in Puerto Rico, these findings could also point to regional differences in the administration of certain accommodations, leading to over or under prescription of standard accommodations in some districts. This could potentially result in a situation where SWDs need accommodations that they do not receive, or receive accommodations they do not need, due to regional variations in assigning accommodations in IEPs.

There was a difference in the frequency and types of non-standard accommodations administered across districts. Although the PRDE accommodation manual does not include any accommodations calling for a change in the administration of test directions, the sampled IEPs in each district indicated some accommodation of this type, including repeated test directions, clarification of test directions, and simplified test directions. The calculator was the second most frequently indicated non-standard accommodation in the sampled IEPs, indicated as an accommodation in three districts. While the only non-standard accommodation indicated in the sampled IEPs from District 5 was the change in the administration of test directions, District 3 indicated six different types of non-standard accommodations. These findings may suggest differences in regional practices in the administration of non-standard accommodations. Further research is needed to explore all of the non-standard accommodations and make sure none of them jeopardize the validity of test scores.

Research Question 1b:

How are the frequently used standard accommodations implemented?

Researchers examined data from observations of the implementation of test accommodations for the three most frequently used accommodation types: extended time, reader, and change in setting. Findings confirmed that the bundling of accommodations is a standard practice in Puerto Rico. The

majority of the time, test administrators implemented these accommodations along with other accommodations and not individually. The extended time accommodation was bundled with the reader accommodation in 56.4% of instances, and with the change in setting accommodation in 52.2% of instances. The reader accommodation was administered in a bundle with another accommodation in 100.0% of instances: 98.9% of instances with extra time, and 52.1% of instances with change of setting. In 50.9% of the instances, the reader accommodation was bundled with both extended time and a change in setting. Researchers could not confirm if in the remaining 47.8% of instances also included a change of setting.

Findings also showed that in a majority of instances where test administrators implemented these accommodations, they implement them to several students at a time. The administration of the reader accommodation was particularly varied; in some instances, teachers administered this accommodation to individual students, and in other instances to a group as large as 19 students. The PPAA accommodation manual recommends administering the reader accommodation individually to students when possible, to allow them to ask questions and ensure they understand what is being read (Puerto Rico Department of Education, 2004), making large-group administration less than ideal. In at least three cases, teachers administered the reader accommodation to a student in a regular classroom with other students present who did not need the accommodation. Though PPEA coordinators observed very few instances of this practice, it is never appropriate, as the reader has the potential to distract the other students and affect their test scores. Observers also noted that one student inappropriately received the accommodation because a special education teacher indicated the student could not read at grade level, even though the accommodation was not indicated on the IEP.

The most inconsistently implemented accommodation was the change of setting accommodation. Often times, though observers did not explicitly note a change of setting accommodation, contextual evidence on the protocol form suggested that a change of setting occurred in order to administer a different accommodation. The practice of both administering the reader accommodation and changing the setting from the general classroom to the resource room appeared to be common across the island.

Research Question 1c:

What is the alignment between the standard allowed accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?

Alignment between the standard allowable accommodations listed in the sampled IEPs and what the PPEA coordinators observed during the PPAA administration was high throughout the whole island. More than 81% of the standard allowable accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs were aligned to the observed accommodations during the assessment. The PPEA coordinators did not observe the administration of accommodations indicated in the sampled IEPs in only 4.2% of instances. The most misaligned accommodation was the change in setting accommodation. The data suggests that in many instances, test administrators inadvertently administered a change in setting accommodation in order to implement a different accommodation such as a reader or extended time, regardless of whether that student's IEP indicated the need for a change in setting. As a result, in 40.5% of the instances where PPEA coordinators observed a change of setting accommodation, this accommodation was not indicated in the student's IEP. Overall, accommodations were consistently aligned between the sampled IEPs and observed administration during testing throughout the island.

Research Question 1d:

What is the alignment between the non-standard accommodations as listed in the sampled IEPs and those that were administered during the assessment?

