



Amanda

Amanda has a behavioral impairment that makes it extremely difficult for her to work in group settings. Several years ago she could not be in class with other students, but her parents and the district have worked with her so that now she is fine working in a general education classroom - as long as all of the work is individual. She acts out and disrupts the class when she is asked to move into group activities. Amanda loves to read and to write and can be very successful in ELA when she is allowed to work alone. Amanda's parents and her teachers are concerned that the new English Language Arts curriculum includes several mandatory group activities in all four grades. What can she do?

Problem Areas

- CE 1.3.7** Participate collaboratively and productively in groups (e.g., response groups, work teams, discussion groups, and committees)—fulfilling roles and responsibilities, posing relevant questions, giving and following instructions, acknowledging and building on ideas and contributions of others to answer questions or to solve problems, and offering dissent courteously.
- CE 1.3.8** Evaluate own and others' effectiveness in group discussions and formal presentations (e.g., considering accuracy, relevance, clarity, and delivery; types of arguments used; and relationships among purpose, audience, and content).
- CE 2.1.11** Demonstrate appropriate social skills of audience, group discussion, or work team behavior by listening attentively and with civility to the ideas of others, gaining the floor in respectful ways, posing appropriate questions, and tolerating ambiguity and lack of consensus.
- CE 3.2.4** Respond by participating actively and appropriately in small and large group discussions about literature (e.g., posing questions, listening to others, contributing ideas, reflecting on and revising initial responses).

What we did:

Amanda's parents came in to talk to her counselor and the school social worker about options that Amanda might have. As they reviewed the PC information they determined that there were only a few content expectations in the ELA curriculum that would cause Amanda a problem. Amanda's history of intervention work demonstrated that every effort had been made to integrate Amanda safely into the classroom environment. The district's policy is that 5b applies to both general and special education students, therefore Amanda's Personal Curriculum committee decided to remove the content expectations that would be problematic. Before they eliminated the expectations entirely, the PC committee asked the English Department Chair, Mr. Browning, to review the problematic CEs and see if they could be easily isolated within the curriculum and removed. Mr. Browning expressed concern that these CEs would likely be integrated into larger courses of study and may even be the final project for a unit. Eliminating these standards for Amanda

would severely restrict her ability to participate in the class effectively. However, Mr. Browning felt that CE 1.3.7 and CE 2.1.11 could be entirely eliminated and the remaining CEs could be modified for Amanda without losing the integrity of the curriculum.

Amanda's Revised Content Expectations

- ~~CE 1.3.7 Participate collaboratively and productively in groups (e.g., response groups, work teams, discussion groups, and committees)—fulfilling roles and responsibilities, posing relevant questions, giving and following instructions, acknowledging and building on ideas and contributions of others to answer questions or to solve problems, and offering dissent courteously.~~
- CE 1.3.8 Evaluate own and others' effectiveness in group discussions and formal presentations (e.g., considering accuracy, relevance, clarity, and delivery; types of arguments used; and relationships among purpose, audience, and content).
- ~~CE 2.1.11 Demonstrate appropriate social skills of audience, group discussion, or work team behavior by listening attentively and with civility to the ideas of others, gaining the floor in respectful ways, posing appropriate questions, and tolerating ambiguity and lack of consensus.~~
- CE 3.2.4 Respond by participating actively and appropriately in small and large group discussions about literature (e.g., posing questions, listening to others, contributing ideas, reflecting on and revising initial responses).