# Specially Designed Instruction

## Considerations for Specially Designed Instruction

The purpose of this document is to help define and increase the capacity of understanding about specially designed instruction as it relates to students with disabilities in Indiana. This document serves as guidance for IEP teams, administrators, educators and practitioners as they determine the need for, plan, and implement Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for students with disabilities who require an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

This document is not a policy brief or a compliance tool. The information that follows focuses on the practical aspects of designing and delivering SDI, to the end that high quality services and programs for children with disabilities are continuously offered and improved.

In general, SDI is adapting content, methods, and/or instructional delivery to address the unique needs of a student (511 IAC 7-32-88). Students who receive special education services must receive SDI in order to be in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Indiana Article 7, but more importantly, because the design and delivery of instruction is what will enable students to achieve the highest outcomes.

SDI describes the individualized instruction provided to a student receiving special education services. In other words, "What does a student need that special education can provide?"

SDI is the instruction applied to address academic and functional deficits.

SDI is what makes special education "special."

SDI is instruction intended to close the academic gap between a student with a disability and peers.

The design and delivery of SDI is the core of special education. SDI is the vehicle to ensure students with disabilities receive high-quality instruction and services that will result in progress toward academic and functional standards, graduation, and meaningful postsecondary outcomes.
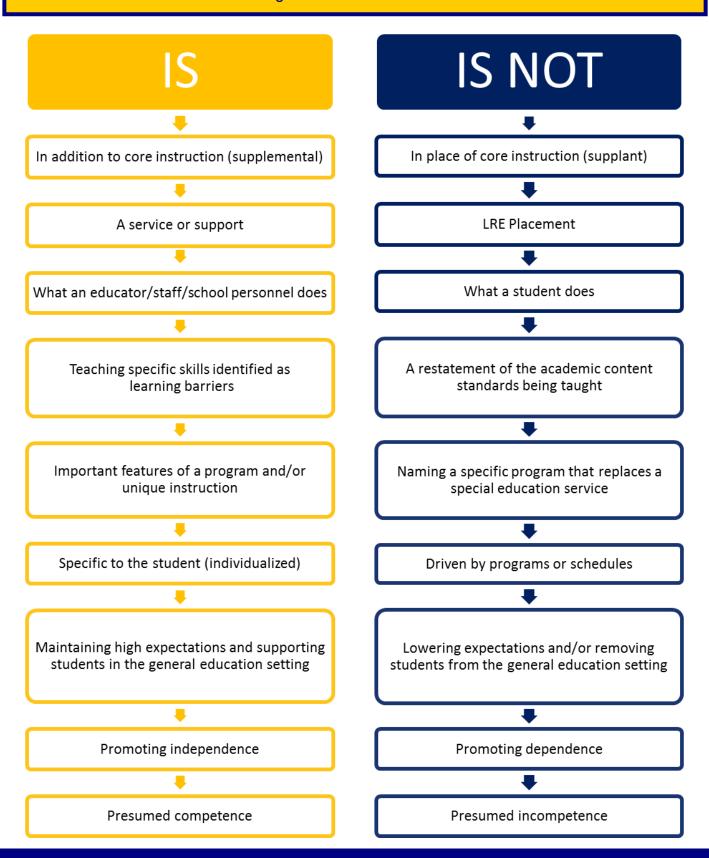
Aligned with SDI, Supplementary Aids and Services (SAS), and other supports that are provided in (1) general education classes; (2) other education-related settings; and (3) extracurricular and nonacademic settings enable students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with 511 IAC 7-42-10.

**Specially Designed Instruction**:
Adapting the content, methods and/or instructional delivery to address the unique needs of a student. SDI ensures access to grade level academic standards or content connectors.

| IS | IS NOT |
|---|---|
| In addition to core instruction (supplemental) | In place of core instruction (supplant) |
| A service or support | LRE Placement |
| What an educator/staff/school personnel does | What a student does |
| Teaching specific skills identified as learning barriers | A restatement of the academic content standards being taught |
| Important features of a program and/or unique instruction | Naming a specific program that replaces a special education service |
| Specific to the student (individualized) | Driven by programs or schedules |
| Maintaining high expectations and supporting students in the general education setting | Lowering expectations and/or removing students from the general education setting |
| Promoting independence | Promoting dependence |
| Presumed competence | Presumed incompetence |

**Many Supplementary Aids and Services are supported through Specially Designed Instruction. For example, in order for a student to access and use a supplementary aid independently, the student will need explicit instruction (SDI) in the use of the specific strategy or device. The intent is to provide levels of support until the student can access a supplementary aid independently (KDOE, 2017).**

| **Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)** Instructional practices the teacher uses | **Supplementary Aids and Services (SAS)** Aids or services the student uses |
|---|---|
| • Guided practice of listening strategies | • Visual prompts |
| • Scaffolded instruction, visual, written, verbal, physical, picture prompts and cues | • Visual, written, verbal, physical, picture prompts and cues |
| • Modeling | • Self-monitoring checklists |
| • Instruction of calming strategies | • Calming strategies |
| • Grapho-phonic strategies (visual/auditory) including letter/sound knowledge, phonemic awareness, de-coding | • Graphic organizers |
| | • Prompting and cueing |
| | • Recorded materials |
| • Explicit instruction on how to use a graphic organizer | • Extended time |
| | • Study guides |
| • Direct instruction and support for specialized software and equipment | • Magnifier |
| | • Copy of notes written on the board |
| • Explicit instruction in the writing process including prewriting activities, writing, revising, editing, and publishing | • Editing checklists |
| | • Cue cards with problem solving strategies, definitions, examples, models, flow chart, process steps |
| • Multi-sensory teaching strategies | • Modified tests/assignments |
| | • Graph paper |
| • Direct instruction in computation and reasoning strategies | • Calculator |
| | • Assistive technology |

# Strategies

The following strategies should be tailored to the individual needs of the student. The Specially Designed Instructional strategies provided are not an exhaustive or limiting list.

