

Policies, Practices, and Processes for Special Education and Inclusive Education

Learning Outcomes

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- 3-1** Differentiate between interindividual and intraindividual differences.
- 3-2** Outline the referral and assessment process utilized in special education.
- 3-3** Describe the required components of an individualized education program (IEP).
- 3-4** Provide examples of related services for students with special needs.
- 3-5** Summarize the purpose of Section 504 and accommodation plans.

Looking at the Standards

INTASC The content of this chapter most closely aligns itself with the following standards:

Standard 1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard 2: Learning Differences

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communicates to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Standard 6: Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth,

to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision-making.

Standard 7: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous goals by drawing on knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.



Special educators are to have knowledge of the following:

Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge

Beginning special education professionals use knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 4: Assessment

Beginning special education professionals use multiple methods of assessment data sources in making educational decisions.

Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies

Beginning special education professionals select, adapt, and use a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to advance learning of individuals with exceptionalities.

Chapter Outline

3-1 Identification and Assessment of Individual Differences

3-2 Referral and Assessment for a Special Education

Pre-referral

Referral

Assessment

Instructional Programming and Appropriate Placement

3-3 The Individualized Education Program

3-4 Related Services

3-5 Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Who Is Protected by Section 504?

Providing a Free Appropriate Public Education

Section 504 Eligibility Determination

Accommodation Plans

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and discuss the roles and responsibilities of general education teachers and special educators as they work together to meet the needs of a diverse learning community. As you will soon see, teachers, by necessity, work with a variety of professionals as well as parents in their attempt to provide an appropriate education for all students. Sometimes, however, despite teachers' best efforts, some children seem to continuously struggle in the classroom. What should a teacher do? How can you help these students? Is a special education always necessary? This chapter will answer these questions and others. Much of what teachers do in their endeavors to meet the unique needs of their students is driven by legislative mandates and legal requirements. We examine the various provisions that often dictate how teachers respond to the learning requirements of their pupils. We begin with a discussion of recognizing the importance of individual differences.¹

3-1

Identification and Assessment of Individual Differences

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the field of education is the individuality and uniqueness of the students we serve. There is considerable wisdom in the maxim that "no two children are alike." Experienced educators will quickly tell you that even though

¹ Content adapted from R. Gargiulo, *Special Education in Contemporary Society*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015).

students may share a common label, such as gifted and talented, culturally diverse, or hearing impaired; that is where the similarity ends. Any two such pupils are likely to be as different as day and night. Of course, the individuality of our students, both typical and atypical, has the potential for creating significant instructional and/or management concerns for the classroom teacher. Recall from Chapter 1 that today's schools are serving an increasingly diverse student population. At the same time, there is greater cooperation and more shared responsibility between general and special educators as well as service providers as they collectively plan appropriate educational experiences for all learners. We also find that classrooms that incorporate principles of universal design for learning are often able to facilitate inclusive educational practices that benefit all students.

When teachers talk about the individuality of their students, they often refer to **interindividual differences** or the heterogeneity of their pupils. These differences are what distinguish each student from his or her classmates. Interindividual differences are differences *between* pupils. Examples might include distinctions based on height, reading ability, athletic prowess, or intellectual competency. Some interindividual differences are more obvious and of greater educational significance than others.

Interindividual differences are sometimes one of the reasons for a referral for special education services. One child might be significantly above (or below) average in intellectual ability, another might exhibit a significant degree of vision loss, and still another pupil may demonstrate behavioral issues. The types of services a student needs and where these services are provided are frequently based on the individual's interindividual differences. Stated another way, teachers, along with other education professionals, often identify, label, and subsequently recommend a pupil for an instructional program on the basis of the learner's interindividual differences.

Not all pupils, however, in a given program are alike. Children also exhibit **intraindividual differences**—a unique pattern of strengths and needs. Intraindividual differences are differences *within* the child. Instead of looking at how students compare with their peers, teachers focus on the individual's abilities and limitations (Photo 3.1). We should point out that this is a characteristic of all pupils, not just those being considered for special education or other services. Roberto, for example, who is the best artist in his eighth grade class, is equally well-known for his inability to sing. One of his classmates, Melinda, has a learning disability. Her reading ability is almost 3 years below grade level; however, she consistently earns very high grades in math.

interindividual differences
Differences between children.

intraindividual differences
Differences within children.



PHOTO 3.1 Interindividual differences distinguish each student from his or her classmates.

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Intraindividual differences are obviously of importance to teachers. A student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan reflects this concern. Assessment data, derived from a variety of sources, typically profile a pupil's strengths and needs. This information is then used in crafting a customized instructional plan tailored to meet the unique needs of the learner.

3-2

Referral and Assessment for a Special Education

Legislative requirements and today's best practices serve as our road map as we travel along the evaluation pathway to providing appropriate educational experiences for students with disabilities. This journey from referral to assessment to the development of an IEP and eventual placement in the most appropriate environment is a comprehensive process incorporating many different phases. Figure 3.1 illustrates this process. In the following sections, we examine several of the key elements involved in developing an individualized program plan.

3-2a Pre-referral

pre-referral intervention
Intervention strategy that occurs prior to initiation of referral for special education services.

A great deal of activity occurs prior to a student ever being assessed. Careful scrutiny of our model reveals an intervention strategy known as **pre-referral intervention**, which occurs prior to initiating a referral for possible special education services. The purpose of this strategy is to reduce unwarranted referrals while providing individualized assistance to the student in an inclusive environment without the benefit of a special education. Although not mandated by IDEA, pre-referral interventions have become increasingly common. In fact, IDEA 2004 permits the use of federal dollars to support these activities. Today, many states either require or recommend the use of this tactic with individuals suspected of having a disability.

Pre-referral interventions are preemptive by design. They call for collaboration between general educators and other professionals for the express purpose of developing creative,

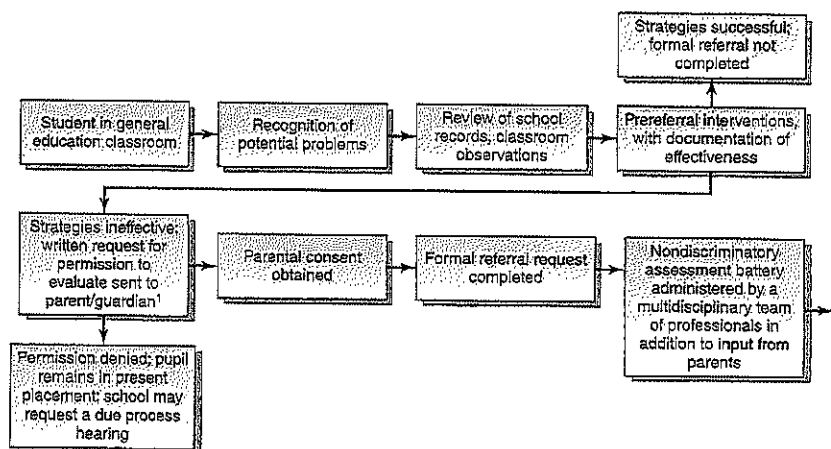


FIGURE 3.1 A Procedural Decision-Making Model for the Delivery of Special Education Services

¹ IDEA does not mandate parental consent for referral but does require consent for evaluation.

