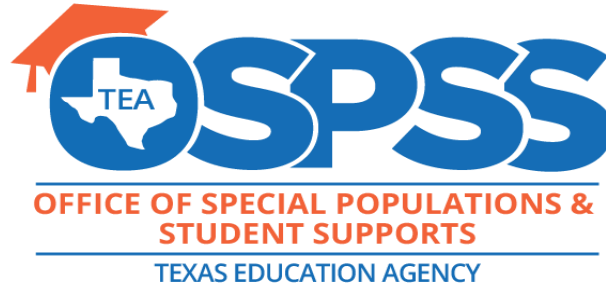


A photograph of a female teacher with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a white t-shirt, sitting on the floor and reading a book to two young students. The students are also sitting on the floor, looking at the book. They are in a classroom setting with bookshelves filled with books and blue storage bins in the background. The image is slightly faded to allow the text to be prominent.

Understanding the Autism Supplement



Nathan Pullen
State Autism Coordinator

Agenda



Texas Administrative Code



Strategy Meanings



Strategy Considerations



Additional Considerations



Resources

Autism Supplement Guidance Document

Available on Texas SPED Support
Website

[Spedsupport.tea.texas.gov](https://spedsupport.tea.texas.gov)

- Questions and answers
- Best Practice Tips
- Key Points
- IEP Examples

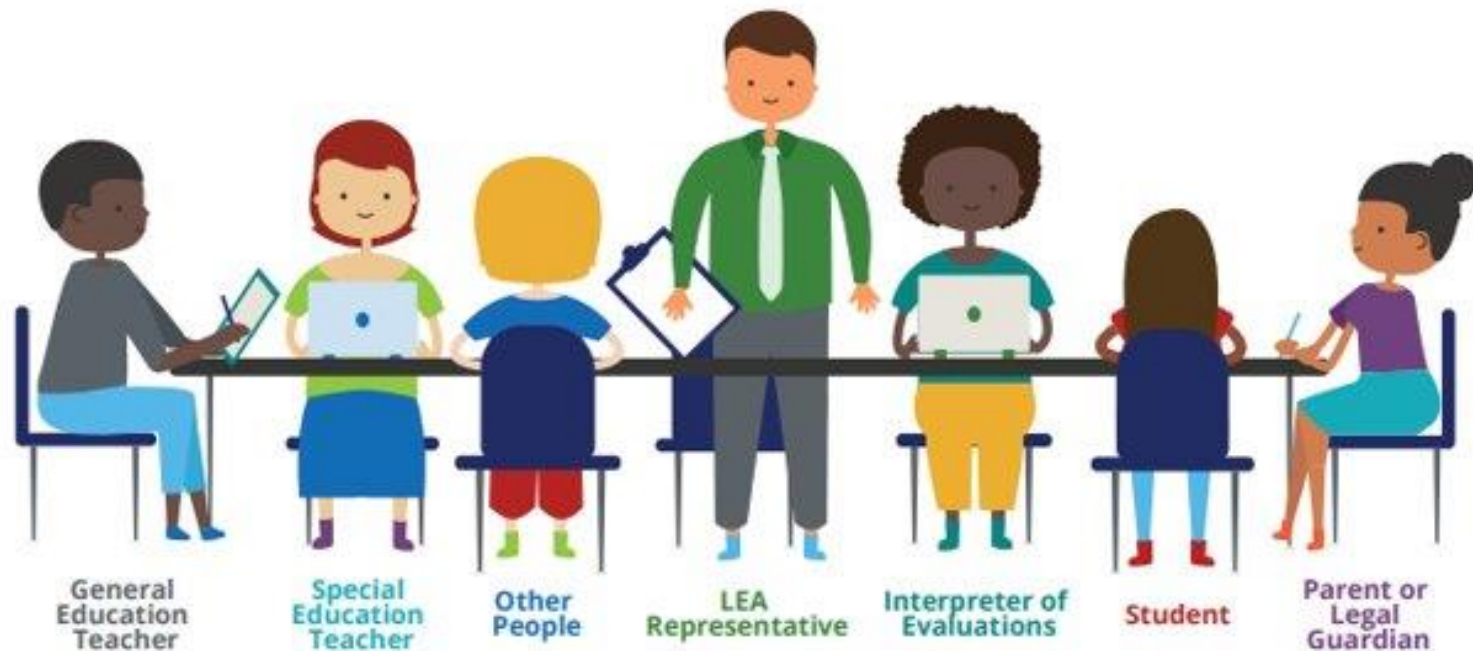
Autism Supplement Guidance Document

Questions and Answers, Key Points, and Examples to Help
Implement the Commissioner's Rule Related to Autism