As anticipated, the rate of alignment between the non-standard accommodations listed in the sample IEPs and those observed during the administration of the PPAA was lower than that of the standard allowable accommodations. Just over 50% of the non-standard accommodations observed during the PPAA matched accommodations indicated in the student IEPs. Close to 30% of the accommodations indicated in the IEPs were not observed during the administration of the PPAA (type V misalignment). Nearly 20% of the accommodations observed during the test administration were not indicated in sampled IEPs (type VI misalignment). The individual help accommodation had the highest rate of type V misalignment, with observed administration in only 4 out of the 15 cases it was called for in the sampled IEPs. However, this misalignment may be explained by the fact that this non-standard accommodation is not approved by the PPAA accommodations manual, and therefore is not an allowable accommodation. While only three types of non-standard accommodations—the calculator, visual organizers, and equipment to amplify sound—are approved by the PPAA accommodation manual, findings indicate that several students received non-allowable non-standard accommodations during the test administration.

Recommendations

Given the findings of this study, researchers offer recommendations in two areas:

1. Provide training to teachers and IEP teams (COMPU).

The PRDE should review its accommodations training practices to ensure that they provide educators with a clear understanding of the process for selecting and recording allowable accommodations for assessment. This training will ensure that accommodations provided to SWDs are based on their individual student needs and not on regional accommodation policies, and should encompass:

- The purpose of accommodations and a clear identification of the standard allowable accommodations. In particular, the training should clarify the use of the change in setting accommodation, the implementation of which was found to be the most inconsistent in this study; and
- The rules and regulations related to the selection of assessment accommodations for individual students and specific purposes.

2. Monitor and evaluate policies related to accommodations decisions.

The PRDE should monitor the consistency of the alignment between assessment accommodations indicated in student IEPs and those provided to students during the PPAA. Specifically, the PRDE should monitor and evaluate the use of non-standard accommodations across all districts. This study found that several non-standard accommodations that are not aligned with PRDE's accommodation policy were implemented during the 2011-2012 PPAA administration.

The PRDE should conduct accommodations reviews during the assessment window or afterward, and these findings should inform how the COMPU records the use of accommodations for assessment on the IEP. The monitoring activities conducted by the PRDE to review accommodations should involve: 1) direct observation of test administrations and the provision of accommodations on the day of

assessment; 2) on-site monitoring visits that include record reviews; and 3) interviews with students, teachers, and administrators about the selection and effectiveness of accommodations.

The PRDE can use this information to inform their policies for accommodations selection and use on a regular basis, to support good decision making, and to provide documentation to meet federal requirements. This evaluation and subsequent reports should: 1) include a timeline of analysis of findings from monitoring and assessment data (empirical evidence); 2) apply existing and new research related to best practices for accommodations; and 3) include an expert panel review of accommodation guidance and training to support continuous improvement of practices.

References

- Abedi, J., & Lord. (2001). The language factor in mathematics tests. *Applied Measurement in Education, 14*(3), 219–234.
- Acosta, Rivera, Shafer Wilner, & Staehr Fenner. (2008). *Best practices in state assessment policies for accommodating English language learners: A Delphi study*. Arlington, VA: The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education.
- American Education Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council of Measurement in Education. (1999). *The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. Washington DC: AERA Publications.
- Bolt, S., & Thurlow, M. (2004). Five of the most frequently allowed testing accommodations in state policy: Synthesis of research. *Remedial and Special Education, 25*(3), 141–152.
- Bottsford-Miller, N., Thurlow, M., Evans Stout, K., & Quenemoen, R. (2006). *A comparison of IEP/504 accommodations under classroom and standardized testing conditions: A preliminary report on SEELS data* (Synthesis Report 63). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.
- Butler, F., & Stevens, R. (2001). Standardized assessment of the content knowledge of English language learners K-12: current trends and old dilemmas. *Language Testing, 18*(4), 409–427.
- Christensen, L., Carver, W., VanDeZande, J., & Lazarus, S. (2011). *Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate the use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Cox, M., Herner, J., Demczyk, M., & Nieberding, J. (2006). Provision of testing accommodations for students with disabilities on statewide assessments: Statistical links with participation and discipline rates. *Remedial and Special Education, 27*(6), 346–354.
- Crawford, L. (2007). *State Testing accommodations: A look at their Value and Validity*. New York: National Center for Learning Disabilities.
- Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Research-based recommendations for the use of accommodations in large-scale assessments*. Practical guidelines for the education of English Language Learners (pp. 1–56). Houston, TX: Center on Instruction.
- Holmes, D., & Duron, S. (2000). *LEP Students and High Stakes Assessment*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/rcd/BE021069/LEP_Students_and_High_Stakes.pdf
- Kane, M. (2006). Validation. In R. L. Brenna (Ed.), *Educational Measurement* (pp. 17–64). New York: American Council on Education/Macmillan.
- Kieffer, M., Lesaux, N., Rivera, M., & Francis, D. J. (2009). Effectiveness of accommodations for English Language Learners taking large-scale assessments. *Review of Education Research, 79*(3), 1168–1201.
- Lazarus, S., Thompson, S., & Thurlow, M. (2006). *How Student Access Accommodations in Assessment and Instruction: Results of a Survey of Special Education Teachers*. EPRRI Issue Brief. College Park, Maryland: Educational Policy Reform Research Institute.