² Eligibility determination must occur within 60 days of referral.

³ If parents refuse consent for a special education, school districts are not responsible for providing a special education.

⁴ IEP must be developed within 30 days of eligibility determination.

*Mandatory resolution session required prior to a due process hearing.

Source: R. Gargiulo, *Special Education in Contemporary Society*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015), pp. 58-59.

alternative, evidence-based instructional and/or management strategies designed to accommodate the specific needs of an individual learner. This process results in shared responsibility and joint decision-making among general and special educators, related service providers, administrators, and other school personnel, all of whom possess specific expertise. Interestingly, in many instances, the pupil's parents are not actively involved in this early phase; however, their input could be invaluable. We believe their participation should be encouraged.

The child's success or failure in school no longer depends exclusively on the pedagogical skills of the general educator; instead, it is now the combined responsibility of a school-based **intervention assistance team** (also commonly known as teacher assistance teams, problem-solving teams, instructional support teams, or child/student study teams). This multidisciplinary group of professionals is charged with constructing academic accommodations or behavioral interventions for pupils believed to be at risk for failure in school. Once the learning/behavioral accommodations are initiated, the student's progress is monitored for a prescribed period of time—often one grading period. If the strategies are successful and the desired outcomes were achieved, then no further action is required. However, as beneficial as pre-referral interventions often are, in some cases the goals are not accomplished. Detailed documentation of the ineffectiveness of either the instructional adaptations or behavioral supports provides strong justification for the initiation of a formal referral for special education services. Figure 3.2 is one example of the type of planning document typically used by intervention assistance teams.

intervention assistance team
A group charged with constructing academic accommodations or behavioral interventions for children believed to be at risk for success in school; also commonly called teacher assistance teams, instructional support teams, or child/ student study teams.

Response to Intervention In recent years, educators have added a new tool to their assessment arsenal. This procedure is known as **response to intervention**, commonly identified as **RTI**. RTI originally came to the forefront of educators' thinking as a result of the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004. It was initially offered as an alternative way of identifying students who might have a learning disability. Although schools have the option of using this procedure for determining the existence of a learning disability, RTI is now increasingly being used as an early intervention system for assessing *all* pupils who may have been exposed to inadequate or ineffective instruction and thus may be at risk for academic difficulties and potential school failure. As a school-wide initiative, RTI is typically used with kindergarteners and students in the elementary grades; however, it is effectively being used in some middle and high schools.

response to intervention (RTI)
A process used to determine if the pupil responds to empirically validated, scientifically based interventions. Designed to target early, effective instruction to students who are having difficulty learning as well as to serve as a data-based tool for diagnosing learning disabilities.

There is no formal definition of RTI, nor is there one widely accepted model or strategy (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Stecker, 2010; Gargiulo, 2015). Essentially, RTI involves providing *all* students with scientifically validated instruction (also known evidence-based practices) and then systematically assessing their academic progress through ongoing monitoring frequently

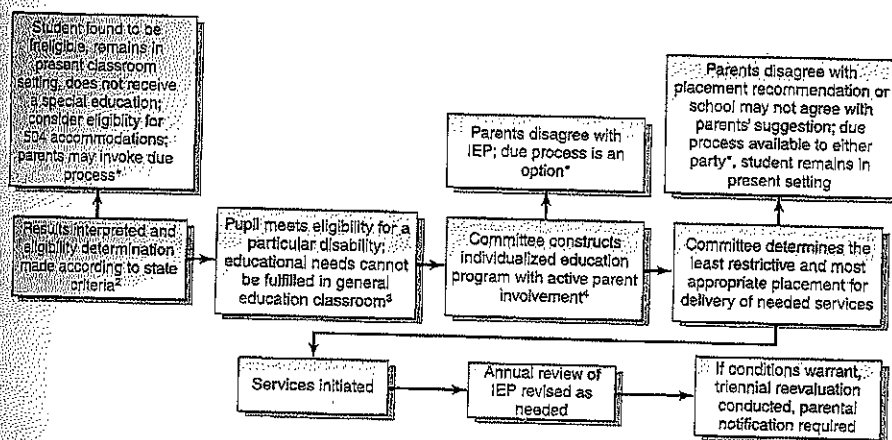


FIGURE 3.1 (Continued)

Student: _____	Teacher: _____
Grade: _____	Date: _____

Intervention Plan

AREA(S) OF CONCERN/DIFFICULTY

PUPIL'S STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

ACADEMIC MODIFICATIONS

What strategy/method is to be used?

How is it to be done?

Where will it be done?

When will it be done?

How long will it be done?

Who is responsible?

BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES

PARENT/HOME ACTIVITIES

MOTIVATIONAL/INCENTIVE SYSTEM

DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

How will effectiveness be assessed?

Who will collect the data?

How often will the data be collected?

FOLLOW-UP PLANS

How often will the team meet to monitor the plan?

What is our criteria for success?

Who will help the teacher implement the plan?

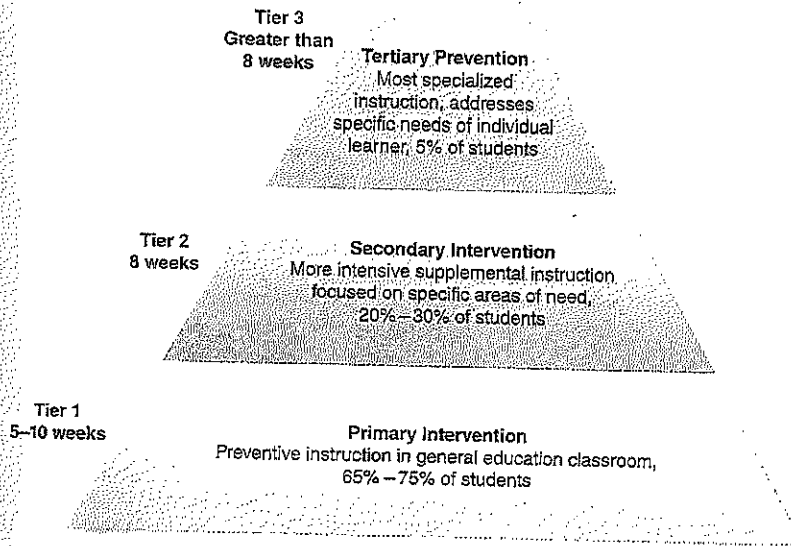
GENERAL COMMENTS

FIGURE 3.2 Sample Pre-referral Intervention Planning Form

Source: Adapted from C. Ormsbee, "Effective Preassessment Team Procedures: Making the Process Work for Teachers and Students," *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 36, 2001, p. 151.

FIGURE 3.3
A Representative
Response to Intervention
Model

Source: R. Gargiulo, *Special Education in Contemporary Society*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), p.212.



