

INSTRUCTION, CURRICULUM, AND ASSESSMENT OPTIONS
FOR ALL STUDENTS, GRADES 9-12

Policy

It is the policy of the Trumbull Public Schools to provide all students with appropriate opportunity to meet the curriculum content standards at their grade level. Every effort will be made by the Early Intervention Team*, the Individual Education Planning Team, or the 504 Accommodation Plan Team to select appropriate level courses for students. Individual needs determine the instructional strategies provided by staff within the educational program. For all students, progress in the general education classroom generates review which may result in instructional accommodations, curriculum modifications and/or support services.

Instructional and assessment accommodations are defined as minor adjustments in teaching practices which enables students to achieve to the best of their ability. For students who require significant adjustments, there is a wide range of curriculum, instructional and assessment modifications that may be made. These modifications may occur at an adapted or functional level. ** In advance placement/honor courses, reasonable accommodations, but no modifications will be made.

Grade modification options are designed to provide accurate and useful information of the students' ability and performance in the general education classroom. Students whose programs require significantly adapted or functional modifications in a general education class will receive a modified grade.

* Early Intervention Team (EIT) (e.g. Child Study Team; Student Assistance Team; Early Assessment Conference).

** For description of accommodations and the two levels of modifications, see pages 2 and 3.

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Regulations

I. Accommodations and Range of Modifications Options

Accommodations may be minor, or they may result in an adapted curriculum or a focus on the functional life skills of the curriculum.

At the high school, when the individual's parent requests that a student with a significant disability be placed in a general education course which is at a higher level than was recommended by faculty, it will not be possible to implement fully or adequately an adapted or functional curriculum and/or instructional modifications due to the complexity of the course content and the pace of instruction. The Individual Education Planning Team (IEPT) will need to reconvene to determine other appropriate course options.

A. Accommodations For All Students:

The Early Intervention Team (EIT), Individual Educational Planning Team (IEPT), 504 Accommodation Plan Team (APT), or parent/teacher/chairperson or administrator conference, as appropriate, determines the student's placement in the general education curriculum by studying the specified general education outcomes and previous Accommodation Checklists from the elementary and middle school to determine educational gaps which may exist between the student's performance and general classroom expectations. A recommendation is then made regarding remediation techniques and/or study strategies selected to enhance the student's educational experience within the general education curriculum. The appropriate academic setting for providing designated support will be determined at the conference.

Accommodations in the general education classroom may include rephrasing directions, providing extra time, or assigning preferential seating. Achievement is measured with the same criterion-referenced/non-referenced tests used with other students unless alternative assessments have been agreed to by the team.

Accommodations should not result in a modified grade for the student. The degree of extra time needed to complete an assignment or test, and how/where it is supported would determine whether the time modifications should be considered minor or adapted.

B. Modifications:

1. Adapted:

If the EIT, IEPT, or APT decides that the general education curriculum content is appropriate but needs significant adaptations for a student whose instructional needs are at a level significantly below that of the peer group, then instructional changes are necessary and may call for an adapted curriculum.

Regulations cont'd.

Support staff shall assist the classroom teacher in developing and offering similar general education course content at an appropriate developmental level. The EIT, IEPT, or the APT determines how the student will be assessed, and the student will receive a modified grade.

2. Functional:

If the IEPT decides that a student with a disability cannot benefit from remediation or significant adaptations of content normally taught in the general education classroom, a modified curriculum will be designed. The modified curriculum will focus on functional academics and pre-vocational skills which can be addressed in the special education classroom and/or general education classroom, as appropriate. The functional curriculum is developed collaboratively by the general education teacher, special education teacher, and support staff, with input from other IEPT members. At the high school level, the input of department chairpersons and school counselors is essential.

General education teachers will be supported with additional staff, supplementary materials, and direct special education intervention for students, as necessary, in the areas of basic academic/social skills and independent living skills.

The student's report card grade is determined by the general education teacher in collaboration with the special education teacher.

II. Suggested Planning Process for Adapted and/or Functional Modifications

The EIT, IEPT, or APT may follow this process to determine the range of modifications needed to meet the individual student needs. It is essential that general and special education staff, the department chairperson (s), the administrator and the student's parents be actively involved in planning for the student.

