



**College of Education and Human Development  
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Summer 2024

EDSE 669: Individualized Supports and Specialized Care of Students with Severe Disabilities

Section: D01; CRN: 40915

Section: 6U1; CRN: 43566

Section: 6Y1; CRN: 43570

Section: 679; CRN: 43626

3 – Credits

<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Alexandra Raines	<b>Meeting Dates:</b> 5/13/24 – 7/12/24
<b>Phone:</b> See Blackboard	<b>Meeting Day(s):</b> N/A
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<b>Office Hours:</b> By appointment	<b>Meeting Location:</b> N/A; Online
<b>Office Location:</b> 203B	<b>Other Phone:</b> N/A

**Note:** This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

**Prerequisite(s):**

None

**Co-requisite(s):**

None

**Course Description**

Focuses on the unique physical, sensory, communication, and health and medical needs of students with severe disabilities. Examines how these needs impact the educational program, how special education and related services are delivered, and how to design academic, functional and behavioral instruction and adaptations to meet those needs.

**Course Overview**

EDSE 669 provides an understanding and application of service delivery for students with severe disabilities and their unique care needs, including: the ability to identify the physical, sensory, communication, and health and medical needs of students with severe disabilities, and understand how these needs impact the educational program; and understanding of the roles and

responsibilities of related services and support staff working in a collaborative setting and the process and procedures related to initiating a related service request; and knowledge of instruction that blends and incorporates academic, functional, communication, and behavioral goals and objectives, while integrating positioning, self-help, feeding, grooming, sensory, and toileting programs into the instructional delivery.

### **Advising Contact Information**

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or [speced@gmu.edu](mailto:speced@gmu.edu) for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

### **Advising Tip**

Mason email is the primary method of communication used by university offices. Check your Mason email regularly: <http://mso365.gmu.edu/>.

### **Course Delivery Method**

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before [@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:@masonlive.gmu.edu)) and email password. The course site will be available on Monday, May 13, 2024.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

### ***Technical Requirements***

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [Browser support](#)

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support))

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - [Adobe Acrobat Reader](https://get.adobe.com/reader/): <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - [Windows Media Player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player): <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
  - [Apple Quick Time Player](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/): [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### ***Expectations***

- **Course Week:**  
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on [Monday], and finish on [Monday]. Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:**  
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week.
- **Participation:**  
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**  
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**  
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**  
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**  
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the

instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- **Netiquette:**  
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- **Accommodations:**  
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

### **Learner Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, teacher candidates/students will be able to:

1. Describe the impact of the unique physical, sensory, communication, and health and medical needs of students with significant disabilities on development, academics, behavior, and social interaction and engagement.
2. Discuss the role muscle tone plays in the positioning and handling of students and familiarity with common positioning equipment used in the classroom.
3. Identify common medical diagnoses and medical terms associated with students with significant disabilities, and the specialized health care interventions that may be required.
4. Identify the roles and responsibilities of related and support staff working in a collaborative setting and the process and procedures related to initiating a related service report.
5. Read and understand evaluation reports written by medical and therapy professionals in order to understand and communicate their impact on the student's functioning in school and community settings and to determine the need for medical and related services as part of the IEP for students with severe disabilities.
6. Discuss and evaluate the range of augmentative and alternative communication devices and systems/assistive technology available for individuals with severe disabilities and identify an appropriate communication strategy or system based on the needs of the individual student.
7. Discuss typical physical and sensory development of children and apply this knowledge to develop adapted learning experiences, environments, and equipment for students with significant disabilities with atypical physical and sensory development and functioning.
8. Write educationally relevant IEP goals and objectives that address individual physical, sensory, communication, and/or medical needs and that also enhance academic success and develop lesson plans that blend and incorporate the academic, functional, communication, and behavioral goals and objectives, while integrating positioning, self-care, self-management, feeding, grooming, sensory, and toileting programs into the instructional delivery.
9. Design physical or sensory management plans that incorporate positioning and handling

strategies and assistive technology.

10. Identify and use evidence-based strategies for instruction and adaptations to address physical, sensory, communication, and health and medical needs.

