



907-714-8881

# PUPIL SERVICES UPDATES

January 2013

Page 1

## ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS & INTERVENTIONS, OH MY!

I have used those words interchangeably for years! Aren't they the same thing? In reality, our students require a great deal more accommodations than they do modifications. With accommodations, we are not changing our learning expectations for the students — they are expected to learn what the other students are learning — rather we are providing more access to that learning for them by making some adjustments to the environment. And interventions are another thing altogether!

Here's a break down (color, bold, italics and underline added for emphasis):

**MODIFICATIONS** are the **changing, lowering or reducing** of learning and assessment expectations. This includes allowing a student to learn less material than is expected of other students (reducing the number of items on an assignment or the common "shortened assignments") or revising assignments or tests to make them easier (reminding student of their reading strategies right before testing reading). Modifications may be appropriate during *instruction*. If they are necessary during large-scale assessments, such as the HSGQE, pre-approval must be obtained from the state.

**ACCOMMODATIONS** are practices and procedures in the areas of **presentation, response, setting, or timing/scheduling** that provide equitable instructional and assessment access for students with disabilities.

An **INTERVENTION** is something that is **added to your existing instructional strategies** to teach new skills, build fluency in a skill, or encourage a child to apply an existing skill to new situations or settings. Interventions are good educational practice.

Contents	
Accommodations & Modifications & Interventions, Oh my!	1
Coming Soon	1
Accommodations & Modifications & Interventions, Oh my! (cont')	2
Celebrations!	2
Eligibility Decisions are Not Always Easy	3
FAQs	4

Modifications	Accommodations	Interventions
Purpose: Changes the expectation of what a student is expected to do or know	Purpose: Removes barriers to learning	Purpose: Teach or strengthen a skill
Something changed	Something changed	Something added
Intended for improvement to specific area	Intended for general improvement	Intended to meet specific target goals
Typically instructional : lowered academic expectations	Typically environmental	Typically instructional
Examples: reducing the number of choices on a multiple choice test, lowering the passing score of a test, use of grammar check on computer, allowing proctor to provide synonyms for words during test.	Examples: auditory cues/ prompts, chunking information, extended time, frequent breaks, preferential seating, use of a calculator.	Examples: goal directed lunch tutoring, behavior plans, instructional reading, writing, math program, consistent daily practice with flashcards.

## Coming Soon...

February 4—6	ASSEC (Anchorage)
February 7 & 8	Parent Conferences
February 23	IEP Saturday

### Mandt Trainings

#### Initial trainings:

Jan. 31 & Feb 1—Central Pen

#### Recertification trainings:

Jan. 17, 18, 29 OR 30— Central Pen

March 8—Seward



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1. ACCOMMODATIONS & MODIFICATIONS & INTERVENTIONS. OH MY!

## Our IEP forms include the following section for modifications and accommodations:

Program Modifications/ Accommodations for Student to:	Supports for School Personnel
<b>Advance toward annual goals</b> Intended to provide student with ability to meet their IEP goals and objectives within the year. For instance, if goal and objectives are for math calculation, what does the student need as an accommodation or modification to meet that goal?	<b>What supports/ training do school personnel need?</b> Supports to school personnel could be any of the following and more dependent on the student's needs:  <b>Consultations:</b> Providing and explaining instructional materials, suggesting instructional strategies to ensure that
<b>Be involved in and progress in the general curriculum</b> Intended to provide student with equal access to the general education setting. For instance, if the student attends general education classes for most of the day, what accommodations or modifications would allow the student to be successful in the general education classroom/ curriculum?	the teacher provides opportunities for the student to develop and master skills in the IEP and other instructional needs, explaining the responsibilities for implementing the IEP, being available to answer questions and to provide assistance and support to the teacher,
<b>Participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities</b> Intended to provide student with equal access to nonacademic activities. Because this section will include extracurricular, which could be activities outside of the school day, this section should be clear as to whether the accommodations and modifications are for nonacademic or extracurricular. For instance, if the student requires assistance from an adult during PE class (refuses to participate in some activities), but could participate on their own in an afterschool basketball class (loves basketball), these accommodations should be clearly delineated here.	<b>Training activities:</b> Behavior management, how to provide accommodations and modifications, characteristics associated with a disability, effective use of a paraprofessional, assistive technology availability and use  <b>Other:</b> Co-teaching, peer tutoring, buddy system, paraprofessional assistance

Thanks to Dan Kaasa, Jill Ramponi and Staci Gonzales for the information provided in this article.

Other websites for intervention help: [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org) [www.gosbr.net/reading](http://www.gosbr.net/reading) [www.studentprogress.org](http://www.studentprogress.org)

# CELEBRATIONS!

We want to have a special spot each month for celebrations of excellence and learning within our district. If you have a celebration about a colleague or about yourself, email it to Denise Kelly!

## CONGRATULATIONS TO:

**AMANDA MILLER AND TINA GILMAN**

**who are nominees for this year's Inclusive Practices Award!**

**Thank you for your dedication to providing meaningful, inclusive opportunities for your students!**



907-714-8881

# PUPIL SERVICES UPDATES

January 2013

Page 3

## Eligibility Decisions are not always easy

There are situations where teams must take into consideration student concerns that may or may not seem disability related when making eligibility determinations. Some of these include student absences, illegal activity and seeming willful misconduct. Here are some tips for guidance.