Note: Percentage of students participating at each level is approximate.
 Duration of intervention is also approximate.
 Students may move between tiers as individual needs dictate.

referred to as curriculum-based measurement (CBM). (For additional information about CBM see Chapter 9.) Pupils are exposed to several levels or tiers of increasingly intensive instructional intervention as needed (see Figure 3.3) (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2012; Vaughn & Bos, 2015). Designed originally to assess reading performance, this model has been expanded to include mathematics (Gersten, 2011) and social/emotional issues (Saeki et al., 2011). Table 3.1 illustrates one example of an RTI model focusing on reading instruction.

Frequently used as a pre-referral strategy, RTI typically includes several common components despite the absence of any one model viewed as the “gold standard.” Key elements often include:

- universal screening—school-wide or district-wide assessment of all students;
- the use of high-quality researched-based instruction matched to the individual needs of the learner;
- fidelity of implementation—consistently and precisely implementing evidence-based interventions;
- tiered instruction—increasingly intensive instructional interventions that are customized to meet the students’ needs;
- frequent and ongoing detailed monitoring of student progress; and
- data-based decision-making (Friend & Bursuck, 2015; Vaughn & Bos, 2015).

An RTI framework represents a significant conceptual shift in thinking from a “wait to fail” approach to one that emphasizes early identification and possible prevention, thereby enhancing the value of RTI as a pre-referral strategy (Fuchs et al., 2012; Vaughn, Bos, & Schumm, 2014). Additionally, we see classrooms built around UDL principles as naturally supporting RTI due to the use of universal interventions, strategies, and tools.

TABLE 3.1 A Representative Response to Intervention Model: Tiers of Instruction

	Tier 1 (Primary)	Tier 2 (Secondary)	Tier 3 (Tertiary)
Definition	Reading instruction and programs, including ongoing professional development and benchmark assessments (3 times per year)	Instructional intervention used to supplement, enhance, and support Tier 1; takes place in small groups	Individualized reading instruction extended beyond the time allocated for Tier 1; groups of 1–3 students
Focus	All students	Students identified with reading difficulties who have not responded to Tier 1 efforts	Students with marked difficulties in reading or reading disabilities who have not responded adequately to Tier 1 and Tier 2 efforts
Program	Scientifically based reading instruction and curriculum emphasizing the critical elements	Specialized, scientifically based reading instruction and curriculum emphasizing the critical elements	Sustained, intensive, scientifically based reading instruction and curriculum highly responsive to students' needs
Instruction	Sufficient opportunities to practice throughout the school day	Additional attention, focus, support Additional opportunities to practice embedded throughout the day Pre-teach, review skills; frequent opportunities to practice skills	Carefully designed and implemented, explicit, systematic instruction
Interventionist	General education teacher	Personnel determined by the school (classroom teacher, specialized reading teacher, other trained personnel)	Personnel determined by the school (for example, specialized reading teacher, special education teacher)
Setting	General education classroom	Appropriate setting designated by the school	Appropriate setting designated by the school
Grouping	Flexible grouping	Homogeneous small-group instruction (for example, 1:4, 1:5)	Homogeneous small-group instruction (1:2, 1:3)
Time	Minimum of 90 minutes per day	20–30 minutes per day in addition to Tier 1	50-minute sessions (or longer) per day depending on appropriateness of Tier 1
Assessment	Benchmark assessments at beginning, middle, and end of academic year	Progress monitoring twice per month on target skill to ensure adequate progress and learning	Progress monitoring at least twice per month on target skill to ensure adequate progress and learning

Source: Adapted from "Secondary Interventions in Reading," by S. Vaughn and G. Roberts, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 39(5), 2007, p. 41.
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Heward's (2013) recent synthesis of the research literature suggests the following benefits of RTI as a pre-referral tactic:

- Provide immediate instructional and/or behavior management assistance to the child and teacher.
- Reduce the frequency of identifying children for special education whose learning or behavioral problems are the result of not receiving appropriate instruction rather than a disability.
- Prevent relatively minor problems from worsening to a degree that would eventually require special education.
- Strengthen teachers' capacity to effectively intervene with a greater diversity of problems, thereby reducing the number of future referrals for special education.
- Prevent the costly and time-consuming process of assessment for special education eligibility by solving the problems that originally caused teachers or parents to be concerned about the child.
- Provide IEP teams with valuable baseline data for planning and evaluating special education and related services for students who are referred and found eligible for special education (pp. 48–49).

Web Resources

Access the following web sites for more information about RTI and related issues:

- National Center on Response to Intervention
- IRIS Center at Vanderbilt University
- RTI Resources
- Wrights Law
- National Council for Learning Disabilities

3-2b Referral

A referral is the first step in a long journey toward receiving a special education. As we have just seen, a referral may begin as a result of unsuccessful pre-referral interventions, it may be the outcome of child-find efforts (IDEA-mandated screening and identification of individuals suspected of needing a special education), or it might originate due to a request from a parent. Simply stated, a referral is a written request to evaluate a student to determine whether the pupil has a disability and is eligible for special education. Typically, a referral begins with a general educator; it may also be initiated by a school administrator, related services provider, or other concerned individual. Referrals typically arise from a concern about the child's academic achievement and/or social and behavioral problems. In a few instances, a referral may be initiated because of a pupil's cultural or linguistic background, it may also be initiated due to difficulties resulting from ineffective instruction. IDEA clearly stipulates, however, that these are *not* permissible reasons for a referral. This is another example of why pre-referral intervention strategies, like RTI, are so vitally important—to rule out possible explanations for a learner's difficulties.

Referral forms vary in their format. Generally, in addition to student demographic information, a referral must contain detailed reasons as to why the request is being made. Teachers must clearly describe the pupil's academic and/or social performance. Documentation typically accompanies the referral and may include test scores, checklists, behavioral observation data, and actual samples of the student's work. Teachers need to paint as complete a picture as possible of their concern(s), and of the efforts they made to rectify the situation.

In most schools, the information that has been gathered is then reviewed by a committee, often known as the child study committee, special services team, or other such name. The composition of this group of professionals varies, but it typically includes an administrator, school psychologist, and experienced teachers. Other personnel may also be involved, depending on the nature of the referral. It is the job of this committee to review the available information and decide whether further assessment is warranted. If the team decides to proceed, then a written request for permission to evaluate is sent to the child's parent(s). School authorities *must* obtain permission from the parent/guardian before proceeding with a formal evaluation. Interestingly, IDEA does not require parental consent for referrals. We believe, however, that it is wise to notify parents that a referral is being initiated, explain the reasons for the referral, and solicit their input and cooperation in the referral process.

3-2c Assessment

The first step in determining whether a student has a disability and is in need of special education is securing the consent of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) for the evaluation. As noted previously, this step is mandated by IDEA as part of the procedural safeguards protecting the legal rights of parents/guardians. Under the provisions of IDEA, school officials must notify the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), in their native language, of the school's intent to evaluate (or refuse to evaluate) the student and the rationale for this decision; they must explain the assessment process and alternatives available to the parent/guardian, such as the right to an independent evaluation of their son or daughter. Many school districts automatically send parents/guardians a statement of their legal rights when permission to initially evaluate is sought.

