

CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

General Guidelines

Curriculum adaptations include accommodations, modifications, and supports that allow a child with a disability access to the general curriculum and assessments. LEAs/districts are responsible for ensuring that each teacher and provider is informed of his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP (34CFR 300.342 (b)(3)).

What are accommodations?

Accommodations are adaptations that enable a student with a disability to participate in educational programming and complete school work or tests with greater ease and success. Accommodations DO NOT fundamentally alter the curriculum or lower expectations or standards in instructional level, content or performance criteria. Accommodations are changes made to the curriculum in order to provide equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known.

What are modifications?

Modifications are adaptations that provide a student with meaningful and productive learning experiences based on individual needs and abilities. Modifications DO fundamentally alter the curriculum or lower expectations or standards, in instructional level, content or performance criteria to meet the student's needs.

Adaptations to Assessments

Accommodations and modifications should not simply be applied at the time of testing as a means of support. In order to justify the use of accommodations/modifications during testing, a student should also have access to the needed supports during instruction in the classroom.

Grading when adaptations have been made to the curriculum

Because accommodations do not fundamentally alter the curriculum, student's grade should not reflect that accommodations have been made. Accommodations provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in the general education curriculum.

If modifications have been made to the curriculum of any course, it is important that the student's grade reflect the student's achievement in the modified curriculum, as long as modified grades are available to all students. However, any modifications to programming, instruction, and grading must be documented in the student's IEP and be directly related to the student's disability. To automatically give modified grades to all special education students would be discriminatory and potentially violate Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

How to determine the appropriate adaptations to curriculum

The IEP team may use the *Nine Types of Curriculum Adaptations* (Diana Browning Wright, Teaching and Learning, 2005) matrix to determine the most appropriate adaptations required for

a student with a disability to gain access to the general curriculum. Once the team has agreed upon the necessary adaptations, they need to be shared with teachers and service providers to ensure that the accommodations, modifications, and supports written into the child’s IEP are being implemented.

Nine Types of Curriculum Adaptations

| Quantity | Time | Level of Support |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or number of activities student will complete prior to assessment for mastery.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Reduce the number of social studies terms a learner must learn at any one time. Add more practice activities or worksheets.</p> | <p>Adapt the time allotted and allowed for learning, task completion, or testing.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Individualize a timeline for completing a task; pace learning differently (increase or decrease) for some learners.</p> | <p>Increase the amount of personal assistance to keep the student on task or to reinforce or prompt use of specific skills. Enhance adult-student relationship; use physical space and environmental structure.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Assign peer buddies, teaching assistants, peer tutors, or cross-age tutors. Specify how to interact with the student or how to structure the environment.</p> |
| Input | Difficulty | Output |
| <p>Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Use different visual aids, enlarge text, plan more concrete examples, and provide hands-on activities, place students in cooperative groups, pre-teach key concepts or terms before the lesson.</p> | <p>Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Allow the use of a calculator to figure math problems; simplify task directions; change rules to accommodate learner needs.</p> | <p>Adapt how the student can respond to instruction.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Instead of answering questions in writing, allow a verbal response, use a communication book for some students, allow students to show knowledge with hands on materials.</p> |

| Participation | Alternate Goals | Substitute Curriculum |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>In geography, have a student hold the globe, while others point out locations. Ask the student to lead a group. Have the student turn the pages while sitting on your lap (kindergarten).</p> | <p>Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials. When routinely utilized, this is only for students with moderate to severe disabilities.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>In a social studies lesson, expect a student to be able to locate the colors of the states on a map, while other students learn to locate each state and name the capital.</p> | <p>Provide different instruction and materials to meet a learner's individual goals. When routinely utilized, this is only for students with moderate to severe disabilities.</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>During a language lesson a student is learning toileting skills with an aide.</p> |
| <p>Substantially altered by Diana Browning Wright with permission from Jeff Sprague, Ph.D. from an original by DeSchenes, C., Ebeling, D., & Sprague, J. (1994). <i>Adapting Curriculum & Instruction in Inclusive Classrooms: A Teachers Desk Reference</i>. ISDDCSCI Publication. Diana Browning Wright, <i>Teaching & Learning 2005</i></p> | | |