TAC §89.1055(g)

For students eligible under §89.1040(c)(1)(Autism) of this title (relating to Eligibility Criteria), the strategies described in paragraphs (1)-(11) of this subsection shall be considered, based on peer-reviewed, research-based educational programming practices to the extent practicable and, when needed, addressed in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Key Points



Part of the IEP, not a separate document



Based on data from a variety of sources



Identifies current, unique needs of the individual student



All 11 strategies must be considered at least annually

A large crowd of graduates in caps and gowns is gathered in front of a large, multi-story university building. The graduates are wearing black caps and gowns with orange stoles. The building has a classical facade with many windows and a central entrance with columns. The scene is outdoors, and the sky is overcast.

Autism Supplement Strategies

Strategy #1: Extended Educational Programming

What it means: Does my student need additional programming outside of the typical hours or days of the school year? This may include:

- Extended day services- extra instruction or support before or after regular school hours
- Extended school year (ESY) services: instruction provided during the summer or other breaks to maintain skills



Extended Educational Programming - Considerations

- Multiple Data Sources: Decisions must be based on data from a variety of sources
- Functional communication system: if a student uses alternative or assistive communication, they may need more time to develop these systems
- Beyond academics:
 - Behavior
 - Social Skills
 - Communication
 - Self-help skills

Strategy #2: Daily Schedules

What it means: Does my student need a daily schedule to keep actively engaged in learning activities and reduce unstructured time during the school day?



Daily Schedules - Considerations

- **Engagement** means active involvement.
- Unstructured times are time periods that do not have instructional expectations or a defined routine for behavior.
- The format of the schedule should be **individualized**.
- An individualized schedule can be **implemented at the same time as the whole-class schedule**.

Strategy #3: In-home and Community-Based Training

What it means: Does my student need support at home or in the community to help them use important skills—like social, behavior, communication, or self-care?



In-Home/Community Training or Viable Alternatives – Considerations

- Viable alternatives may include, but are not limited to:
 - Working with daycares, respite care, foster families, siblings, or grandparents
 - Parent observations at school
 - Making a video of the teacher working with the student
 - Making a video of the child demonstrating the skills
 - Visual supports for the home
- This strategy may be used to address a student's academic learning needs and/or reinforce social behavior skills in a variety of settings outside of the school community.

Strategy #4: Positive Behavior Supports

What it means: Does your student need positive strategies—like changing what happens before a behavior, teaching better ways to respond, and using reinforcement?

This could mean help with behavior in the:

- Home
- School
- Community



Positive Behavior Support - Considerations

- There are no one-size-fits-all strategies for supporting the behavior needs of students with autism.
- A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) can help determine the function(s) of behavior, and function-based interventions are most effective with targeted behaviors.

Strategy #5: Futures Planning

What it means: Is it time to start planning for your student's future—learning, working, living, and being part of the community—by helping them build important skills now?



Futures Planning - Considerations

- Focus on a student's life and *their* vision for the future.
- Futures planning involves participation from family, caregivers, friends, and the student.
- Futures planning is **not** the same as transition planning (required at age 14).
- Futures planning begins as soon as the student enters the school system at any age.

Strategy #6: Parent/Family Training and Support

What it means: Does your family need training or support to help your student succeed at home and in the community?