Assessment, according to McLean, Wolery, and Bailey (2004), "is a generic term that refers to the process of gathering information for the purpose of making decisions" (p. 13). Educational assessment can rightly be thought of as an information-gathering and decision-making process.

One of the goals of the assessment process is to obtain a complete profile of the student's strengths and needs. By law (IDEA), this requires the use of a **multidisciplinary team**

assessment

An information-gathering and decision-making process to obtain a student profile of strengths and needs.

multidisciplinary team

The group responsible for developing an individualized and comprehensive assessment package that evaluates broad developmental domains (cognitive, academic, achievement) as well as the specific areas of concern noted on the referral, such as social/emotional problems or suspected visual impairments.

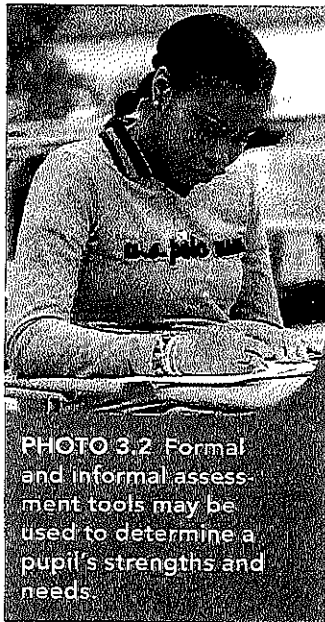


PHOTO 3.2 Formal and informal assessment tools may be used to determine a pupil's strengths and needs.

of professionals, of which one member must be a teacher. The team is responsible for developing an individualized and comprehensive assessment package that evaluates broad developmental domains (cognitive, academic, achievement) as well as the specific areas of concern noted on the referral, such as social/emotional problems or suspected visual impairments.

Successful accomplishment of this task dictates the use of both formal and informal assessment tools (Photo 3.2). Once again, IDEA is very clear about this issue. No one procedure may be used as the sole basis of evaluation; a multitude of tests are required. IDEA regulations further require that the evaluations be presented in the pupil's native language or, when necessary, via other modes of communication such as sign language or Braille for students with a sensory impairment. Additionally, the selection and administration of the assessment battery must accurately reflect the child's aptitude and achievement and not penalize the student because of his or her impairment in sensory, manual, or speaking skills. The accompanying Teaching All Learners feature describes some accommodations that may be needed for accurate assessment.

School psychologists, educational diagnosticians, and other professionals responsible for evaluating the student have a wide variety of assessment instruments at their disposal. Evaluators attempt to gauge both interindividual and intraindividual differences by using both

TEACHING ALL LEARNERS



Assessment Accommodations

To accurately portray a pupil's abilities and needs, assessment accommodations are sometimes necessary. Accommodations are changes in how students access and demonstrate learning without changing the standards they are working toward. Accommodations must be individualized; not all pupils require them, nor do students with the same disability require the same type of accommodations. The need for accommodations may change over time; some individuals may require fewer accommodations, whereas in other situations additional support is required. Listed below are examples of accommodations that IEP teams may find beneficial.

Presentation accommodations let students access assignments, tests, and activities in ways other than reading standard print. Students with print disabilities (inability to visually decode standard print because of a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability) may require a combination of these accommodations:

- Visual: large print, magnification devices, sign language, visual cues
- Tactile: Braille, Nemeth code, tactile graphics
- Auditory: human reader, audiotope or CD, audio amplification device
- Visual and auditory: screen reader, videotape, descriptive video, talking materials

Response accommodations allow students to complete assignments, tests, and activities in different ways or solve or organize problems using an assistive device or organizer. Response accommodations include:

- Different ways to complete assignments, tests, and activities: expressing responses to a scribe through speech,

sign language, pointing, or assistive communication device; typing on or speaking to a word processor, Braille, or tape recorder; writing in a test booklet instead of on an answer sheet

- Materials or devices to solve or organize responses: calculation devices; spelling and grammar assistive devices; visual or graphic organizers

Timing and scheduling accommodations give students the time and breaks they need to complete assignments, tests, and activities, and may change the time of day, day of the week, or number of days over which an activity takes place. These include:

- Extended time
- Multiple or frequent breaks
- Changing the testing schedule or order of subtests
- Dividing long-term assignments

Setting accommodations change the location in which a student receives instruction or the conditions of the setting. Students may be allowed to sit in a different location than the majority of students to:

- Reduce distractions
- Receive distracting accommodations
- Increase physical access
- Use special equipment

Source: Adapted from S. Thompson, "Choosing and Using Accommodations on Assessments," *CEC Today*, 10(6), 2004, pp. 12, 18. Reprinted with permission by Council for Exceptional Children.

norm and criterion-referenced assessments. Simply stated, **norm-referenced assessments** are standardized tests and are linked to interindividual differences. Norm-referenced tests compare a pupil's performance with that of a representative sample of children, providing the evaluator with an indication of the pupil's performance relative to other individuals of similar chronological age. Data are typically presented in terms of percentile ranks, stanines, or grade equivalent scores. Data gleaned from norm-referenced tests provide limited instructional information. In contrast, **criterion-referenced assessments** are associated with intraindividual differences and can provide data that are useful for instructional planning. In this type of assessment procedure, a student's performance task is compared to a particular level of mastery. The criterion level is typically established by the classroom teacher. Criterion-referenced assessments are especially helpful for identifying the specific skills the pupil has already mastered as well as the skills that require additional instruction. Teachers are concerned with the individual's pattern of strengths and needs, rather than how the student compares with his or her classmates.

As mentioned, evaluators must put together a complete educational portrait of the student's abilities. This frequently requires multiple sources of information, which typically include standardized tests, work samples, and observational data, among other forms of input.

Table 3.2 summarizes some of the types of assessments increasingly being used by evaluation specialists to complement data derived from norm-referenced tests.

norm-referenced assessments

Standardized tests that compare a pupil's performance with that of a representative sample of children, providing the evaluator with an indication of the pupil's performance relative to other individuals of similar chronological age.

criterion-referenced assessments

Tests that provide data useful for instructional planning; student performance on a task is compared to a particular level of mastery.

3-2d Instructional Programming and Appropriate Placement

When properly conducted, educational assessments lead to the development of meaningful IEPs. Measurable annual goals (and short-term objectives/benchmarks for pupils evaluated via alternate assessments) are crafted based on data gleaned from these evaluations. But first, the multidisciplinary team must determine whether the student is eligible to receive special education services according to specific state criteria. Eligibility standards differ from state to state, but most are framed around IDEA criteria.

If team members, working in concert with the child's parent(s), determine that the student fails to qualify for a special education, then we suggest developing intervention strategies and recommendations for accommodations that address the referral concerns.

