

# HUMANITIES



*"The only way to improve outcomes is to improve instruction."*

-Michael Barber & Mona Mourshed, *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*

'Literacies for the 21st Century' reminds us that the quest to ensure that all children learn to read and write is not an individual one. Whether and how children communicate (the fundamental purpose of literacy) will shape the trajectory of their local communities and the world in the years to come.

-Carol DeShano da Silva

## SFUSD's ELA PK-12 Core Curriculum with Embedded CCSS and Students with Disabilities

In a speech to a gathering of special education practitioners, Dr. Fred Balcom, California's Director of Special Education, punctuates the importance of special education teachers as the knowledgeable holders of interventions for students with disabilities. He asserts that it is the special education teachers who are trained to support and address the wide range of disabilities with which our students may be diagnosed.

In the most successful models, general education teachers have the ability to work alongside their special education peers as they address the needs of their students.

"Now, special educators bring something unique to the table. Not only do they support the instruction by providing additional interventions for classroom teachers, but they also can provide support and address the disabilities that general

ed teachers aren't necessarily trained to do. They're trained in the content, but knowing that content is only part of the game. It's the skills, the unique abilities of instruction that you all bring that make it critical - that make student success happen." -Dr. Fred Balcom, Director of Special Education, California Department of Education.

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**"Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for five thousand years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental."**

**-W.E.B. DuBois**

## CCSS Application to Students with Disabilities



*"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."*

—Audre Lorde

The Common Core State Standards articulate rigorous grade-level expectations in the areas of mathematics and English language arts. These standards identify the knowledge and skills students need in order to be successful in college and careers.

Students with disabilities students eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must be challenged to excel within the general curriculum and be prepared for success in their post-school lives, including college and/or careers. These common standards provide a historic opportunity to improve access to rigorous academic content standards for students with disabilities. The continued development of understanding about research-based instructional practices and a focus on their effective implementation will help improve access to mathematics and English language arts (ELA) standards for all students, including those with disabilities.

Students with disabilities are a heterogeneous group with one common characteristic: the presence of disabling conditions that significantly hinder their abilities to benefit from general education (IDEA 34 CFR §300.39, 2004). Therefore, *how* these high standards are taught and assessed is of the utmost

importance in reaching this diverse group of students.

In order for students with disabilities to meet high academic standards and to fully demonstrate their conceptual and procedural knowledge and skills in mathematics, reading, writing, speaking and listening (English language arts), their instruction must incorporate supports and accommodations, including:

- Supports and related services designed to meet the unique needs of these students and to enable their access to the general education curriculum (IDEA 34 CFR §300.34, 2004).
- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) which includes annual goals aligned with and chosen to facilitate their attainment of grade-level academic standards.
- Teachers and specialized instructional support personnel who are prepared and qualified to deliver high-quality, evidence-based, individualized instruction and support services.

Promoting a culture of high expectations for all students is a fundamental goal of the Common Core State Standards. In order to participate with success in the general curriculum, students with disabilities, as appropriate, may be provided additional supports and services, such as:

- Instructional supports for

learning— based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—which foster student engagement by presenting information in multiple ways and allowing for diverse avenues of action and expression.

- Instructional accommodations (Thompson, Morse, Sharpe & Hall, 2005) —changes in materials or procedures—which do not change the standards but allow students to learn within the framework of the Common Core.
- Assistive technology devices and services to ensure access to the general education curriculum and the Common Core State Standards.

Some students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will require substantial supports and accommodations to have meaningful access to certain standards in both instruction and assessment, based on their communication and academic needs. These supports and accommodations should ensure that students receive access to multiple means of learning and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, but retain the rigor and high expectations of the Common Core State Standards.

### References

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 34 CFR §300.34 (a). (2004).  
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 34 CFR §300.39 (b)(3). (2004).  
Thompson, Sandra J., Amanda B. Morse, Michael Sharpe, and Sharon Hall. "Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer and Evaluate Use of Accommodations and Assessment for Students with Disabilities," 2nd Edition.

