

9. My child has a disability. What plans are being made to help special education students be successful?

Beginning with the graduating class of 2009, all students, including special education students, must fulfill the HSA testing requirement in order to earn a Maryland High School Diploma. At this time, there are no alternative assessments for the HSA available to students with disabilities. However, a state task force is exploring possible testing options that Maryland could make available for students having difficulty with traditional pencil-and-paper tests. The task force began working on the issue in fall 2004 and will produce recommendations by 2007. This work may result in alternative assessments that would be comparable to the current High School Assessments and particularly helpful for students with disabilities.

Many special education students have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that documents their need to have accommodations during daily instruction and during testing. The Maryland State Department of Education publishes a manual to guide educators in making decisions about accommodations on state tests. The manual is called *Requirements for Accommodating, Excusing, and Exempting Students in Maryland Assessment Programs*, and it is available on the Web at www.marylandpublicschools.org. (The exact Web address is www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/earlyinterv/Special_Ed_Info.htm.) Your child’s teacher or principal can also help you understand what accommodations are allowed on state tests.

If you have specific questions about your child, contact his/her teacher or IEP team members.

For more information, visit www.marylandpublicschools.org. From the testing menu at the top of the page, choose High School Assessment.



www.marylandpublicschools.org