TABLE 3.2 Emerging Sources of Assessment Information

Source	Description
Naturalistic Observation	Documentation of qualitative as well as quantitative aspects of a youngster's behavior in natural environment. Information may be recorded formally (rating scales, observational recording systems) or informally (anecdotal records, audio recordings). Data can be used to support or refute information gathered from other sources.
Interviews	Information obtained from significant individuals in a student's life—parents, teachers, older siblings, or the pupil himself or herself. Interviews are a planned and purposeful activity whose purpose is to gain insight or perspective on specific areas of interest, such as the child's background or possible reasons for behavioral problems. Format may be formal (interviewer follows a predetermined set of questions) or informal (interview proceeds according to the individual's responses). Data may be gathered orally or in writing.
Work Samples	Evidence of a pupil's actual classroom performance, typically focused on particular skill development. Sometimes referred to as a permanent product. Spelling tests, arithmetic fact sheets, and handwriting samples are examples of this information source. Work samples are especially useful when planning instructional intervention and modification. Requires teacher to think diagnostically and to look, for example, at error patterns or clarity of directions.
Portfolios	As a type of authentic assessment, portfolios are an outgrowth of the familiar work folder concept. They include a wide range of examples of a student's emerging abilities and accomplishments over time. Qualitative and quantitative indicators of performance might include writing samples, audio/video recordings, worksheets, drawings, photographs, or other forms of evidence. Useful for student self-assessment.

Source: R. Gargiulo, *Special Education in Contemporary Society*, (5th ed.). (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015). p. 62.

We believe this is necessary because the pupil will remain in his or her present placement—the general education classroom. Additionally, the team might also wish to consider the pupil for a Section 504 accommodation plan if the student is eligible for such services. (We address this topic in greater detail later in this chapter.) Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be sent written notification summarizing the evaluation and stating why their son or daughter is ineligible to receive a special education. If, however, it is determined that the pupil is eligible for a special education, the multidisciplinary team is then confronted with two monumental tasks: constructing the IEP and determining the most appropriate placement for the student.

3-3

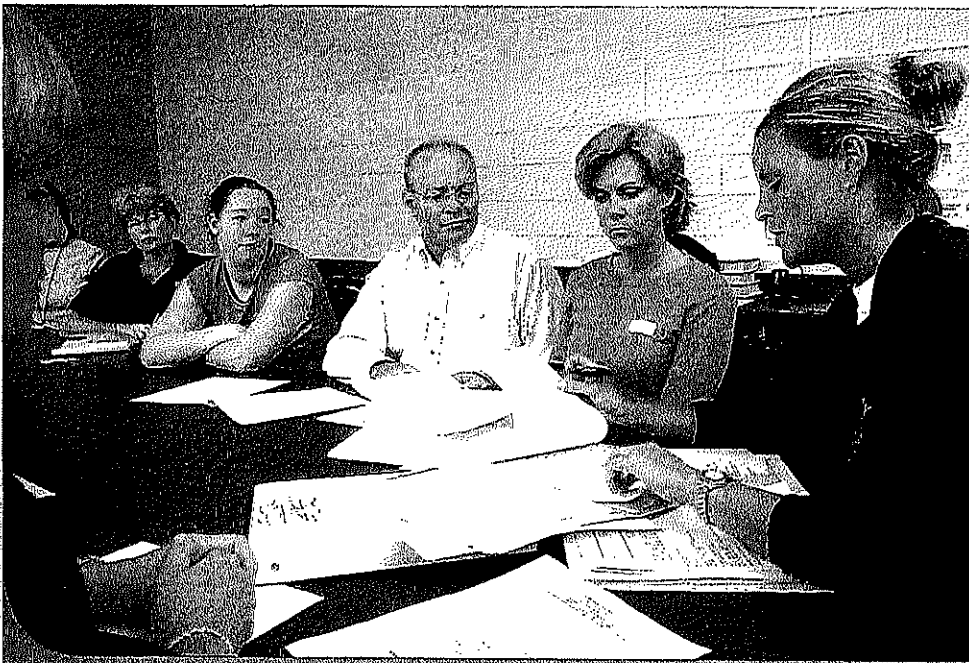
The Individualized Education Program

Each student identified by a multidisciplinary child study team as having a disability and in need of a special education must have an individualized program of specially designed instruction that addresses his or her unique needs. An individualized education program (IEP) is the guide to the design and delivery of customized services and instruction. It also serves as the vehicle for collaboration and cooperation between parents and professionals as they jointly devise appropriate educational experiences.

An IEP is part of an overall strategy designed to deliver services appropriate to the individual needs of pupils ages 3 and older. By the time we reach the IEP stage, the appropriate permissions have been gathered, assessments have been conducted, and a disability determination has been made. We are now at the point where the IEP is to be developed, followed by placement in the most appropriate and least restrictive setting. Bateman and Linden (2012) make a very important point about when the IEP is to be developed. They believe that IEPs are often written at the wrong time. Legally, the IEP is to be developed within 30 days after the evaluation and determination of the student's disability but *before* a placement recommendation is formulated. Placement in the least restrictive and most normalized setting is based on a completed IEP, not the other way around. An IEP should not be limited by placement options or the availability of services. We believe it is best to see the IEP as a management tool or planning vehicle that provides instructional direction and ensures that individuals with disabilities receive an individualized education appropriate to their unique needs. This focus is in concert with both the intent and spirit of IDEA. IEPs are written by a team. At a minimum, participation must include the following: a parent/guardian; the child's teachers, including a general education teacher and a special educator; a representative from the school district who is knowledgeable about special education, the general education curriculum, and the availability of resources in the local school district; and an individual able to interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation. When appropriate, the student as well as other professionals who possess pertinent information or whose expertise is desired may participate at the discretion of the parent or school. Parents have a legal right to participate meaningfully in this planning and decision-making process; they serve as the pupil's advocate (Photo 3.3). Although IDEA mandates a collaborative role for parents, it does not stipulate the degree or extent of their participation.

IEPs will vary greatly in their format and degree of specificity. Government regulations do not specify the level of detail considered appropriate, nor do they stipulate how the IEP is to be constructed—only that it be a written document. What is specified are the components (see the accompanying Teaching All Learners feature).

As stated previously, an IEP is, in essence, a management tool that stipulates *who* will be involved in providing a special education, *what* services will be offered, *where* they will be delivered, and for *how long*. In addition, an IEP gauges *how successfully* goals have been met. Although the IEP does contain a measure of accountability, it is not a legally binding contract; schools are not liable if goals are not achieved. Schools are liable, however, if they do not provide the services stipulated in the IEP. IEPs are to be reviewed annually, although parents may request an earlier review. A complete reevaluation of the pupil's eligibility for special education must occur every 3 years. PL 105-17 waived this requirement, however, if both the parents and school officials agree that such a review is not necessary.



Robin Nelson/PhotoEdit

PHOTO 3.3 Parents have a legal right to participate in the development of their child's individualized education program.

The IEP is not meant to be so comprehensive that it serves as the entire instructional agenda, nor is it intended to dictate what the individual is taught. They do have to be individualized, however, and address the unique learning and/or behavioral requirements of the student. In some situations, IEP teams rely on computer-managed IEPs. These can be a valuable resource and a useful logistical tool. We caution educators, however, to use this technology only as a support for designing customized and individually tailored plans. The IEP team is *always* responsible for developing individual goals that meet the learner's needs. An overreliance on generic computer-generated goals and objectives may diminish the educational relevancy of this procedure and its legality may be questioned (Bateman & Linden, 2012).

