



Supporting All Learners: Accessibility & Accommodations

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Introductions

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Agenda

- Defining of terms
- Why are supports important?
- How to select accommodations
- Accessibility support tools

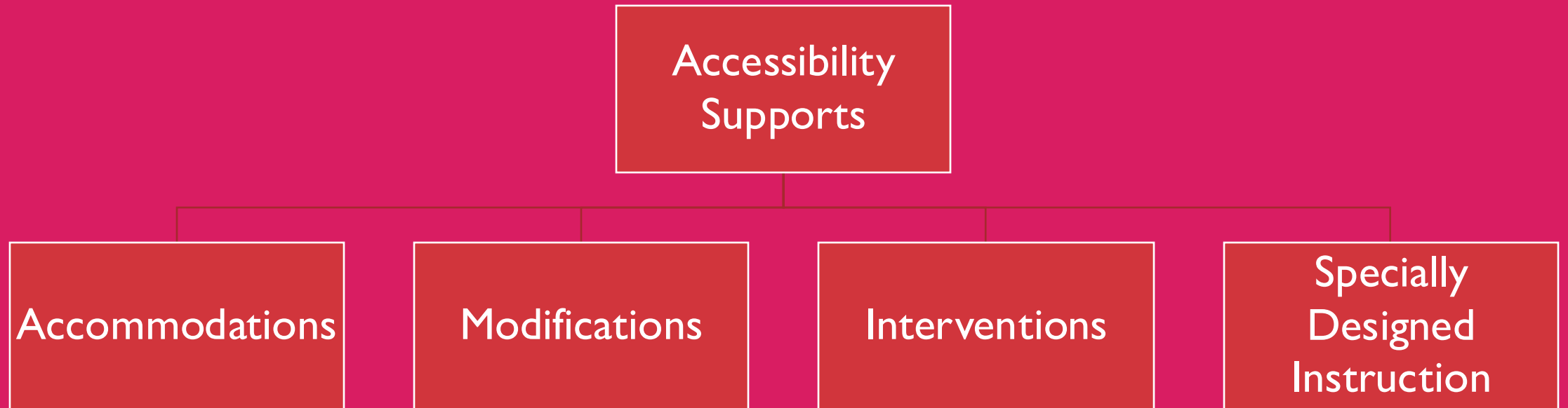


Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions



What's What???

Accessibility Supports



Key Definition:

Tools and procedures that provide **equal access** to instruction and assessment.



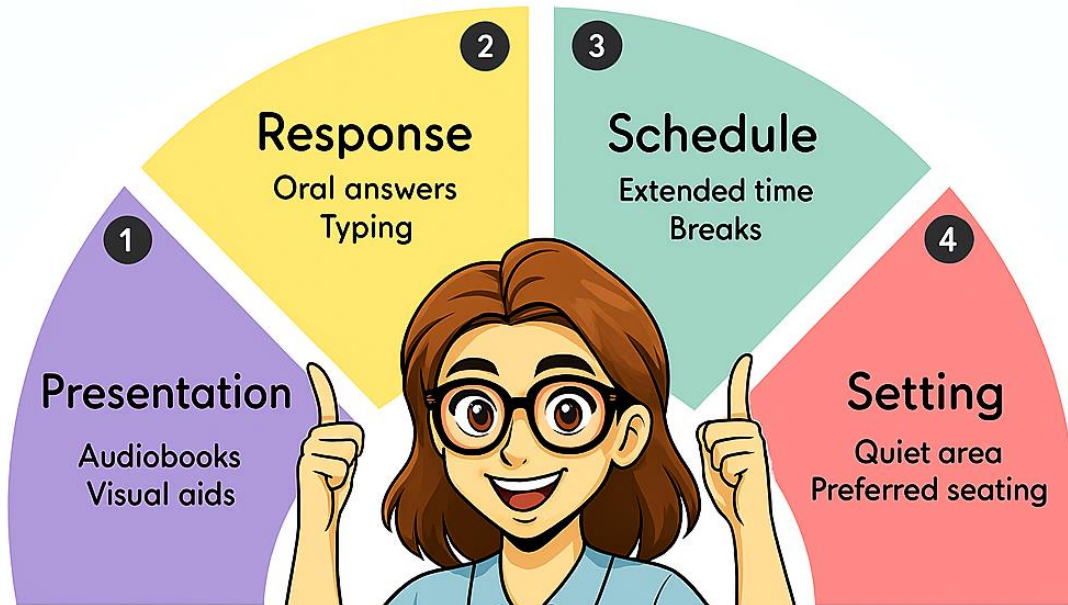
Goal: To "level the playing field" by offsetting the effects of a student's disability.



Core Principle: They do **not** reduce learning expectations or change *what* a student is learning.

