Best Practices for Including Students
Instructed on Access Points

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Collaboration Unity Equity

Inclusion of Students Instructed on Access Points

Access points are Florida's alternate achievement standards that reflect the essence or core intent of the standards and align to grade level standards. A student who has a significant cognitive disability may be eligible for modifications to grade-level standards and receive direct academic instruction based on state standards access points. Instruction is delivered at the student's individual level of complexity. Access points afford students opportunities to engage in state standards at their individual ability level regardless of the subject. Alignment to general education standards allows a classroom teacher to develop one lesson that can be used for the entire class. While access points are setting neutral and can be provided in any setting, the student's IEP team makes decisions regarding the use of access points and where instruction takes place. (Access Project | (321) 269-2326 x12023 | www.accesstofls.org)

A collaboration with:

ACCESS
Providing Resources that Facilitate the Teaching & Learning of Access Points

Getting Started

"Remember that a modified lesson in an inclusive classroom is a lesson where the objective and/or learning materials have been changed to meet the needs of a special learner. However, the overall concept or activity remains the same so that the learner can experience the curriculum alongside his or her classmates." (The Inclusive Class, Nicole Eredics)

Modifying Core Curriculum for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

For students meeting specific criteria, general education curriculum standards can be taught at a reduced level of complexity, referred to as access points (AP). Access points are directly aligned to state standards in core content areas, the Arts and PE.

AP for ELA and Math have multiple entry levels referred to as Essential Understandings (EUs) allowing access to, involvement with and progress within grade level content along a continuum of cognitive abilities. Although EUs are not required to master any given AP, they help disaggregate or "break down" modified concepts. Science, Social Studies, Health, Dance, Theater, Arts, and Physical Education (PE) access points are written at three levels of complexity and are defined as Independent (In), Supported (Su), and Participatory (Pa). A student can fluctuate within the complexity levels based on content area and skill and is not required to master all three levels of complexity. The three levels of complexity allow the student to engage at their individual ability level and move toward higher complexity levels as their ability increases.

Both the entry points of complexity and the essential understandings (EUs) help teachers break down the standards into levels for a student to interact with the grade level content alongside their same age peers.

> Presuming Competence is assuming students with significant cognitive disabilities are not inherently incapable; they just need the right supports and systems to help them succeed.

Identify standard(s) and corresponding access point(s) to be taught in a lesson. Identify Specially Designed Instruction and consider Collaborative Teaching Approach needed.

Using the Universal Design for learning (UDL) guidelines, develop a lesson that is optimal for all learners.
- View the UDL guidelines at http://udlguidelines.cast.org or
- View a video about the UDL guidelines at https://youtu.be/U1B6yQXsr0c

Based on a student's IEP, identify modifications and/or accommodations.

Consider the student's mode of communication.
- Does the student utilize an augmentative and alternative communication system (AAC)?
- Does the student require supports for communication?
- What form of expressive written communication does the student utilize?

Identify tools to objectively collect data to be used in determining student grade(s) and for progress monitoring.
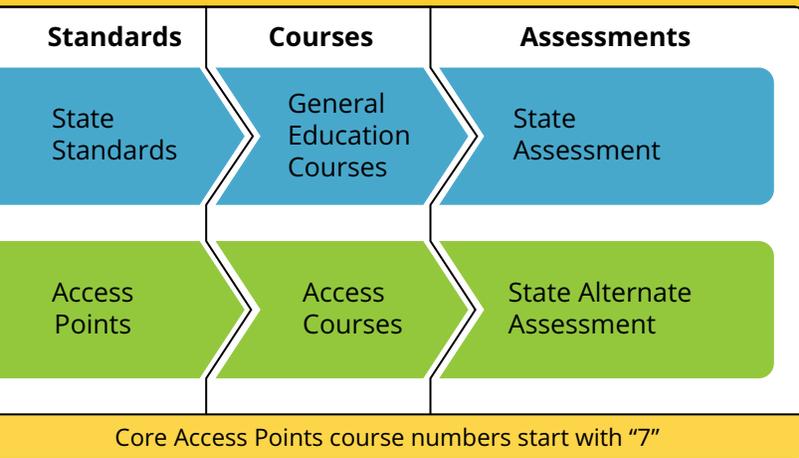
Start Your Planning Using Access Project Resources

- Allows teachers in any setting to quickly find resources aligned to specific state standards, corresponding access points and essential understandings
- Includes the general education standard and access point for courses by grade level
- Provides ways for teachers to record data on the progress of their students either individually or by group/class
- May also include resources to support the teaching and learning of access points

On the Access Project website, select the "Core" button, then choose a content area to access the corresponding resource. (https://accesstofls.org)

Alignment of Standards, Courses, and Assessments

Standards	Courses	Assessments
State Standards	General Education Courses	State Assessment
Access Points	Access Courses	State Alternate Assessment

Core Access Points course numbers start with "7"

Collaborative Teaching Approaches

The six collaborative teaching approaches are used by a general educator and an exceptional educator. Using an in-class service delivery model, they work together to provide specially designed instruction to students with disabilities as stated on their IEP. Co-teaching and support facilitation are the two most common models of in-class support. Students on access points in general education settings must be supported by support facilitation, at a minimum. For more information on models of support, visit http://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com/wp-content/ uploads/2020/05/CueCard-CT.pdf.

Grading

"Grades for all students should be meaningful and informative for teachers, students, and parents. Research evidence supports the use of standards-based grading for students with disabilities. (Jung & Guskey, 2007; Muñoz & Guskey, 2015; O'Connor, 2009). When teachers are grading students with significant cognitive disabilities in inclusive classrooms, a multifaceted approach is needed. Teachers must first determine what the purpose of grading is and then decide what adaptations may be needed for making the grade meaningful for the student."

Reyes, E. N., Wakeman, S., & Thurlow, M. (2020). *Grading for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms* (TIPS Series: Tip #11) Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, TIES Center.

For students who participate in a modified curriculum, the IEP team should determine that it is most appropriate to use grading procedures that reflect the student's expected level of performance in relation to progress toward preestablished learning criteria, which would be the modified state standards. In this case, it is essential that all members of the IEP team, including the student and parent(s), have a clear understanding of how the student will be graded.

Taken from Technical Assistance Paper 312775:
https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7571/urlt/0086206-y2006-11.pdf

Visit the Access Project website for grading rubrics. https://www.accesstofls.org/Classroom_Resources.html

"In the absence of absolute evidence, it is essential to make the assumption that, if proven to be false, would be least dangerous to the individual."

(321) 269-2326 x12023
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1-888-232-0421
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