

# SPECIAL EDUCATION

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PROGRAM GUIDE 2016

Smith, Julie  
PENDLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## **SPECIAL EDUCATION VISION:**

Pendleton School District provides a comprehensive special education program in conjunction and collaboration with general education to ensure students develop skills and strategies for becoming independent productive citizens of the community through fluid and invisible inclusive services, supportive practices and effective instruction.

The Special Education Department continues to develop and refine instructional programs and curriculum to meet the diverse needs of children who have disabilities in the Pendleton School District. This guide is to assist general and special education staff in designing effective and rigorous programs for students. Included in this guide are:

- Definitions for general and special education
- Definition of specially designed instruction
- Description of the special education process
- Resources for accommodations or modifications
- Descriptions of the continuum of instructional options for students
- Guide for providing specially designed instruction in the context of general education
- Description of options for materials
- Supplemental descriptions for Specific Learning Disabilities

## DEFINITIONS

**General Education:** the program of education all children should receive based on Oregon State Standards for education delivered by highly qualified teachers licensed to teach general education in the state of Oregon. A standard education consists of common curriculum goals, professional-technical education, federal and state mandated programs for instruction and support, character education, student activities, international understanding, and support services. (OAR 581-021-0200)

**General Education Curriculum:** the same curriculum as for children without disabilities. (OAR 581-015-2000)

**Special Education:** specially designed instruction provided at no cost to parents to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. Special education supplements general education providing additional instruction and support for students who have a disability. Special education services in schools are provided to all students identified as having a disability and needing special education through the age of 21. (OAR 581-015-2000)

**Specially Designed Instruction:** adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to meet the unique needs of the child ensuring access to the general curriculum. The aim is for them to meet the educational standards that apply to all children. Special education teachers specially design instruction. (OAR 581-015-2000)

**Individualized Education Program (IEP):** a written educational program developed, reviewed, revised and implemented for a school-aged child with a disability. IEP's contain consideration of special factors, present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, consideration and participation in state and district assessments, measurable annual goals and objectives, services, related services, accommodations or modifications, supplementary aids and services, non-participation justification, consideration of extended school year needs, and placement determinations. For student's 15 years or older IEP's also contain post-secondary goals, course of study, transition services, other agency supports, and graduation option selection. (OAR 581-015-2000)

**Least Restrictive Environment:** School districts must ensure that: (1) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who do not have a disability. (2) Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (OAR 581-015-2240)

## SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

**Parent Involvement:** Parents are a vital part of their child's education and participate as an equal member of all education teams in the special education process. Parents and students of children with disabilities have specific rights under the law. A procedural safeguards booklet outlining these rights is available at the child's attending school or the district office.

**Pre-referral:** Pendleton School District uses multi-tiered systems of support to provide every student with the instruction and support they need to make progress toward state standards. When a student struggles, general education provides additional supports and monitors for instructional success. Additional supports may be in the form of accommodations, instructional changes, supplemental instruction, additional time, behavioral supports, etc.

**Referral:** Referrals for a special education evaluation to determine if a student has a disability come from parents, teachers, teacher teams, or outside agencies when they suspect a student has a disability and students are not making progress in general education even with pre-referral supports. Upon referral, a team meets to discuss the educational concerns and determine whether they suspect a disability and whether or not to conduct an evaluation. When a team determines they do not suspect a disability and/or not to conduct an evaluation, they will make recommendations for general education to assist instructional programming for the student.

