
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE: **ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**



Alternative pathways to a diploma under Act 833 (2014) and the pathway for students assessed on Louisiana Alternate Assessment Level 1 (LAA 1) give students with disabilities opportunities to earn a high school diploma and develop and demonstrate skills necessary for successful post-secondary experiences. Effective local implementation of these alternative pathways is critical to student success. This guide will support administrators of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with developing local policies and procedures for implementing alternative pathways to a diploma for students with disabilities.

Consistent policies and procedures will help principals and teachers fully implement these opportunities and support all students in their pursuit of a diploma and post-secondary success. LEA administrators should create concrete, reliable procedures throughout their district that outline expectations for:

- › Identifying eligible students
- › Planning appropriate experiences
- › Applying individual performance criteria to courses

FOCUS 1:

IDENTIFYING ELIGIBLE STUDENTS



For students to benefit from the opportunities available to them, and for educators to know how to appropriately plan for students, **all students with disabilities with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), except those identified as gifted and talented, must be considered and appropriately identified for alternative pathways to a diploma.** LEA administrators should implement policies and procedures which facilitate appropriate and timely student identification.

Administrators should consider the following when creating policies and procedures:

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	RESOURCES
<p>Define a process for determining eligibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Which individuals in each school will be responsible for identifying potentially eligible students?› When should student eligibility be determined? (at the end of 8th grade or beginning of 9th grade)› How often will student eligibility be examined? (after each EOC assessment)› What is the process for reviewing data and what tools will be used to determine eligibility? <p>Ensure all students are properly identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› How will eligibility be monitored at the LEA and school building level to ensure all students are examined for eligibility?	<p>Alternative Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Special Education Guidance for High School Students› ACT 833 Series Graduation Webinar› Pathway to a Career Diploma for Students Assessed on LAA1 Webinar <p>Student Eligibility/Identification Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› LAA 1 Eligibility Criteria› Act 833 FAQ on Graduation› SER Report: The “Act 833 Identification Report” identifies students determined eligible or ineligible for Act 833.› The Assessment Warehouse: Historical assessment information at your fingertips including EOC, LEAP, iLEAP, Dibels, etc! <p>Coming soon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Determining Eligibility for Alternative Pathway to a High School Diploma: FAQ› Determining Eligibility for Alternative Pathways to a High School Diploma: Student Examples

FOCUS 2:

PLANNING APPROPRIATE EXPERIENCES

After a student has been identified as eligible for an alternative pathway, IEP teams must determine the most appropriate route or course of study that will lead to a diploma. The course of study should be based on student interests, strengths, and needs. LEA administrators should define policies and procedures for assisting educators and IEP teams in making appropriate pathway planning decisions for students.



Administrators should consider the following when defining a process for creating a student's course of study:

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	RESOURCES
<p>Define a process for determining students interests, strengths, and needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› What tools are used to assess student career interest?› Who is responsible for conducting career assessments?› When are career assessments administered? <p>Define a process for identifying and implementing pathways for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› What courses and Jump Start Pathways are available in the LEA/school?› What training and tools will be used to guide students in selecting pathways that will lead to a diploma and future success?	<p>Planning Pathways for Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Planning Appropriate High School Experiences for Act 833 Eligible Students› Planning Appropriate High School Experiences for Students Assessed on LAA1 on an Alternate Diploma Pathway› All Things Jump Start› A Pathway for Every Student Guidance <p>Identifying and Implementing Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Special Education Course Codes for Students Assessed on LAA1› Teachers Toolbox: Professional Development Resources from LADOE› Louisiana's Guidebooks› National Technical Assistance Center on Transition› Jump Start Industry Credentials for Students with Disabilities› Jump Start Students with Disabilities Implementation Guidance

FOCUS 3:

DEVELOPING AND APPLYING INDIVIDUALIZED PERFORMANCE CRITERIA TO COURSES (ACT 833)



Act 833 (2014) provides for the application of individual performance criteria for courses as appropriate. Individual performance criteria allows students to demonstrate proficiency of course standards through an alternate means and is established by the IEP team. LEA administrators should develop local policies and procedures to support IEP teams in developing, implementing, and documenting successful completion of individual performance criteria.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	RESOURCES
<p>Define procedures for developing, implementing, and documenting successful completion of individual performance criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› How are personnel (e.g., IEP team members, school counselors, general educators, administrative personnel, and parents) trained in Act 833 individual performance criteria expectations (e.g., decision making, IEP documentation)?› What is the communication structure for sharing individual performance criteria for specific courses?› Who is responsible for tracking student progress throughout the school year? What procedures will be established for the IEP team to make adjustments to performance criteria if appropriate?› How is successful completion of individual performance criteria communicated and documented?	<p>Developing Individual Performance Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Curriculum and Instruction Materials› Assessment Guidance and Materials› Act 833 Individual Performance Criteria Guidance <p>Documenting Individual Performance Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› SER Report: The “Act 833 Application Report”: Identifies students that have individualized performance applied as well as where the criteria is being applied. <p>Coming soon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Creating performance criteria: FAQ› Creating performance criteria: Case Study