### **Professional Standards**

(Council for Exceptional Children [CEC] and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium [InTASC]). Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: CEC Standard 1: Learner development and individual differences (InTASC 1,2); CEC Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge (InTASC 4,5); CEC Standard 4: Assessment (InTASC 6) & CEC Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies (InTASC 7,8).

### **Required Texts**

Articles as assigned in each module.

### **Recommended Texts**

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

### **Required Resources**

Articles as assigned in each module.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

### **VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement**

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDSE course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL.

For EDSE 669, the required PBA is Physical Management Plan with Assistive Technology. Please check to verify your ability to upload to VIA/SLL before the PBA due date.

### **Assignments and/or Examinations**

**Performance-based Assessment  
(VIA submission required)**

The performance-based VIA assignment is the Physical Management Plan with Assistive Technology. Please refer to *course assignments* for assignment details.

**College Wide Common Assessment  
(VIA submission required)**

N/A

**Other Assignments**

- Physical Management Plan: (100 points).

For this assignment, students will select one of the case study students who has a severe or multiple disabilities including physical, sensory and/or medical needs. Students will

1. Write a detailed description of this student by gathering information from the case study packet and from careful observation of video footage.
2. Determine a functional goal for this individual.
3. Describe the type of Assistive technology needed to support this goal and how it will be used by the individual.
4. Establish how the laws and case laws support these individuals' rights to the educational opportunities that will allow them to obtain this goal.
5. Describe how this functional goal will improve this student's ability to participate across environments and in the educational opportunities presented to them.

- Weekly Modules (11 modules x 30 points each = 330 points)

Each week on Monday morning at 9:00 am a new module will open. Each module will consist of recorded lectures, readings and graded activities to complete.

**Assignment Summary**

Assignment	Due Date	Points possible
Weekly Module 1- 11	Mondays by 11:59pm	330 (30 per module)
Physical Management Plan		100
Total Points Possible		430

**Student Evaluations of Teaching:**

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

**Course Policies and Expectations**

**Attendance/Participation**

Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and

participating in course discussions and group interactions. Grading for work completed in *Learning Modules* is specifically outlined in *Weekly Learning Modules* within the Other Assignments section of the syllabus. Please note that while only certain learning elements are assessed through “grades”, the instructor can still assess student involvement and engagement using other measures. Blackboard enables the instructor to view such data as login dates, duration of time spent online, access to specific content elements, and more. The instructor will use this data along with course grades to ensure that students are actively engaged in the course. Students struggling to complete work on time or who appear to not be engaging fully with course content will be asked to conference with the instructor.

**Late Work**

All activities and assignments should be submitted through Blackboard by 11:59pm on the dates indicated.

In fairness to students who make the effort to submit assignments on time, there will be progressive cost reduction per day for late work within each learning module. Work that is submitted one day late will receive a 10% cost reduction per day up to 4 days. Any late work submitted after 4 days will receive a grade of a 0%.

*One-time Extension:* The instructor recognizes that unexpected challenges may arise during the semester and, therefore, will allow students to request a one-time extension that they can apply to one Weekly Learning Module (Modules 1-13 only). Students must request the extension by completing the *One time Extension Request* found on Blackboard prior to the original due date; requests made after 11:59pm on the specified due date will not be honored. Students do not need to receive confirmation from the instructor to assume they have received the extension; it will be automatic as long as it is the first request. The deadline for extended work will be Saturday at midnight instead of the specified Tuesday at 11:59pm for the specific learning module. All extensions will be tracked in the Blackboard gradebook.