## Academic

- Phonemic awareness strategies, multi-sensory teaching strategies, modeling, instruction in the use of organizers, small group instruction, direct instruction, guided practice, word problem strategies

## Communication

- Auditory discrimination training, environmental prompts, social scripts, mirror training, guided responding, video self-modeling, system of least prompts, direct instruction, verbal/guided repetition, computer assisted instruction

## Physical (OT/PT)

- Hand over hand guidance, modeling, one-on-one instruction, instruction in the use of equipment or assistive technology, direct instruction and support

## Behavior

- Explicit social instructional skill instruction, relaxation strategies, de-escalation strategies, direct teaching of replacement behaviors

## Vocational

- Task analysis, differential reinforcement, direct instruction, verbal prompts/cues, graduated guidance, self-monitoring, corrective feedback/re-teaching

# Question and Answer

## Must "specially designed instruction" (SDI) be provided for the special education student solely by the special education teacher or can it be provided by the general education

Under IDEA "Specially Designed Instruction" (SDI) is a shared responsibility.

- A special education teacher has expertise in the area of specially designed instruction.
- A general education teacher has expertise in curriculum.
- A special education teacher and a general education teacher work collaboratively to plan, design and implement specially designed instruction for students whom they

## Can Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) be provided by a paraprofessional?

Paraprofessionals serve an important "supportive" role in providing SDI.

A paraprofessional acts under the direct guidance and supervision of a special education teacher or credentialed related service personnel. The following conditions must be in place:

- The general and/or special education teacher design and deliver core instruction and SDI for the student
- Adequate training is provided to the paraprofessional to support SDI (e.g., reinforcement/review of skills or concepts, data collection)
- On-going communication occurs between the paraprofessional and special education teacher or related service personnel

For example, paraprofessionals may provide the following

- Facilitate the use of assistive technology
- Lead a review of concepts
- Monitor student academic progress and/or behavior

A paraprofessional may not:

- Replace the special education teacher
- Plan, deliver, or lead initial instruction

# Question and Answer

## What does SDI look like for a student receiving consultation services?

A special education teacher and a general education teacher work collaboratively to plan, design and implement specially designed instruction for students whom they share responsibility. Consultation services may include collaboration on:

- Academic or behavioral needs of a student
- Specific instructional strategies or supports
- Modes of learning/communication
- Accommodations and assistive technology

## Where and when is Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) delivered?

- Any setting or time school-related activities occur
- To the maximum extent appropriate, with peers in the general education setting

## How is Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) delivered?

- Intentionally, directly, and highly structured
- Through customized changes to the content, methods and/or instructional delivery based on the student's needs

# Resources

**CAST** – Center for Applied Special Technology. http://www.cast.org/

**Council for Exceptional Children**. (2014, November/ December). Evidence-Based Special Education in the Context of Scarce Evidence-Based Practices: The Council for Exceptional Children's Interdivisional Research Group. Teaching Exceptional Children, 47, pp. 81-84.

**Indiana Department of Education** - https://www.doe.in.gov/specialed

**Indiana IEP Resource Center** - The IEPRC offers support for educators throughout Indiana to improve the IEP process in schools. https://www.indianaieprc.org/index.php

**Kentucky Department of Education**. (2014, February) IEP Lesson Plan and Development Handbook.  Retrieved October 2017.

**National Implementation Resource Network (NIRN)** - http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/

**NCAC** (n.d.). Differentiated Instruction and Implications for UDL Implementation: Effective classroom practices report. Retrieved October 2017, from  www.cast.org/udlcourse/DifferInstruct.doc

**PACER Center** (2015). School Accommodation and Modification Ideas for Students who Receive Special Education Services. Retrieved October, from http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c49a.pdf.

**PATINS Project**- Promoting Achievement through Technology and Instruction for all Students. http://www.patinsproject.com/

**Project Success** – Resource center that promotes higher academic achievement for individuals with disabilities.  http://www.projectsuccessindiana.com/

**SWIFT Center** - SWIFT is a national K-8 technical assistance center that builds school capacity to provide academic and behavioral support to improve outcomes for all students through equity-based inclusion. http://www.swiftschools.org/

# References

- **Article 7** - Title 511, Article 7. Indiana State Board of Education; 511 IAC 7

- **ESSA** (2015). Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-85.

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq*., (2004). https://sites.ed.gov/idea/

- **Kansas MTSS** (2017, July). Kansas State Department of Education Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports Integrated Framework Fact Sheet 2017. Retrieved October, 2017, from https://ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/1127/_2nd_MTSS_fact_sheet_with_resource_info.pdf.

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- **North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Exceptional Children Division**. (2016, April) Considerations for Specially Designed Instruction. Retrieved May 25, 2017, from http://nceln.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nceln.fpg.unc.edu/files/events/SDI%20Considerations%20April%202016.pdf