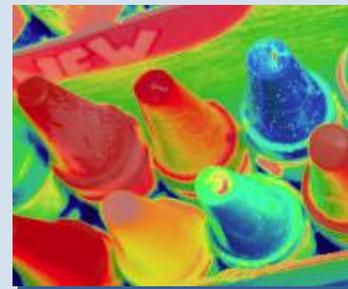
“The pathway to improvement lies not in the increased use of a single compelling instructional method, but in building of a full repertoire of effective methods, and a nuanced understanding of how and when each will propel a teacher’s students toward ambitious learning goals.”

– Bradley A. Ermeling, James Hiebert and Ronald Gallimore

Research and practical experience suggest that focusing on continual improvement of teaching is more effective than imitating effective practices.

In many school contexts, the idea of sharing effective practices represents a search for ways to keep the classroom environment lively and stimulating. In this context, *effective* is sometimes labeled *fresh, innovative, or high interest*. Although there's nothing wrong with employing high-interest activities, it's counterproductive to make them a focal point and primary objective of instruction rather than a means of fostering student learning of specific content and skills. Ends can be confused with means; activities can be substituted for achievement.

From: “*Best Practice*” – *The Enemy of Better Teaching*. –Bradley



#### Additional Resources:

**National Center on Universal Design for Learning:** Resources to support the effective implementation of UDL.  
<http://www.udlcenter.org>

**Reading Supports BookShare** ([www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)) FREE accessible textbooks & literature for qualifying students.

**Read & Write for Google Chrome** (download from Chrome Web Store) Accessible text (text-to-speech & translator (ELL) tool for GoogleDocs, websites, .pdf, & ePubs).

**Project Gutenberg** ([www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)) A large collection of royalty-free e-text in various formats including audio recordings.

**Tarheel Reader** (<http://tarheelreader.org/>) Accessible books online with a variety of ways to access including switch access.

**NewsELA** ([www.newsela.com](http://www.newsela.com)) Articles accessible at 5 different reading levels with a simple click. Many articles include a quiz to check for comprehension.

**Resources for the Classroom Read & Write for Google Chrome Premium** is available free to all educators. Visit [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com) and register for your free subscription.

**Inspiration & Kidspiration** ([www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)) 30-day free trial of visual mapping and outlining program. Extensive templates designed for instructional activities.



“Effective teaching draws on current research and practice and depends on the teacher as professional to provide learners the balance of skills, strategies, materials, and social and emotional support they need. Instructing, demonstrating, discussing, coaching, and discovering are all part of this model. In addition, teaching for understanding is integral to everything we do, beginning with our youngest learners.”

–Regie Routman

# Special Education Glossary of Key Terms

Special education uses a dizzying number of terms. Most of them, however, have to do with the various ways students with disabilities can learn and develop important skills. The following list offers definitions for a select but important set of these terms.

## Accommodations

are any adjustment that help a student overcome or “work around” a disability that does not alter or lower the standards or expectations for a subject or test, whatever else it changes. Specific accommodations range widely. Providing braille readers or large-print books to a student who is visually impaired constitutes an accommodation, as do curb cuts for students who use a wheelchair. Through a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, classroom accommodations may be formally identified and put in place, although many teachers make informal accommodations for students in their classes all the time and naturally, whether or not the students have a disability. To learn more, go to <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/topicareas/accommodations/accomptopic.htm>.

## Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

devices are part of a holistic communication approach that integrates multiple forms of self-expression, which include devices used by students to communicate at school, at home, and in the community to convey needs, wants, thoughts, and feelings. These devices do not have to be fancy or expensive. For example, a “picture exchange communication system” (PEC) helps students to initiate communication through the use of pictures or symbols in place of words.

Other devices include, but are not limited to, refreshable braille, communication boards, eye-gaze boards, and other assistive technologies. To learn more, go to <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/dtsorders/AAC/>.

## Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

are a set of college- and career-ready standards for kindergarten through 12th grade in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics and designed to ensure that all students leave high school prepared for career, college, and civic life. State education chiefs and governors in 48 states developed the Common Core. For information about the California Common Core State Standards, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>.

## Differentiated Instruction

is an approach to teaching and managing a classroom that allows teachers to factor the many differences within a mixed-ability classroom into planning and delivering instruction to ultimately provide multiple learning

options and different paths to learning that help students take in information and make sense of concepts and skills. Differentiated instruction provides appropriate levels of challenge for all students, including those who struggle and those who are advanced. While differentiated instruction is not mandated by IDEA, current brain research does confirm it as an effective approach for supporting the learning needs all students. To learn more, go to <http://www.ascd.org/research-a-topic/differentiated-instruction-resources.aspx>.

## Instructional Supports

represent any person, strategy, or program that, in effect, “supports” the student in learning. This broad category includes curricula that are designed for diverse learners (see *Universal Design for Learning* below); special educators, who are trained to adapt instructional materials and strategies so that students can better learn; and paraprofessionals, who assist a student in classroom activities and instruction.

To learn more, go to <http://www.intensiveintervention.org/resource/accommodations-instructional-and-testing-supports-students-disabilities>.

## Extended standards

are linked to the Common Core State Standards, but they are more focused and include the content and application of knowledge through high-order thinking skills, and



include a focus on academic and real life-application. For examples of the extended standards for English language arts, go to

- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/mathk-5\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/mathk-5_instructionalguide.pdf)
- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/ela6-8\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/ela6-8_instructionalguide.pdf)
- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/ela9-12\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/ela9-12_instructionalguide.pdf)

For examples of the extended standards for mathematics, go to

- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/mathk-5\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/mathk-5_instructionalguide.pdf)
- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/math6-8\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/math6-8_instructionalguide.pdf)
- [http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/math9-12\\_instructionalguide.pdf](http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/essd/math9-12_instructionalguide.pdf)

### Learner Characteristics

are those unique qualities in a student that create a learning profile. Learner characteristics may include, but are not limited to, a student's expressive and receptive communication ability; need for augmentative and alternative communication use; ability to be engaged in learning environments; needs in a classroom setting; and present levels in reading and mathematics. To learn more, go to <http://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychology/kevinpugh/5-7320/ITcomponents/learner.html>.

### Learning Progressions

are the vertical building blocks that connect one grade-level's content to that of the next grade level; mastery of content within a progression leads to success in later content goals. To learn more, go to <http://edglossary.org/learning-progression/>.

### Modifications

are any of the changes made to the level and type of content to be taught (thus different from an accommodation). Modifications usually only apply to the one or two percent of students with significant disabilities who, regardless of all possible accommo-

dation, services, or supports, cannot benefit from the level and type of curriculum being offered to all students. Modifications, which must be clearly spelled out in the IEP, may apply to an instructional approach, method, material, timing, setting, and/or arrangement. Modifications need to be considered and used carefully, since students for whom material and work are modified may find that they are not ready for a program that leads to a standard diploma in high school.

To learn more, go to [http://paws.wcu.edu/mherzog/617modideas\\_001.htm](http://paws.wcu.edu/mherzog/617modideas_001.htm).

### Multitiered System of Supports (MTSS)

is a whole-school/district, data-driven, prevention-based framework for improving learning outcomes for every student through a layered continuum of evidence-based practices. (See also *Tiers*.) To learn more, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ct/cr/rt/> and <http://www.kansasmstss.org>.

### Related Services

are any developmental, corrective, or support service, provided by trained professionals, "as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education" [IDEA]. The individualized education program (IEP) team decides which related services a child needs and specifies them in the child's IEP. The law lists the following examples of related services, but does not intend

this list to be exclusive: audiology, occupational therapy; physical therapy; psychological services; medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes only; school health services; transportation services; counseling services; speech-language pathology; social work services; parent counseling and training; recreation therapy; and early identification and assessment of disabilities in children. To learn more, go to <http://trts.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/rs/>.

### Scaffolding

is when teachers provide successive levels of temporary support that help students reach higher levels of comprehension and skill acquisition that they would not be able to achieve without assistance. To learn more, go to [http://www.niu.edu/facdev/resources/guide/strategies/instructional\\_scaffolding\\_to\\_improve\\_learning.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/facdev/resources/guide/strategies/instructional_scaffolding_to_improve_learning.pdf).

### Specially Designed Instruction

is any teaching method or strategy designed (1) to address the unique needs of a student that result from the student's disability; and (2) to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum. Examples include giving an audio recording of a textbook chapter to a student with a learning disability so he can both hear and read the words at the same time. To learn more, go to <http://www.education.com/reference/article/special-education1/#A>.

### Supplementary Aids and Services

are a type of support that is not a "special education and related service" but one that a child with a disability still needs in order to be educated with his or her nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. These supports "supplement" other efforts.



## Examples of Assistive Technology by Domain

	Low- to Mid-tech	Mid- to High-tech	Apps for Mobile Devices
<b>Receptive</b>	<p><b>Notepad</b> – Notepads are an excellent way to record information. Students with learning disabilities (LDs) may appreciate having the information color-coded based on the purpose, topic, or function of the information.</p>	<p><b>Audio recorders</b> – Audio recorders that store hundreds of hours of audio can be purchased as cheaply as \$30-\$40.</p> <p><b>Talking dictionary</b> – Students with LDs can use talking dictionaries to verify definitions and spelling. Talking dictionaries are small enough to be carried in a pencil case and are not as expensive as computers or tablets.</p> <p><b>Visuwords</b> – This free online dictionary allows students to look up words to find their meanings and associations with other words and concepts.</p>	<p><b>Audiobooks</b> – Provide a simple way to listen to many of the best classic books and modern titles.</p>
<b>Speaking</b>	<p><b>Cue cards</b> – Cue cards provide helpful hints for the oral presentation of information, and the process of composing cue cards can help organize the information before-hand.</p>	<p><b>Prezi</b> – A free 3D graphic organizer which can be used to create presentations. Prezis can be collaborative as students can comment and build upon other Prezis.</p>	<p><b>ShowMe Interactive Whiteboard</b> –In order to reduce anxiety, students may opt to record presentations on their iPad beforehand. Video recordings can be uploaded on YouTube or a more private domain.</p>

<p><b>Reading</b></p>	<p><b>Highlighter strips</b> – Translucent rectangles of color can help eliminate extra visual clutter by blocking out the rest of the text.</p> <p><b>Sticky notes</b> – Students with LDs may find it useful to summarize the main ideas of the text with sticky notes which can be stuck directly on the page.</p>	<p><b>Kurzweil 3000</b> – Text-to-speech software, such as Kurzweil 3000, can read aloud digital or printed text.</p> <p><b>Storyline Online</b> – A free online streaming video program featuring books read aloud. Each book includes accompanying activities and lesson ideas.</p> <p><b>Wikipedia</b> – The Simple English function on Wikipedia allows content to be “translated” into plain English which is easier to read.</p>	<p><b>Speak Selection</b> – Located in the accessibility features of Apple devices, Speak Selection can be used to read aloud electronic text.</p>
<p><b>Writing</b></p>	<p><b>Pencil grips</b> – For students who struggle with handwriting, pencil grips can provide a surface that is easier to manipulate.</p> <p><b>Computerized pens</b> – These pens can automatically transmit handwriting into digital text. Some computerized pens have audio-recording functions that allow the writer to listen to specific sections of the audio file by tapping on the written notes.</p>	<p><b>Word processing</b> – Functions such as spell check, dictionary options, synonym support, and word-prediction features are helpful for students with learning disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Dragon Dictation</b> – This easy-to-use voice recognition application allows you to speak and instantly see your text or e-mail messages. You must be connected to the Internet for this application to work.</p>
	<p><b>Graphic organizers</b> – Organizing ideas visually allows students</p>		

<b>Reasoning</b>	<p><b>Graphic organizers -</b> Organizing ideas visually allows students with LDs to see the connections between ideas.</p> <p><b>Audio recorders -</b> Many students with LD experience difficulty translating oral language into written text. Recording ideas early in the thinking process can provide a record for later recall and clarification.</p>	<p><b>Audacity -</b> Audacity is a free software program which allows you to record and edit sounds.</p>	<p><b>SimpleMind+ -</b> This app allows you to brainstorm and organize your ideas. Completed concept maps can be automatically converted to an outline.</p>
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The central question is not “What about the student is causing the performance discrepancy,” but “What about the interaction of the curriculum, instruction, learners and learning environments and school organizations should be altered so that students will learn and be more successful?”

-Jim Ysseldyke