**Grading**

93-100% = A	87-89% = B+	70-79% = C
90-92% = A-	80-86% = B	< 70% = F

**\*Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site](https://oai.gmu.edu/) (<https://oai.gmu.edu/>) and [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

## Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/). Professional dispositions are an essential function of a special educator’s job, indicating that these dispositions are critical to develop and assess in special education licensure programs. In the College of Education and Human Development, dispositions are formally and separately evaluated in at least three points in each student’s program – a self-evaluation at the start of their program, a self-evaluation at the mid-point of their program, and a university supervisor’s evaluation during internship. In special education graduate licensure programs, the initial self-evaluation is completed in a designated course (EDSE 501), the mid-point self-evaluation is completed in designated courses (EDSE 627, EDSE 661, and EDSE 616), and the internship evaluation is completed by instructors in EDSE 783, EDSE 784, and EDSE 785. In addition to these three designated evaluation times, instructors may complete instructor-rated disposition assessments other times throughout the program. When dispositions are assessed, it is important that for areas where a positive disposition is rated as “not proficient,” the student takes steps to grow as an educator.

## Class Schedule

\*Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Module Available</b>	<b>Module Topic</b>	<b>Module Due</b>	<b>Additional Assignments Due NOT Mondays</b>
1 & 2	5/13	Course Overview Quality of Life Alternative  Reading and Using Research	5/20	
3	5/20	Motor Development Common Medical Terminology	5/27	
4	5/27	Muscle tone, reflexes & postural adjustment	6/3	
5 & 6	6/3	Positioning equipment & models  Adaptations in the classroom	6/10	
7	6/10	Therapeutic feeding and assistive technology	6/17	



8	6/17	Writing IEP goals for self-care & working with Related Service Providers	6/24	
9	6/24	Sensory Integration and SIB	7/1	
10 & 11	7/1	The Law & Abuse  Independent Living and Family Perspectives	7/12	<b>Physical management Plan is due <u>by Friday, July 12th</u></b>

### Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: See [Core Values](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>).

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/) (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See [Disability Services](https://ds.gmu.edu/) (<https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

#### Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/) (<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>).
- [Learning Services \(learningservices@gmu.edu\)](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development](http://cehd.gmu.edu/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/>).**

**Appendix**

**Assessment Rubric(s): Physical Management Plan with Assistive Technology**

	Does Not Meet Expectations 1	Meets Expectations 2	Exceeds Expectations 3
Student Description CEC/IIC Standard 1	Candidate provides partial demographic and background information, giving only a limited view of the context of student’s physical, sensory, medical and academic needs, and levels of support. Candidate provides a limited discussion of the educational impact of the student’s exceptionality and current physical, sensory, and/or medical	Candidate provides demographic and background information related to the target student’s physical, sensory, and/or medical needs as well as academic needs and levels of support. Candidate discusses the educational impact of the student’s exceptionality and current physical, sensory, and/or medical needs, attitude, interests,	Candidate provides demographic and background information related to the target student’s physical, sensory, and/or medical needs as well as academic needs and levels of support. Candidate discusses the educational impact of student’s current physical, sensory, and/or medical needs, attitude, interests, values, and behavior and effect these conditions can on the life of a student with severe exceptional learning needs. Candidate provides an extensive discussion

	needs, attitude, interests, values, and behavior and the effect these conditions can on the life of a student with severe exceptional learning needs.	values, and behavior and the effect these conditions can on the life of a student with severe exceptional learning needs.	of the educational impact of the student’s exceptionality that clearly justifies the need for the development of functional goals and planned instruction.
Relationship to IEP CEC/IIC Standard 6	Candidate provides an incomplete description of specific supports and services available to the target student and fails to establish a clear link between laws, policies, and rights and the provision of specialized health care to meet the medical needs of the student with severe exceptional learning needs.	Candidate outlines laws, policies, and rights related to the provision of specialized health care and/or medical needs for students with severe exceptional learning needs. This description includes specific supports and services available to the target student based on both the legal, judicial and educational systems to which they are entitled, and the student’s physical, sensory, and/or medical needs.	Candidate outlines laws, policies, and rights related to the provision of specialized health care and/or medical needs for students with severe exceptional learning needs. This description is thorough and comprehensive and includes a range of specific supports and services available to the target student based on both the legal, judicial and educational systems to which they are entitled, and the student’s physical, sensory, and/or medical needs.
Functional Goal CEC/IIC Standard 5	Candidate develops an instructional goal that is not age or ability related and/or does not target appropriate self-care or self-management skills based on the physical, sensory, and/or medical needs of students with severe exceptional learning needs. Candidate's use of functional assessment data to inform functional assessment goals is limited.	Candidate develops an age-and ability-appropriate functional goal that enhances self-care and/or self-management skills for students with severe exceptional learning needs based on their physical, sensory, and/or medical needs. Candidate also uses assessment data to inform functional, instructional goals.	Candidate develops an age-and ability-appropriate functional goal that enhances self-care and/or self-management skills for students with severe exceptional learning needs based on their physical, sensory, and/or medical needs. Candidate also uses assessment data to inform functional, instructional goals. Candidate develops a functional goal which is designed to enhancing functioning across multiple environments.
Assessment Plan CEC/IIC Standards 4 & 5	Candidate provides an incomplete or partial outline of procedures for obtaining functional assessment data in a variety of environments.	Candidate outlines procedures for obtaining functional assessment data in a variety of environments. Candidate describes an assessment	Candidate outlines procedures for obtaining functional assessment data in a variety of environments. Candidate selects, adapts, and modifies assessment procedures including individual

