Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications may seem like interchangeable terms, but when it comes to special education they have different meanings.

Adaptations provide a way to:
- Maximize opportunities for interactions between students;
- Increase the student’s opportunities to be an active participant;
- Increase the opportunities for students to learn concepts in real and concrete ways;
- Make the information relevant to the student’s current and future life; and
- Help create a match between the student’s learning style and the teacher’s teaching style!

**ADAPTATIONS**

are any adjustments or changes made to the environment, curriculum, instruction or assessment practices in order for students to be successful learners. Both accommodations and modifications are types of adaptations.

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**What’s the difference?**

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

are changes in how a student accesses information and demonstrates learning. They do not substantially change the instructional level, the content, or the performance criteria.

**MODIFICATIONS**

are changes in what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate when participating in the general education curriculum. They do not mean that the student must have a separate or parallel curriculum. However, at the high school level, such changes do mean that a student will not graduate with a regular North Carolina diploma.