Questions are provided below to assist in the selection of effective instructional strategies and modifications.

A. Examine Strategies for Instruction:

Can the student actively participate in the lesson as is? Will the student be able to achieve essentially the same outcome as other students?

Can the student's participation be increased through various classroom groupings?

- Cooperative groups
- Small groups
- Peer partners

Regulations cont'd.

Can the student's participation be increased by changing the lesson format?

- Activity-based lessons, games, simulations, role-playing
- Experiential lessons

Can the student's participation and understanding be increased by changing the delivery of instruction or teaching style?

B. Examine the Learning Environment:

Can changes be made in the classroom environment or lesson location that will facilitate participation?

- Environmental/physical
- Social
- Lesson location

C. Examine the Demand of the Task:

Will the student need adapted curricular goals?

- Adjust pacing
- Provide similar content with functional/direct applications
- Adjust the evaluation system
- Adjust management techniques

D. Examine the Way the Task is Performed:

Will different materials be needed to ensure participation?

- Same content, but variation in size, number/length, format
- Additional or different materials/devices

E. Examine the Support Structure:

Will individualized attention be needed to ensure participation?

- From peers or general education teacher, special education teacher, or paraprofessional

F. Examine Alternative Activities that Foster Participation and Interaction:

Will a different activity need to be designed and offered for the student and a small group of peers?

Regulations cont'd.

- In the classroom
- In other general education environments
- In community based environments

G. Examine Format or Method of Assessment:

Examples:

- Oral Testing
- Testing on essential facts only
- Simplified test instructions and language
- Shortened test
- Reduced number of choices in multiple choice questions
- Oral report by student
- Demonstration of skill by student
- Completion of project by student
- Use of skill by student in real life context (s)
- Illustration or scrapbook developed/explained by student
- Anecdotal observations by teacher
- Assessment based on IEP goal and objective (s)

III. Collaborative Planning

A. Planning Time:

Collaborative planning time by the teachers for students with significant disabilities is essential, and should be held during the school day whenever possible. When not feasible, such collaborative planning may take place either before or after the instructional day. This planning will not impact on the teachers' instructional time.

B. Documentation:

Documented Collaborative Planning for Adapted and Functional Modifications for Students with Significant Disabilities:

The range of Adapted and Functional modifications, specific materials or activities, grade modification (s), teacher and student responsibilities and other supportive services needed to enhance the success for students with significant disabilities must be documented.

Regulations cont'd.

IV. Assessment Options

The EIT, IEPT, or APT may use one or more of the grade options below in any program or course in which a letter grade is typically used to indicate a student's performance/progress. These options will be used in conjunction with or in place of a letter grade. The EIT, IEPT, or APT will agree on a specific grade option (s). In advance placement/honor courses, reasonable accommodations, but no modifications will be made.

Grade options for EIT, IEPT, or APT to consider:

1. Competitive Grade/No modifications
2. Adapted Curriculum/Modified Letter Grade
3. Functional Curriculum/Modified Letter Grade
4. Narrative Report Only/No Letter Grade
5. Pass/Fail (No letter grade)
6. Audit Course/No Grade/No Credit

V. G.P.A. Weighted Adjustment for Modified Grades

The student grade point average (G.P.A) will reflect courses for modified grades. A modified grade will be given to students who select a course with prior agreement that they will not be held to the same academic standard established by the curriculum guide. In these instances, expectations will be adjusted to allow for a level of academic success based on the student's ability and performance in the classroom. A modified grade will have a weight of .05, the mathematical equivalent of one letter grade subtracted from the cumulative G.P.A. When calculating a seventh semester G.P.A., a modified grade of "B" will be equivalent to a "C".

VI. Reporting on Transcripts

The following statement will appear on all transcripts: "This transcript may reflect a modified grade, if you should have any questions please contact the counseling office at the high school."

Modified grades will be recorded in the cumulative folder by the school psychologist (or representative) for students with disabilities and by the school counselor for typical or 504 students.

VII. Honor Roll

A student who receives a modified grade(s) will be eligible to be on the honor roll.