



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

August 24, 2016

TO Superintendents
Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Directors, Curriculum and Instruction
Test Coordinators, LEAs and Charter Schools

FROM Maria Pitre-Martin, Ph.D. 

STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES AND MATHEMATICS SEQUENCE EXEMPTION IN THE FUTURE-READY COURSE OF STUDY

General Statute 115C-81b states:

“The State Board shall not adopt or enforce any rule that requires Algebra I as a graduation standard or as a requirement for a high school diploma for a student whose individualized education program (i) identifies the student as learning disabled in the area of mathematics and (ii) states that this learning disability will prevent the student from mastering Algebra I.”
As noted in General Statute 115C-81b, **the individualized education program (IEP) must state that the specific learning disability (SLD) in the area of mathematics will prevent the student from mastering Algebra I (now interpreted as NC Math 1 per memo dated 12/16/13).** With this statute, these students are not required to pass NC Math 1 *to meet state graduation requirements.*

The IEP team decision regarding the application of this statute through documentation in the IEP could occur at different times during the academic career of a student with an SLD in the area of mathematics. The attached considerations are provided to local education agencies (LEAs) and IEP teams in determining whether an SLD will **prevent** the student from **mastering NC Math 1.**

If you have additional questions, please contact Lynne Loeser at lynne.loeser@dpi.nc.gov or Matt Hoskins at matt.hoskins@dpi.nc.gov.

MPM/tb

c Tammy Howard, Director, Accountability Services
William J. Hussey, Director, Exceptional Children Division
Tiffany Perkins, Director, K-12 Curriculum and Instruction
Jennifer Curtis, Section Chief, K-12 Mathematics

ACADEMIC AND DIGITAL LEARNING

Maria Pitre-Martin, Ph.D., *Chief Academic and Digital Learning Officer* | maria.pitre-martin@dpi.nc.gov
6307 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6307 | (919) 807-3759 | Fax (919) 807-4065

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The IEP team decision regarding the application of this statute through documentation in the IEP could occur at different times during the academic career of a student with an SLD in the area of mathematics. The following required considerations are provided to local education agencies (LEAs) and IEP teams in determining whether an SLD will **prevent** the student from **mastering NC Math 1**:

Situation A: Prior to taking the NC Math 1 course (in rare cases):

- The IEP team shall conduct a comprehensive review of historical and current data to inform the decision of whether the SLD in the area of mathematics will prevent the student from mastering NC Math 1.
 - The review of data *must* include (but is not limited to):
 - the transition plan and post-secondary goals of the student, progress monitoring of IEP goals, grades, formal and informal formative assessments, and EOG scores.
 - The review of data *may* include:
 - progress monitoring of general outcome goals, local benchmarks, results from norm-referenced standardized achievement tests, universal screening data, and/or formal/informal diagnostic assessments.
- Before this determination, the IEP team must confirm and document the following on the Prior Written Notice, in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) of the IEP, and on the *Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet*:
 - Evidence that the student has had current and historical access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics. This evidence must include (but is not limited to):
 - Attendance records (including disciplinary removals), review of lesson plans for a description of specially designed instruction in math, frequency and duration of IEP service delivery and math supports, and present levels of performance.
 - A preponderance of evidence indicates that the SLD in the area of mathematics has resulted in a lack of foundational mathematics knowledge and skills that would prevent the student from mastering NC Math 1 content despite the implementation of accommodations, modifications, *and* specially designed instruction in math provided by the IEP.
 - Evidence of the above must strongly support the case that the decision is **not restricting the student's access to the NC Math 1 course**.

Situation B: After taking the NC Math 1 course and prior to placement in the NC Math 2 course (Most students with an SLD in the area of mathematics **should have the opportunity** to take the NC Math 1 course with the appropriate accommodations, modifications, and specially designed instruction provided by the IEP):

