

## **Student Degree of Support – Frequently Asked Questions**

**This questionnaire was developed to assist local educational agencies (LEAs) in meeting their reporting requirements for the Student Degree of Support field for students with disabilities in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). Student Degree of Support will be a required data element for the Fall 1 Submission in CALPADS beginning with the 2025-26 academic year.**

### **Which students with disabilities require population of the Student Degree of Support field?**

The Student Degree of Support field is only required to be populated for students on **Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)** in grades Transitional Kindergarten (TK) through 12 identified with the following primary or secondary disabilities:

- Intellectual Disability (ID)
- Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- Emotional Disability (ED)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Deaf-blindness (DB)
- Multiple Disabilities (MD)
- Autism (AUT)
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

This questionnaire is only applicable to the students described above.

### **Why is the Student Degree of Support collected?**

For students with certain primary and secondary disabilities that are served in special education settings identified in CALPADS with an Instructional Strategy Code of 700 – Special Education (scheduled classes where ALL students in the classroom are students with disabilities [SWD] and the curriculum was specifically designed for SWD), the Student Degree of Support is collected to assist the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) in determining whether the teacher of record assigned to the course has the appropriate credential and authorizations to teach the students in the class based on:

- Primary and secondary disability; and
- The student support needs required to implement the student's IEP.

These assignment determinations are made in the California State Assignment Accountability System's (CalSAAS) annual monitoring process.

The CTC's Authorization for Special Education Settings can be found at the following web page: <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/calsaas-information/Appropriate-credentials-for-SPED>

### **What are the definitions of Mild Moderate Support Needs and Extensive Support Needs?**

In reporting the Student Degree of Support, the options are Mild Moderate Support Needs or Extensive Support Needs. The definitions of Mild Moderate Support Needs and Extensive Support Needs are taken directly from the Authorization Statements for each of these credentials as determined by the CTC.

Definition of Mild to Moderate Support Needs for use in Authorization Statement:

Mild to Moderate Support Needs includes providing specially designed instruction to access grade level California Content Standards in the Least Restrictive Environment. The education specialist **provides instruction** and supports in **one or more** of the following domains: academics, communication, gross/fine motor, social-emotional, behavioral, vocational, and learning environment access skills. **The supports may also include** health, movement and sensory support. Mild to Moderate Support Needs practices may include lower student to educator ratio.

Definition of Extensive Support Needs for use in the Authorization Statement:

Extensive Support Needs include providing specially designed instruction to access grade level California Content Standards in the Least Restrictive Environment. The education specialist **provides intensive instruction** and supports **in two or more** of the following domains: academics, communication, gross/fine motor, social-emotional, behavioral, vocational and adaptive/daily living skills. **The supports also often include** health, movement and sensory support. Extensive Support Needs practices include lower student to educator ratio.

### **Which staff are responsible for identifying the Student Degree of Support?**

Each LEA should determine which staff are responsible for identifying the Student Degree of Support. Input should be gathered from special education staff, including members of the IEP team and the special education student data coordinator, and

these staff should utilize information from the student's IEP document to make these determinations.

**Is the Student Degree of Support part of the IEP document?**

No. These data are captured in the student data section of local special education data systems but are not part of the legal IEP document. Although these data are not captured in the IEP document, data from the student's IEP will be necessary to make these determinations for each student.

## Student Degree of Support Identification – Guiding Questions

1. Is the student on an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?
  - a. If yes, *go to question 2.*
  - b. If no, **STOP, this questionnaire ONLY applies to students on IEPs.**
  
2. Is the student's grade level Transitional Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade (including adult-age students with disabilities in transition programs)?
  - a. If yes, *go to question 3.*
  - b. If no, **STOP. This questionnaire does not apply to students with grade levels of Infant (IN), Prekindergarten (PS), or Adult (AD).**
  
3. Is the student's primary OR secondary disability one of the following?
  - Intellectual Disability (ID)
  - Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
  - Emotional Disability (ED)
  - Other Health Impairment (OHI)
  - Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
  - Deaf-blindness (DB)
  - Multiple Disabilities (MD)
  - Autism (AUT)
  - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
  - a. If yes, *go to question 4.*
  - b. If no, **STOP. This questionnaire only applies to students with the primary or secondary disabilities identified above.**
  
4. Is the student's primary OR secondary disability 300 – Deaf-blindness?
  - a. If no, *go to question 5.*
  - b. If yes, **STOP. The student's degree of support should be ESN – Extensive Support Needs.** Students with a primary disability of deaf-blindness can only be taught by an educator with one of the following credential authorizations:

Education Specialist Instruction Credential:

- Extensive Support Needs (R3EN)1
- Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (R3HD or R3DH)
- Visual Impairments (R3VB or R3VI)

- Moderate/Severe Disabilities (R3MS)  
Education Specialist Added Authorization:
    - Deaf-Blind (AADB)  
Education Specialist Bridge Document:
      - Extensive Support Needs (R3BE)1
5. Is the student eligible to take the California Alternate Assessments (Cal Alt and Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California [ELPAC])? (**Generally** students taking the alternate assessments will require ESN.)
- a. If no, then go to question 6.
  - b. **If yes, STOP. The Student Degree of Support will likely be ESN – Extensive Support Needs.**
6. If unable to determine degree of support using a specific disability or statewide assessments, consider all domains for which the student requires support in their IEP goals based on their primary and secondary disabilities. Mark all that apply:
- a. academics
  - b. communication
  - c. gross/fine motor
  - d. social-emotional
  - e. behavioral
  - f. vocational
  - g. learning environment access skills
  - h. adaptive/daily living skills
  - i. health support
  - j. movement support
  - k. sensory support
7. Does the student require INTENSIVE instruction and supports in two or more of the domains above?
- a. **If yes, the Student Degree of Support is ESN – Extensive Support Needs**
  - b. **If no, the Student Degree of Support is MMSN – Mild Moderate Support Needs**