One of the challenges confronting the IEP team is ensuring that students have access to the general education curriculum as stipulated in the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA. But what is the general education curriculum? In most instances, it is the curriculum that typical learners are exposed to, which is often established by individual state boards of education. The IEP must address how the pupil's disability affects his or her involvement in and ability to progress in the general education curriculum. The underlying assumption seems to be that even if a child is receiving a special education, he or she should engage the general education curriculum. Documentation is required if the team believes that this curriculum is inappropriate for a particular student.

IDEA 2004 requires the IEP team to develop measurable annual goals while also emphasizing exposure to the general education curriculum. Goal statements are purposely broad. Their intent is to provide long-range direction to a student's educational program, not to define exact instructional tasks. Based on the pupil's current level of performance, goals are "written to reflect what a student needs in order to become involved in and to make progress in the general education curriculum" (Yell, 2012, p. 253). They represent reasonable projections or estimates of what the pupil should be able to accomplish within the academic year. They also answer the question, "What should the students be doing?" Annual goals can reflect academic functioning, social behavior, adaptive behavior, or life skills. Regardless of their emphasis, goal statements should be positive, student-oriented, and relevant (Polloway, Patton, Serna, & Bailey, 2013).

Web Resources

For additional information about IEPs access the following web sites:

- LD Online
- Wrightslaw
- National Center for Children with Disabilities
- Council for Exceptional Children

TEACHING ALL LEARNERS



Elements of a Meaningful IEP

- **Current Performance.** A statement of the student's present levels of educational and functional performance, including how a pupil's disability affects his or her involvement in the general education curriculum or, for preschoolers, how the disability affects participation in age-appropriate activities
- **Goals.** A statement of measurable annual goals that addresses the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum as well as the student's other education needs; short-term objectives or benchmarks are required for pupils who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards
- **Special Education and Related Services.** A statement of special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services (based on peer-reviewed research) to be provided, including program modifications or supports necessary for the student to advance toward attainment of annual goals, to be involved and to progress in the general education curriculum, extracurricular, and nonacademic activities, and to be educated and to participate in activities with other children both with and without disabilities
- **Participation with Typical Students.** An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate in the general education classroom
- **Participation in State-wide and District-wide Assessments.** A statement of any individual modifications needed for the student to participate in state-wide or district-wide assessment; if student will not participate, then a statement of why the assessment is inappropriate and how the pupil will be assessed
- **Dates and Places.** Projected date for initiation of services; expected location, duration, and frequency of such services
- **Transition Services.** Beginning at age 16, a statement of needed transition services identifying measurable post-school goals (training, education, employment, and, if appropriate, independent living skills), including a statement of interagency linkages and/or responsibilities
- **Measuring Progress.** A statement of how progress toward annual goals will be measured and how student's parents (guardians) will be regularly informed of such progress
- **Age of Majority.** At least 1 year before reaching age of majority, information regarding transfer of rights to the student on reaching age of majority

Measurable annual goals should include the following five components:

- The student ... (the who)
- Will do what ... (the behavior)
- To what level or degree ... (the criterion)
- Under what conditions ... (the conditions)
- In what length of time ... (the time frame)

"By the end of the school year Jessica will be able to complete 20 long-division problems in 10 minutes with 90 percent accuracy" is an example of a measurable annual goal.

Short-term objectives or **benchmarks**, typically 1 to 3 months in duration, are only required in the IEPs of students with significant cognitive deficits— typically those learners who complete alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards. These statements, written after goals have been crafted, describe the sequential steps the pupil will take to meet the intent of each goal statement. Benchmarks are usually written by teachers and describe anticipated student accomplishment. Additionally, the IEP team is required to consider the unique needs of the student. In some instances, the IEP may need to address:

- behavior intervention strategies and positive behavior supports for pupils whose behavior impedes their learning or that of their classmates
- instruction in and the use of Braille for learners with visual impairments
- the need for assistive technology devices and services
- the language and communication needs for students with hearing impairments
- the need for services that extend beyond the typical school year
- for pupils whose language is other than English, the need for ESL (English as a second language) services

benchmarks

Short-term objectives, written by teachers, that are only required in the IEPs of students with significant cognitive deficits.

Quality IEPs largely depend on having well-written and appropriate goals (and objectives) that address the unique needs of the individual. IEPs are the primary means of ensuring that a specially designed educational program is provided. The accompanying Teaching All Learners feature provides a sample agenda for an IEP team meeting.

3-4 Related Services

Teachers today no longer work in isolation. In fact, because of tremendous student diversity, it is increasingly common for teachers to work in partnership with professionals from other disciplines. An IEP team is a good example of this partnership. Successfully meeting the needs of students with special needs in inclusive classrooms requires collaboration and cooperation between and among a wide variety of service providers.

For those pupils with a disability, IDEA requires that their IEPs provide **related services** if the students are to receive benefit from their special education. For example, a girl with an orthopedic impairment might require physical therapy to aid in maintaining muscle tone and flexibility, and a school bus equipped with a lift may also be necessary if she uses a wheelchair. Another student with autism might require services from a speech-language pathologist because of significant language delays. In other instances, school social workers might be involved if a teacher suspects one of the students is a victim of child abuse or neglect.

Related services, which essentially are noninstructional services, are obviously a key component of an individual's educational program (Photo 3.4). Examples of related services include:

- Physical therapy
- Audiology
- School nurse services
- Transportation



Photo 3.4 Related services are a critical component of a pupil's individualized educational program.

related services

Services that children with disabilities require to benefit from their special education (for example, physical therapy, school bus lift, speech pathologist).

TEACHING ALL LEARNERS



Suggested Individualized Education Program Meeting Agenda

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introduction of participants and their respective roles • Statement of purpose • Review of previous year's IEP (except for initial placement) and accomplishments • Discussion of student's present level of performance and progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment information • Strengths and emerging areas • Development of annual goals (and benchmarks if appropriate) • Consideration of specific needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional modifications and accommodations • Participation in state-wide and district-wide assessments • Participation in general education curriculum and extracurricular activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related services • Assistive technology needs • Transition goals • Behavior intervention plan • Language needs for students with limited English language skills • Braille instruction for students who are visually impaired • Recommendations and justification for placement in least restrictive environment • Closing comments, securing of signatures • Copies of IEP provided to all team members |
|---|--|

Content Adapted from R. Gargiulo, *Special Education in Contemporary Society*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015).

- Speech and language
- Psychology
- Recreational therapy
- Orientation mobility
- Interpretive services
- Occupational therapy
- Nutrition
- School social work
- Vocational education
- Rehabilitation counseling
- Parent counseling
- Health services

The preceding list is neither complete nor exhaustive. Other services may be provided if deemed necessary by the IEP team.

Fortunately, there is a growing recognition among educators today of the importance of professionals working together regardless of the different disciplines they may represent. Because no one discipline or profession possesses all of the resources or skills needed to develop the educational experiences called for by learners with special needs in inclusive settings, it is imperative that service providers work in a cooperative and collaborative fashion.