Accommodations





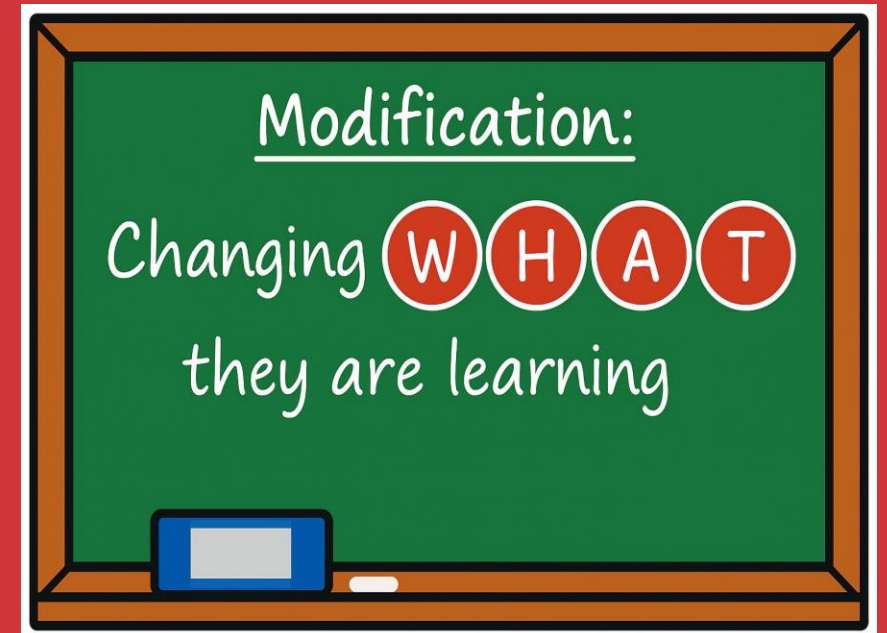
Four Categories of Accommodations

Key Definition: Practices or materials that **change, lower, or reduce** state-required learning expectations.

Impact: They change the underlying "construct" (what is being measured).
The learning expectations are lowered.

Core Principle: They **DO** reduce the learning expectation or standard a student is expected to master.

Modifications

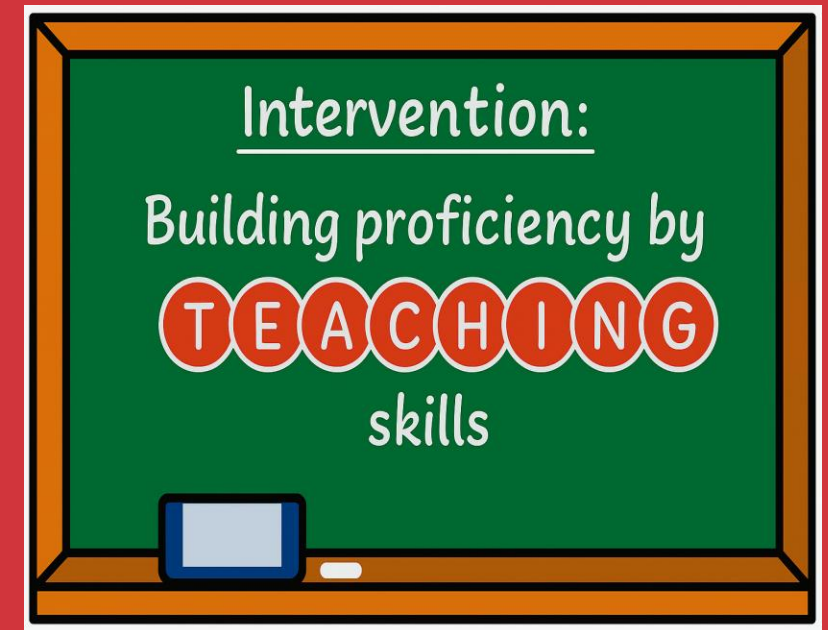


Key Definition: Strategies or techniques used to teach a skill.

Impact: The focus is on teaching of skills to build fluency and application of skills.

Core Principle: Interventions should be targeted to specific skills and research or evidence based. Progress monitoring is required.

Interventions



Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions: What's the difference?

- [DESE Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions Guidance Document](#)

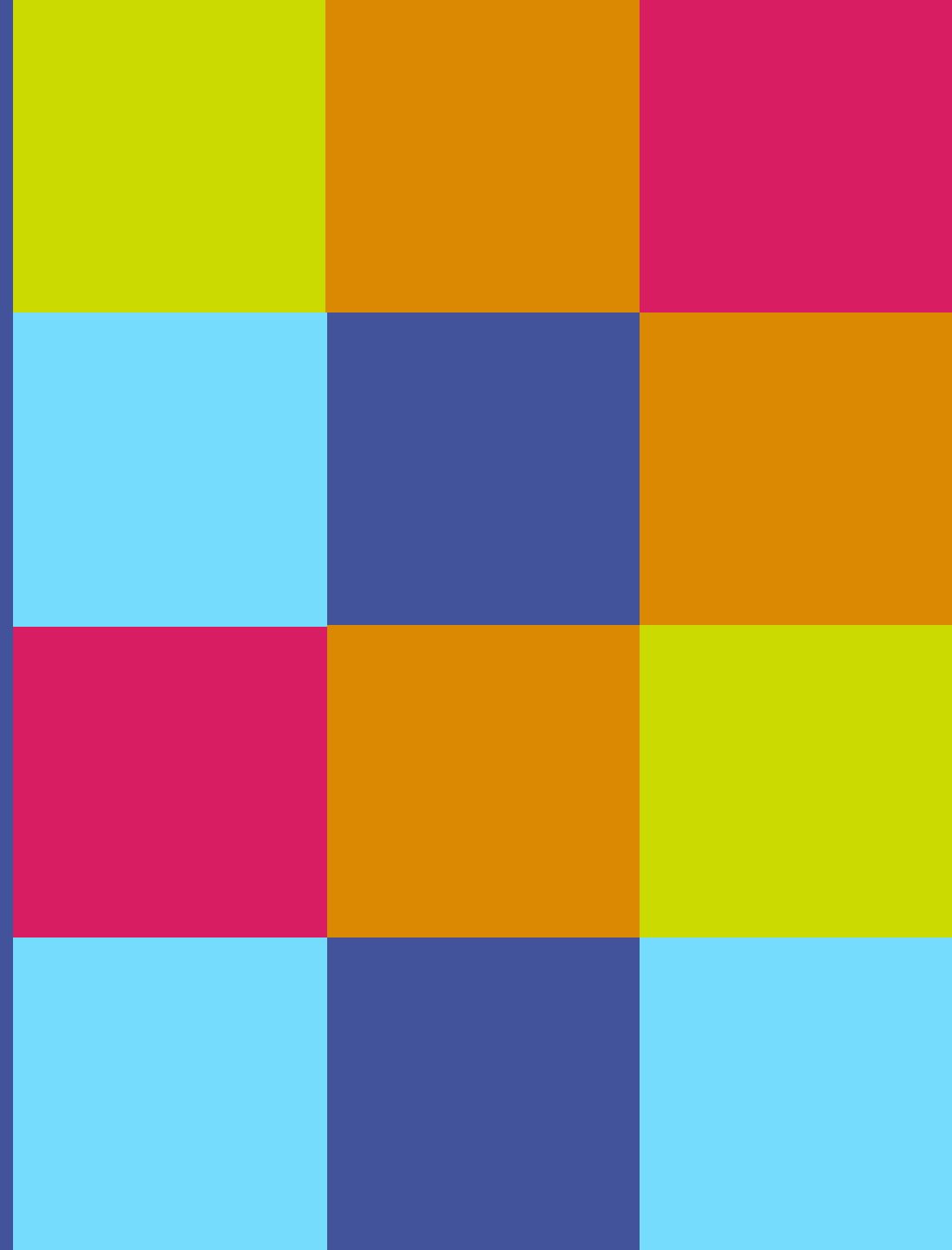
Accommodations, Modifications, and Interventions...What's the difference?

