

Presidential 1776 Award: Accessibility and Accommodations Policy

I. Policy Statement

The U.S. Department of Education is committed to ensuring that all eligible participants in the Presidential 1776 Award have equal access to all components of the award selection process. In accordance with federal law, the Department provides reasonable modifications or accommodations for qualified students and individuals with disabilities to ensure full and fair participation in the Presidential 1776 Award, including the online assessment and oral evaluation rounds.

For example, in connection with the Presidential 1776 Award program, students may receive the reasonable modifications or accommodations they receive through a Section 504 Plan, Individualized Education Program (IEP), or other document.

To receive accommodations, schools or parents must submit a request on behalf of the student that describes the accommodation request during the Registration window, February 1-21, 2026. Forms will be sent to those who mark they need an accommodation on their registration.

If your situation is not covered here, or you have questions, reach out to 1776accommodations@ed.gov

This policy applies to all stages of the Presidential 1776 Award selection process, including the timed online multiple-choice examination and live oral questioning rounds.

II. Legal Authority

The Department will comply with all applicable disability-related federal laws and regulations, including:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794); and
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d), governing electronic and information technology accessibility

III. Scope of Accessibility

This policy applies to all aspects of the competition including all stages of the competition and all digital platforms, testing interfaces, instructions, and communications associated with the award.

IV. Eligibility for Accommodations

In order to be eligible for accommodations, a participant must:

- Have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities or
- be a child with a qualifying disability as defined under IDEA, who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services

Participants are not required to disclose the nature of their disability beyond what is necessary to support the accommodation request.

V. Reasonable Accommodations

A. Online Multiple-Choice Assessment

Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Extended testing time
- Extended breaks
- Screen reader compatibility and keyboard navigation
- Large-print or high-contrast display settings
- Text-to-speech functionality (where test integrity permits)
- Alternative formats for visual or auditory content
- Use of assistive technology compatible with Section 508 standards

All testing platforms will be designed to meet WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards, including:

- Automated testing with accessibility validation tools
- Manual testing with assistive technologies
- Keyboard navigation verification
- Screen reader compatibility testing
- Color contrast and visual design review

B. Oral Questioning Rounds

Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Extended response time for oral answers
- Use of assistive communication devices
- Sign language interpreters or real-time captioning (CART)
- Permission to respond via assistive technology
- Modified pacing or rest breaks during questioning

Accommodations will be designed to ensure equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge, not to alter the substance or rigor of the evaluation.

VI. Requesting Accommodations

Participants must submit accommodation requests via form (emailed to those who select they need an accommodation on their registration form) or email to accessibility@ebscoed.com by February 21, 2026, for the Round 1 online multiple-choice qualifying test and email 1776accommodations@ed.gov by April 10, 2026 for the Regional Round 2 oral test.

Requests should include:

- A description of the requested accommodation(s)
- Documentation supporting the need for accommodation
- School Name and Point of Contact
- Email used to register for the test
- Test taker name
- Parent contact
- Subject Line: Presidential 1776 Award Accommodation Request

Accommodation requests will be reviewed on an individualized, case-by-case basis.

The Department may engage in an interactive process with the participant to clarify needs and identify effective accommodations.

VII. Confidentiality

All disability-related information will be:

- Kept confidential
- Maintained separately from program records
- Shared only with personnel who require the information to implement approved accommodations

VIII. Denial or Modification of Requests

Accommodation requests may be denied or modified only if:

- The request would fundamentally alter the nature of the assessment or evaluation
- The request would compromise test integrity or program fairness
- The accommodation constitutes an undue burden under federal law

Participants will be notified in writing of any denial or modification and may request reconsideration.

IX. Non-Discrimination Assurance

No participant will be excluded from participation, denied benefits, or otherwise subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability in any component of the Presidential 1776 Award selection process.

X. Accessibility Contact Information

Participants with questions may contact:

U.S. Department of Education

1776accommodations@ed.gov

EBSCOed

accessibility@ebscoed.com

XI. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure continued compliance with federal law and evolving accessibility best practices.