3-5 Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Section 504

A civil rights law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

Recall from Chapter 1 that **Section 504** of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112) is a civil rights law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities (Photo 3.5). The intent of this legislation, according to Smith (2002), is to create equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. Likewise, Miller and Newbill (2006) view this act as an attempt “to level the playing field for students facing life challenges” (p. 13). Far-reaching in its intent and coverage, this law holds great significance for educators. Section 504 provides, among other things, that eligible students with disabilities have equal access to programs, activities, and services that are available to pupils without disabilities. This provision includes, for example, field trips, extracurricular activities, and academic courses (with appropriate accommodations), in addition to physical accessibility. Interestingly, because this law is an antidiscrimination statute, federal funds are not available to help schools meet the various requirements of Section 504. As this law pertains to education, PL 93-112 requires schools to adhere to the following provisions:

- Annually identify and locate all children with disabilities who are unserved.
- Provide a “free, appropriate public education” to each student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. This means providing general or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the individual educational needs of persons with disabilities as adequately as the needs of nondisabled persons are met.
- Ensure that each student with disabilities is educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate.
- Establish nondiscriminatory evaluation and placement procedures to avoid the inappropriate education that may result from the misclassification or misplacement of students.



PHOTO 3.5 Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability.

www.brookmedia/Shutterstock.com

- Establish procedural safeguards to enable parents and guardians to participate meaningfully in decisions regarding the evaluation and placement of their children.
- Afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities. (Office for Civil Rights, 1989, p. 8)

3-5a Who Is Protected by Section 504?

Although 504 protections are afforded to persons with disabilities across their lifespan, our focus here is on school-age individuals. As we noted in Chapter 1, all students eligible for services under IDEA are also protected by Section 504. The converse of this statement is not true, however. Some examples of pupils eligible for services under Section 504 include:

- a student referred for special education services but who does not qualify under IDEA;
- individuals who are no longer eligible for services under IDEA or who transition out of a special education program;
- students with a history of substance abuse;
- victims of abuse and neglect;
- pupils with health needs, such as diabetes, asthma, severe allergies, hemophilia, or communicable diseases; or
- someone with a low IQ but not viewed as having an intellectual disability.

Obviously, due to the broader scope of the definition of a disability incorporated in Section 504, significantly greater numbers of students are eligible to receive a free appropriate public education via Section 504 than would be afforded services under IDEA.

3-5b Providing a Free Appropriate Public Education

Similar to the requirements found in IDEA 2004, schools are required to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to pupils found eligible for Section 504 services and protections. This process involves the five areas of referral, evaluation, program planning, placement, and re-evaluation. The specific requirements of the 504 FAPE process include:

- **Referral**—Schools are required to refer students who they think would be eligible for Section 504 services. A committee of knowledgeable individuals will make that determination. Parents or school personnel may make referrals.
- **Evaluation**—If the committee believes that the child would probably be eligible for Section 504 services, then an evaluation of the area of suspected need must be completed. This evaluation must use nondiscriminatory procedures.
- **Eligibility Determination**—After the evaluation, the committee must determine if the student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.
- **Accommodation Plan Development**—If the committee determines that the student is eligible under Section 504, an accommodation plan must be developed.
- **Periodic Reevaluation**—The school must periodically re-evaluate the student to determine continuing eligibility under Section 504. (Smith, 2002, p. 263)

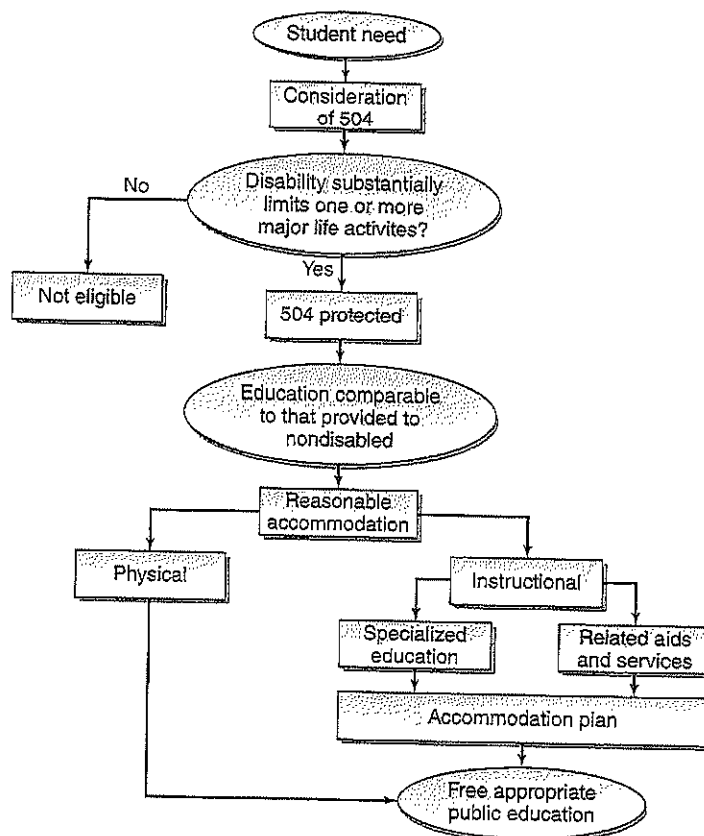
The required steps for providing a free, appropriate public education are illustrated in Figure 3.4.

3-5c Section 504 Eligibility Determination

Anyone can refer a pupil for Section 504 services, with general educators and parents being the two most likely individuals. As found in IDEA, just because a pupil is referred does not mean that he or she will be eligible for services. A committee of school personnel with knowledge of the student makes the eligibility determination (Smith, 2001).

FIGURE 3.4
Section 504
Decision-Making

Source: *Section 504 and the ADA Promoting Student Access: A Resource Guide for Educators* (2nd ed.) (Albuquerque, NM: Council of Administrators of Special Education, 1992), p. 5. (<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED436899.pdf>).



As we saw earlier, eligibility determination under Section 504 is not based on whether a student has a particular disability warranting a special education, but rather whether there is a substantial limitation to a major life activity resulting from a physical or mental impairment. In many instances, this is a subjective process involving professional judgment. Observations, anecdotal information, and opinions are considered legitimate sources of assessment information. Norm-referenced assessments may be used but are *not* required as part of the evaluation process (Smith, 2001, 2002).

Making a determination regarding whether a pupil is eligible for Section 504 services in the absence of test scores and other quantitative information may make some educators uncomfortable. Smith and Patton (2007) recommend that school personnel consider the duration and intensity of the student's impairment. They have developed a process for assisting teachers and other school personnel in their decision-making process. This procedure involves using a rating form incorporating a Likert-type scale for assessing the duration and intensity of various functional limitations (see Figure 3.5). The use of this instrument offers school personnel a defensible position for their eligibility decision. Once a student has been found eligible for Section 504 services, an accommodation plan must be developed.

accommodation plan
 Simple, inexpensive, and easy-to-use plan required by Section 504 that includes information necessary to enable the student to have equal access to education and extracurricular activities while also providing an equal opportunity to be successful.