This document is meant to serve as a resource with definitions, examples and clarifications of accommodations, modifications, and interventions. The list of examples is not exhaustive but may provide you with ideas of what each might look like in the classroom.

Definitions	Examples	Clarifications
<p>Accommodations*: Changes made to instruction and/or assessment intended to help students fully access the general education curriculum without changing the instructional content. Accommodations provide equitable instruction and assessment for students by reducing or eliminating the effects of a student's disability. They do not change or reduce the learning expectations in regard to the goal being addressed or assessed. Generally, the resulting student product with accommodations is equal to the student product without accommodations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing more time to complete work • Allowing movement to increase physical comfort • Allowing use of recorder to tape lectures • Allowing use of calculator (if "computing" is not the goal being addressed/assessed.) • Allowing oral responses instead of written responses • Providing study guides before tests • Orally reading test items in any subject other than reading/comm. arts (if "reading" is not the goal being addressed/assessed) 	<p>Accommodation or Modification? Determining the difference between a modification and accommodation can be difficult. The key is to begin with the end in mind. Ask yourself, "What is the goal I want the student to learn and master?"</p> <p>If a change made to the instruction and/or assessment does allow for demonstration of mastery of the goal, then the change is probably an accommodation.</p> <p>If a change made to the instruction and/or assessment does not allow for demonstration of mastery of the goal, then the change is probably a modification.</p>
<p>Modifications: Alterations made to instruction and/or assessment that change, lower, or reduce learning or assessment expectations. Modifications change or reduce the learning expectations in regard to the goal being addressed or assessed. More often than not, the resulting student product is not equal to the student product without modifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the amount or complexity of content the student has to know • Rewording/explaining/paraphrasing test questions • Shortening a spelling list • Oral Reading of reading/comm. arts content (if "reading" is the goal being addressed/assessed.) 	<p>If the goal is to have the student learn the same content as all students and produce the same product as other students you do not want to provide modifications to any assignments/instructional activity related to that goal, rather you would want to provide that student with accommodations to complete assignment/instructional activity.</p> <p>Examples: <i>Given the same math assignment reducing the number of problems a student has to complete can be either an accommodation or a modification depending on the goal being assessed.</i></p>
<p>Intervention: Academic or behavior interventions are strategies or techniques used to teach a new skill, build fluency in a skill, or encourage the application of existing skills to a new situation. Interventions should include a targeted assessment, planning, and data collection. Interventions should be scientifically research based or evidence based and monitored regularly (progress monitoring) to determine student growth and to inform instructional decision-making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of evidence based interventions can be found on the websites listed here: National Center on Intensive Intervention What Works Clearinghouse Florida Center For Reading Research Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports 	<p>If a student was expected to complete 100% of every math assignment given to peers, reducing the number of problems would be a modification. However, if a student was expected to show they could add 2-digit numbers with 100% accuracy allowing the student to work just enough problems (on an assignment) to prove he/she has mastered the goal reducing the number of problems would be an accommodation.</p>

Why provide supports?

Examining the "Why" Behind the "What"



Why?



“The one consistent feature of learning is variability: all students learn differently and take different paths to success.”

Meet Me in St.Louis



If I gave you the task of meeting me at the St. Louis zoo at 10:00am next Saturday morning. Would all our travel plans look the same?

★ "That's not fair!" ★

★ First: Ask Yourself

What do I mean by 'fair'?

★ Then: Ask Yourself

What do I not know about this situation?

Does someone need something that I don't?

★ Finally: Shift Your Thinking

Fair isn't always equal.

We all need different tools to succeed.