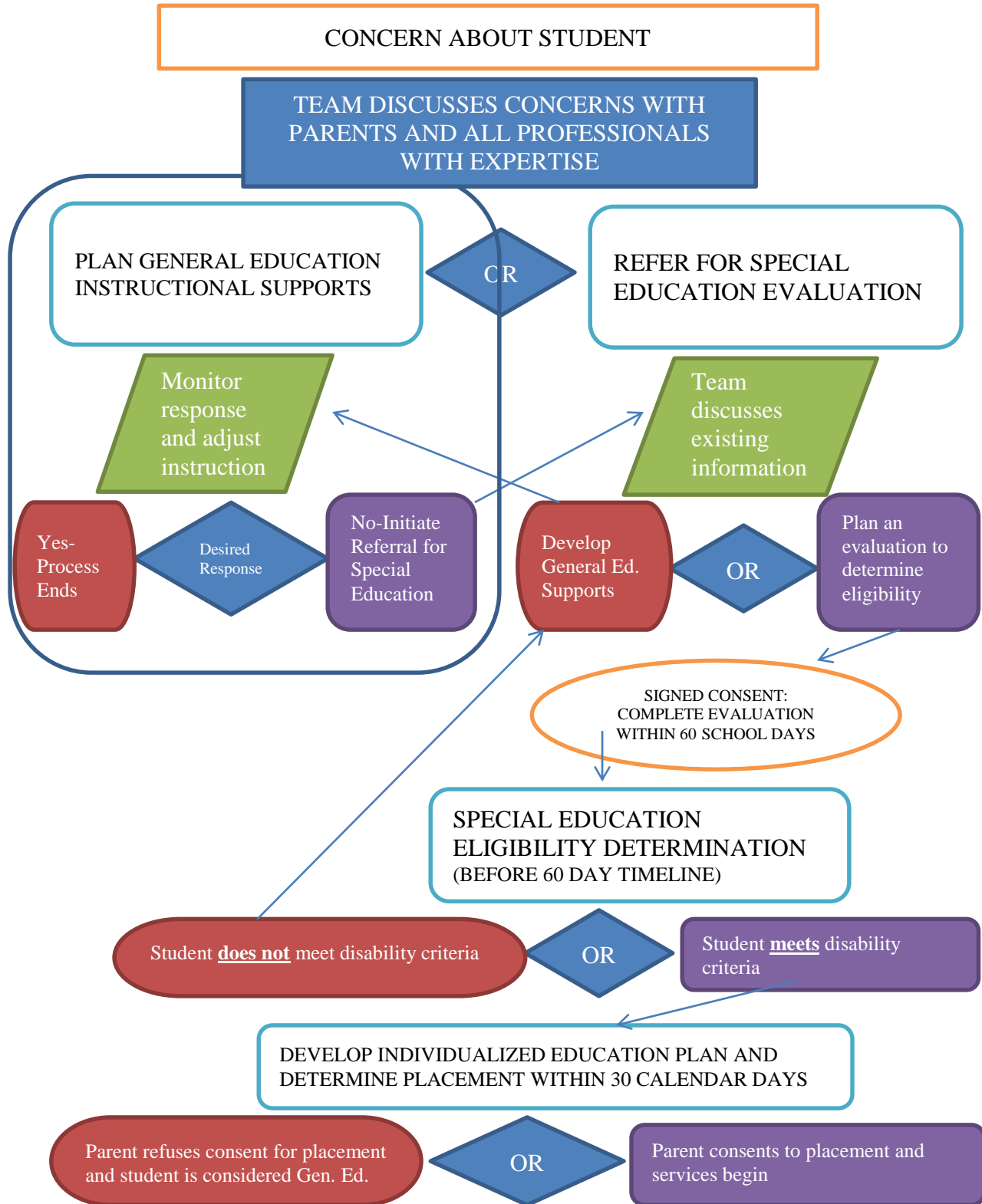
**Evaluation:** A team plans an individual evaluation based on the suspected disability using existing information including information shared by the parents. Teams individually tailor evaluations to determine if the student has a disability and their specific education and related service needs. For Specific Learning Disability teams must determine whether student response to increasing intensity of instruction is significantly different such that a Specific Learning Disability is the most likely reason for lack of progress. Teams must consider when learning difficulties are primarily the result of a lack of instruction, economic disadvantage, cultural differences, vision, hearing, or other disabilities when determining a specific eligibility.

**Eligibility:** Teams meet to review existing information alongside any new evaluation and assessment data to determine whether a student meets the criteria for a disability. Each disability category has its own criteria and documentation requirements by law. The team also determines whether the disability has an adverse impact on educational progress *and* requires special education services. When students are not eligible, the team will make recommendations for general education to assist instructional programming for the student based on evaluation information. Teams re-establish eligibility every three years or sooner if needed.

**Individualized Education Program Development:** Every eligible student needs an individualized education program or IEP. The parent, a general education teacher, a special education teacher, a district representative and other professionals develop IEP's based on the needs of the student to make progress toward state standards. Teams review and revise IEP's annually or sooner if needed.

**Placement:** After the team develops an IEP, they determine placement based on the needs of the student. The placement must be in the least restrictive environment for the student and meet the student's unique educational needs. Parents have the right to consent or refuse consent for initial placement into special education. Parents also have the right to revoke placement in writing at any time. Teams review placement annually or sooner if needed.