This could include:

- learning strategies for behavior
- finding helpful resources like workshops or support groups
- using school-based techniques at home for consistency

Parent and Family Training - Considerations

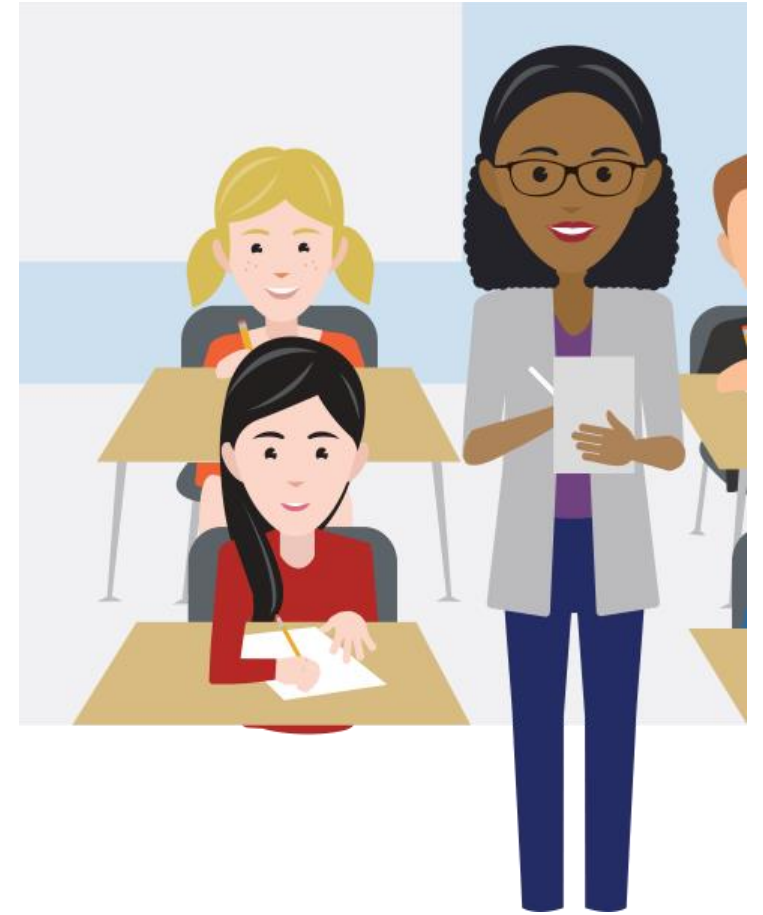
- Training should focus on the generalization of IEP-related skills.
- Training can include areas such as behavior management, interpersonal skills, communication, and/or how to create structured environments across all settings.
- A school should provide information regarding local resources available to parents/families of students with autism.
- Parent training and support may be provided in a variety of formats including, but not limited to, group training, individual training, and providing resources.

Strategy #7: Staff to Student Ratio

What it means: Does your student need an increased staff-to-student ratio to support their learning and behavior across different school settings and activities?

This could mean different ratios for:

- Learning a new skill
- Becoming more fluent in a skill
- Maintaining a skill over time
- Generalizing a skill