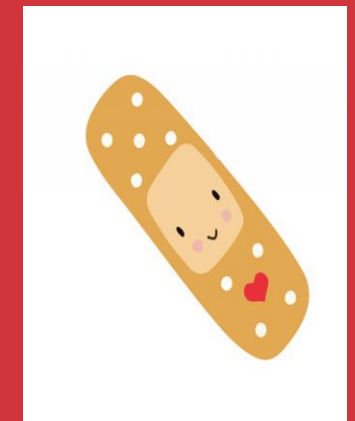
My experience isn't THE experience.



Made by teacher Ryan Brazil
Shared by Edutopia

That's Not Fair!

[It's Important to Talk About Learning Accommodations With Your Students—Here's How to Do It; Edutopia](#)



Neurodiversity

- Core neurodiversity principles:
 - Brain differences are natural and valuable
 - Accommodations are rights, not privileges
 - Diversity strengthens communities
 - Different doesn't mean less



Teaching With Brain Science

THE RESEARCH IS IN

15 Tips to Align Your Teaching With Brain Science

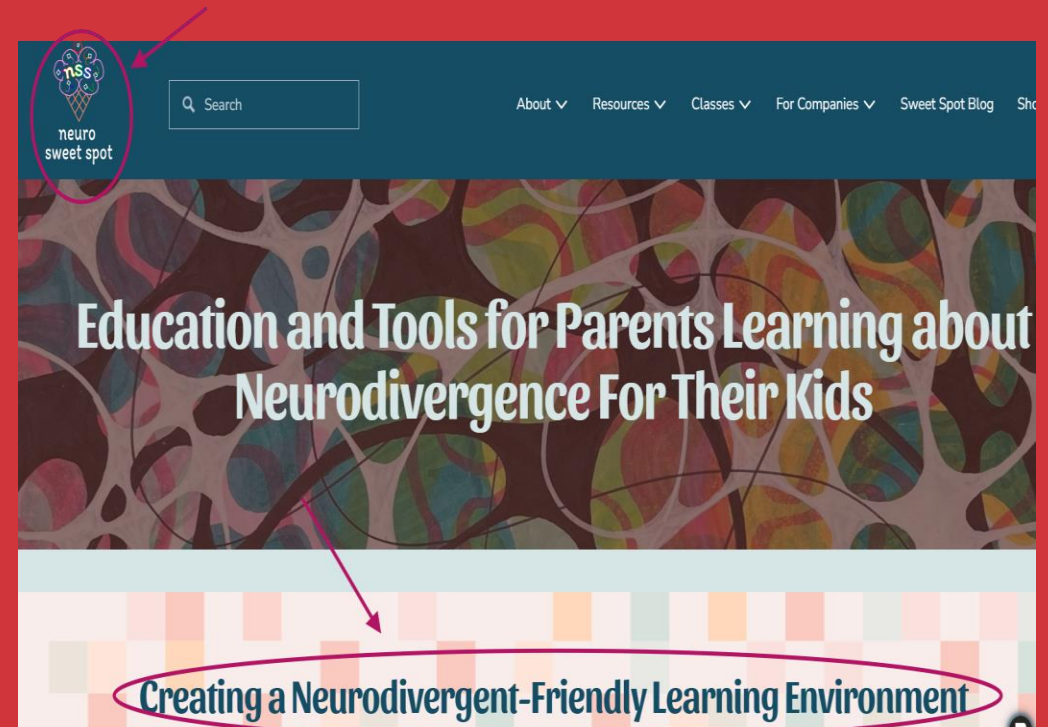
A comprehensive guide to applying the latest insight from neuroscience, psychology, and cognitive science to improve your instruction.

By [Youki Terada](#)

October 24, 2025



Nuero Sweet Spot



Cognitive Functioning and Psychological Processing Guidance

Instructional strategies and accommodations aligned with cognitive skills

Idaho Department of Education

Cognitive Functioning & Psychological Processing

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT



Universal Design for Learning

- UDL Learning Guidelines 3.0
- Learner agency = student directed learning
- Multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression

CAST Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

The goal of UDL is **learner agency** that is purposeful & reflective, resourceful & authentic, strategic & action-oriented.



What would you do?



Why?

“When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.”

CAST: Universal Design for Learning

This strikes fear in every educator



Problem Solving Mindshift

- [ICEL Problem Solving Data Collection](#)
- [ICEL Problem Solving Data Collection with examples and "look fors"](#)
- [Center for MTSS Success ICEL Matrix](#)

LICE

- Learner
- Instruction
- Curriculum
- Environment

ICEL

- Instruction
- Curriculum
- Environment
- Learner

Resources

For Educators

Overview
Recognizing ADHD & Classroom Strategies
Classroom Accommodations
Instructional Process
Assignment Accommodations
Attention Strategies
Adapting Positive Behavior Interventions
Teacher Training & Video Series
Webinars on Preschoolers
Educational Rights

CHADD
Educator
Resources

Reading Rockets

Inclusive Classrooms

Inclusive Classrooms: Getting Started

Literacy in the Inclusive Classroom

Peer Support and Social Inclusion

★ **Accommodations and Modifications**

Assistive Technology in Inclusive Classrooms

Universal Design for Learning

Sensory-Friendly Spaces

Case Study: Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation

Websites, Blogs, and Media About Inclusive Classrooms

Why?

“Accommodations and supports do not remove challenge—they remove obstacles.”