	<p>Candidate fails to describe an assessment plan which makes responsive adjustments to instruction based on continual observations. Candidate fails to describe methods of maintaining records and does not outline a plan for modifying instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.</p>	<p>plan which makes responsive adjustments to instruction based on continual observations. Candidate describes methods of maintaining records and outlines a plan for modifying instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.</p>	<p>response methods to meet the unique abilities and needs of individuals with severe exceptional learning needs. Candidate describes an assessment plan which makes responsive adjustments to instruction based on continual observations. Candidate describes methods of maintaining records and outlines a plan for modifying instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.</p>
<p>Instructional Procedures CEC/IIC Standard 5</p>	<p>Candidate fails to select and adapt instructional strategies and materials which incorporate evidence-based practices validated for the characteristics of learners with severe exceptional learning needs. Candidate provides an incomplete description of a variety of accommodations and/or modifications which fails to demonstrate how these learners with severe exceptional learning needs will receive access to the curriculum. Candidate fails to describe strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments and multiple service providers. Candidate fails to describe appropriate adaptations to meet the student's sensory, physical,</p>	<p>Candidate selects and adapts instructional strategies and materials which incorporate evidence-based practices validated for the characteristics of learners with severe exceptional learning needs. Candidate provides a thorough description of a variety of accommodations and/or modifications which demonstrate how these learners with severe exceptional learning needs will receive access to the curriculum. Candidate describes strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments and multiple service providers. Candidate describes appropriate adaptations to meet the student's sensory, physical, medical and/or health needs and</p>	<p>Candidate selects and adapts instructional strategies and materials which incorporate evidence-based practices validated for the characteristics of learners with severe exceptional learning needs that are responsive to the student's cultural, linguistic, and gender differences. Candidate provides a thorough description of a variety of accommodations and/or modifications which demonstrate how these learners with severe exceptional learning needs will receive access to the curriculum. Candidate describes strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments and multiple service providers. Candidate describes appropriate adaptations to meet the student's sensory, physical, medical and/or health needs and develops a plan to evaluate and modify instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data. Candidate describes instructional procedures which include a plan for individualized</p>

	medical and/or health needs and develops a plan to evaluate and modify instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.	develops a plan to evaluate and modify instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data.	reinforcement systems and environmental modifications.
Assistive Technology CEC/IIC Standard 3 and 5	Candidate fails to incorporate appropriate assistive technology devices, tools and/or strategies that are specifically related to the instructional plan and/or based on the student's physical, sensory, and/or medical needs that support the student in reaching criterion for the identified functional goal.	Candidate incorporates appropriate assistive technology devices, tools and/or strategies into the instructional plan based on the student's physical, sensory, and/or medical needs that support the student in reaching criterion for the identified functional goal.	Candidate incorporates a range of appropriate low tech and high-tech assistive technology devices, tools and/or strategies into the instructional plan based on the student's physical, sensory, and/or medical needs. These technology options support the student in reaching criterion for the identified functional goal as well as improving student's behavior, independence level and/or social functioning.