

Rockin' With Region 4



A Quick Review: The History Behind the Final Regulations for IDEA 2004

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Welcome back! School Year 2006 – 2007 is officially here and, by now, you have settled into a regular routine with your students. There are a few changes that are coming soon in Virginia, particularly due to the fact that on August 14th 2006, the U.S. Department of Education released the final regulations for Part B of the IDEA 2004. What does this mean for you and your students? How will Virginia revise the state's special education regulations to ensure compliance with IDEA 2004?

The history of special education in our country has certainly evolved over the past few decades. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the federal law that protects the rights of children with disabilities to receive special education services. IDEA began as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, or Public Law 94-142, in 1975. It has been updated about every five years, the latest of which is the 2004 reauthorization. This has been done in an effort to improve services based on what we continue to discover about research-based best practice in education. Not only does the knowledge base about best practice evolve, but the educational community often finds that there are areas of the law that require clarification for appropriate interpretation. The new regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education on August 14th are needed to implement changes made to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. The Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia will soon reflect the final regulations for IDEA 2004. The revision process will take approximately 18 months; information on Virginia's Regulatory Process framework and timeline can be accessed at the Virginia Department of Education web site: <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/dueproclregulationsCWD.html>.

It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of the IDEA remains the same – equal access to education for all students. To achieve this goal, IDEA seeks to:

- ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living;
- ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected;
- assist States, localities, educational service agencies, and Federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities;
- assist States in the implementation of a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families;
- ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting system improvement activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and support; and technology development and media services; and
- assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

IDEA is divided into four sections, Parts A - D.

- Part A defines the terms used in the law.
- Part B gives money to states to provide services for eligible children and youth with disabilities,

including the rules and regulations that states and school systems must follow to receive funds from the federal government. This section outlines:

- o evaluating children and determining eligibility for services
 - o notifying and involving parents
 - o working with parents to write IEPs
 - o providing services; and
 - o resolving conflicts between parents and the school system.
- Part C is the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities. Services that may be included in this program are family training, counseling, home visits, speech-language services, occupational therapy and physical therapy.
 - Part D helps state education departments and other agencies improve how they work with children and youth with disabilities. This section provides information and research that informs professional practitioners and families, including:
 - o teacher education
 - o operation of parent training and information (PTI) centers
 - o identification of best practices and promising practices
 - o development of technologies; and
 - o public dissemination of information.

There are some notable changes to the IDEA 2004 regulations. For example, in the past, schools have been required to wait until a child fell considerably behind grade level before finding them eligible for special education services. Now, with the release of the final regulations of IDEA 2004, school districts are no longer required to follow this discrepancy model, but are allowed to find other ways to determine when a child needs extra help. New implications for teacher qualifications and special education services in private schools are also addressed in the document. The full report, released on August 14th 2006, is published in the

Federal Register. It will become official 60 days from the release date.

To read the IDEA 2004 Final Federal Regulations, go to the following web site and click on Regulations:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/special/guid/idea/idea2004.html>

The USDOE web site also offers further information and resources related to the implementation of IDEA 2004.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) will be conducting IDEA 2004 Regulations workshops and seminars. Presenters will be Deborah Ziegler, CEC Associate Executive Director for Public Policy, and Daniel Blair, CEC Senior Director for Public Policy. One of the scheduled workshops will take place in Washington, D.C.

To find out more, go to: www.cec.sped.org

Additional web sites for information are:

Wrightslaw

IDEA 2004 Regulations: Summary of Major Changes

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/idea/law/idea.regs.sumry.chngs.pdf>

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

<http://www.nichcy.org>

Click on News You Can Use to find information on IDEA.

AND - Don't forget that you may always contact the VDOE Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC) at George Mason University for the latest and greatest information on what is happening in Virginia related to IDEA 2004. We are always available to help you. There will be trainings and workshops going on locally, regionally, and state-wide. Check on TTAC Online to see what is available in your area of special education.