[Understood.org](https://www.understood.org)

Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)

- Students with disabilities have right to access to same curriculum and make progress towards the same standards that apply to their non-disabled peers
- "Every student should have the chance to meet challenging objectives." *Andrew F. 2017*
- Access not advantage

IDEA: Least Restrictive Environment

2) Each public agency must ensure that—

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled;
and

Special classes, separate schooling, or other **removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if** the nature or severity of the disability is such that **education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.**

34 CFR 300.114 LRE requirements

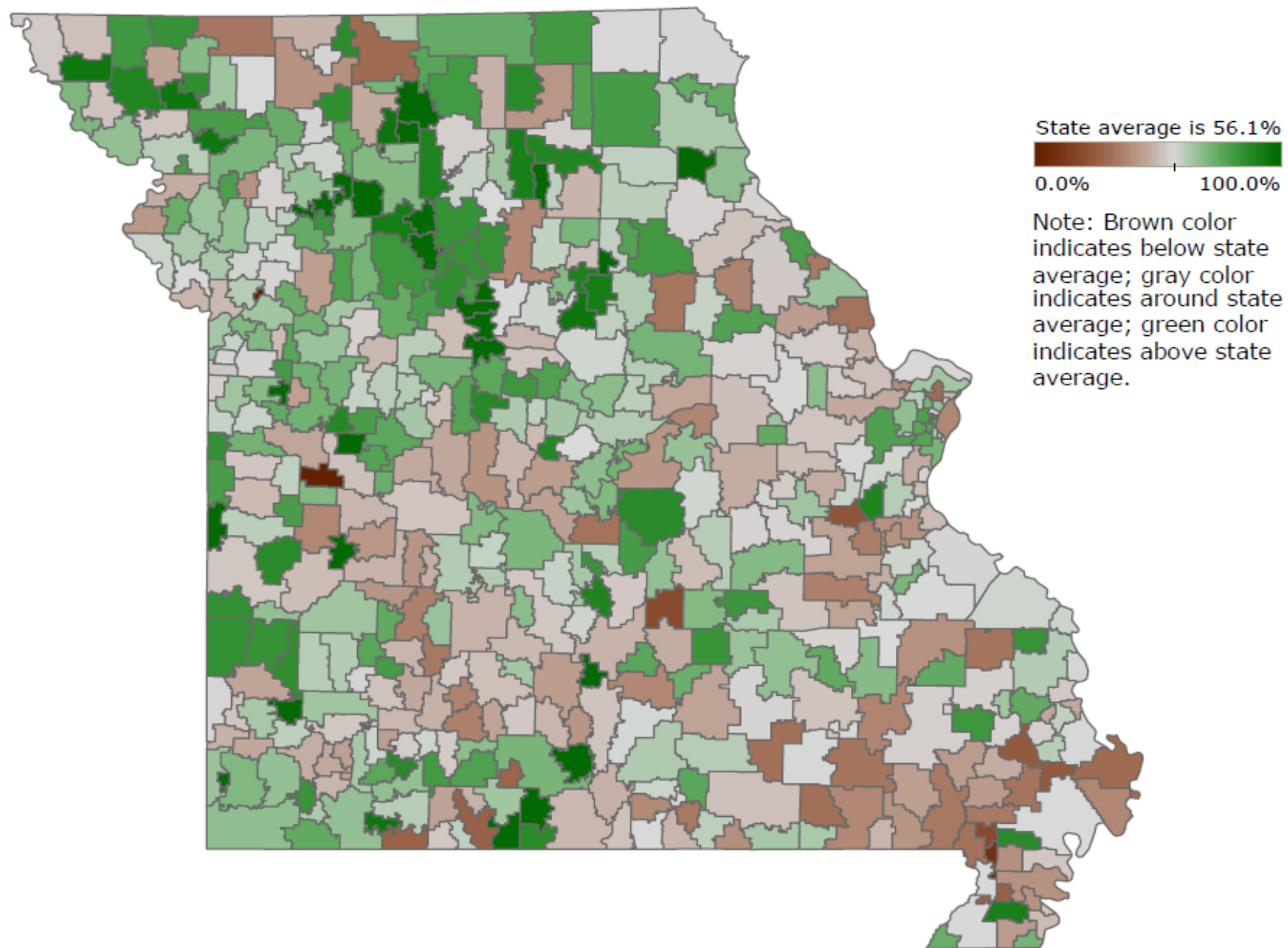
IDEA: Least Restrictive Environment



A child with a disability is **not removed** from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms **solely because of needed modifications (or adaptations)** in the general education curriculum.

34 CFR 300.116

Percent of K-12 Students with Disabilities Inside Regular Class >79% in 2024-25



Other Federal Laws

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504)

