


MEMORANDUM

January 23, 2017

TO: The Honorable Chair and Members of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—COLLEGE BOARD WILL AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPT DISTRICT SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTS

The College Board announced on December 1, 2016, that starting January 1, 2017, the vast majority of students who have a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan will receive automatic approval for already-documented testing accommodations when taking the SAT, PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, SAT subject tests, and AP exams. Under the simplified process, the school testing accommodation coordinator will only need to confirm that the requested test accommodation – such as extra time, sitting in a separate room, and/or having the test read to the student – is already in the student's plan and has been used for school testing. This new policy is consistent with the School Board's legislative program, which calls for streamlined documentation at the College Board and other major testing services. M-DCPS staff has had several conversations with the College Board and community members, including the Dade Delegation, regarding this issue and is pleased that at least one of the major testing companies is addressing the needs of our students and families.

The College Board will also provide increased testing accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs). Initially, the College Board changes will affect state-funded SAT tests administered during the school day. Students taking SAT exams in these states will be able to access testing instructions in several native languages with approved bilingual glossaries as of January 2017. By Fall of 2017, these ELL students will also receive extended testing time and the opportunity to test in an environment with reduced distractions. The College Board has stated that these testing supports are expected to be expanded to ELL students taking the SAT in all states, including Florida, in the near future.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305 995-1497.

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cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet