



## **Rigorous Reading Requirement for Students with Disabilities Questions and Answers**

### **Elementary**

**1. Do *all* elementary students with disabilities scoring level 1 or level 2 on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) reading need to receive 90 minutes of reading instruction daily?**

Yes. Through the K-12 Comprehensive Research-Based Reading Plan, *all* students in grades K-5 are required to receive 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically based reading instruction. This requirement also includes students who are exempted from the FCAT. However, for students who have significant cognitive impairments, the individual educational plan (IEP) team may determine that other instruction, such as language acquisition or other pre reading skills, is more appropriate for the student during the 90-minute reading block. All students must be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the student reads on grade level.

**2. Can an IEP team make the decision to decrease the 90-minute reading requirement in elementary school for a student with disabilities?**

No. All students in grades K-5 are required to receive 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically based reading instruction.

**3. Can the 90-minute uninterrupted reading block in elementary school be divided between settings (i.e., a general education setting and an ESE resource setting)?**

No. At this time, the uninterrupted reading block must take place in the same setting throughout the entire 90 minutes. Schools are encouraged to include all students in the general education setting for the 90-minute reading block. An ESE teacher or a speech/language pathologist (SLP) may provide services in accordance with the IEP in the general education setting during the reading block. The ESE teacher or the SLP is not required to remain in the general education setting for the entire 90-minute reading block. An IEP team may determine that a student should receive the entire 90-minute reading block in an ESE setting. Students may also receive the 90-minute reading block in the general education setting and receive additional instructional time in the ESE setting.

**4. Are ESE teachers considered highly qualified to teach reading in the elementary grades if they do not have the reading endorsement or reading certification?**

It has been determined that a teacher who has certification in an appropriate Exceptional Student Education (K-12) area to match the ESE table in the Course Code Directory and is teaching reading to ESE students in grades K-6 is not required to have the reading endorsement or reading certification. This includes sixth grade in an elementary or middle school. Additional information relating to the required certification for teaching reading to exceptional education students was provided in a memorandum dated June 15, 2004, and may be viewed at <http://info.fldoe.org/dscgi/ds.py/Get/File-2132/04-129.pdf>.

## Middle and High School

### **5. Are ESE teachers who teach reading in grades 7-12 required to have the reading endorsement or reading certification?**

Yes. In order to be considered highly qualified, they must earn a reading endorsement or reading certification by June 30, 2006. According to the course code directory, it is required for the following ESE courses: #7810020, #7910100, # 7910400.

### **6. How many minutes of intensive reading instruction are required for students in grades 6-12?**

The number of minutes of reading instruction in middle and high schools may vary according to the district's K-12 comprehensive reading plan and course schedules, such as traditional or block scheduling.

### **7. Can an IEP team make the decision to decrease the reading requirement in middle and high school for students with disabilities?**

No. The amount of time students are scheduled into a reading class must be congruent with the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Plan. The IEP team may determine that the student's functioning level is not appropriate for the intensive reading course, or that other instruction is more essential for the student. The IEP team may determine that other instruction, such as language acquisition or applied functional reading in a community, vocational, or work setting, is more appropriate for the student. This instruction may occur in an ESE reading course per the course code directory (#7810020, #7910100, #7910400) or could be addressed in another ESE course.

All students must be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met; the student graduates from high school, or is no longer subject to compulsory school attendance and has chosen to withdraw from school. [Section 1008.25 (4)(c), Florida Statutes]

### **8. Can an IEP team make the decision to waive the requirement for an intensive reading remediation class so that a student with disabilities may take another elective?**

No. The district K-12 comprehensive reading plan applies. Students with disabilities scoring level 1 or level 2 on the FCAT reading portion (or working below grade level if FCAT scores are unavailable) are required to receive intensive reading instruction. Within the confines of the district K-12 comprehensive reading plan, flexibility is allowable for secondary students scoring level 2 in that they may receive the reading instruction in a content area class with a teacher who is either reading endorsed or currently working toward the reading endorsement. All students must be provided with remedial or supplemental instruction until the expectations are met, the student graduates from high school, or is no longer subject to compulsory school attendance and has chosen to withdraw from school. [Section 1008.25 (4)(c), Florida Statutes] For further information about scheduling for middle and high school students, refer to the memorandum dated October 28, 2005, regarding K-12 comprehensive reading plans and intensive courses at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-3350/crpmemo.pdf>.