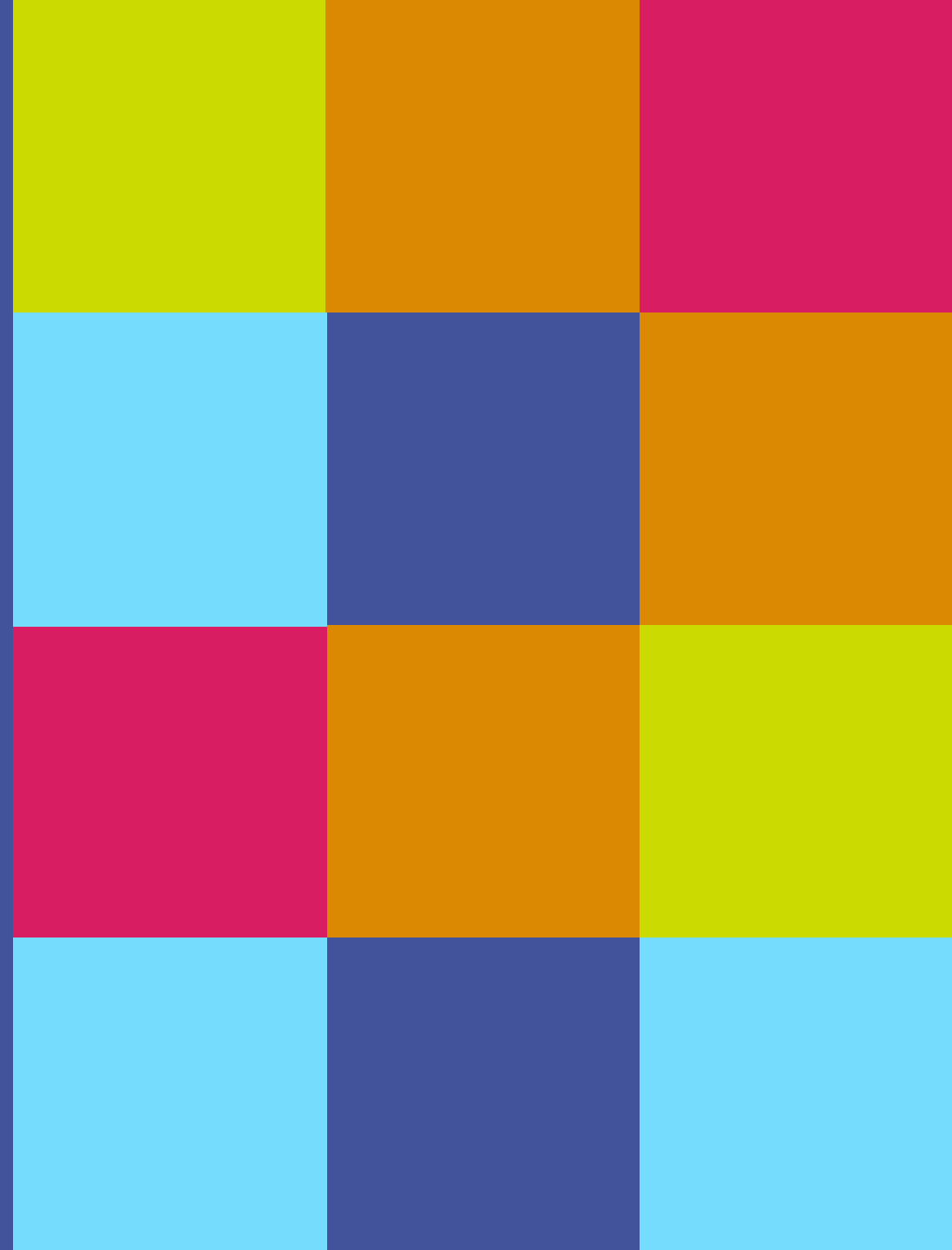
No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. [29 U.S.C. Sec. 794 (a)]

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

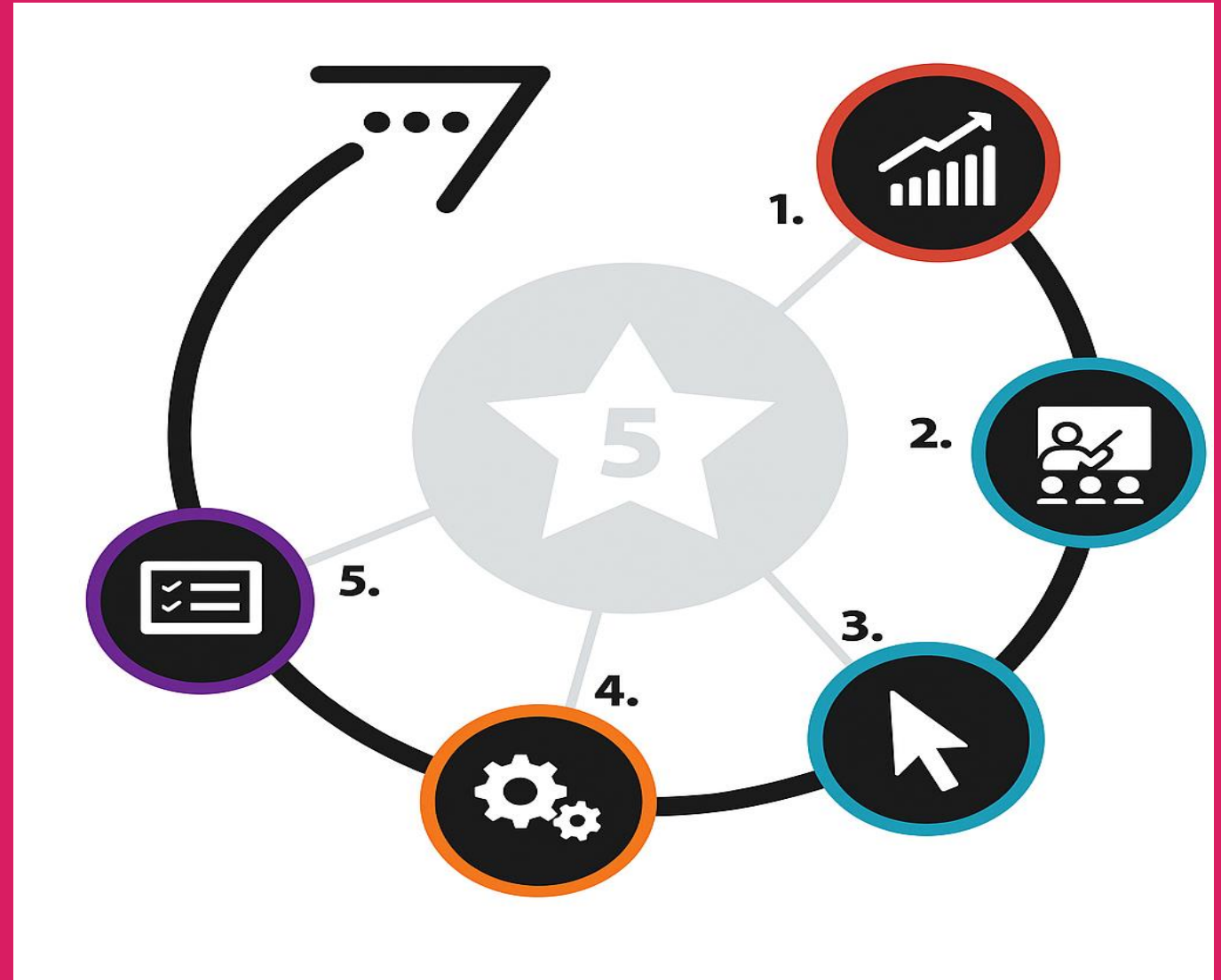
The ADA ensures equal opportunity and access for students, prohibiting discrimination in all programs, services, and activities. This applies to public and private schools, including K-12 institutions, colleges, and universities.

