

The Maine Through Year Assessment Accessibility Guide

**Maine 23/24 SY
Reading and Mathematics**

Contributors

Maine Through Year Assessments are administered by the Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE)

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The assessment contractor is NWEA. NWEA can be reached by calling Partner Support at 1-855-430-1777.

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Introduction

This Accessibility Guide provides the necessary information to prepare students who utilize accessibility features, including universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations, for the 2023-2024 Maine Through Year Assessment in Mathematics and Reading.

The online administration of the Maine Through Year Assessment will be delivered by the Maine Department of Education using the NWEA Acacia platform. Embedded tools, supports, and accommodations are available in the platform, in addition to non-embedded tools, supports, and accommodations which can be provided locally by the assessment administrator/proctor.

If questions arise, or if any situation occurs that could cause any part of the assessment administration to be compromised, School and District Assessment Coordinators should contact **Krista Averill, Assessment Coordinator, at the Maine Department of Education** at Krista.Averill@maine.gov or 1-207-215-6528.

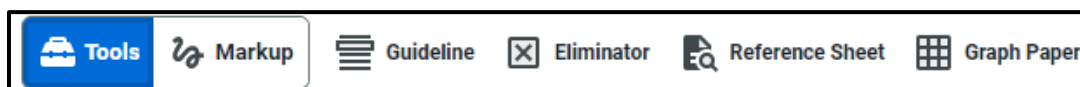
Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Universal Tools for All Students

Universal tools are available to all students participating in the Maine Through Year Assessment. These supports are either embedded in the online assessment or provided by an assessment administrator at the local level during the assessment (i.e., scratch paper). Universal tools do not affect the construct being measured on the assessment.

Embedded Universal Accessibility Tools Menu

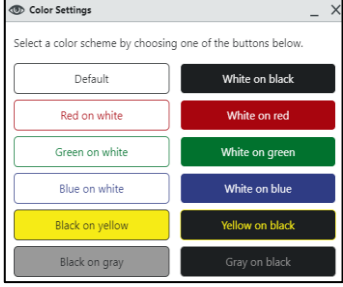

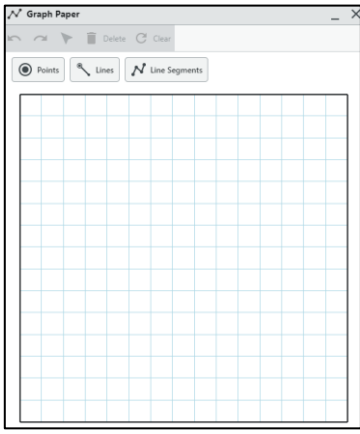
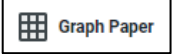

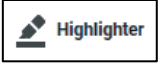

The Accessibility Tools Menu is located on the top of each assessment screen within the assessment supports toolbar. The student can access this menu at any time during the assessment sessions. The available tools may change depending on the assessment item, the grade, and the subject.

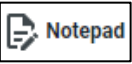
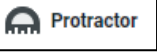
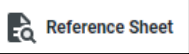

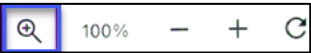



Students can set preferences for many of the tools that will persist from screen to screen (question to question) during an assessment session.

Students must reselect their preferred settings each time they log in to a new session or rejoin a session.

Feature	Description	Tool Icon
Eliminator	The Eliminator is used as an assessment-taking strategy to cross out answer choices with the response still visible.	
Calculator	An embedded basic, scientific, or graphing calculator is available, depending on the assessment, grade, and item; this tool is available only with the specific items for which the tool would be appropriate.	

Feature	Description	Tool Icon
<p>Color Contrast</p> 	<p>This shows a variety of color contrasting options for students to choose from during the assessment.</p>	
<p>Graph Paper</p> 	<p>Graph paper pops up to allow a student to plot points and lines. Hard copy graph paper may also be provided.</p> <p>For grades 3 through 5, 15 x 15 graph paper is provided.</p> <p>For grades 6 through 8 and high school, 33 x 33 graph paper is provided.</p>	
<p>Help Videos</p>	<p>Help videos are available within the secure assessment engine and show students how to respond to question types and use tools.</p>	
<p>Highlighter</p>	<p>Highlight is used to mark words or numbers. This tool allows a student to highlight text and erase highlights that have been made.</p>	
<p>Keyboard Navigation</p>	<p>The student can navigate throughout assessment content by using a keyboard, (e.g., arrow keys). This feature may differ depending on the assessment platform or device.</p>	
<p>Guideline</p>	<p>The student can use this feature as a guide when reading text.</p>	

Feature	Description	Tool Icon
Notepad	Notepad is used as an assessment-taking strategy to take notes on an item.	 Notepad
Protractor	The protractor is used to measure angles in degrees.	 Protractor
Reference Sheet	Displays conversion tables, formulas, etc., as aids to the student.	 Reference Sheet
Ruler	Customary Ruler and Metric Ruler are used to measure images within an item. This tool is available only with the specific items for which the tool would be appropriate.	 Ruler
Responsive Zoom 	<p>The student can enlarge the size of text and graphics on a given screen. This feature allows students to view material in magnified form on an as-needed basis. The system allows magnifying features to work in conjunction with other accessibility features and accommodations provided.</p> <p>Mac, Windows, and Chromebooks can now use Ctrl + and Ctrl – on their keypads to zoom in and out.</p> <p>iPad users use the Pinch Zoom feature.</p>	

Non-Embedded Universal Tool

Provisions Outside of the Online Assessment Platform

Tool	Description
Scrap/Scratch Paper	The student uses scratch paper, an individual erasable whiteboard, or an assistive technology device to make notes or record responses. Scratch paper can be lined, blank, or graph. All scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each test to maintain test security.

