




PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA


DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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TO Superintendents
Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Lead Administrators, Charter Schools

FROM Rebecca Garland, Chief Academic Officer 
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Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence Exemption in the Future-Ready Course of Study

As the transition is made to a new math sequence for the Future-Ready Core Course of Study, we have received many questions. In particular, questions have been asked regarding the statute allowing students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) in mathematics to be exempt from the requirement to pass Algebra I to meet North Carolina graduation requirements. General Statute 115C-81b states:

“The State Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires Algebra I as a graduation standard or as a requirement for a high school diploma for a student whose individualized education program (i) identifies the student as learning disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this learning disability will prevent the student from mastering Algebra I.”

With this statute, these students are not required to pass Algebra I *to meet state graduation requirements*. With the change in the NC SCOS from Algebra I & II, and Geometry to Common Core Math I, Math II, and Math III sequence for freshmen entering high school in 2012-13, Math I will be considered a substitute for Algebra I.

Schools that have students who may be eligible for this exemption may benefit from the following guidance:

- A student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) may have a primary area of eligibility other than Specific Learning Disability, yet the student could still have a Specific Learning Disability in mathematics as a secondary area of eligibility and meet the criteria for exemption. This secondary disability must be addressed through the evaluation, eligibility and IEP processes. The IEP team must document the primary disability and the secondary disability of SLD on the DEC 4.
- LEAs are encouraged to review their data to determine the number and prevalence of students who are exempted from Math I. The use of a problem-solving process to

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analyze students' response to Core instruction and determine needed changes in instruction, curriculum or environment to support students with learning disabilities in math is recommended.

- Regular progress monitoring and the use of a problem-solving process to analyze data and make needed revisions to the IEP, including supports and services to promote the student's success in Math I, should be put into place prior to making the decision to exempt a student from the Math I requirement.
- Students receiving this exemption must earn four mathematics credits. Decisions on course selections for individual students are made at the local level, following guidance provided on the NC DPI Math Options Chart <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/academicservices/2013/math-options-chart.pdf>.
- Each student's course selections should be guided by his or her post-secondary goals, as defined in his or her IEP.

Instances in which the exemption is considered, it should be stated clearly to the parent and student that, although the student may graduate with a North Carolina High School Diploma, he/she may experience difficulty meeting criteria for admission to four-year colleges and universities in the University of North Carolina (UNC) university system, as well as community colleges.

Keep in mind, the majority of students with disabilities will participate fully in the Future Ready Core Course of Study with appropriate accommodations described in their Individual Education Plan . This memorandum only pertains to those students who have been identified as having a Specific Learning Disability in mathematics, and whose learning disability will prevent them from mastering Math I.

If you have additional questions, please contact lynne.loeser@dpi.nc.gov.

RG/WJH/DM/ll