So many options!

How to select appropriate supports for students



Selection of Accessibility Supports

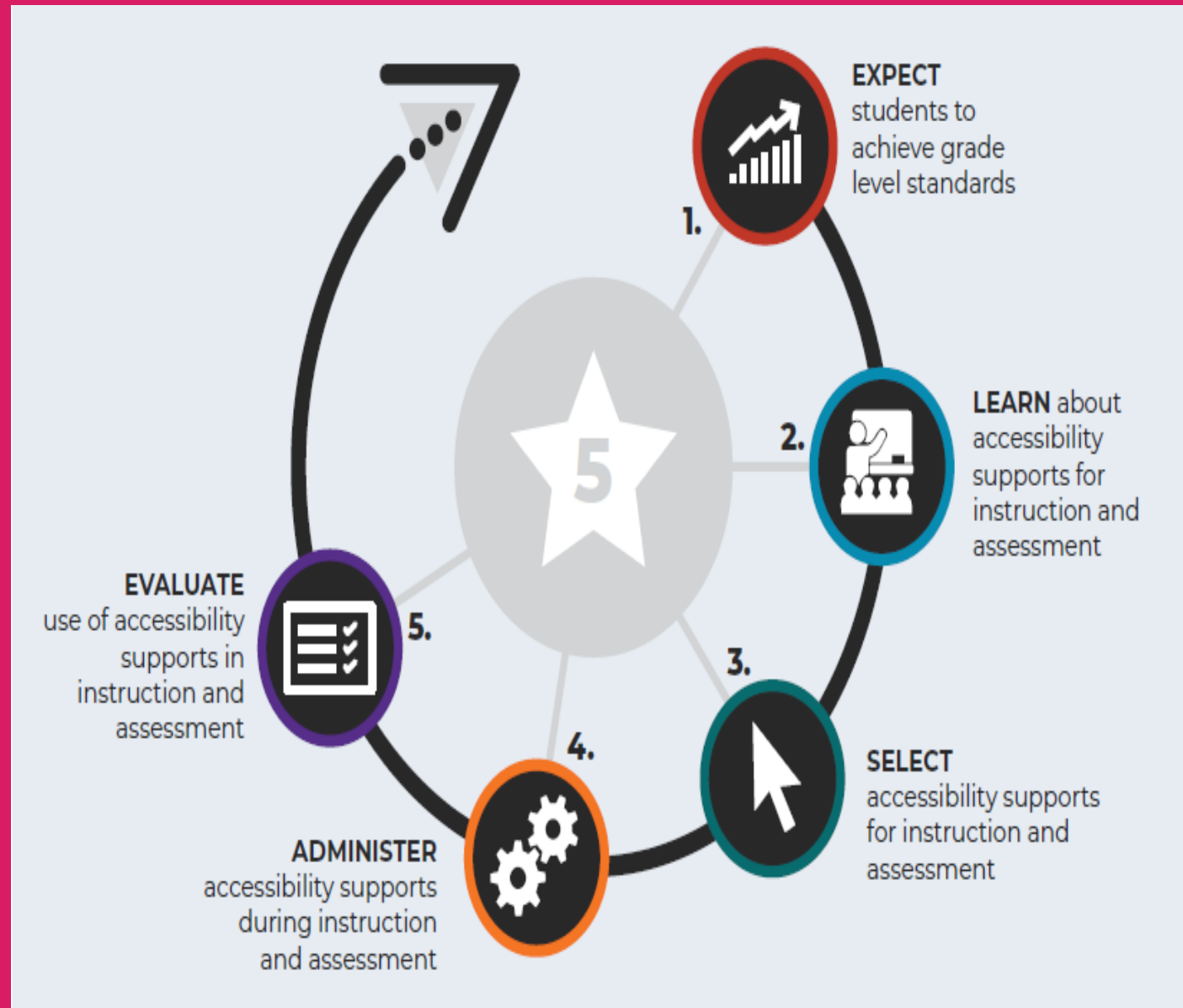


CCSSO Accessibility Manual: How To Select, Adminmister and Avaluate the Use of Accessessibiilty Supports for Instruction and Assessment of Students

Five Step Decision Making Process



[CCSSO Accessibility Manual: How To Select, Administer and Evaluate the Use of Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment of Students](#)