- The IEP team shall conduct a comprehensive review of historical and current data to inform the decision of whether the SLD in the area of mathematics has prevented the student from mastering NC Math 1 content.
 - The review of data *must* include (but is not limited to):
 - The transition plan and post-secondary goals of the student, progress monitoring of IEP goals, progress monitoring of general outcome goals in mathematics, grades, local benchmarks, formal and informal formative assessments, and EOG scores.
 - The review of data *may* include:
 - results from norm-referenced standardized achievement tests, universal screening data, and/or formal/informal diagnostic assessments.
- Before this determination, the IEP team must confirm and document the following on the Prior Written Notice, in the PLAAFP of the IEP, and on the *Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet*:
 - Evidence that the student has had current and historical access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics. This evidence must include (but is not limited to):
 - Attendance records, review of lesson plans for specially-designed instruction, frequency and duration of IEP service delivery and math supports, and present levels of performance.
 - That a preponderance of evidence indicates that the disability has resulted in lack of knowledge and skills that prevented the student from mastering NC Math 1 content despite the implementation of accommodations, modifications, *and* specially designed instruction provided by the IEP.
 - Evidence of the above must strongly support the case that the decision is **not restricting the student's access to the NC Math 1 or NC Math 2 course.**

Situation C: After taking the NC Math 2 course. (This could be applied in situations in which after completion of the NC Math 1 course, the IEP team was **unable to determine** whether (a) the student demonstrated mastery of the NC Math 1 content **AND** (b) a preponderance of evidence indicated that the disability resulted in lack of knowledge and skills that prevented the student from mastering NC Math 1 content to a level that enables successful completion of the NC Math 1 and NC Math 2 course sequence. The student's performance in NC Math 2 may be considered by the IEP team as an additional data source in the determination of mastery of NC Math 1 content, because NC Math 1 is foundational to the content of NC Math 2 and other higher level courses.

The IEP team shall conduct a comprehensive review of historical and current data to inform the decision of whether the SLD in the area of mathematics has prevented the student from mastering NC Math 1 content, subsequently preventing success in the NC Math 2 course.

- The review of data *must* include (but is not limited to):
 - The transition plan and post-secondary goals of the student, progress monitoring of IEP goals, progress monitoring of general outcome goals in mathematics, grades, local benchmarks, formal and informal formative assessments, and EOG scores.

- The review of data *may* include:
 - results from norm-referenced standardized achievement tests, universal screening data, and/or formal/informal diagnostic assessments.
- Before this determination, the IEP team must confirm and document the following on the Prior Written Notice, in the PLAAFP of the IEP, and on the *Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet*:
 - Evidence that the student has had current and historical access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics. This evidence must include (but is not limited to):
 - Attendance records, review of lesson plans for specially designed instruction, frequency and duration of IEP service delivery and math supports, and present levels of performance.
 - That a preponderance of evidence indicates that the disability has resulted in lack of knowledge and skills that prevented the student from mastering NC Math 1 content despite the implementation of accommodations, modifications, and specially designed instruction provided by the IEP.
 - Evidence of the above must strongly support the case that the decision is **not restricting the student's access to higher level math courses**.

Once an IEP team has determined that a student has demonstrated mastery of the NC Math 1 course, the statute no longer applies. The determination of mastery is made by the student's IEP team when the summary of evidence indicates that a student has demonstrated mastery of the **content of the course**. The determination of mastery is not hinged upon a single source of data, such as a final grade or EOC score. If a student is determined to have demonstrated mastery of the NC Math 1 course, the math course options would then include: (a) the usual sequence **or** (b) exemption by the school principal from the usual sequence and the substitution of two math courses. Both of these options require the completion of the NC Math 1 and NC Math 2 course as a graduation requirement.

In addition to the above situations, the factors below should be considered by the LEA and IEP teams:

- A student's IEP may have a primary area of eligibility other than SLD, yet the student could still have an SLD in the area of mathematics as a secondary area of eligibility and meet the criteria for exemption. This secondary disability must be addressed through the evaluation, eligibility, and IEP processes.¹ The IEP team must document the primary disability and the secondary disability of SLD in the area of mathematics on the Prior Written Notice and on the SLD eligibility worksheet.
- LEAs should, at least annually, review data to determine the number and prevalence of students who are exempt from NC Math 1. Analysis of data through systematic problem solving should occur to determine needed changes in instruction, curriculum, or environment to support students with specific learning disabilities in math.

¹ In rare instances, a student may be found eligible under the disability category of multiple disabilities, having two co-occurring disabilities, one of which is an SLD in the area of math.

