



DPS Curriculum Connection

Creating Inclusive Opportunities

Our inclusion work continues as we develop and implement practices within our buildings. Many times we wonder how students with disabilities can meaningfully participate in class, especially if they work below their classroom peers.

Instructional accommodations, such as modifying materials and giving individualized cues is one way. Instructional accommodations don't always require you to modify curriculum. Students work on the same topics, but sometimes at different levels, at different paces, and with different products at the end.

IDEA states that students with disabilities are entitled to supplemental supports that enable them to meaningfully pursue individually determined learning outcomes—including those from the general education curriculum. So often we ask the question of whether a student is able to pursue the same learning outcomes as his or her age-level peers, instead of asking whether that student's needs can be appropriately addressed in the general education setting. The participation of students with disabilities in the general education setting follows two areas. The first area are the student's goals in the IEP. The second area are the supports that the school provides to help the student pursue their educational goals. Depending on the student's specific need(s), sometimes modifications to the general education program are needed and at other times it may not be. For teachers it is vitally important that they understand ALL students' curricular expectations and develop a vision for how to teach a class with a mix of abilities.

There are two approaches for adapting curriculum that helps students with significant disabilities participate in the regular education classroom.

- 1) **Multilevel Curriculum**—Students with disabilities and their peers participate in a shared activity. Each student has individually appropriate learning outcomes that are within the same curriculum area but that may be at grade level, below grade level, or above grade level. Students with different ability levels are working on the same or different subject matter within the same academic area. An example would be a social studies class studying World War II. A student with an IEP might be expected to become familiar with and learn historical people, places, and events. His classmates might be expected to demonstrate knowledge of political and economic factors that led to the war. During the lesson students can assist in reading specific pieces aloud to a small group. Specially prepared questions related to the IEP goals could be created for the student to answer. Not only is the student meeting the educational goals of the IEP, but getting a chance to demonstrate social skills of listening and being an active member of a group. Applying multilevel curriculum allows teachers to stretch their curriculum away from the “middle zone” in which all students share the same curricular content, level and amount of work.
- 2) **Curriculum Overlapping**—Student with disabilities and nondisabled peers participate together in an activity, but they pursue learning outcomes from different curriculum areas. This is a vital strategy for classrooms in which there are substantial differences between the learning outcomes most of the students are pursuing and the outcomes a student with a disability is pursuing. One way to start planning for curriculum overlapping is to make a simple matrix with the student's IEP outcomes down the side and a list of classes or activities across the top. Being able to routinely embed these IEP goals into activities and lessons across different content areas is curriculum overlapping.

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Project Choices

*Choices = Children
Have Opportunities
in Inclusive Commu-
nity Environments
and Schools*

*To get additional in-
formation go to:*

*[http://
www.projectchoices.
org/](http://www.projectchoices.org/)*

*Happy Retirement to
Mrs. Hertenstein &
Mrs. Manning !*

Academic Dates to Remember:

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	1/16
DHS Jazz Choir Auditions	1/17 1/18
Board of Education Meeting @ RMS	1/18
IMEA All State Convention	1/26
School Improvement Half-Day	1/26
DHS Financial Aid Workshop	1/26

Whatever path we decide to take we must do what is in the best interest of the child, and we must come together as regular educators and special educators. A team approach is a must.