



You Asked!

Q19: I am confused by Chapter 10: Special Education and Section 504 Plans of the California Dyslexia Guidelines issued by California Department of Education (CDE) on August 14, 2017. Please provide clarification.

A: The CDE received a number of comments from individuals and organizations, including Decoding Dyslexia CA, regarding concerns surrounding the information contained in [Chapter 10](#) of the dyslexia guidelines.

The CDE corrected the dyslexia guidelines on September 14, 2017 to reflect statutory law as follows:

1. In determining whether a student has a specific learning disability under California education law, there are three methods that can be used (i.e. severe discrepancy, response to intervention, or pattern of strengths and weaknesses). The revised guidelines have clarified this by adding an “or” between the 3 methods listed in bullet points 1 – 3 on pages 59 and 60.

Sidebar about the "use of severe discrepancy" in California: The California Dyslexia Guidelines provide the following information cautioning against the use of severe discrepancy method listed above:

- Under the law, severe discrepancy may be considered but **must not be required** (page 104, Appendix C: Legal Citations, United States Education Code, Title 20, Chapter 33, [Section 1414\(b\)\(6\)](#)),
- Findings in neuroscience research support the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 criteria that identification of individuals with dyslexia does not require a discrepancy between reading and other cognitive abilities, such as IQ (Page 7, Chapter 2, The Neuroscience of Dyslexia).

2. The previous statement that a 504 Plan “will not specify specialized instruction” (page 61) is incorrect and has been updated in the latest revision.

(Please refer to [You Asked!](#) questions 17 and 18 for further details on section 504 plans.)

3. In addition, the Glossary section of the dyslexia guidelines on page 109 has been updated to reflect the addition of "phonological processing" in the definition of Specific Learning Disability (pursuant to [CA Education Code Section 56334](#))

As there are outdated versions of the California Dyslexia Guidelines in circulation, please help us get the word out on these important statutory corrections by widely sharing the updated [link](#) to the guidelines and this You Asked! question.

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