

Slide 1

Welcome to the Spring 2026 Grades 3-8 Accommodations Improvements abbreviated training for SIS vendors. This training is intended for SIS vendors and District and School Test Coordinators who partner with SIS vendors. The extended version of this training will be posted later this month and is intended for all audiences who administer or support IAR or ISA test administrations.

Slide 2

Today's training covers:

How to document locally provided Accessibility Features and Accommodations in the Illinois Administration Platform.

Accessibility improvements to the standard computer-based test form.

A new structure for how accommodations will be built and assigned moving forward.

A review of the Accommodations Upload Template, which informs how student accommodations are assigned in the testing platform.

Slide 3

As ISBE enhances statewide assessments, it is reviewing legacy systems to streamline Grades 3-8 summative testing. For Spring 2026, one focus has been to improve efficiency, particularly in accommodations assignments. Prior to 2026, ISBE collected dozens of data fields in the Illinois Administration Platform, some of which are listed here.

Beginning in Spring 2026, ISBE has determined it will no longer need to track the fields listed. These fields, such as cover-overlays for paper assessments, are no longer needed at the state level and will be removed from the testing platform and Accommodations Upload Template.

We will look at the AUT template later in the presentation.

Schools and districts remain responsible for maintaining documentation and maintenance of student IEP, 504 plans, and EL modifications.

Slide 4

Students are automatically registered to take regular IAR or ISA computer-based assessments through the Student Information System based on grade and subject. The overwhelming majority of students should take the regular computer-based assessments for IAR and ISA.

Slide 5

This bulleted list highlights accessibility features—such as color contrast, text-to-speech, and closed captioning— now included on regular computer-based IAR and ISA assessments that were previously considered accommodations or designated supports.

Most students, including students with IEP, 504, or EL plans, should be able to take ISBE’s Computer-Based Assessment without the need for additional accommodations.

Please carefully review your student IEP, 504, and EL plans before assigning students any of the accommodations we are about to discuss.

Slide 6

Let’s take a look at the online accommodation improvements for Spring 2026.

Beginning in Spring 2026, the label “Extensions” will be removed from the Illinois Administration Platform and the Accommodations Upload Template. The label “Extensions” will be replaced with “Speech-to-Text” and “Word Prediction.”

Beginning in Spring 2026, students whose IEP indicates that state assessment tests must be read aloud will be assigned a form enabled with both “Text-to-Speech” and “Proctor Read Aloud.”

School Test Coordinators will no longer need to assign “Math Text-to-Speech” in the Accommodations Upload Template, or AUT. All Math tests will be enabled with “Text-to-Speech,” just like the science administration.

And finally, beginning in Spring of 2026, students with IEPs who require the “Speech-to-Text” response accommodation to participate in the Illinois Assessment of Readiness will now be able to do so on the Math test. That’s right! Qualified students will now be able to participate in the IAR and Illinois Science Assessment with TestNav’s “Speech-to-Text” and “Word Prediction” functionality.

Slide 7

Let’s take a look at the new test form, the Online Accommodated Form - Bundle

For returning staff, you will recognize this as the “ELA Text-to-Speech” form that Illinois has always provided for students who have IEPs that require reading support on statewide summative assessments. This test features text-to-speech functionality, meaning each question includes an embedded audio file that students can activate or deactivate as needed for reading assistance. Additionally, Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction tools can

be assigned as add-ons for students whose IEPs require writing support on statewide summative assessments.

So, what makes this test different this year?

This test includes a computer-based Proctor Read Aloud version of the test. The Proctor Read Aloud version of the test is a link that is accessed through the Proctor Dashboard during testing.

You may recall that, prior to Spring 2026, a separate computer-based Human Reader test was developed and assigned to students whose IEP required that a test proctor read statewide summative assessments aloud to a student. Starting in Spring 2026, the computer-based Human Reader test will no longer be developed as a separate test. The Proctor Read Aloud replaces the Human Reader test.