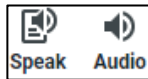
Designated Supports for Some Students

Supports outlined below may provide increased accessibility within the assessment.

Utilization and implementation of designated supports is determined on an individual basis by a team of two or education professionals with knowledge of the student’s performance and supports must be consistent with the student’s normal routine during classroom instruction and assessment.

Provision of supports does not alter the construct of any test item.

Embedded Designated Support

Tool	Tool Icon	Description
Provision within online platform that must be assigned to individual student by DAC/SAC		
Text-to-Speech (TTS)		Text is read aloud to the student via (embedded) TTS technology. Audio is provided for directions, questions, and answer choices, but is not provided for passages in the Reading assessment. Headphones/earbuds are necessary unless a student is tested individually in a separate setting.

Text to Speech (TTS) Support

Text to Speech is an approved designated support for students who are offered the opportunity to access text to speech and/or read aloud as part of their normal routine during classroom instruction and assessment.

For students whom Text to Speech (TTS) is an approved tool for the Maine Through Year Assessment for Mathematics and Reading, a Text to Speech tool will enable the text on the screen to be read aloud. For the TTS tool to appear on-screen for the student during the assessment session, TTS must be pre-selected by the District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) or School Assessment Coordinator (SAC) in the student’s record when the SAU updates the registration for the student for each assessment administration.

Text to Speech will read the Directions, Prompts, and Answer Choices. Text to Speech will not read the Reading Passages on the Reading assessment.

All students taking the online, computer-adaptive assessment requiring this support are expected to utilize text to speech. A human reader cannot be provided for the online assessment.

Non-Embedded Designated Supports

Provisions Outside of the Online Assessment Platform

Tool	Description
Small Group or Individual Setting	This Designated Support is provided to minimize distractions for students whose test is administered out of the classroom so that others will not be distracted by supports/accommodations being used.
Bilingual Word Glossary for MLs	A bilingual/dual language word-to-word glossary is provided to students who are Multilingual Learners as a language support as per their Individual Language Acquisition Plan.
Mathematical Supports (Mathematics Assessment)	This Designated Support is for students who need additional supports for math (e.g., abacus, number line, addition/multiplication charts, base-ten blocks, various types of counters, fraction tiles and pies without numerical labels, coins, clock with or without numbers shown on clock face; clock should not have gears, etc.).

Examples of supports that can be provided to students and do **not** need to be indicated in the assessment platform include:

- Translated copies of the Mathematics Reference sheet, which can be found under the “Content” drop-down menu on the [Maine DOE Through Year Assessment webpage](#)
- Assistive technology
- Medical devices
- Visual aids (e.g., magnification devices, external monitors, reduction of visual print by blocking or other techniques, student privacy shields)
- Auditory devices (e.g., special acoustics, amplification, noise buffers, whisper phones, calming music)
- Student reads assessment aloud to self in individual setting
- Directions clarification

Accommodations Requiring IEP/504 Documentation

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that are used to increase equitable access during the assessment for students with documentation of the need on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Embedded Accommodations: Paper-Based Accommodated Forms

Tool	Description
Standard Paper-Based	<p>For students with an IEP/504 plan that requires assessments to be paper-based and not administered online.</p> <p>Standard (size 12 font) paper-based forms are print-on-demand. NWEA will provide secure download instructions and login credentials to the school building administrator following Maine DOE's approval of the paper-based form request.</p>
Large Print	<p>For students with an IEP/504 plan that requires assessments to be paper-based, large print, and not administered online.</p> <p>Large print forms are shipped to schools following Maine DOE's approval of the paper-based form request.</p> <p>**Note: Large print forms are size 18 font. The Zoom tool within the assessment platform allows for greater magnification of the font. In addition, external monitors can be used when designated as the primary screen in the device settings.</p>
Braille	<p>Both contracted and un-contracted braille (English Braille, American Edition, or Unified English Braille) are available as indicated by a student's IEP/504 Plan. Students who require a braille assessment will be sent a transcribed paper-based assessment.</p>

Requesting Paper-Based Accommodated Forms

To request a paper-based or large print form, the following two steps need to be completed:

1. The District or School Assessment Coordinator enters the accommodation into the student's profile in Acacia. The Material Orders Operational Report can be used to confirm how many students need paper-based accommodated forms at each school building.
2. Complete the Maine Through Year Paper-Based Assessment Approval Form: [Paper-based form request](#)

To request a braille form, please reach out to the Assessment Coordinator at the Maine Department of Education: Krista Averill, Krista.Averill@maine.gov.