CCSSO Manual: Accessibility Support Tools

Name of Tool	Purpose	Page Number
Tool 2: Guiding Questions	Questions to guide the initial selection of appropriate accessibility supports and to revisit the usefulness of current supports:	28
Tool 3 and Tool 4: Questions To Gain Student and Parent Input	Questionnaires to collect information about needed accessibility supports from the student and parent's perspective	29-30
Tool 11: Five Step Decision Making Process	Prompts to guide accessibility support selection	38

Special Considerations for IEP Teams

- Accommodations and modifications based on unique disability related needs of student
- Avoid selecting the same accommodations and modifications year after year without analyzing data to support the continued need
- Document implementation of accommodations and modifications
- Be specific when documenting accommodations and modifications in the IEP
- Select based on input from ALL stakeholders, including general education teachers, parent AND student
- Determination of appropriate accommodations and modifications happen prior to placement decisions are made

Where's the evidence? Evidence Based Accommodations



[Accommodations Toolkit](#)

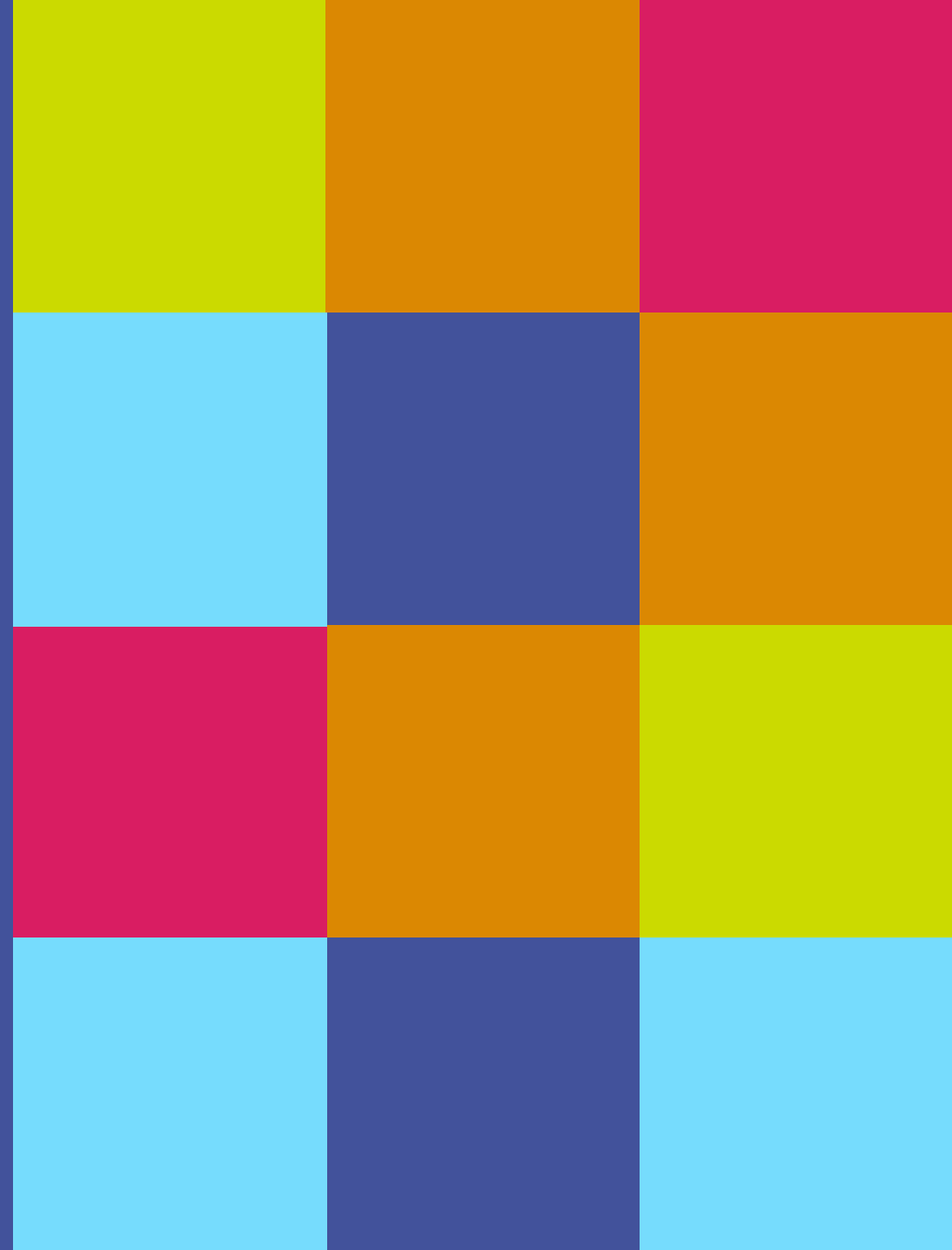
Accommodation	Results	Notes
Extended Time	Inconclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be beneficial for students with anxiety• To be effective, combine with task completion instruction
HUMAN Read Aloud	Mixed to no effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students and teachers preferred technology based read aloud• No impact if student does not know content• Can lead to over dependence and student apathy• Taxing on human resources

Accommodations: A Cautionary Tale

William A. v. Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (2025),

- Addressed a school district's failure to meet the specific reading needs of a student, thus denying the student a FAPE under the IDEA.
- This case further underscores that even the best-intended and most well-used accommodations cannot and should not take the place of Specially Designed Instruction (Special Education services).
- According to the court, William could learn to read if given appropriate instruction, and that the accommodations he received for reading and writing simply masked his inability to read.
- He was passed from grade to grade without being given appropriate reading instruction

Accessibility Tools



Thank you!

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