Combined with the ELA Text-to-Speech accommodation, this test will now be called the “Online Accommodated Form Bundle for ELA.” For any student taking a computer-based ELA test whose IEP requires reading support, the Online Accommodated test should be assigned beginning in Spring 2026. Both the Proctor Read Aloud and Text-to-Speech features will be available within the same testing assignment.

The Online Accommodated Mathematics Test may not look familiar to returning staff because it now includes both Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction features. In the past, students with IEPs that required writing support on statewide summative assessments did not have access to these tools. Beginning in Spring 2026, schools can assign the Online Accommodated Mathematics test form to students with IEPs that require writing support during testing. This test will enable both Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction for answering constructed response items on the math test.

Text-to-Speech is enabled as a universal feature on math tests.

Notice that this test will also be associated with a Proctor Read Aloud version, which replaces the “Human Reader” test. Prior to Spring 2026, the Proctor Read Aloud, or Human Reader, was considered an accessibility feature that could be assigned to any student who needed read-aloud support. Beginning in Spring 2026, Text-to-Speech will be enabled as a universal feature on all math tests.

Due to this improvement, schools should assign Proctor Read Aloud only to students whose IEPs require a proctor to read the assessment aloud.

Ultimately, the Online Accommodated Mathematics test is a bundled reading and writing support accommodation. Students assigned this Online Accommodated Mathematics test must have an IEP for these accommodations.

The Online Accommodated Science Test should be treated in the same way as the Math test. This assignment is reserved for those students with both IEP reading and writing supports. It will include Text-to-Speech, Speech-to-Text, Word Prediction, and the Proctor Read Aloud link, or Human Reader, just like the math test.

In conclusion, these three testing assignments should be reserved only for those students with IEPs who otherwise would not be able to participate in the Illinois Assessment of Readiness or the Illinois Science Assessment without these supports.

ISBE will be monitoring testing assignments in the Illinois Administration Platform prior to the Spring 2026 testing window to ensure that this test is assigned minimally across the state.

Slide 8

Now, let's move on to the improvements made to the Assistive Technology and American Sign Language, or ASL, tests for Spring 2026.

Beginning in Spring 2026, technology updates to screen reader software have made it possible to retire the non-screen reader version of this test. Students who need to use JAWS, NVDA, Voiceover, or Dragon NaturallySpeaking should be assigned the Online Accommodated Form, Assistive Technology or AT/Screen Reader Form.

Assistive Technology specialists taking this training should reference the updated Assistive Technology Guidelines for an expanded explanation.

You can find the Assistive Technology Guidelines on the Illinois Support Site.

Beginning in Spring 2026, the Human Signer test will be retired. Prior to 2026, a separate computer-based Human Signer test was developed and assigned to students whose IEP required statewide summative assessments be assigned to a student by a qualified Test Proctor. The computer-based Human Signer test will no longer be developed as a separate test. A Proctor Read Aloud link will be associated with the American Sign Language test, and, together, they will be called the Online Accommodated Form – Sign Language.

Let's review these two forms more closely.

Slide 9

The Online Accommodated Form, AT/Screen Reader will be coded to communicate with screen reader software and supports Dragon NaturallySpeaking and keyboards. For more information about this form, read the Assistive Technology Guidelines.

The Online Accommodated Form – Sign Language will include American Sign Language videos and a Proctor Read Aloud link for a Test Proctor to sign the test for a student.

Slide 10

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness and the Illinois Science Assessment will continue to offer a computer-based Spanish language test enabled with Text-to-Speech, as well as paper and large-print options for math and science. English paper, large print, and Braille will also continue to be available. The big change for paper testing is that all paper testing materials must be ordered from the testing platform. Pearson will no longer count initial orders of paper materials and ship them to schools or districts. District and School Test Coordinators are now responsible for ordering all paper materials. The materials ordering window for districts and schools to begin ordering testing materials for students and test proctors opens on February 16, 2026. Pearson will continue to ship Test Coordinator Manuals and Test Administration Manuals which should arrive in districts by January 15, 2026.