- Puerto Rico Department of Education. (2004). *Manual de Acomodos*. San Juan: Puerto Rico Department of Education.
- Puerto Rico Department of Education. (2010). *Manual para el Coordinador de las PPAA*. San Juan: Puerto Rico Department of Education.
- Rhode Island Department of Education. (2003). *Rhode Island assessment accommodation study: Research summary*. Minneapolis, MN: National Center for Educational Outcomes. Retrieved from <http://education.umn.edu/NCEO/TopicAreas/Accommodations/RhodeIsland.htm>
- Shriner, J., & DeStefano, L. (2003). Participation and accommodation in state assessment: The role of Individualized Educational Programs. *Exceptional Children, 69*(2), 147–161.
- Sireci, S., Scarpeti, S., & Li, S. (2005). Test accommodations for students with disabilities: An analysis of the interaction hypothesis. *Review of Educational Research, 75*, 457–490.
- Thompson, S., Morse, A., Sharpe, M., & Hall, S. (2005). *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities*. CCSSO State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards Assessing Special Education Students. Retrieved from http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/accommodations_manual.asp
- Ysseldyke, J., Thurlow, M., Bielinski, J., House, A., Moody, M., & Haigh, J. (2001). The relationship between instructional and assessment accommodations in an inclusive state accountability system. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(3), 212–220.

Appendix A: Puerto Rico Assessment Accommodations according to Accommodations Manual

Visual Accommodations	Tactile Accommodations	Auditory Accommodations	Multisensory Accommodations	Modified Forms of Response	Environmental and Location Accommodations
Large-print version	Braille	Human reader	Videotapes and video descriptions (a descriptive narrative of key visual elements)	Scribe	Reduced distractions to the student
Equipment to enlarge text	Tactile graphics	Cassette or CD	Screen reader program	Word processor	Reduced distractions to other students
Sign language		Books on tape	Visual keys (for students who are blind/hard of hearing)	Voice to text	Change of location to help with physical access or use of special equipment
		Recorded books	Annotations, outlines, and instructions	Braille or electronic Braille notebook	Time and itinerary accommodations
		Equipment to amplify sound	Materials that “speak” (classroom materials with auditory components)	Note-takers (another student or an electronic note-taker)	Extended time
				Recorder	Frequent or multiple pauses
				Answer in the test booklet	Change of itinerary or order of activities
				Test answer supervision (to ensure the student correctly chooses their answer on the answer sheet)	
				Materials or equipment used to solve or organize answers	
				Equipment to make calculations	
				Grammatical and spelling tools (such as a dictionary)	
				Visual organizers	
				Graphic organizers	

Appendix B: Data Collection Protocol

Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico y edCount, LLC

Verificación de acomodados establecidos para los estudiantes con impedimentos y Limitaciones Lingüísticas en Español (LSP) durante las PPAA.