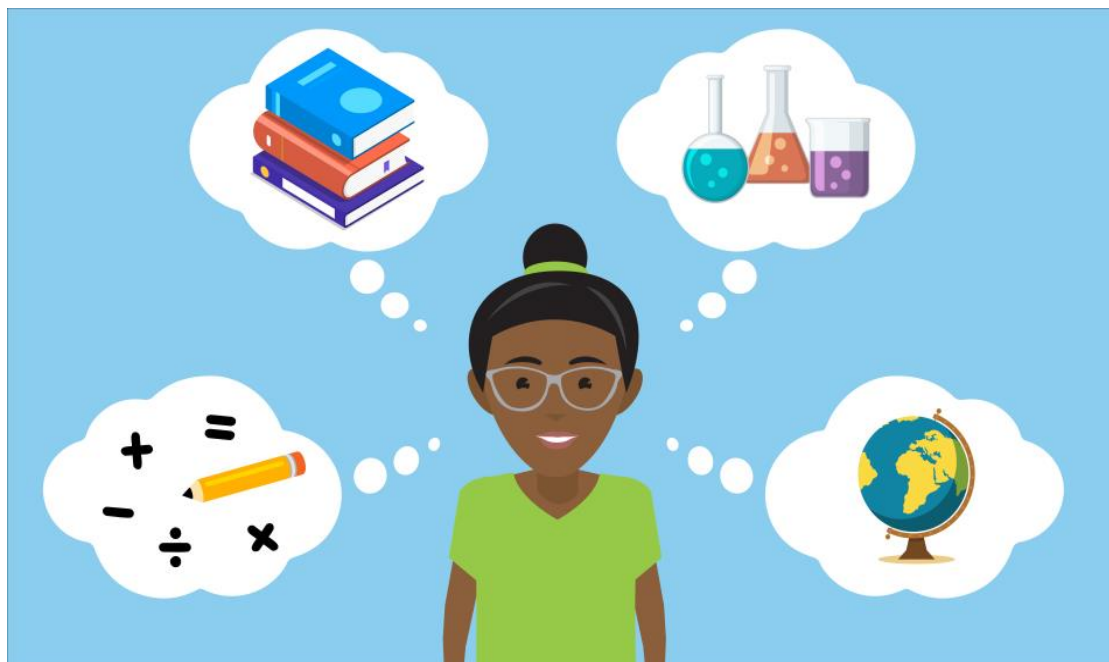


Staff to Student Ratio - Considerations

- Review the student's current daily schedule and levels of learning for each skill or objective. Consider settings, demands, and other influencing factors.
- Address the staff-to-student ratios that are appropriate for each part of the student's day.
- Maintain and prioritize the goal of increased independence. Consider the setting, communication abilities, and social skills, behavioral skills, and adaptive behavior.

Strategy #8: Communication Interventions

What it means: Does your student need communication support—like different ways to express themselves and understand others—that works across all settings such as home, school, and the community?



Communication Interventions - Considerations

- Consider a student's style of learning and the portability of a communication strategy.
- Parents/guardians, siblings, and peers are encouraged to use the student's methods of communication in all settings.
- Teachers and other staff should consult a speech language pathologist (SLP) and use the suggested interventions with the student throughout the school day.

Strategy #9: Social Skills Support and Strategies

What it means: Does your student need additional support to learn and use social skills across different settings?

Strategies may include:

- Peer interaction
- Video modeling
- Social narratives
- Role playing



Social Skills Supports and Strategies - Considerations

- The decision about what strategies and supports to implement should be individualized for each student and their unique needs.
- Social behavior occurs in all environments and may be unique to certain environments.
- Teachers, speech-language pathologists, related service providers, and any other persons routinely interacting with the student in the school setting can provide supports.

Strategy #10: Professional Educator/Staff Support

What it means: Does your student need school staff to receive additional training so they can effectively use the strategies and techniques described in your student's IEP?



Professional Educator/Staff Support – Considerations

- Any school personnel who work with a student with autism may need training to ensure the implementation of techniques and strategies described in the IEP.
- All required training completed by any school personnel involved with a student with autism should be documented.
- Schools are responsible for training teachers and paraprofessionals to effectively implement programs for students with autism.
- Training may include a foundation of evidence-based practices.

Strategy #11: Teaching Strategies

What it means: Does your student need specific teaching strategies that are based on peer reviewed research proven to work for students with autism?

This may include, among other strategies:

- Visual supports
- Structured learning
- Social skills training
- Discrete-trial teaching
- Augmentative communication



Teaching Strategies - Considerations

- Strategies listed in this rule are among the many available instructional options an ARD committee may consider when developing an IEP.
- It is the responsibility of an ARD committee to make decisions regarding the appropriateness of strategies based on the unique needs of an individual student.
- There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to providing services to students with autism.

When A Strategy Is Not Needed

- If the ARD committee determines that one or more of the 11 strategies are not needed, the IEP must include a statement that:
 - identifies the strategies not needed,
 - explains why the strategy is not needed, and
 - describes what information was used to determine the decision

Key Takeaways

- The Autism Supplement is part of the IEP.
- ARD committees must consider all strategies *at least annually*.
- Document how strategies will be implemented.
- Base decisions on current data and the unique needs of the student.
- Document the basis for the determination if a strategy is not needed.



Texas SPED Support Resources

- [Autism Supplement Guidance Document](#)
- [Evidence-Based Practices for Autism](#)
- [Autism Toolkit](#)
- [Strategies in Action Video Collection](#)
- [Show Me Video Collection](#)