FINDING THE RIGHT LEVEL OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT



## PROVIDING ACCESS IN GENERAL EDUCATION

Students with disabilities have an individual right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. We have found that students with disabilities make the most educational progress when provided high quality general education curriculum **and** special education supports. Having a disability means a student may learn differently and need specific supports to learn in general education curriculum. Universal Design for Learning (UDL), accommodations or modifications are ways to support students based on their individual needs in the general education classroom. For more specific information on UDL see the Accessible Lesson Planning Handbook.

Accommodations or modifications provide access to general education curriculum for students with disabilities. These are changes in the setting, presentation, timing, student response format, assignment structure, or content. Individually planned changes allow students with disabilities to learn in the classroom along with their general education peers. The individualized education program outlines the needed accommodations or modifications based on the impact of the student's disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum and school-wide activities.

**Accommodations** change **how** a student accesses information and demonstrates learning. Accommodations **do not** substantially change the instructional level, content, or performance criteria. Accommodations provide a student with equitable access to learning and showing what they know. Teams specify those accommodations based on a student's individual needs.

Accommodations include changes in:

- Presentation of a lesson
- Instructional strategies
- Student response format and procedures
- Time/scheduling
- Environment or setting
- Equipment or technology
- Assignment structure

**Modifications** change **what** we expect a student to learn in a substantial way. Changes provide the student with relevant and meaningful participation and learning alongside general education students in the classroom.

Modifications include changes in:

- Instructional level of the content
- Content or curriculum standard(s)
- Depth or breadth of standards
- Performance criteria
- Assignment requirements and structure

**Accommodations**-Can and should be provided to any student who needs them **without** changing the outcome of instruction.

#### Presentation

- Remove the Reading & Writing Barriers to learning the content: Books on tape, peer readers, etc.
- Either provide notes, fill in the blank/skeleton or copies of entire notes with a highlighter, a good note taker could provide carbon copy notes for multiple users
- Use visual aids including graphic organizers, and reduce the visual clutter of environment, assignments, presentation, etc.
- Use structured small heterogeneous group discussion protocols to process content

#### Instructional Strategies

- Chunk large blocks of information into smaller units
- Focus on whole concepts first then break down into discreet steps
- Use concrete to representational to support learning of abstract content/processes
- Use mnemonics for memorizing rote processes or information

#### Response Format & Procedures

- Speech to text and text to speech tools eliminate reading and writing barriers
- Provide page numbers for finding information-road map to learning
- Give the questions ahead of time
- Highlight key words in directions
- Provide a word bank for fill in the blank
- Provide a completed example on worksheets
- Sentence Frames or Sentence Starters for short answer items
- Reduce amount of work while covering all the key concepts/ideas
- Break large assignments into smaller chunks with clear timelines for completion
- Large response area/fewer items on a page
- Oral responses
- Type work
- Graphic organizers for planning composition
- Break score down into content and process i.e. writing ideas separate from spelling and punctuation, math-correct answer separate from correct process
- Performance assessment rather than paper and pencil tests
- Reduce the number of assignments to only those essential for learning the content

#### Timing/Scheduling

- Provide frequent breaks
- Short testing sessions
- Additional time to complete work
- Test at the students' peak time of day

#### Setting/Environment

- Distraction Free environment
- Barrier Free environment
- Optimal temperature



- Lighting-cover fluorescent lights with colored film, turn some lights off, low reflective paper...
- Smells-no perfume or perfumed deodorant

### **Modifications-MUST BE USED WITH CAUTION**

These change what the child learns and therefore have major ramifications for the future. Sometimes they are necessary but we have to look at the long term plan and either have an alternate diploma plan already in mind or a solid plan for closing the performance gap and reducing the need for future modifications. Most students need a challenging curriculum in general education with accommodations **and** special education supports.

#### Instructional Level

- Partial completion-ideas and concepts crucial and attainable
- Lower level text
- Lower level writing expectations
- Lower level math expectations

#### Content Curriculum

- Alternative learning objectives i.e. Unit in Biology on plant reproduction-plants grow with soil, water, and sunlight
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade math in an Algebra class

#### Performance Criteria

- Reduction in the number of concepts for mastery
- An alternative grading procedure/scale
- Grade based on alternative learning objectives

*These lists are just a starting point for consideration and by no means exhaustive of the entire range of possible accommodations or modifications.*

## CONTINUUM OF INSTRUCTIONAL OPTIONS

The Pendleton School District provides a continuum of instructional service options to meet the unique needs of every student in each school. General education teams determine levels of supports for most students. Students needing accommodations through a 504 plan have a 504 team that determines the level of support needed. IEP teams annually determine the appropriate level and location of services based upon the students present level of academic achievement and functional performance for students with disabilities.