1 Código del estudiante:		Fecha:					
2 Coordinador PPEA:		Fac. Doc. de Educación Especial:					
3 Información sobre la escuela							
Región Educativa	<input type="checkbox"/> Arecibo	<input type="checkbox"/> Bayamón	<input type="checkbox"/> Caguas	<input type="checkbox"/> Humacao	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayagüez	<input type="checkbox"/> Ponce	<input type="checkbox"/> San Juan
Nombre de la Escuela							
4 Información demográfica del estudiante							
Género	<input type="checkbox"/> Femenino			<input type="checkbox"/> Masculino			
El grado del estudiante durante la administración de las PPAA (primavera 2012)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3er grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 4to grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 5to grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 6to grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 7mo grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 8vo grado	<input type="checkbox"/> 11mo grado
PEI o Plan LSP	PEI / Fecha del Plan:			Plan LSP/ Fecha del Plan:			
5 Plan de educación individualizada (PEI) o Plan LLE (LSP por sus siglas en inglés)							
Indique el impedimento (sección III.B)							
Acomodos que necesita el estudiante (sección VI.F)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiempo adicional	<input type="checkbox"/> Uso de ábaco		<input type="checkbox"/> Uso de letra agrandada			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Uso de calculadora	<input type="checkbox"/> Ubicación del pupitre		<input type="checkbox"/> Uso del Braille			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Uso de grabadora	<input type="checkbox"/> Equipos de alta tecnología		<input type="checkbox"/> Uso de audio			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Otros:						
Programa de Medición por el cual se evaluará el progreso académico y funcional del estudiante (sección VI.G)	Programa de Medición Regular			Evaluación Alterna			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sin acomodados	<input type="checkbox"/> Con acomodados		<input type="checkbox"/> Alineada con estándares de aprovechamiento alternos (portfolio)			
Acomodos durante la Evaluación (Categorizados utilizando la sección VI.G)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tiempo extendido	<input type="checkbox"/> Pausas frecuentes o múltiples		<input type="checkbox"/> Anotador			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lector	<input type="checkbox"/> Responder en el folleto de prueba		<input type="checkbox"/> Lenguaje de señas			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cambio de ambiente y lugar	<input type="checkbox"/> Cambio de itinerario u orden de la prueba		<input type="checkbox"/> Braille			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor para respuestas de prueba	<input type="checkbox"/> Equipo para agrandar		<input type="checkbox"/> Letra agrandada			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Otros:						

Código del estudiante:		Fecha:			
Acomodos durante la Evaluación para estudiantes con limitaciones lingüísticas en Español documentados en el Plan LLE (LSP siglas en inglés).					
6 Información sobre los acomodos administrados durante las PPAA 2011-2012 para los estudiantes con impedimentos					
Acomodos administrados durante las PPAA	Tiempo extendido	Pausas frecuentes o múltiples	Anotador	Otros Acomodos:	
	Lector	Responder en el folleto de prueba	Lenguaje de señas		
	Cambio de ambiente y lugar	Cambio de itinerario u orden de la prueba	Braille		
	Monitor para respuestas de prueba	Equipo para agrandar	Letra agrandada		
Tiempo Extendido <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo Comentario:		Lector <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo Comentario:		Cambio de ambiente y lugar <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo Comentario:	
				Monitor para respuestas de prueba <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado individualmente <input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo Comentario:	

<p>Pausas Frecuentes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Responder en el folleto de prueba:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Cambio de itinerario/orden de la prueba</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Equipo para agrandar</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>
<p>Anotador</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Lenguaje de señas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Braille</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado de forma individual</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado en grupo</p> <p>Comentario:</p>	<p>Letra Agrandada</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementado</p> <p>Comentario:</p>

Observaciones sobre los acomodados adicionales:

7 Información sobre los acomodados administrados durante el PPAA 2011-2012 para los estudiantes con Limitaciones Lingüísticas en Español (LSP)

Observaciones sobre los acomodados administrados durante el PPAA para los estudiantes (LSP):

Appendix C: Data Collection Guidelines

Introducción

Varias leyes federales garantizan el cumplimiento de los acomodados que requieren los estudiantes con diferentes tipos de impedimentos y los estudiantes identificados con Limitaciones Lingüísticas en Español (LSP). La Ley “No Child Left Behind Act” (NCLB) de 2001, crea un sistema de responsabilidad completo al establecer el desarrollo de los documentos de estándares académicos y requerir una evaluación anual en las áreas académicas de Español, Inglés como Segundo Idioma, Matemáticas y Ciencias. La reautorización del 2004 de la Ley “Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)” requiere que se realice una determinación sobre los acomodados que requiere cada estudiante con impedimento. A la vez, se debe garantizar el acomodo que, de acuerdo al Programa Educativo Individualizado (PEI), se determinó era requisito brindar a los estudiantes con impedimentos, así como en el Plan de aprendizaje para estudiantes (LSP) durante la administración de las Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA. Además, es responsabilidad del estado presentar información sobre la cantidad de estudiantes que utilizan estos acomodados durante las pruebas.