3-5d Accommodation Plans

Section 504 **accommodation plans** should be simple, inexpensive, and easy to use. The majority of accommodations will occur in the general education classroom. It is important to note that special educators are not liable for Section 504 accommodations; this responsibility belongs to general education teachers. Designed for an individual pupil, these plans should include the information necessary to enable the individual to have equal access to educational and extracurricular activities while also providing an equal opportunity to be

Nature of Mental or Physical Impairment:

Major Life Activity	School-Related Description of Impairment ¹	Source of Information ²	Severity					Duration					Substantial Limitation? ³	
			Mild		Severe			Short-term			Long-term		Yes	No
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		
Caring for oneself			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Performing manual tasks			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Walking			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Seeing			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Hearing			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Speaking			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Breathing			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Learning			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Working			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No
Other ⁴			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	Yes	No

Note: ¹Description of education-related behaviors associated with major life activities affected by mental or physical condition.

²Listing of persons and/or evaluation techniques used for identifying behaviors with impairment.

³Based on consideration of the nature, severity, and duration of impairment.

⁴Other major life activities might include bending, stooping, reaching.

FIGURE 3.5 Sample 504 Eligibility Determination Form

Source: Adapted from Section 504 Eligibility Determination Form: Evaluation Data. Note. From *Section 504 and Public Schools: A Practical Guide for Determining Eligibility, Developing Accommodation Plans, and Documenting Compliance*, 2nd Ed. (p. 36), by T. E. C. Smith and J. R. Patton, 2007, Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

successful (Smith, 2002). Many of the accommodations are common sense and will vary depending on the needs of the learner. Examples include:

- preferential seating
- extended test time
- rest periods during the school day
- tape-recorded lessons
- modified attendance policies
- oral testing options
- peer note-taker
- outlines and study guides
- textbooks kept at home

Accommodation plans do not have mandated components like IEPs do. The format of these plans; therefore, will greatly vary. At a minimum, this document should identify the pupil's strengths and needs, the type of accommodation required, the individual(s) responsible for implementation, and team members. We believe that it is important that these plans focus on the capabilities and strengths of the pupils—what they bring to the instructional process rather than emphasizing their needs or limitations. A focus on what the learners can do leads to a “glass half full” philosophy in which students are viewed as competent learners and interventions or accommodations are purposely constructed to move the students from where they are to where they need to be (Miller & Newbill, 2006). A basic accommodation plan is illustrated in Figure 3.6.

Name: Jason Wentworth Birthdate: February 23, 2007
 School: Greystone Elementary Grade: 3rd
 Teacher: Mary Russell Date: November 13, 2015
 Review Date: At the end of the 6-week grading period

General Strengths: Jason has above average intellectual ability. He is popular with his classmates. Discipline is generally not a problem. Supportive and involved parents.

General Weaknesses: Jason exhibits ADHD. He has difficulty concentrating (except for brief periods of time) and he is easily distracted. Classroom assignments and homework are frequently not completed. Recent evidence of growing frustration and loss of self-esteem.

Specific Accommodations

Accommodation #1

Class: All classes

Accommodation(s): Worksheets will be modified so less material is presented on each page. Allow extra time for completion if necessary.

Person Responsible for Implementation: Mrs. Russell

Accommodation #2

Class: All classes

Accommodation(s): Jason will be given access to a study carrel when working on classroom assignments or taking tests.

Person Responsible for Implementation: Mrs. Russell

Accommodation #3

Class: All classes

Accommodation(s): Jason will record daily homework activities in assignment notepad. Teacher will check for accuracy and parents will sign notepad and return it to school.

Person Responsible for Implementation: Mrs. Russell

Accommodation #4

Class: All classes

Accommodation(s): Jason will receive praise and recognition for task completion and appropriate behavior. Teacher to provide immediate feedback whenever possible.

Person Responsible for Implementation: Mrs. Russell

General Comments: Weekly progress reports to parents via telephone or email.

Accommodation Plan Team Members:

Name	Team Member's Signature	Position/Title
Ms. Claire Wentworth	<u>Claire Wentworth</u>	Parent/Guardian
Mr. Ralph Hastings	<u>Ralph Hastings</u>	Assistant Principal/504 Coordinator
Ms. Mildred Smith	<u>Mildred Smith</u>	School Counselor
Ms. Jennifer Jenkins	<u>Jennifer Jenkins</u>	Resource Teacher
Ms. Mary Russell	<u>Mary Russell</u>	General Educator

Copies: Parent

Classroom Teacher(s)

Cumulative File

Other: _____

FIGURE 3.6 Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Source: Adapted from the Sample Accommodation Plan. Note. From *Section 504 and Public Schools: A Practical Guide for Determining Eligibility, Developing Accommodation Plans, and Documenting Compliance*, 2nd Ed. (p. 46), by T. E. C. Smith and J. R. Patton, 2007, Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Thematic Summary

- Effective instructional planning for learners with special needs requires that educators consider the pupil's intraindividual differences.
- Pre-referral interventions are typically used to reduce unwarranted referrals for special education services while also offering assistance to the student in an inclusive setting.
- Response to intervention (RTI), which incorporates the use of scientifically validated instruction, is often used as a pre-referral strategy.
- RTI is often supported by using universal design for learning principles.
- Educational assessments, incorporating both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests, lead to the development of meaningful IEPs.
- An IEP is foundational to providing students with disabilities with an education appropriate to their unique needs.
- It is becoming increasingly common for teachers to work in partnership with professionals from other disciplines.
- Section 504 affords protections and services to students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as learning. Eligible pupils receive accommodations in the general education classroom via "504 plans."

Making Connections for Inclusive Teaching

1. How might pre-referral interventions benefit a pupil suspected of requiring special education?
2. How can the application of response to intervention strategies (RTI) assist teachers in identifying students who may require academic assistance?
3. How might a classroom built around UDL principles support a response to intervention framework?
4. Describe some of the alternatives to norm-referenced assessments. Why should teachers consider information from these sources?
5. "As a general educator, I don't have the time or the expertise to comply with the IEP accommodations of all my students; besides, this document is simply some paperwork to be placed in the students' file." Refute this statement. Why might some teachers express this belief?
6. How might an IEP and a Section 504 accommodation plan improve the quality of instruction for all students in an inclusive setting?

Learning Activities

1. Obtain examples of blank IEP forms and Section 504 accommodation plans from different school districts in your vicinity. In what ways do these forms differ? How are they the same? Do they fulfill the requirements of the law as outlined in your textbook?
2. Visit an elementary school and a middle or high school in your community. Talk to several general education

teachers at each site who serve students with Section 504 accommodation plans. What types of accommodations do they typically provide their pupils? Are these teachers working with related service providers? If so, what is their role? What do they see as the advantages and disadvantages of including students with special needs in their classrooms?

Key Concepts and Terms

interindividual differences, p. 57
 intraindividual differences, p. 57
 pre-referral intervention, p. 58
 intervention assistance team, p. 59

response to intervention (RTI), p. 59
 Assessment, p. 63
 multidisciplinary team, p. 63
 norm-referenced assessments, p. 65

criterion-referenced assessments, p. 65
 benchmarks, p. 68
 related services, p. 69
 Section 504, p. 70
 accommodation plans, p. 72