The advantage to moving away from a Pearson-driven deadline for shipping materials is that the District and School Test Coordinators will be able to assign accommodations, including paper accommodations, much later.

The DTC and STC can assign online student accommodations through the Accommodations Upload Template CSV or in the User Interface of the Illinois Administration Platform any time before a student tests through the last day of the testing window.

Slide 11

You may be wondering what all these changes look like. This chart provides a basic decision tree. For students who do not have an IEP or 504, the decision is easy. They will be registered for grade-specific IAR and ISA assessments through the SIS system. Students with IEPs will take either a computer-based test or a paper-based test.

Many students with IEPs taking the computer-based assessment may qualify to take the regular computer-based assessments and can be registered for grade-specific IAR and ISA assessments through the SIS system.

Responsible parties who record the types of state assessment accommodations students require in IEPs should evaluate whether student testing accommodations are available as universal features in TestNav before assigning accommodations in the testing platform.

Students who require support outside the regular computer-based test will have three computer-based testing options: the Accommodated Bundle, the Accommodated Sign Language, or the Accommodated AT/Screen Reader forms.

Students who require paper-based tests will have the same options that have been available in prior years: paper, large print, Braille, Spanish paper, and Spanish large print. Keep in mind that very few students should be taking paper tests.

Slide 12

Students with IEPs who take the ELA/L computer-based test and need additional support have four options: the regular computer-based form, the Accommodated Bundle, sign language, or the AT/Screen Reader form. The regular computer-based ELA test form is not enabled with Text-to-Speech reading supports. ELA is the only subject that does not enable Text-to-Speech as a universal feature. That's because part of the ELA assessment measures reading comprehension. Adding Text-to-Speech to an ELA assessment would violate the construct of the assessment. Therefore, schools must assign Text-to-Speech as an accommodation for students with an IEP who require reading support on state assessments.

For students who qualify, the Online Accommodated Bundle includes both Text-to-Speech and Proctor Read Aloud options. Both reading supports have been made available on the same testing form for school-level flexibility. With the understanding that schools may want to assign either Text-to-Speech or have a Test Proctor read the test aloud to the student on testing day, ISBE has chosen to include both reading supports on the same computer based assessment so decisions can be made on the day of testing without changing testing assignments.

The bundled accommodation is also eligible for Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction for students whose IEP requires both reading and writing support on state assessments. The School Test Coordinator, or STC, must assign Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction in the testing platform for students to receive these supports.

The Online Accommodated Sign Language option includes both item-level American Sign Language Videos and a Proctor Read Aloud option that Test Proctors can access to assign the items for students. Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction is also available for the STC to assign if the assignment is appropriate.

The Online Accommodated AT/Screen Reader option includes content coded to recognize a variety of screen reader software, supports Dragon NaturallySpeaking, and is keyboard compatible.

Paper testing remains unchanged for Spring 2026 with the exception that all paper materials must be ordered by districts and schools in the testing platform.

Slide 13

Students with IEPs who are taking the Mathematics computer-based test and need additional support have four options: the regular computer-based form, the Accommodated Bundle, sign language, or the AT/Screen Reader form. The regular computer-based Mathematics test form is enabled with text-to-speech as a universal support.

The Online Accommodated Bundle includes both Text-to-Speech and a Proctor Read Aloud option. Both reading supports have been made available on the same testing form for flexibility. Understanding that schools may want to assign a proctor to read the test aloud to the student, ISBE has chosen to include the Proctor Read Aloud support on an accommodated math form along with Text-to-Speech so decisions can be made on the day of testing without changing testing assignments. While the Proctor Read Aloud for math and science was previously considered a feature available to any student, ISBE now recommends that only students with IEPs requiring state assessments be read aloud by a Test Proctor receive this support. Therefore, this support has been isolated to the Online Accommodated Bundle.

Any student who needs a test read aloud can take the regular computer-based test assigned through SIS registration.

Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction are enabled on this test form for students whose IEP requires both reading and writing support on state assessments.