*All students are general education students first.* Some require special education services to mitigate the effects of a disability. The criteria put forth in this guide are a resource for teams making the determination for the levels of service in the least restrictive environment.

The continuum includes:

- General Education Only
- General Education with Accommodations
- General Education with specially designed instruction through consultation
- General Education with specially designed instruction through push in
- General Education with specially designed instruction through pull out
- Special Education Class with inclusion in General Education
- Special Education Class with inclusion in General Education modified curriculum

***General Education Only***

This option is for students who either do not have a disability or have a disability that does not have an adverse impact on their academic progress requiring special education services. Students do not need specially designed instruction and are able to work toward grade level standards with only general education supports.

- Participate in District Adopted Core Curriculum aligned to state standards
- Progress is monitored in general education by general educators
- General Education supports are developed by general educators to meet individual needs
- Students participate in school-wide activities
- Students participate in extracurricular activities

***General Education with Accommodations***

This option is for students who either do not have a disability or have a disability that does not have an adverse impact on their academic progress requiring special education services. Students are working toward grade level standards and need accommodations to ensure adequate progress. Students do not need special education services or specially designed instruction. Students may or may not have a 504 plan if they have a disability outlining necessary accommodations. The majority of students benefit from this option.

- Participate in District Adopted Core Curriculum aligned to state standards
- Progress is monitored in general education by general educators
- General Education supports are developed by general educators to meet individual needs
- Students receive accommodations for instruction designed by general educators
- Students participate in school-wide activities
- Students participate in extracurricular activities

Options Below Require Special Education Eligibility

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***General Education with specially designed instruction through consultation***

This option serves students who have mild to moderate disabilities requiring specially designed instruction. Students receive services within the general education classroom. Special Educators and General Educators specially design components of the curriculum based on the student's needs. Collaboration, ongoing student monitoring, and program adjustments occur on a regular schedule.

- Participate in District Adopted Core Curriculum aligned to state standards
- Progress is monitored in general education by general educators and special educators
- Special Education supports are developed by special educators to meet individual needs
- Students receive instruction from general educators which is specially designed with special educators to accelerate the rate of learning
- Students receive accommodations for instruction designed by special educators
- Students participate in school-wide activities
- Students participate in extracurricular activities

### ***General Education with specially designed instruction through push in services***

This option serves students who have mild to moderate disabilities requiring specially designed instruction. Students receive services within the general education classroom. Special Educators and General Educators specially design components of the curriculum based on the student's needs. Collaboration, ongoing student monitoring, and program adjustments occur on a regular schedule.

- Participate in District Adopted Core Curriculum aligned to state standards
- Progress is monitored in general education by general educators and special educators
- Special Education supports are developed with special educators to meet individual needs
- Students receive instruction in the general education classroom from general educators **and** special educators which is specially designed to accelerate the rate of learning
- Teachers may co-plan and co-teach lessons designed to meet the needs of the student in the general education classroom
- Students receive accommodations for instruction designed by special educators
- Students participate in school-wide activities
- Students participate in extracurricular activities

### ***General Education with specially designed instruction through pull out services***

This option serves students who have moderate to significant disabilities requiring specially designed instruction in a specialized learning environment. Students receive general education curriculum taught by general educators and receive intensive pull out services for specially designed instruction with special educators. Teachers use accommodations to give students access to learning general education curriculum. Sometimes modifications are necessary to alleviate frustration and maximize learning in the general education curriculum.

- Participate in District Adopted Core Curriculum aligned to state standards
- Progress is monitored in general education by general and special educators
- Special Education supports are developed by special educators to meet individual needs
- Students receive intensive specially designed instruction in the special education classroom by special educators to accelerate the rate of learning
- Time out of the classroom is strategically determined to maximize access to general education curriculum
- Students receive accommodations for classroom instruction designed by special and general educators
- Students participate in school-wide activities
- Students participate in extracurricular activities

***Special Education with inclusion in General Education Core Content***

This placement option is for students with significant social emotional difficulties contributing to lack of academic progress and inability to perform in a general education classroom. Students need a highly structured setting with a high adult to student ratio to learn self-regulatory, social emotional and behavioral skills. Many students either perform at grade level or have the capacity to perform at grade level. Students may have some lagging skills due to missed instruction because of their inability to self-regulate. Students are part of the school community and receive as much instruction in the general education classroom as they have the skills to navigate.

