



ESE Program Information Sheet - Intellectual Disability (InD)

Definition: An Intellectual Disability is defined as significantly below average general intellectual and adaptive functioning manifested during the developmental period, with significant delays in academic skills. Developmental period refers to birth to eighteen (18) years of age.

Overview: Intellectual Disability (InD) term has changed over time most recently changing from a Cognitive Disability or Mental Retardation. These terms are no longer used in education. The essential elements of InD are a limitation in intellectual functioning or general mental capacity for learning and problem solving, early age onset occurring during a child's developmental period, and behavioral limitations in adapting to environmental demands such as conceptual skills (language/literacy, time, money, self-direction), social skills (interpersonal skills, self-esteem, ability to follow rules/laws, ability to avoid being victimized or taken advantage of), and practical skills (daily living & personal self-care, job skills, transportation needs, communication needs, finances).

State Laws and Regulations: The rule referenced below is specific to InD. Please refer to [Volume I-B: Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules, Excerpts Related to Exceptional Student Education](#) (PDF, 9MB) for a complete listing of laws and regulations applicable to exceptional student education.
[Rule 6A-6.03011, Florida Administrative Code \(F.A.C.\), Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](#) (Word)

General Resources: The following Resources will provide educators with information concerning Students who have an Intellectual Disability.

- [Technical Assistance Paper DPS 2009-014 – Questions and Answers: Rule 6A-6.03011, Florida Administrative Code \(F.A.C.\) Exceptional Student Eligibility for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](#) (PDF)
- [Measuring Adaptive Behavior - Important Information for Parents](#) (RTF, 80KB)
- [Inclusion - A Brief Summary](#) (PDF, 139KB)
- [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#) (PDF, 488KB)
- [Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities - Technical Assistance Paper and Participation Checklist](#) (PDF)
- [Memo: 1% Rule](#) (PDF)
- Technical Assistance Paper FY: 2007-4 - [Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Taking the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test® \(FCAT\)](#) (PDF, 398KB)
- Technical Assistance Paper DPS: 2010-24 - [Waiver of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test \(FCAT\) Graduation Requirement for Students with Disabilities](#) (PDF)
- [Transition Planning for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](#) (PDF, 3MB)
- [Access Points Material Review Manual](#) (PDF, 445KB)

National Resources:

- [American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Family Support Center on Disabilities: Knowledge and Involvement Network](#)

Tips to support inclusion: Although knowing the general characteristics of InD is helpful, teaching strategies for students with InD still need to be individualized. It is important for teachers to realize the wide range of abilities and characteristics students with InD may exhibit. Some general instructional strategies and supports are:

- Use short and simple directions & sentences to ensure understanding
- Ask student if clarification is needed & continuously assess understanding of task
- Minimize distractions and transitions
- Teach specific skills when needed
- Use explicit instruction
- Increase task difficulty over time
- Use concrete materials or visuals and models to show expected product/task
- Understand student may not be able to perform or complete a task that they completed previously
- Teach and encourage skills to help student diffuse frustration and anger
- Break tasks down into smaller chunks or provide breaks between tasks
- Provide immediate and explicit feedback
- Provide class notes in multiple formats – digital, paper, etc.
- Ask one question at a time
- Avoid complex words, vocabulary, or jargon
- Ensure that student has a way to communicate and express their needs
- Speak directly to the student and paraphrase what student needs
- Use Social Stories to assist student to understand and adapt to difficult situations
- Develop a procedure for student to ask questions
- Model desired behaviors
- Ensure that classroom rules and routines are consistent