



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENCE GUIDE

TITLE: Guidelines for Individualized Educational Program (IEP) Teams When Considering a Recommendation to Instruct a Student Using an Alternate Curriculum

NUMBER: REF-6275.0

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Division of Special Education

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this reference guide is to provide guidance to IEP teams when considering a recommendation to instruct a student with a disability using an alternate curriculum.

MAJOR CHANGES: Not applicable.

BACKGROUND: IEP teams are often challenged with making the recommendation for the appropriate curriculum of instruction. The decision to recommend instruction using an alternate curriculum will impact a student's educational outcomes from the point of the recommendation forward. As such, the decision to recommend a student be instructed using an alternate curriculum should only be made after appropriate information has been gathered and discussed by an IEP team.

PROCEDURES: I. Preparatory Activities

Before the IEP meeting, those individuals who will be involved in the meeting should engage in preparatory activities which provide information about: 1) how the student learns, 2) strategies, supports and accommodations that have proven successful over time and 3) the skills and application practices that will be required to progress in the next grade level or unit of instruction. This information should be compiled from multiple sources including (but not limited to):

- Report cards
- Class tests
- Standards-referenced assessments, such as performance-based assessments and curriculum-based assessments
- Anecdotal records
- Behavioral reports
- Checklists and other teacher evaluations
- Reports from any related service providers
- Performance on State and District-wide assessments
- Observations from parents, including how the student applies what he/she has learned at school while at home and in the community.

ROUTING

All Schools
Instructional Area Superintendents
Instructional Directors
School Site Administrators
IEP Team Members



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PROCEDURES (continued):

For more information, please consult the Special Education Policy and Procedures Manual, July 2007, page 55, "VI. PREPARING FOR AN IEP MEETING." Additionally, the Related Resource section below should be consulted for pertinent resources.

II. Recommended IEP Team Discussion

During the IEP meeting, it is suggested that the following questions be discussed when considering the recommendation that a student be instructed using an alternate curriculum. If the questions below cannot be answered in full, it is permissible for the IEP Team to recess the meeting so that the appropriate data can be gathered and discussed at a reconvened IEP Team meeting. These guiding questions should assist teams in making the decision to recommend the most appropriate curriculum of instruction for a student. In addition to the guiding questions, please consult BUL-4902.2: "Determining the Appropriate Educational Placement for Students with Disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)."

- Is the student's demonstrated cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior in the home, school and community environments significantly below age expectations, even with program modifications, adaptations and accommodations?
- Is the student's course of study primarily functional and life-skills oriented?
- Does the student require extensive direct instruction and/or extensive support in multiple settings to acquire, maintain, and generalize academic and functional skills necessary for application in school, work, home, and community environments?
- Does the student's disability cause dependence on others for many, if not all, daily living needs, and is this anticipated to continue in adulthood? Note: This should not be the sole determining factor for recommending that a student participate on an alternate curriculum.
- The following factors should be considered but must not be the primary reason for recommending a student to be instructed using an alternate curriculum:
 - Excessive or extended absences, poor attendance or lack of instruction;
 - Sensory (visual or auditory) or physical disabilities; emotional-behavioral disabilities; or a specific learning disability;
 - Social, cultural, linguistic or economic differences;
 - Below average reading level;
 - Low achievement in general;
 - Expectations of poor performance;
 - Disruptive behavior;
 - The anticipated impact of the student's performance on the school/district performance scores; and
 - The student's disability category, educational placement, type of instruction, and/or amount of time receiving special education services.



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PROCEDURES (continued):

III. IEP Documentation

The IEP document must confirm why the team is recommending the change in curriculum:

- A. Present Levels of Performance for each instructional area must include documentation of the student's current performance, assessment measures used to determine performance needs, and an impact of disability statement. The information presented should clearly support the discussion regarding the recommendation to use the alternate curriculum. Please refer to the Alternate Curriculum: Present Level of Performance Training found online at: <http://lausd.wistia.com/medias/6dcw9yea22> .
- B. Appropriate and measurable goals must be developed for each performance area using the Special Education Administrators of County Offices (SEACO) Curriculum Guide for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities.
- C. Determine supports and related services needed to support the student's participation in the least restrictive environment.
- D. Instructional setting and placement recommended on FAPE 1 of the IEP must align with student's instructional needs and be within the Least Restrictive Environment.
- E. Complete the *Eligibility to Participate in an Alternate Assessment* questions (Attachment A). If the answer to all of the questions is "Agree," the team should indicate in Section K of the IEP that the student will participate in an alternate assessment. If the answer to any of these questions is "Disagree," the team should consider core assessments (e.g. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CASPP), etc.). Upload the completed *Eligibility to Participate in an Alternate Assessment* to the Assessment area of Welligent. For uploading instructions, please refer to Welligent Connection, Volume 2, Issue 2, July 26, 2006.
- F. Discuss and explain the difference between a Certificate of Completion and a High School Diploma to the parents and/or students participating at the IEP meeting. Criteria for students pursuing a certificates of completion and diplomas can be found in the 2007 Special Education Policy and Procedures Manual, page 260.

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A: Eligibility to Participate in an Alternate Assessment

RELATED RESOURCES:

- Special Education Policy and Procedures Manual, 2007
- BUL-4902.2: "Determining the Appropriate Educational Placement for Students with Disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)"
- MEM-5710.0: "IEP Academy – Thinking Through the IEP Process Web-Based Special Education Professional Development Workshop"
- REF-5907.0: "Requesting Information in Preparation of a Discussion Regarding a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) During an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team Meeting"
- Welligent Connection, Volume 2, Issue 2, July 26, 2006



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- Alternate Curriculum: Present Level of Performance Training
<http://lausd.wistia.com/medias/6dcw9yea22>

ASSISTANCE: For assistance or further information please contact Nathan Edson, Specialist, Alternate Curriculum Programs at nathan.edson@lausd.net or 213-241-4966.

Eligibility to Participate in an Alternate Assessment

Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria

Eligibility for an alternate assessment is based on a student's individualized education program (IEP) that reflects an emphasis on curricular instruction of the California content standards based on alternate achievement standards. In order to aid an IEP team in its determination of whether a student should be assessed using an alternate assessment, the following shall be considered:

Circle "Agree" or "Disagree" for each task:

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|-------|----------|---|
| Agree | Disagree | The student demonstrates academic/cognitive ability and adaptive behavior that require substantial adjustments to the general curriculum. The student may participate in many of the same activities as his or her nondisabled peers; however, his or her learning objectives and expected outcomes focus on the functional applications of the general curriculum. |
| Agree | Disagree | The student cannot address the performance level assessed in the statewide assessment, even with accommodations or modifications. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is <i>not</i> based on the amount of time the student is receiving special education services. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is <i>not</i> based on excessive or extended absences. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is <i>not</i> based on language, cultural, or economic differences. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is <i>not</i> based on deafness/blindness, visual, auditory, and/or motor disabilities. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision to participate in the alternate assessment is <i>not primarily</i> based on a specific categorical label. |
| Agree | Disagree | The decision for alternate assessment is an IEP team decision, rather than an administrative decision. |

If the answer to any of these questions is "Disagree," the team should consider core assessments (e.g. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, etc.).