- Students receive intensive specially designed instruction on self-regulation skills and strategies in a self-contained special education classroom with a high level of structure and adult support
- Students participate in general education curriculum in the general education classroom with a high level of adult support
- Teachers utilize significant accommodations or modifications when necessary to provide access to general education curriculum
- Students increase time in the general education classroom as they gain skills
- Students receive specially designed instruction in any area of need
- Students participate in school-wide activities with accommodations or modifications
- Students participate in extra-curricular activities with accommodations or modifications

***Special Education with inclusion in General Education Modified Content***

This placement option is for students with significant developmental disabilities who are working on an alternative curriculum based on functional skill development for maximum independent living. Students need a highly structured classroom with a high adult to student ratio due to the intensive instructional needs. Students are part of the school community and receive instruction in general education classrooms modified toward alternative standards based on their individual needs.

- Students receive intensive specially designed instruction and supports for self-care and daily living skills, functional academics toward vocational goals, sensory regulation, self-regulation, mobility, communication, and social skills
- Students participate in general education curriculum in the general education classroom with a high level of adult support
- Teachers utilize significant modifications to provide access to general education curriculum
- Students participate in school-wide activities with modifications
- Students participate in extra-curricular activities with modifications

## INCLUSIVE SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION

Inclusive services begin with the philosophy that the classroom is a place for every child in the school community. General education classrooms are the least restrictive environment for most students with disabilities when teachers receive appropriate training, support, and time for collaboration to structure instruction to meet diverse individual needs of all learners in the classroom. To implement specially designed instruction within the classroom, general and special educators need collaboration time on a regular basis to examine unit and lesson objectives, co-design unit and lesson plans including assessments for and of learning, and analyze formative and summative data to adjust instruction.

There are many ways to deliver services and instruction in the classroom listed and described below. However, the main point is not to isolate students within the classroom but to make the classroom an inclusive place that values each student and every student learns.

- Specially designing a portion of the lesson through co-planning:
  - General and special educators co-plan units of instruction
  - Changes in content, delivery or methodology to the lesson are designed based on individual needs of students
  - General educators deliver the lesson and monitor student learning
  - General and special educators analyze student data and begin the planning process again
- Co-teaching:
  - General and special educators co-plan units of instruction
  - Changes in content, delivery or methodology to the lesson are designed based on individual needs of students
  - General and special educators determine who teaches what, how, when and to whom
  - General and special educators teach the units of instruction together and monitor student learning
  - General and special educators analyze student data and begin the planning process again
- Side by Side Teaching:
  - General and special educators co-plan units of instruction
  - Changes in content, delivery or methodology to the lesson are designed based on individual needs of students
  - General and special educators determine who teaches what, how, when and to whom
  - General and special educators teach the units of instruction to their specified student and monitor student learning
  - General and special educators analyze student data and begin the planning process again

## CURRICULUM OPTIONS FOR MATERIALS AND TOOLS

Instructional standards and individual student goals define curriculum rather than purchased programs. Teachers may use purchased programs as instructional tools to teach standards as appropriate. This list is not all-inclusive but provides a starting point of ideas for tools.

### *Reading*

#### K-2

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Reading Mastery
- Spelling Mastery
- ReadWell
- Road to the Code
- Edmark
- Early Reading Intervention
- Cove Reading
- Language for Learning
- Distar language
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Attainment Early Literacy Skill Builder/Pathways to Literacy/Building with Stories
- Writing and Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking

#### 3-5

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Reading Mastery
- Language!
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Rewards
- Read Naturally
- Reading Mastery
- SRA Comprehension
- Six Minute Solution
- Wordly Wise
- Phonics for Reading
- SERP Word Generation
- Attainment Early Literacy Skill Builder/Pathways to Literacy
- Writing and Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking

#### 6-12

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Attainment Curriculum
- Language!
- SERP Word Generation
- Rewards
- Read Naturally
- Phonics for Reading
- SRA Comprehension

**Math**

K-2

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Attainment Early Numeracy
- Connecting Math Concepts
- Touch Math
- Number Sense Routines
- Number Corner
- Carnine Math Facts
- SRA Addition, Subtraction
- Excel

3-5

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Connecting Math Concepts
- Touch Math
- Number Sense Routines
- Math Essentials
- Carnine Math Facts
- Corrective Mathematics
- Number Corner
- Excel
- SRA Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division
- Accelerated math