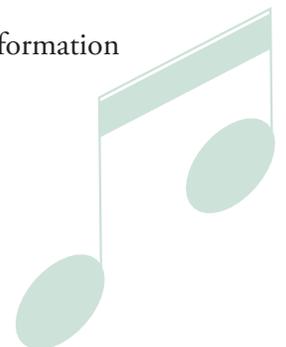
VDOE TTAC at GMU Contact Information

<http://ttac.gmu.org>

Phone number: 703-993-4496

T/TAC Online

www.ttaconline.org





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Transforming Learning Using Interactive Boards



“Educators around the world are adopting SMART Board interactive whiteboards because of their positive impact on student engagement and teachers’ preparation time,” says Nancy Knowlton, SMART Board president and co-CEO. “An important part of that impact comes from teachers’ ability to integrate relevant digital learning materials into their planned lessons and spontaneously during class. SMART Board software 9.5 offers the flexibility teachers need when developing materials for student-centered, inquiry-based lessons.”

Why should we consider investing in this technology?

- 1) It is a tool which can be used across curricular areas at every grade level. Its use encourages participation. Younger children are particularly keen to participate. They like to be in front of the class to show what they can do without hesitation and tend to stay focused for longer periods of time.
- 2) Students with special needs can use the board with just their fingers, using pointers to control

the board or just to write on it. When fine motor skills are an issue related to a student’s disability, they can drag and drop objects with a simple touch.

- 3) Being connected to the internet allows students to create communities of learning and become global learners at a very early age.
- 4) Smart Solutions has developed a screen surface with a special hard coat polyester cover that reduces glare from projectors and increases durability. Students can use a pointer to click without damaging the surface.

Teachers tell us how difficult it is to integrate new technologies and balance the school’s budget; yet, there are many schools that are already integrating interactive boards in their classrooms. As with any new tool, teachers face the challenge of using interactive boards in the most effective manner to meet the varying learning needs for all their students.

First of all, teachers should consider which model of interactive board will offer the best opportunities for instruction in their classroom. Learning occurs when children are fully engaged in an activity, and thus, the following details around this special tool must be thoughtfully considered:

Should there be:

- one board per classroom?
- one board for school-wide use in the school’s computer lab?
- a rear projection board that is installed on the wall?
- a portable board that can be moved and shared between several classrooms?

When funds are limited, there is always an opportunity to write a grant (www.smarterkids.org) and receive financial support from local organizations, such as Rotary International.

No matter which interactive board the school selects, it is important to seek training for all teachers, computer lab instructors and personnel involved in academic activities. It is also recommended to keep in touch with the dealer or company where the board is purchased. They constantly offer training workshops which teachers can attend for free. Another source for training is

www.smarttech.com where you can download training materials as well as ideas for developing lessons aligned with academic standards.

What are the models I can chose from?

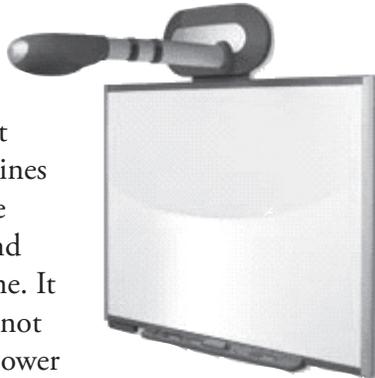
Interactive Boards in the 600 Series are called “front projection” and can be table or roller mounted. The 640 model can be easily transported in a foamed special bag.



“In-Wall Rear Projection” SMART Board has an all-in-one solution that includes a complete projection system or a screen-only model that works with your own projector and mirror setup. The cost of these projection solutions is much higher than the “front projection” ones.



The latest projection solution from Smart Technologies is the Smart Board 600i, which combines 2 products: an interactive board with a projector and an audio system, all in one. It must be mounted and is not portable. The projector power and volume are controlled from the pen tray and a connection panel allows you to connect a VCR, camera, DVD player, or other peripherals besides your computer.



No matter what model you chose, you will be able to create and prepare lesson plans using Smart Board Interactive Board software. Students can review lessons and do homework at home using the same software program. Both students and teachers can use The Gallery to share and access thousands of Smart lesson activities, integrate video and audio, or attach a web page, a document, or another presentation to their own work.

Interactive boards have the power to transform teaching and learning, allow teachers to present their information in multiple ways, while allowing students to express themselves in multiple ways. With an interactive board in your classroom, you are offering a vast array of resources to your students. You have, in fact, facilitated an environment in your classroom based on universal design for learning.

For further information, please go to the following sites:

<http://education.smarttech.com/st/en-US/>

<http://eduscapes.com/sessions/smartboard/>