The Online Accommodated Bundle for math should be assigned to students with IEPs who require both reading and writing supports on state assessments or need Test Proctor to read the test aloud.

The Online Accommodated Sign Language option includes both item-level American Sign Language Videos and a Proctor Read Aloud option that a Test Proctor can access to assign the items for students. Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction is also available for the STC to assign if appropriate.

The Online Accommodated AT/Screen Reader option includes content coded to recognize various screen reader software, supports Dragon NaturallySpeaking, and is keyboard-compatible.

Paper testing will remain unchanged for Spring 2026, except that districts and schools must order all paper testing materials through the testing platform. The materials ordering window for districts and schools opens on February 16, 2026. Pearson will continue to ship Test Coordinator Manuals and Test Administration Manuals which should arrive in districts by January 15, 2026.

Slide 14

Students with IEPs who are taking the Science computer based test and need additional support have four options: the regular computer based form, the Accommodated Bundle, sign language, or the AT/Screen Reader form. The regular computer-based Mathematics test form is enabled with Text-to-Speech as a universal support.

The Online Accommodated Bundle includes both Text-to-Speech and a Proctor Read Aloud option. Both reading supports have been made available on the same testing form for

flexibility. Understanding that schools may want to assign a Test Proctor to read the test aloud to the student, ISBE has chosen to include the Proctor Read Aloud support on an accommodated math form along with Text-to-Speech so decisions can be made on the day of testing without changing testing assignments.

Previously, any student could access the Proctor Read Aloud feature for math and science. However, ISBE now recommends that this support be provided only to students with IEPs that require state assessments to be read aloud by a Test Proctor. As a result, this feature has been moved exclusively to the Online Accommodated Bundle. Any student who needs a test read aloud can take the regular computer-based test assigned through SIS registration.

Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction are enabled on this test form for students whose IEP requires both reading and writing support on state assessments.

The Online Accommodated Bundle for math should be assigned to students with IEPs who need both reading and writing supports on state assessments or require a Test Proctor to read the test aloud to the student.

The Online Accommodated Sign Language option includes both item-level American Sign Language Videos and a Proctor Read Aloud option that a Test Proctor can access to assign the items for students. Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction are also available for the STC to assign if appropriate.

The Online Accommodated AT/Screen Reader option includes content coded to recognize various screen reader software, supports Dragon NaturallySpeaking, and is keyboard-compatible.

Paper testing remains unchanged for Spring 2026 with the exception that all paper materials must be ordered by districts and schools in the testing platform.

Slide 15

English learner accessibility features and accommodations have not changed for Spring 2026. A computer-based Spanish assessment with Text-to-Speech, Spanish paper, Spanish large print, and regular computer-based math and science tests with embedded Text-to-Speech, features support English learners and English learners with disabilities.

Remember that students should be tested in their language of instruction, when possible.

Slide 16

Now, let's review the streamlined version of the updated Spring 2026 IAR and ISA revised Accommodations Upload Template, or AUT. This condensed template serves as a reference tool for accurately entering and uploading student accommodations into the Comma

Separated Values, or CSV, file within the Illinois Administration Platform. District and School Test Coordinators have permission to perform this task.

ISBE offers three online accommodated forms, three paper accommodated forms, and an online Spanish form with Text-to-Speech. Calculators in non-calculator sections can be assigned for math forms. Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction can be assigned to the ELA-accommodated form and to a regular computer-based science form.

The Online Accommodated bundle provides reading and writing support for math and science, as well as reading support for ELA. The STC can assign writing support for ELA.

The Online Accommodated Sign Language form provides ASL videos at the item level and a Proctor Read Aloud for signing. The STC can assign Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction on ELA or science, and calculators on math can be assigned.

The Online Accommodated AT/Screen Reader form provides screen reader support for students with visual impairments. When students load their screen reader, the form is coded to interact with the screen reader. Students without visual impairments may also use this form if they are using Dragon NaturallySpeaking or are keyboard-dependent. Students who use a screen reader and read Braille during testing will need the STC to order the Braille companion book for the student through the testing platform.