Los acomodados establecidos en los planes educativos (PEI y CoREL) permiten a los estudiantes con impedimentos y estudiantes LSP realizar un mejor desempeño durante las PPAA. Con el propósito de garantizar el uso apropiado de los acomodados durante el desarrollo de los programas educativos de los estudiantes con impedimentos y estudiantes LSP, es necesario tomar en cuenta las necesidades específicas y las características de cada estudiante. Los acomodados ofrecidos durante la PPAA se agrupan generalmente en las siguientes categorías:

1. Acomodos para estudiantes con impedimentos

- Acomodo de presentación (por ejemplo: letra agrandada, lenguaje de señas, braille y lector)
- Acomodo para responder (por ejemplo: anotador, responder en el folleto de la prueba y monitor para la respuesta de la prueba)
- Acomodo de ambiente y lugar (por ejemplo: un pupitre especial, en el hogar del estudiante, en un salón separado de los otros estudiantes, etc.)
- Acomodo de tiempo e itinerario (por ejemplo: tiempo extendido, pausas frecuentes, cambio de orden o itinerario)

2. Acomodos para estudiantes con Limitaciones Lingüísticas en Español (LSP)

- Acomodo lingüístico (por ejemplo: uso de diccionario bilingüe, uso de glosario, lector de instrucciones)
- Acomodo no-lingüístico (por ejemplo: tiempo extendido, marcar las instrucciones con un marcador)

El Manual de Acomodos 2004 y la Carta Circular de LSP del Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico, indican las alternativas de acomodados a ser utilizadas durante el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje y el sistema de medición (PPAA) para estudiantes que están registrados en educación especial y estudiantes LSP. El Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico (DEPR) tiene la responsabilidad de garantizar la aplicación de estas normas, para asegurar que todos los estudiantes que toman las PPAA tienen la mejor oportunidad de demostrar lo que saben y lo que pueden hacer.

El plan de verificación de Acomodos (*“Accomodations Review for the PPAA 2011-2012”*) fue desarrollado por el DEPR en colaboración con la compañía edCount, LLC. El mismo incluye tres (3) componentes. El primero (1) se realizó en noviembre de 2011 y tenía el propósito de señalar cómo los acomodados seleccionados para los estudiantes identificados durante la administración de las PPAA, corresponden con sus acomodados durante el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje. El segundo (2) componente, el cual se atiende en esta verificación, se dirige a observar si los acomodados seleccionados para los estudiantes con impedimentos y estudiantes LSP están disponibles y son implementados durante la administración de las PPAA 2012. Estos acomodados deben corresponder según se indican en los PEIs y los planes de aprendizaje de los estudiantes observados. Finalmente, el tercer (3) componente atenderá la efectividad de los acomodados en reducir los obstáculos que los estudiantes enfrentan al momento de tomar las pruebas.

Los resultados de estos tres (3) componentes serán utilizados para:

1. proveer información a los profesionales, tomando acciones correctivas inmediatas,
2. informar cada año las decisiones relacionadas con capacitaciones y asistencia técnica, con el fin de verificar el uso adecuado de los acomodados.

Este Plan de Verificación incluye los procedimientos a seguir durante las visitas de las escuelas que se realizarán desde el 20 al 24 de abril del 2012.

