

## Specialized Academic Instruction (Final)

This paper was prepared by the Special Education Division, California Department of Education, in response to a request for guidance from the Advisory Commission on Special Education (ACSE).

Question	Answer and Description
What is specialized academic instruction (SAI)?	<p>SAI is a way of delivering instructional services to students with disabilities (SWDs).</p> <p>SAI is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An instructional delivery model, NOT a program.</li> <li>2. Used to describe instructional services on the Individualized Education Program (IEP).</li> </ol>
Who is implementing or using the SAI designation on IEPs?	Some districts in California are using the SAI designation on IEPs.
Do the California <i>Education Code (EC)</i> and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) support the SAI designation?	<p>The definition of SAI comes from the IDEA federal regulations (August 2006). See Federal Register/Vol. 71, No. 156/Monday, August 14, 2006/Rules and Regulations, page 46761.  <a href="http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-3/081406a.pdf">http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-3/081406a.pdf</a></p> <p><u>"Specialized Academic Instruction"</u>: Adapting, as appropriate to the needs of the child with a disability the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children. (<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>, Title 34, Section 300.39(b)(3))</p> <p>SAI is interchangeable with "Specially Designed Instruction" in the federal regulations.</p>
Where did the term SAI originate?	<p>The term SAI originated in federal law and regulation (see above).</p> <p>In the 2006-07 school year, the California Department of Education (CDE) added the SAI designation to its data collection system known as CASEMIS.</p> <p>In CASEMIS, the SAI data field describes the instructional time a student is removed from the regular</p>

	<p>class of less than 21 or more than 60 percent of the school day. This reporting requirement does not reflect the appropriate programs that may be designed to meet individual students' needs, such as a resource specialist program (RSP) or a special day class.</p> <p>In 2008-09, the CDE saw an increase in districts using the SAI designation.</p>
Is SAI a CDE-supported service delivery model?	The SAI designation is used by the CDE in its data collection system known as CASEMIS to describe an instructional delivery model.
Who is instructing districts to implement SAI?	Districts have the local option of using the SAI designation to describe an instructional delivery model.
Can a district collapse the Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and move all of these students to general education to receive SAI from general and special education teachers?	<p>Some service delivery issues and guidance are given in the memorandum from Jack O'Connell, dated March 27, 2009 located at the CDE Web page <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/sspiofclmem.asp">http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/sspiofclmem.asp</a>.</p> <p>"In a desire to close the achievement gap and meet federal and state requirements, many districts and schools are implementing the latest research-based practices that ensure students are successful in school. As a means to effectively utilize personnel, some special education teachers are being asked to instruct students with and without an Individualized Education Program (IEP). If there are changes occurring in the manner of how instructional programs are delivered, including special education services, it is necessary that these practices remain compliant with federal and state laws and regulations. This letter provides clarification about delivering services to students with disabilities and how to effectively implement laws and regulations to meet compliance requirements."</p> <p>Flexible Service Delivery Models: All students with disabilities receive special education services within one or more of the following collaborative models depending on their need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With consultative/collaborative support in a general education classroom</li> <li>• In a co-teaching model</li> <li>• In a school wide intervention model</li> <li>• In core with supplemental special education support model</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In intensive core program served by a qualified specialist</li> <li>• Intensive special education support in more than one core area</li> </ul>
Is it legal for districts to not provide a full continuum of services as defined by IDEA and remove the RSPs, change RSP teacher titles to Specialized Academic Instructors, and no longer have the RSP caseload protection of 28?	<p>A full continuum of service is required by the IDEA and California <i>EC</i>.</p> <p>30 <i>EC</i> 56360 - Continuum of Program Options; Availability</p> <p>56360. Each special education local plan area shall ensure that a <b>continuum</b> of program options is available to meet the needs of individuals with exceptional needs for special education and related services, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.) and federal regulations relating thereto.</p> <p><b>Note: <i>EC</i> 56360 does not specify what is to be included in the continuum.</b> Rather, the variety and range of curricular choices to ensure that a continuum of program options is available are local determinations.</p> <p>For Resource Specialist Programs, alleged violations of the caseload limit of 28, falls under the CDE's authority for investigating compliance violations.</p>
Can districts direct educators and IEP teams to change student IEPs (blanket fashion) to SAI?	Decisions of an IEP team are based on the individual needs of the student. The SAI designation may be used on an IEP to describe an instructional delivery model that provides the frequency, duration, and intensity of services required for the maximum educational benefit.
If a district is planning to make instructional changes to service delivery for students with IEPs, the following information should be considered:	<p>Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teachers must meet some specifics (<i>EC</i> Section 56362):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RSP teacher's caseload cannot exceed 28 students who have IEPs: instructional aides and pupil enrollment requirements remain the same.</li> <li>• An RSP teacher cannot be <b>simultaneously assigned</b> to serve as a resource specialist <b>and</b> as a general education teacher.</li> </ul>

## Collaborative Special Education Practices

<p><b>Consultative Support Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student receives <b>instruction in the general education</b> classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student <b>does not receive direct instruction</b> from the <b>special educator</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special educator works with general education teacher</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides resources, training and support</li> <li>• Instructs the student and teacher on appropriate accommodations and assistive technology</li> <li>• May not have frequent contact with the student</li> <li>• Frequently monitors student progress</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Friend &amp; Cook, 2007</p>	<p><b>Collaborative Support Models</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student receives <b>core instruction in the general education</b> classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student <b>may receive some instruction</b> from the <b>special educator</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special educator works with general education teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing support with materials and strategies</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special educator <b>may provide supplemental or other direct instruction</b> to support the core in a variety of settings</li> </ul> <p>Friend &amp; Cook, 2007</p>
<p><b>Co-teaching Support Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special educator and general educator working together</b> in the same classroom to deliver instruction to a blended group of students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Both teachers provide instruction</b> utilizing a variety of models <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parallel teaching</li> <li>• Station teaching</li> <li>• Team teaching</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Co-teaching <b>does not need to occur every day</b>, but occurs regularly</li> </ul>	<p><b>School-Wide Intervention Models</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Refers to settings that <b>serve students who are below grade level in academic skills</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>May include “at risk” general education students and special education students</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> General educators, special educators and other specialist <b>provide instruction in the school-wide intervention model</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Supplemental Support Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special education students receive core content instruction within the general education classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>In addition to core instruction</b>, may receive supplemental support from special education teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the <b>general education setting</b></li> <li>• In a <b>special education setting</b></li> <li>• In a <b>“strategic” class</b> in an RtI framework</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Intensive Special Education Support Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Special education students receive <b>intensive intervention instruction</b> from the special education teacher in a core area</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students are included in general education core content instruction whenever appropriate (<b>Least Restrictive Environment</b>)</li> </ul>