Braille Assessments

Maine Through Year Assessment booklets are available in braille as an accommodation for students who require this format. These students may need assistance indicating their responses. If so, Proctors need to provide the appropriate response accommodation for students using this format (e.g., students indicate their answers directly in the formatted braille assessment booklets or respond using a braille writer). The wording of content in the braille form may be slightly different than the wording of the questions in the paper-based forms. Differences in wording are the result of adaptations made for the various assessment formats.

When braille materials are ordered, the building administrator is contacted and given secure access to the corresponding paper accommodated assessment to be printed on site. The paper accommodated assessment could be used as a reference for administrators/proctors who administer the braille versions of the Assessments. Braille responses must be transcribed into the online assessment engine following the procedures outlined in the Transcribing Paper Accommodated Assessments section of this manual.

Braille materials are produced in accordance with the rules of the Braille Authority of North America (BANA). Literary text is produced using Unified English Braille (UEB).

Transcribing Paper-Based Accommodated Assessments

For all paper-based forms, all of the student's answers are entered by the assessment administrator or proctor directly into the assessment platform. Once the student's answers have been entered into the platform, the paper-based forms are destroyed on-site. No materials should be shipped back to NWEA.

During or immediately following the assessment session, student responses for paper-based accommodated assessments **must** be transcribed into the online assessment engine. To transcribe responses requires the proctor or other designated district or school personnel to log in to the NWEA State Solutions Secure Browser using the student's test ticket.

Follow these steps to transcribe student answers:

1. Obtain the student's test ticket from the School Assessment Coordinator.
2. After the student has completed the paper accommodated assessment, use a device that has the NWEA State Solutions Secure Browser software installed and use the student's test ticket to log in to the student's assessment.
3. For security reasons, Maine DOE recommends a second trained staff member be present to verify all transcriptions, when feasible.

4. Begin transcribing student responses. Once you have finished, submit the assessment. The Proctor should then return all printed assessment materials to the School Assessment Coordinator.

Transcribe the student's responses as faithfully and completely as possible and follow the qualifications and procedures outlined below:

- The transcriber must be a current employee of the school district.
- The transcriber must be trained in assessment administration and sign an Assessment Security and Data Privacy Agreement, found in Appendices E and F of the Assessment Security Handbook (https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/materials/security).
- Transcription must take place in a secure location.
- The assessment is transcribed exactly as the student answered the assessment items.

Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities for Paper-Based Assessments

1. Count all school and district packages immediately upon receipt.
Verify that all large print and braille assessment packages were received. Immediately report any missing packages to NWEA Maine Partner Support.
2. Inventory the materials.
Immediately report any shortages or the incorrect receipt of assessment materials to NWEA Maine Partner Support for reconciliation.
3. Distribute materials on the day of the assessment session.
Assessment booklets should be distributed to Proctors early enough on the day of the assessment to give them ample time to review directions prior to the assessment. After each day of the assessment is complete, all assessment materials should be returned to the School Assessment Coordinator for secure storage as soon as possible.
4. Provide assessment forms to Proctor or other trained school personnel for entry into the online system.
5. After the assessment, securely destroy paper-based assessment materials.

Non-Embedded Accommodations

Provisions Outside of the Online Assessment Platform Based on IEP or 504 Plan

Tool	Description
Human Reader (Paper Based Tests ONLY)	<p>This accommodation is only allowed for students that have a documented need for a paper/pencil assessment.</p> <p>The student will have those parts of the test that have text-to-speech support in the computer-based version read by a qualified human reader in English. (This accommodation applies to directions, questions, and answer choices, not Reading Passages.)</p>
American Sign Language	<p>Text is translated via a sign language interpreter to the student by an Assessment Administrator as documented in the IEP/504 plan.</p>
Scribe	<p>The student may dictate answers to a human scribe in an individual setting as indicated by a student's IEP/504 plan. The human scribe records verbatim what a student dictates and must give the student an opportunity to review scribed text. Scribed answers must be entered into the online assessment platform; no paper submissions are accepted.</p> <p>*Note: The Through Year Assessment does not include constructed response questions.</p>
Calculator Use (Mathematics Assessment)	<p>A calculator is provided throughout the entire mathematics assessment, as per the student's IEP or 504 plan.</p>
Human Reader for Reading Passages (Reading Assessment, Grades 6+ ONLY)	<p>This accommodation is only allowed for students in grades 6+ that have a documented print disability. The student will have the Reading Passages on the Reading Assessment read by a qualified human reader in English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Reader for Reading Passages: Training Video • Maine Print Disability Considerations • Print Disability Flowchart • Print Disability Checklist <p>Contact the Maine DOE's Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education (OSSIE) at ossie@maine.gov or 1-207-624-6608 for more information.</p>