The online Spanish form with Text-to-Speech. is offered for math and science to English learners. It is important to note that students should be testing in the language of instruction, whenever possible.

The paper accommodations have not changed for Spring 2026. Districts and schools will be tasked with ordering all print testing materials. The materials ordering window opens on February 16, 2026. Pearson will continue to ship Test Coordinator Manuals and Test Administration Manuals which should arrive in districts by January 15, 2026.

The remaining TestNav tool in the platform that is yet to be rolled into a universal tool that students can choose is the mouse cursor. Any student can utilize feature. however, it is recommended that STCs prioritize assigning this feature to students with low vision. Next, let's walk through the updated Accommodations Upload Template, or AUT, for Spring 2026 by starting with the column labels and system fields.

Slide 17

Column Header labels within the CSV file that is downloaded from the Illinois Administration Platform will contain letters A through X.

Field Name refers to the name of the system field or the name of the accommodation.

Eligibility identifies eligibility requirements for the accommodation.

What's included briefly describes student supports included with each accommodations field name and student supports that a DTC or STC must assign to a student for the student to receive the accommodation.

Eligible Tests lists whether ELA/L, math, and science include the accommodation.

Test Format indicates whether the test is delivered online or by paper.

Expected Values require a "1" in each cell and row to assign an accommodation.

Column Headers A through H are populated by the SIS system and should not be edited.

Slide 18

These fields are described at greater length within the Accommodations Field Guide. AUT support is included in the field guide. The field guide is organized to provide succinct descriptors of student profiles and accommodations as a support to District and School Test Coordinators assigning IAR and ISA test form accommodations in the Illinois Administration Platform.

The information provided in the field guide is not intended to define student testing needs. Accommodations that a student receives during routine classroom instruction may differ from accommodations a student receives during testing. It is expected that District and School Test Coordinators confirm that IEP, Section 504, and EL teams have met, reviewed, and updated student test accommodation plans before starting the activity.

The scope of the Accessibility Field Guide is limited to features and accommodations that are available only in TestNav or by ordering paper materials from Pearson. Refer to the Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual to review all testing features and accommodations available for students taking IAR and ISA assessments.

Slide 19 and 20

Let's take a closer look at some of the updates to the Spring 2026 AUT. In Column J, the second entry is the Online Accommodated Bundled form. Reading from left to right, this form supports students who need reading and/or writing support. Included in the ELA bundle are reading supports Text-to-Speech and Proctor Read Aloud. Included in the math and science bundles are reading supports Text-to-Speech and Proctor Read Aloud as well as writing supports Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction. The STC must assign Speech-to-Text and Word Prediction for ELA and calculators in non-calculator sections for math.

The student profile provides instructions for assigning the support and other information relevant to student profiles. STCs who assign the ELA Online Accommodated Form Bundle for reading support must enter a "1" in column J of the CSV file for the row associated with the student's ELA registration noted in column H. STCs who assign the ELA Online

Accommodated Form Bundle for reading support with a writing support add-on must enter a “1” in column J and a “1” in column X of the CSV file for the row associated with the student’s ELA registration.

Other information relevant to student profiles: the AUT notes that STCs should download the IAR English Language Arts/Literacy Reading Support Guidance Tool. The AUT also notes that students who need only math and science Text-to-Speech reading support, STCs should take no action because math and science are universally enabled with Text-to-Speech, and these students are not eligible to take this accommodated form.

STCs who assign math and science Proctor Read Aloud must enter a “1” in column J of the CSV file for the row associated with the student’s registration. STCs who assign math and science writing support must enter a “1” in column J of the CSV file for the row associated with the student’s registration.

This guide is available for download on the Illinois Support Site in the Resources tab. Select IAR or ISA Resources. Scroll down to Administration Information and select Accessibility Features and Accommodations, or AF&A Resources. Then, select Spring 2026 Accommodations Field Guide.