6-12

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Connecting Math Concepts
- Touch Math
- Number Sense Routines
- SRA Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division
- Math Essentials
- Carnine Math Facts
- Corrective Mathematics

**Writing**

K-2

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Spelling Mastery
- Reasoning & Writing
- Handwriting without Tears
- Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking

3-5

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Spelling Mastery



- Reasoning & Writing
- Handwriting without Tears
- Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking

6-12

- General Education Core Curriculum specially designed
- Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking
- Reasoning & Writing

### ***Social Skills***

- Super Flex
- Social Skill Builder
- Model Me Kids
- Second Steps
- Stop & Think Social Skills Program
- Explore Social Skills
- Social Thinking Products [www.socialthinking.com/Products](http://www.socialthinking.com/Products)

### ***Self-Regulation***

- Super Flex
- Zones of Regulation
- Every Kids Yoga
- Learning to Breathe
- BrainWise
- [http://www2.massgeneral.org/schoolpsychiatry/classroom\\_selfregulation.asp](http://www2.massgeneral.org/schoolpsychiatry/classroom_selfregulation.asp)
- Social Thinking Products [www.socialthinking.com/Products](http://www.socialthinking.com/Products)

## SUPPLEMENTAL SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY INFORMATION

Specific Learning Disabilities are the most commonly identified disabilities in schools. Identifying a student as having a specific learning disability is a difficult and careful process because these disabilities do not have visible physical symptoms or signs and are diversely experienced. Research does support that learning disabilities are the result of differences in the way the brain processes certain types of information and these differences make acquiring specific academic skills difficult. In schools, we see these differences in the outcome of instruction; however, there are many reasons for differential outcomes from instruction in schools making the identification difficult in some instances. The least likely option in most cases is a disability.

Specific Learning Disabilities describe difficulties in learning and using skills most often in reading but also in writing, listening, reasoning, and math. Dyslexia is a common term used for Specific Learning Disabilities in the area of Reading. People experience these difficulties in very different ways. Some may struggle in only one area while others may struggle in many areas. While there is no “cure” for learning disabilities, individuals can learn at high levels utilizing strategies for working with their learning differences over time.

In the Pendleton School District, we follow the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act definition using a Response to Instruction framework for identification of students with Specific Learning Disabilities.

*“In general.—The term ‘specific learning disability’ means a disorder in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved with understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.*

*Disorders included.—Such term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.*

*Disorders not included.—Such term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental disability, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.”*

### **Response to Instruction Framework**

We screen all students three times a year to identify students working below grade level achievement standards. Teams of educators plan additional instructional supports for groups of students achieving below grade level and monitor student responses to instruction. Teachers analyze progress-monitoring data to ensure all students are progressing at a rate, which over time will close the performance gap for each student. Teachers increase specificity and targeting of skills for any student not progressing at an adequate rate and closely monitor student progress. Teachers may meet in teams that include specialists and the parent to discuss an individual student who is not responding to instruction. These teams analyze all other possible factors, skill deficits, instructional barriers, etc. and make changes to the student’s instruction based on their hypothesized learning needs of the student. A timeline for a specified amount of growth is set and they closely monitor student progress. When the process outlined above indicates teachers and teams have:

- exhausted all other possibilities for learning difficulties **and**
- provided a high level of instructional support specifically targeted to individual needs **and**
- a student continues to achieve below grade level achievement standards **and**
- the student is exhibiting an unusually slow rate of progress given intensive general education instruction

Teams may refer a student for an evaluation to determine if a student has a specific learning disability in the area(s) of instruction the team targeted.

The Response to Instruction framework allows students to receive instruction and support in general education differentiated to their specific needs before referral to special education. It also allows teams to separate out other factors contributing to learning differences before assuming the student has a disability. This process prevents instructionally based referrals to special education where the student just needs additional time or supports to be successful but does not have a disability.

We want to identify those students who truly have disabilities. Identifying a child with a disability provides specific rights outlined in the law but also may have unintended consequences which may cause the student to feel less competent, different, or like teachers have low expectations for them. We work hard in the Pendleton School District to reduce the stigma of having a disability of any kind and employ non-discriminatory practices. However, students do at times feel stigma with the identification of a disability. For that reason, we want to be careful to not to incorrectly identify students with disabilities who have mild learning differences not associated with a disability.

The Pendleton School District has a lengthier document describing learning disabilities in detail. This document provides specific description, technical assistance documents for determining rate of response, and further information for correctly identifying Specific Learning Disabilities. For a copy, contact Julie Smith, Special Programs Director, at 966-3262.