Componente 2: Verificación de Acomodos establecidos durante el programa educativo (PEI y CoREL) a los Estudiantes con Impedimentos y Estudiantes con Limitaciones Lingüísticas en Español (LSP) durante la administración de las *Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico (PPAA)*

Es importante señalar que el DEPR realiza monitorias extensivas sobre el proceso de administración de las PPAA. Los equipos de monitorias regionales y de los distritos escolares visitan las escuelas durante el período de las pruebas y completan protocolos donde registran cómo éstas cumplen con los procedimientos requeridos y aseguran que todos los estudiantes participen en el proceso de evaluación. Además, el equipo de monitoria federal, de la Secretaría de Educación Especial y de las Regiones Educativas visitan cada distrito escolar para asegurar que el personal del distrito participe en las actividades establecidas para garantizar el cumplimiento de Título I, Parte A, Sec. 1111, Estándares y Avalúo. El proceso que se describe a continuación ocurrirá como parte adicional al proceso vigente.

Para verificar si los acomodados seleccionados para los estudiantes con impedimentos y estudiantes LSP están disponibles y son implementados correctamente durante la administración de las PPAA de 2012, el DEPR seleccionó veinte y una (21) escuelas. Tres (3) en cada una de las siete Regiones Educativas para ser visitadas durante la semana de la administración de las pruebas (20 al 24 de abril de 2012). El propósito de estas visitas es asegurar el cumplimiento de ofrecer los acomodados establecidos en el PEI y en el plan educativo de lenguaje. Antes del comienzo las monitorias, se seleccionará la muestra de los estudiantes.

El proceso de verificación de acomodados durante la administración PPAA 2012:

- Selección de la muestra de los estudiantes participantes de esta verificación de acomodados durante la administración de las PPAA. (, excepto por la muestra de tercer y séptimo grado que será seleccionada por los Coordinadores de las PPEA).
- Selección de tres escuelas por Región Educativa

- El Coordinador PPEA y el Facilitador Docente de Educación Especial realizarán la visita de verificación de acomodados establecidos durante los días 20, 23 y 24 de abril 2012.
- El Coordinador PPEA y el Facilitador Docente de Educación Especial verificará los registros de acomodados del Anejo A contra el Programa Educativo Individualizado (PEI) y con el Plan de Desarrollo de lenguaje (LSP).

Al completar las visitas a las escuelas en las siete Regiones Educativas de Puerto Rico, se recogerán los documentos de las visitas realizadas y serán enviados a la compañía edCount, para el análisis de los datos obtenidos y los resultados y recomendaciones serán presentados al DEPR. La hoja de cotejo para la revisión de los acomodados

A continuación se presenta la hoja de cotejo para la revisión de los acomodados. Esta indica las tareas específicas necesarias para prepararse, llevar a cabo y culminar cada una de las monitorias de las escuelas. Este documento pretende facilitar el proceso de verificación de los acomodados.

Procedimientos para la verificación de acomodados

Los pasos a seguir durante la verificación y observación de los acomodados:

Antes de las visitas se deberá:

- Conocer el propósito de las visitas a las escuelas y los procedimientos a seguir.
- Proveer orientación sobre los procedimientos que se seguirán durante las monitorias, incluyendo cómo completar los protocolos.
- Notificar el proceso de monitorias a todos las Regiones, Distritos y Escuelas
- Garantizar el cumplimiento del proceso de cómo serán revisados los expedientes (PEI o plan LSP).

Durante– Paso 1: Observaciones de estudiantes seleccionados

- Reunirse con el director de la escuela o persona encargada para comunicar el propósito de la visita.
- Garantizar el horario establecido para la administración de las PPAA.
- Iniciar el proceso de monitorias y verificación de los acomodados (Anejo B)
- Observar el ambiente escolar durante la administración de las PPAA y los estudiantes seleccionados para el plan de verificación de acomodados.
- Completar las secciones **6 y 7** del protocolo de observación.

Después – Paso 2: Registro de datos en el protocolo

- Verificar en los PEI y el Plan de Desarrollo de Lenguaje (LSP) los acomodados establecidos
- Completar las secciones **1 a la 5** del protocolo para cada uno de los estudiantes con impedimentos y estudiantes LSP seleccionados según se indica en el PEI o plan LSP.

Al culminar las visitas:

- De ser necesario, reunirse con el director de la escuela para el cierre de visita y responder cualquier pregunta que aún tenga acerca del proceso de verificación de acomodados. **No se compartirá información individual de los hallazgos de las observaciones con el director, ni con otro personal de la escuela.**