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Bureau of Special Education FY'14 Memo #27

Date: March 24, 2014

To: Superintendents of Schools
Directors of Special Education

From: Office of the Commissioner
Division of Educational Improvement
Bureau of Special Education

RE: Smarter Balanced and Accommodations

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education would like to offer guidance regarding Smarter Balanced Assessment and students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who may need accommodations. Smarter Balanced has developed *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* that addresses the selection and administration of universal tools, designated supports and accommodations when administering Smarter Balanced assessment.

The guidelines may be found at:

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_091113.pdf

The Usability, Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines FAQ may be found at:

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_FAQ.pdf

With Smarter Balanced assessment being a computer assessment, it offers universal tools for all students based on student preference and selection. The universal tools allow access features that are digitally-delivered components of the assessment or they are administered separate from it. Students with an IEP will utilize the same process that all students will use to access the universal tools.

Designated supports are also available to all students; however, designated supports require explicit actions by a team for a student to be able to use them and they must be identified ahead of the assessment implementation. When reviewing the designated support, the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education has made decision that the Individual Education Program team (IEP team) will be the entity that is the decision making team for students with disabilities. Also in the Usability, Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines, it requires that every student that uses designated supports have an Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Plan (ISAAP). For students with IEPs you will not need to create a second plan. The IEP will be the ISAAP.

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For administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment in spring 2015, the Bureau of Special Education has made revisions to the New Hampshire Special Education Information System's (NHSEIS), EasyIEP which now identifies Smarter Balanced; in addition, to the established NECAP for Science. The designated supports and accommodation that can be found in Smarter Balanced have been uploaded into EasyIEP under *General Accommodations and Modifications*. We encourage you to review this section in the links provided:

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_091113.pdf

www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wpcontent/uploads/2013/12/SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_FAQ.pdf

Should you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact Mary Steady at 271-3730 or mary.steady@doe.nh.gov.

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