The DTC and STC can assign online student accommodations through the Accommodations Upload Template CSV or in the User Interface of the Illinois Administration Platform any time before a student tests through the last day of the testing window. The DTC and STC must assign paper student accommodations through the AUT CSV of the Illinois Administration Platform and order paper materials through the Illinois Administration Platform, or IAP, by March 30, 2026 for the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, and by April 27, 2026 for the Illinois Science Assessment. This allows materials to be shipped and delivered in time for testing.

To begin the process of downloading the AUT CSV file, log into the Illinois Administration Platform and select Rostering. Then, select Users. Next, select the kabob or three dots in the upper-right corner and then select Student Accommodation Upload.

Scroll to the bottom of the next screen and select the Student Accommodation Upload page. Then, select the Click to create template button to create a template page.

After you have created the template, you can download it using the Template History Button at the top of the page.

From Template History, you may then download the Accommodations Upload Template as a .csv file.

Save the CSV file to a local device and update accommodations.

Then, reupload the file to update within the system.

Accommodations can also be updated from the User Interface.

When you open the AUT template, fields A through H are populated with student registration information, which the SIS system updates nightly.

When you look at column H, you will find that this grade 5 student is registered for each subject. Math and ELA are tested at Grades 3-8 and science is tested in grades 5 and 8.

This student requires Text-to-Speech, and the STC has completed the IAR English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/L) Reading Support Guidance Tool with assistance from the IEP team. The team decided that Text-to-Speech is an appropriate accommodation for all subjects. Since it is a universal feature for both math and science, the STC should take no action. This student has been registered for the regular computer-based math and science tests through the SIS system. Text-to-Speech is not a feature in ELA and is only available as an accommodation. The STC has assigned the ELA Online Accommodated Form Bundle for reading support by entering a “1” in column J of the CSV file for the row associated with the student’s ELA registration, as noted in column H.

Accommodations updates can also be made in the User Interface by going to Rostering and Users. From here, use the filter to locate the student and select the edit button. On the next screen, click on Accommodations and Edit. From this screen, you can check the accommodation the student needs by subject. Remember to click Save.

If you are populating the AUT template with student accommodations, save the CSV. Then, upload it back into the IAP by selecting Rostering, then Users. Select the kabob, or three dots, and choose Student Accommodation Upload. On the next screen, scroll to the bottom and drop the file into the Upload field.

There’s more to come this winter. Look for brand new, side-by-side proctor instructions with audio files included. District and School test coordinators will be notified through the Illinois Administration Platform as soon as the files are posted to the Illinois Support Site.

For each language and test proctoring script, the directions will now be posted exclusively on the Illinois Support Site as computer-based modules. Proctors will be able to scroll through the script and see the English version, followed by a native language version of spoken directions. Audio files in the native language will appear across the bottom of the module, allowing proctors to play them if they do not speak the student’s native language. The available languages include Arabic, French, Mandarin, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Telugu, Ukrainian, and Urdu.

The Accessibility and Accommodations Manual is being redesigned to focus exclusively on the IAR and ISA assessments and will be rebranded to align with ISBE style guidelines. While most policies will remain unchanged, the manual will be streamlined and will incorporate the new ISBE Accommodations Suite.

The new additions include a section on Test Assignment Scenarios to assist STCs assigning students to appropriate tests. The manual will also feature updated alternative text guidelines specific to IAR and ISA (formerly audio guidelines), designed to help Test Proctors accurately describe images and math equations to students who require a Test Proctor to read the test aloud.

This concludes the Grades 3-8 Accommodations Improvements for the Spring 2026 Illinois Assessment of Readiness and the Illinois Science Assessment.

We hope that you have found this training useful for learning more about the Spring 2026 testing season. For questions, please contact Pearson by email at SCHIllinoisTeam@pearson.com or call customer support at 1-833-213-3879. You may also visit the Illinois Support Page at il.mypearsonsupport.com to schedule a meeting with Customer Support by selecting the Support button.