

Access to the General Education Curriculum

Access to the general education curriculum is about ensuring that all students with disabilities have access to and show progress in the general curriculum through curricular/instructional adaptations in the least restrictive environment. TEA and ESC 20 developed a Standards-Based Individualized Education Program (IEP) Online Training Module. "The training focuses on the portion of the ARD process related to developing a student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and using the PLAAFP to create enrolled grade level measurable annual academic goals. The training should take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete" (<http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/esc20public/SpecialEducation/AGCHome/AGCStatewideLeadership>). It begins by saying the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 2004) and other educational laws are designed to provide students with disabilities greater access to the general education curriculum. The required general education curriculum for each grade level in Texas schools is the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). (<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148>) It is noted that NCLB and IDEA regulations say that modified academic achievement standards are allowed for some students, but require that all students have access to and instruction in grade-level content.

An IEP Annual Goal Development Question & Answer document (in English and Spanish) can also be found at: http://esc20.net/default.aspx?name=ci_se.agc. It provides information to ARD/IEP committees in how to address access to the general education curriculum. It says that "Annual IEP goals should reflect and link directly to specific grade level TEKS. The IEP does not need to include all TEKS in a specific subject. The IEP should include only the most critical student expectations within a specific content domain" and "Annual goals are statements that describe what a child with a disability can reasonably be expected to accomplish within a twelve month period." Much important information for parents is provided in this document. It is noted that "The student expectation component of the TEKS is used to provide the framework for annual goal writing by establishing grade level expectations. However, student expectation statements alone are not measurable and should be crafted by ARD committees to reflect a measurable annual goal." Section 2 addresses writing academic/standards-based goals, and answers key questions for parents and educators on this topic. A common issue is how to write goals for the enrolled grade level when a student is not on grade level. To assist schools, the document refers to two websites with documents developed by the National Association of State Directors of Special Ed to assist schools. (<http://www.nasdse.org/Publications/tabid/577/Default.aspx>)

Access to the general education curriculum includes the provision of modifications, accommodations, supplementary aids, and supports in order for the student to make satisfactory educational progress. This would include students having instructional materials (printed textbooks and printed core materials) in formats that are accessible to them. The ARD/IEP team needs to consider each print-disabled student's need for accessible, alternate-format versions of print instructional materials. If a student with a print disability does need a specialized format, the IEP should specify the following:

- the specific format(s) to be provided (Braille, audio, e-text, large print, etc.)
- the services and/or assistive technology the student needs to use the specialized format
- the individual or individuals responsible for providing the specialized format, and
- whether or not the format is required to be used in the student's home or in another setting in order for the student to receive a free appropriate public education.

ESC 20 has the task of providing leadership on this topic for other ESC's and schools in Texas. TEA and ESC 20 have developed a free online training titled, "Standards-Based IEPs Goal Development Online Training 2009-2010". "The training focuses on the portion of the ARD process related to developing a student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and using the PLAAFP to create enrolled grade level measurable annual academic goals. The training should take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete, and upon successful completion a certificate will be created by the user. The intended audience is general and special educators who are involved in the ARD/IEP process, but other personnel, including parents, are welcome to



participate."

Resources:

- TEA Standards-Based IEP Guidance document: <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/guidance/sbIEP.html>
- ESC 20 website on Access to the General Curriculum: http://esc20.net/default.aspx?name=ci_se.agc.Home

Reading Strategies Resources Weblinks:

- www.sedl.org
- The Florida Center for Reading Research, www.fcrr.org
- <http://www.meadowscenter.org/vgc/>

Reading Strategies Resources Documents:

- Key Points for Secondary Readers: <http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/esc20public/SpecialEducation/AGCHome/PDFs/KeyPointsSecondaryReaders.pdf>
- Accessible Textbooks: A Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities, Center for Applied Special Technology and LD OnLine (2007): <http://www.ldonline.org/article/16308>
- Access to the General Ed Curriculum: Research-Based Interventions for HS Students with Disabilities: http://www.ncset.org/teleconferences/transcripts/2004_08a.asp
- Accessible Instructional Materials and the IEP: http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/accessible_iep
- Effects of Peer Support Interventions on Students' Peer Support Interventions on Students' Access to the General Curriculum and Social Interactions: <http://familiestogetherinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/accesspeersupport.pdf>
- Using Technology to Provide Access to the General Ed Curriculum-: [_http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te800.htm](http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te800.htm)
- Using Mnemonic Instruction to Facilitate Access to the General Ed Curriculum: http://www.k8accesscenter.org/training_resources/Mnemonics.asp
- Using Peer Tutoring to Facilitate Access: [_http://familiestogetherinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/PeerTutoringFinal.pdf](http://familiestogetherinc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/PeerTutoringFinal.pdf)
- Enhancing access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities: <http://www.k8accesscenter.org/index.php>
- "LD-LA, Learning disAbilities, Learning Abilities," is a six-part video series, with topics including reading, dyslexia, phonemic awareness, multisensory instruction, dyscalculia or math disabilities and ADD/ADHD. The series draws on current research from the National Institutes of Child Health, to help improve the understanding and teaching of all students at risk of not learning to read or do math: <http://weta.convio.net/site/R?i=g2oH5IjFW8he-qLHwzf2gA>



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PATH Project: 1-800-866-4726



PEN Project: 1-877-762-1435



TEAM Project: 1-877-832-8945

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