

# CAREERTECH FAQ REGARDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

## FAQ

### Enrollment & Academic Credit

#### Can students who have IEPs earn academic credit toward high school graduation by completing technology center coursework?

According to the Oklahoma accreditation standards, students who have IEPs may receive academic credit toward high school graduation for technology center coursework, as long as the following conditions are met:

- State and federal legislation and policies are followed.
- The course is documented on the IEP.
- The specific competencies and/or skills required for the technology center program are documented on the IEP.

- A technology center representative is a full participant in the development of the IEP.
- The student's progress is monitored by the high school and the IEP team.

#### Can a technology center limit the enrollment of students with disabilities to certain programs?

No. To comply with federal and state laws and regulations, a technology center must allow individuals with disabilities to enroll in any program. According to the Oklahoma accreditation standards, students are enrolled in a technology center based on the following criteria:

- Documented interest.
- Ability to benefit from training.
- Work history.
- IEP provisions.
- Accommodation plans.
- Plans of study developed at the sending school or in cooperation with other agencies. After considering all of this information, a student's IEP team may conclude that a certain program is not appropriate for the student. If the student or parents disagree with the decision, they can request mediation or a due process hearing to resolve the issue.

#### Can a technology center refuse to enroll a student with a disability in a particular program because the student will be unable to master all of the program competencies and/or obtain paid employment in the field?

No. A technology center can expect to lose any case in which its only arguments against enrollment are that the student will not master all or even most program competencies and will be unable to obtain paid employment in that occupation. A hearing officer may deem a program appropriate for a student if the student can obtain even slight educational benefit.

### **If personnel from the technology center and the local school district have different opinions concerning the enrollment of a student in the technology center, who resolves the dispute?**

The student's IEP team will initially decide this issue by team consensus. If the technology center representative disagrees with the decision, he/she should sign paperwork to document his/her attendance at the meeting and mark disagree in the appropriate box. In addition, during or promptly after the meeting, the technology center representative should give the local school district a written statement identifying the points of disagreement.

If the team favors placement in a CareerTech program or makes another decision with which the technology center representative disagrees, the technology center must decide what to do:

- Implement the IEP despite disagreeing.
- Request mediation.
- Request a due process hearing to challenge the team's decision.

### **What happens when the local school district fails to notify the technology center that an enrolling student has an identified disability?**

Under the Standards for Accreditation of Oklahoma Schools, for a student to be legally enrolled, the technology center must receive a copy of the student's IEP before he/she arrives on campus. In addition, the technology center instructor must have access to a copy of the student's IEP before the student receives instruction. The teacher should also receive updated information promptly after each change in the IEP. When the local school district fails to notify the technology center in a timely manner that a student has a disability, it is not complying with federal and state laws and regulations. When the technology center becomes aware of the situation, it should ask the local school district to schedule an IEP team meeting promptly to discuss the student's enrollment, programming and placement. If the local school district fails to do so, the technology center should document its request in writing, and it may take the position that decisions made without its involvement are void and unenforceable.

If the local school district still fails to schedule an IEP team meeting, the technology center has an obligation to follow the process required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and should convene a team meeting to discuss the matter.

## **IEP Meetings**

### **What happens when the local school district fails to invite the technology center representative to attend the IEP meeting at which the team intends to discuss enrollment, programming, placement or accommodations at a technology center?**

The local school district's failure to invite a technology center representative when the team determines career and technology education enrollment, programming, placement or accommodations can lead to a void IEP that the technology center has no obligation to implement. Technology centers and local school districts should work closely together to establish efficient communication concerning IEP team meetings and the implementation of student IEPs.

### **Should the career and technology teacher attend his or her students' IEP meetings?**

Yes. A technology teacher or a technology center representative should attend every IEP team meeting at which the student's career and technology education program is to be discussed. If unable to attend the meeting, the career and technology teacher or representative should provide input in advance so that the team can fully discuss career and technology education issues. The teacher should be prepared to discuss how he or she provides instruction and handles behavior issues. The teacher should also be prepared to discuss how the student may participate successfully in the course.

### **When should a student's IEP be reviewed and/or amended if the student enrolls in a career and technology education program? What should the IEP team do at the meeting?**

The IEP team should meet before the student enters the career and technology education program. The team should review the student's current IEP and amend it to reflect appropriate information concerning the student's career and technology education enrollment.

The IEP must include the specific course for which the student will receive credit. The team may also include goals and objectives relevant to the student's participation in a particular career and technology education course; appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the student; supplementary aids and services; accommodations; and supports for personnel that will be provided for the student. The specific items included in the IEP depend upon the student's individual needs.

According to the standards for accreditation of Oklahoma schools, the IEP team must also document the specific competencies for the student's career and technology education program required for the course.

### **If the student's career and technology teacher does not attend the IEP meeting at which the team changes part of the student's career and technology education program, how will the teacher know what to do differently?**

All career and technology education personnel responsible for implementing a portion of the student's IEP must have access to the IEP and be promptly informed of their specific responsibilities. They must also know the specific accommodations and supports that must be provided to the student in accordance with the IEP. Each technology center or career and technology education teacher who implements a portion of a student's IEP should have a copy of the IEP and safeguard its confidentiality. When the career and technology teacher cannot attend the student's IEP team meeting, another career and technology education representative should attend. That representative can provide the teacher a copy of the new or amended IEP to review and explain the teacher's specific responsibilities under the IEP.

The student's special education teacher at the local school district can also provide that information to the career and technology teacher.

## **Student Progress**

### **What obligation does the technology center have to report student progress toward achieving IEP goals?**

Federal and state laws and regulations require local school districts to regularly inform the parents of the progress of a student with a disability toward his or her annual IEP goals as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled student's progress. The technology center should report student progress via report cards and/or progress reports for students with disabilities in the same manner and with the same frequency it reports progress for nondisabled students.

If the technology center serves a student with a disability who has one or more annual IEP goals related to CareerTech, the technology center should discuss with the local school district who will take responsibility for reporting progress, how often it will be reported and how it will be accomplished.

### **What should the technology center teacher do if the student is not making progress toward achieving competencies identified in the IEP or has increasing behavioral problems?**

The career and technology teacher should promptly contact the technology center's representatives who are responsible for IEPs and the student's teacher of record at the local school district for assistance and support.

Career and technology education personnel can request an IEP team meeting at any time to address any issue concerning the student's education, including behavioral concerns.

The technology center and the local school district must work together to address the concerns through the IEP team process.

## Resources

### Where can technology center personnel find disability resources?

Technology center resources for students with disabilities can be found on ODCTE's Career and Academic Connections webpage under Special Populations/Special Needs Resources.

<https://www.okcareertech.org/educators/career-and-academic-connections/special-populations-special-needs-resources>

## Support Services

### What responsibilities does the technology center have for a student's licensure? Must the technology center arrange accommodations for any licensing exams the student takes?

The technology center should offer the same support for all students in the licensure process. It is not required to arrange accommodations, but should give students with disabilities and their parents information about potential accommodations for licensing examinations and a list of resources they can contact for assistance.

### Who has the responsibility to pay for support services if a student's IEP/504 team determines that such support is necessary for the student to participate in a technology center program?

There is no definitive answer to this question. The IEP/504 team should discuss and try to resolve the issue. If it cannot do so or if one person or group disagrees with the consensus of the team, mediation or a due process hearing may be requested to resolve the dispute.

## Assistance

For more assistance and information regarding educating students with disabilities at technology centers, contact the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education disabilities services specialist at 405-743-5596.

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