- Students receiving this exemption must still earn four mathematics credits. Decisions on course selections for individual students are made at the local level.
- Each student's course selections should be guided by his or her post-secondary goals, as defined in his or her IEP.
- In instances in which the exemption is considered, it should be stated clearly to the parent *and* student that, although the student may graduate with a North Carolina high school diploma, he/she will likely experience difficulty meeting criteria for admission into four-year colleges and universities in the University of North Carolina system, as well as community colleges.

Keep in mind the majority of students with disabilities will participate fully in the Future Ready Core Course of Study with appropriate accommodations described in their IEP. This guidance only pertains to those students who have been identified as having an SLD in the area of mathematics, and whose learning disability will prevent them from **mastering** NC Math 1.

If you have additional questions, please contact Lynne Loeser at lynne.loeser@dpi.nc.gov or Matt Hoskins at matt.hoskins@dpi.nc.gov.

North Carolina General Statute 115C-81b
Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence
Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet

Meeting Date:	
Demographic Information:	
Student Name:	ID Number:
DOB:	Grade:
LEA:	School:

- This review was conducted prior to the student taking the Math I course.
- This review was conducted after taking the NC Math 1 course and prior to placement in the NC Math 2 course.
- This review was conducted after taking the NC Math 2 course.

NOTE: Once a student demonstrates mastery of the NC Math 1 course, the statute no longer applies.

- A. IEP documentation that the student has a primary or secondary eligibility as Specific Learning Disability (SLD) in the area of mathematics.¹

Date of IEP documentation	
---------------------------	--

If current documentation of an SLD in mathematics does not exist, then General Statute 115C-81b does *not* apply. The remainder of this worksheet is not applicable.

- B. A comprehensive review of historical and current data to inform the decision of whether the SLD in the area of mathematics will prevent the student from mastering NC Math 1.

Required Data Sources	Summary of Evidence
Transition plan and post-secondary goals	
Progress monitoring of IEP goals	
Grades (including grades in NC Math 1 and NC Math 2 if applicable)	
Formal and informal formative assessments	
EOG scores	
Other:	

¹ In rare instances, a student may be found eligible under the disability category of multiple disabilities, having two co-occurring disabilities, one of which is an SLD in the area of mathematics.

**North Carolina General Statute 115C-81b
Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence
Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet**

Other:	
Other:	

C. Evidence that the student has had current and historical access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics.

Required Evidence	Summary of Evidence
Attendance records (including disciplinary removals)	
Review of lesson plans describing specially designed instruction in math	
Present levels of performance	
Intensity, frequency and delivery of IEP services	
Intensity, frequency and duration of math supports	
Other:	
Other:	

Does the IEP team find that the student has had current and historical access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics?

Yes No*

*NOTE: If the determination is *no*, problem solving must occur to identify needed actions to address the delivery of core, supplemental and intensive instruction to ensure the student has had access to high quality and scientifically research-based instruction in mathematics.

Does the IEP team find that the student's SLD in the area of mathematics prevented mastery of the NC Math 1 course?

Yes No

North Carolina General Statute 115C-81b
Students with Specific Learning Disabilities and Mathematics Sequence
Exemption for High School Graduation Worksheet

D. IEP team decision regarding application of NC General Statute 115C-81b:

A preponderance of evidence indicates the SLD in the area of mathematics has resulted in a lack of foundational mathematics knowledge and skills that will prevent the student from the mastery of Math I content despite the implementation of accommodations, modifications, and specially-designed instruction provided by the IEP. The evidence strongly supports the case that the decision **will not restrict the student's access to NC Math 1, NC Math 2, or other higher level mathematics courses**. The student will be exempt from NC Math 1 as a graduation requirement and a four-course mathematics sequence from the list of approved courses will be constructed.

The IEP team has determined that the culmination of evidence indicates that the student has demonstrated mastery of the **content of the course**. The determination of mastery was made based on **multiple sources of data** in addition to the final grade and EOC score. The student will not be exempt from NC Math 1 as a graduation requirement and will (a) complete the usual mathematics sequence **or** (b) be exempt by the school principal from the usual sequence and substitute two math courses. Both of these options require the completion of the Math 1 and Math 2 course as a graduation requirement.

E. If the determination has been made that the student will be exempt from NC Math 1 as a graduation requirement:

The parent *and* student have been informed that, although the student may graduate with a North Carolina high school diploma, he/she will likely experience difficulty meeting criteria for admission to four-year colleges and universities in the University of North Carolina system, as well as community colleges.