**Absences:** Clearly document any evidence that the absences are not caused by the student's educational disability. Meet with the team to determine if absences are caused by or have a direct relationship to a disability. Excessive absences do not automatically "disqualify" a student from being considered for eligibility for special education services. \*\*Absences of an already identified student should trigger an IEP meeting possible amendment—call in the team if they are chronic.

**Illegal activity:** Clearly document any evidence that the student is engaging in illegal drug activities or other illegal activities. Should be considered as you look at the student's overall conduct within the school setting.

### Misconduct:

- Look for and clearly document examples of the student being able to control his/her actions. Does the student have behavior issues ONLY in certain classes? Can the student control his/her behavior during football or other sports' seasons? Does the student control his/her behavior prior to preferred activities (field trips, class parties, etc.)?
- Look for and clearly document evidence of forethought and planning prior to the misconduct. Did the student clearly plan the execution of the misbehavior? Did the student tell others that he/she was going to engage in misconduct prior to the event? Was it necessary for the student to purchase or otherwise obtain materials in order to engage in the misbehavior?
- Look for and clearly document evidence of deliberate, volitional and willful misbehavior (e.g., student's statements to others before/ after incidents of misconduct).

\*\*Just because a student may be eligible under Emotional Disturbance doesn't mean that everything they do is caused by the disability. Look at why the student is eligible under Emotional Disturbance.

### Other:

Clearly delineate between "social maladjustment" and "emotional disturbance" in making eligibility determinations. Your school psychologist will do this with all of the data gathered from team members.

Clearly distinguish between "disability" and "disorder or impairment" in making eligibility determinations—particularly when determining if eligible for IDEA or 504.

Consider any additional evaluations that are offered by the parent to determine if the student is qualified under any other eligibility categories. Always consider evaluations that parents bring in to the school and document that they have been reviewed and how the team will use them.

Don't allow your temper or judgments to cloud your focus! Kids first!

**Each eligibility decision is based on the individual's needs. It is important to remember that what is willful for one student may uncontrollable for another. This is what makes these decisions difficult. That is why you have a team!**

Jacobs, M. (2013, January). *Eligible or Not? Potential "Rule-Out Factors Under the IDEA and Section 504*. Presented as a webinar for LRP Publications.

**CELEBRATE WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE MORE OF!**

**-Tom Peters**



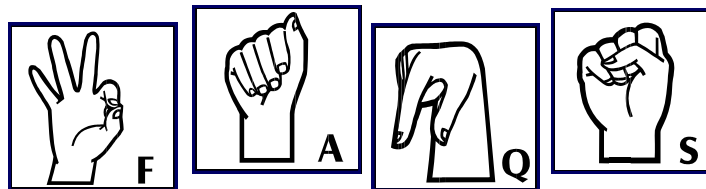


907-714-8881

## PUPIL SERVICES UPDATES

January 2013

Page 4



Q: What is a surrogate parent and when do I need one?

A: Students in Alaska ages 3—17 (or 18-21 when “adjudicated incompetent by a court”) are entitled to a surrogate parent under Alaska regulations if:

- The district cannot identify the parent of the child;
- The district, exercising reasonable diligence, cannot locate at least one person acting as a parent of the child;
- The district locates one or more persons acting as a parent of the child, but each person affirmatively disclaims responsibility for the child’s educational program and relinquishes it in writing to a surrogate parent; or
- The child is committed to the custody of the Department of Health and Social Services.

Students who are in the process of evaluation for special education or who are already eligible, and fall under one of the categories above may need a surrogate parent. If you feel as though you have a student who meets any of the above, contact your program coordinator immediately.

Q: My student has a study skills class. How do I document that on the Summary of Services page?

A: A study skills class could be documented in a couple of ways. One way is to include the minutes of the study skills class within one or more of the content area minutes. For instance, if the class is 45 minutes, a student might have an additional 15 minutes for reading, 15 minutes for writing and 15 minutes for math. This would be appropriate when the teacher will be providing specialized instruction for all three subjects during that period. Another way is to include “Study Skills” as a separate category on the Summary of Services. This would be appropriate if the student has a goal to work on specifically during the study skills time period. These often include organization, work completion, or behavior type goals. At any time, use the additional comments to explain what minutes are for or where they are provided.

Q: Why is it important to explain a drop in SBA scores? For instance in math, my student has a 350 in 2009, 290 in 2010 and 255 in 2011. Lots of kids go down on that test, right?

A: While it is true that the SBAs are a snapshot of how a student may be doing on grade level standards, drops in scores of any kind are always a cause for closer look. Teams should try to analyze what may have caused the dip and make determinations of how to assist the student to improve. Likewise a student who is proficient on his/her SBAs, but does not display the same level of understanding and proficiency in the classroom should be discussed. All of this information must be detailed in the PLAAFP to provide a clear picture of the student’s current level of functioning.

*Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties.*

*Helen Keller*

A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR