

# Louisiana Believes

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**A Closer Look!  
Implementation Guide: Alternative Pathways to a High  
School Diploma**

# Alternative Pathways to a High School Diploma Implementation Guidance

- Why the guidance?
  - Data indicates the need for practical development of procedures outlining how these pathways will be implemented in your districts
  - Districts will use the guidance to develop procedures for implementing alternative pathways
- Guidance Development Stages
  - Consulted with 5 districts
    - Established needs in districts
    - Identified common components
    - Established guiding questions within each component
  - Pilot – Collaborative Trainings
    - 5 districts
    - Tested the guidance
    - Adjusted accordingly
- Guidance Release
  - The August 2016 Directors of Special Education meeting
  - September Supervisors Collaborative training

# Objectives

During this collaborative training, participants will identify strategies for developing policies and procedures necessary to effectively implement alternative pathways in their districts.

Strategies will focus on the following areas:

- identifying eligible students ,
- planning appropriate experiences, and
- applying individual performance criteria to courses.

# Identifying Eligible Students



# Identifying Eligible Students

- All students with IEPs, except those identified as gifted and talented, must be
  - considered for eligibility for alternate pathways and, if eligible,
  - appropriately identified for an alternate pathway to a diploma.
- LEA administrators should create and implement procedures which facilitate appropriate and timely student identification.

# Identifying Eligible Students

- When creating procedures related to identifying eligible students for alternate pathways to a diploma, administrators should:
  - define a process for determining eligibility, and
  - ensure all students are properly identified.

# Process for Determining Eligibility

- Define a process for determining eligibility.
- Which individuals will be responsible for identifying potentially eligible students?
- When and how often should student eligibility be considered?
- What is the process for reviewing data and what tools will be used for determining eligibility data?

# Process for Determining Eligibility

- Which individuals will be responsible for identifying potentially eligible students?
  - Counselors
    - “Data Keepers”; they receive scores on all students
  - Teachers
    - On the IEP
      - » last 3 years of testing
      - » EOC course results
    - If not, could/should these historical scores be included on IEPs?
  - Department Chair at high school level
    - Facilitates the process at school building level
    - Double checks process
  - Central Office Special Education Staff
    - Checks and balance system
    - **Buck stops with someone in this office**
  - Who will be the key stakeholders in your district?



# Process for Determining Eligibility

- When and how often should student eligibility be considered?
  - State Assessment eligibility criteria
    - 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade?
    - end of 7<sup>th</sup> (make eligible but not apply performance criteria)
    - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (may be challenging due to date scores are received)
  - EOC eligibility criteria
    - every year, including 12<sup>th</sup>
    - twice a year depending on block schedule
- Can a student be made eligible but the IEP team not apply individual performance criteria until a later time?

# Process for Determining Eligibility

- What tools will be used to determine eligibility?
  - School Cumulative Folders
    - Statewide assessments
    - EOC scores
  - Reports from Testing Coordinators
    - Student Testing History Reports
  - IEPs – Special Education Teacher
    - IEP General Student Information Page - Running record of test scores in Statewide Assessment Results Block
    - Assessment Card
  - DOE Resources
    - Special Education Guidance for High School Students
    - Act 833 Series Graduation Webinar
    - Pathway to a Career Diploma for Students Assessed on LAA1 Webinar
    - LAA1 Eligibility Criteria
    - Act 833 FAQ on Graduation
    - SER Reports:
      - The Act 833 Eligibility Report
      - Act 833 Application Report
      - LAA1 Code Report: LEA, Student ID, Exceptionality, etc.
      - LAA1 Summary Report: Diploma, Certificate, Other
    - The Assessment Warehouse

# Eligibility Safeguards

- How will eligibility be monitored to ensure ALL students are examined for alternate pathways?
- Will procedures include a particular person/position that is ultimately responsible for checking and double checking that all students have been considered for eligibility?
  - Will that person be on a district level?
  - Will the person be on a school level?
  - Or could there be an a person on each level?

# **Planning Appropriate Experiences**

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- After a student has been made eligible for an alternative pathway, IEP teams must:
  - determine the most appropriate route or course of study that will lead to a diploma, and
  - base the course of study on student interests, strengths, and needs.
- LEA Administrators should create policies and procedures for assisting educators and IEP teams in making appropriate pathway planning decisions for students.



# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- Consider the following when creating policies and procedures:
  - define a process for determining students interests, strengths, and needs, and
  - define a process for identifying and implementing pathways for students.

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- Define a process for determining students interests, strengths, and needs.
  - What tools are used to assess student career interest?
  - Who is responsible for conducting career assessments?
  - When are career assessments administered?

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- What tools are used to assess student career interest?
  - Interests interviews and observations
  - Vocational assessments/Interest inventories
    - Reading Free Vocational Interest Inventories
    - Unique Transition Planning
    - Ohio Employability and Life Skills Assessment
    - Career Compass
    - Person Centered Planning
  - General needs assessment
    - Target Area’s for Transition Planning
    - NSTTAC Transition Assessment Tool Kit
  - Resources
    - [Planning Appropriate High School Experiences for Act 833](#)
    - [Planning Appropriate High School Experiences for Students Assessed on LAA1](#)
    - [All Things Jump Start](#)
    - [A Pathway for Every Student Guidance](#)

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- Who is responsible for conducting career assessments?
  - Teacher of record (example: Basic Career Readiness)
  - Special education teacher
  - Parents
  - Counselors
  - Jump Start coordinator

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- When are career assessments administered?
  - At the time of the first IGP (8<sup>th</sup> grade) but NOT finalized at this time
  - Interest assessment will be given annually as part of the IEP process.
  - Does your timeline allow for variances for those students that may need a little more time to achieve these goals?
    - Do you start identifying career choice earlier?
    - Do you allow extra time on the end of their high school experience to achieve goals?
  - Does your timeline allow for variances related to the challenges faced by over age students?



# Planning Appropriate Experiences

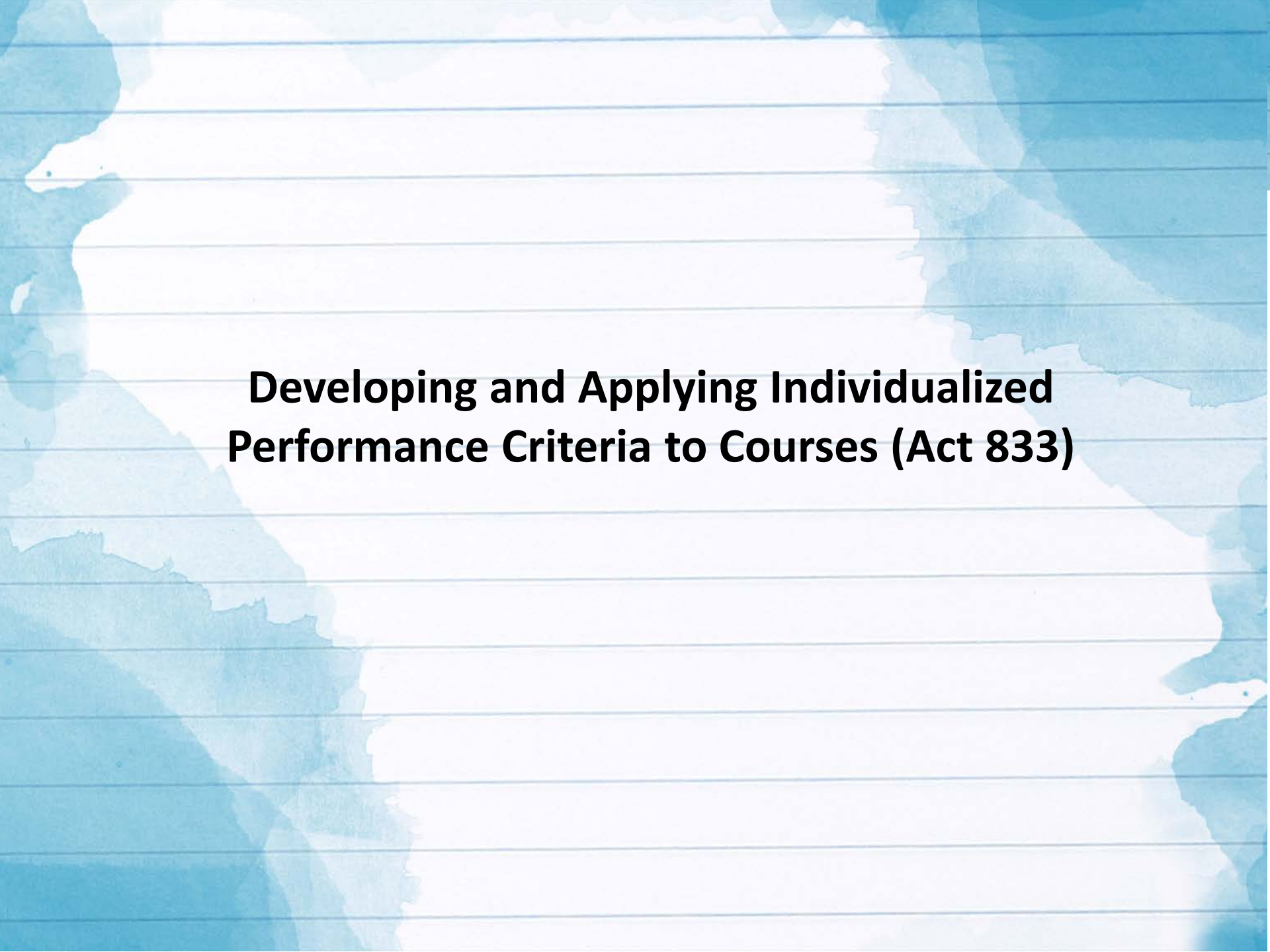
- Define a process for identifying and implementing pathways for students.
- What courses and Jump Start Pathways are available in the LEA/school?
- What training and tools will be used to guide students in selecting pathways that will lead to a diploma and future success?

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- What courses and Jump Start Pathways are available in the LEA/school?
  - Which academic classes align with student's post-secondary interests and needs?
    - Look at school course catalogues – or compile a school/district catalog.
    - Look at course codes that are available on a state level that you may not be using in your districts.
  - Which career/vocational classes align with the student's post-secondary goals and success?
    - See suggestions above
    - What if the classes are not offered in your district?
      - What are possible work arounds?
      - Is teaming with other districts a possibility?
      - Post-secondary programs may address the needs or interests of your students
      - Outside agencies such as LRS may address areas of need

# Planning Appropriate Experiences

- What training and tools will be used to guide students in selecting pathways that will lead to a diploma and future success?
  - [Teachers Toolbox: Professional Development Resources from LADOE](#)
    - Counselor's Toolbox
    - Resources by Grade
    - Compass
  - [Special Education Course Codes for Students Assessed on LAA1](#)
  - [Louisiana's Guidebooks](#)
  - [National Technical Assistance Center on Transition](#)
  - [Jump Start Industry Credentials for Students with Disabilities](#)
  - [Jump Start Students with Disabilities Implementation Guidance](#)



**Developing and Applying Individualized  
Performance Criteria to Courses (Act 833)**

# Individualized Performance Criteria

- Individualized Performance criteria:
  - allows students to demonstrate proficiency of course standards through an alternate means, and
  - is established by the IEP team.
- Administrators should develop local policies and procedures to support IEP teams in developing, implementing, and documenting successful completion of individual performance criteria.



# Individualized Performance Criteria

- Consider the following when creating policies and procedures:
  - Define procedures for developing individual performance criteria.
  - Define procedures for implementing individual performance criteria.
  - Define procedures for documenting successful completion of individual performance criteria.

# Individualized Performance Criteria

- Define procedures for developing individual performance criteria:
  - How are personnel (e.g., IEP team members, school counselors, general educators, administrative personnel, and parents) trained in Act 833 individual performance criteria expectation (e.g., decision making, IEP documentation, maintaining rigor)?
  - When will this training be conducted?
    - ongoing
    - beginning of the year
    - end of year
    - summer
  - What resources will you use for training?
    - [Curriculum and Instruction Materials](#)
    - [Assessment Guidance and Materials](#)
    - [Act 833 Individual Performance Criteria Guidance](#)

# Individualized Performance Criteria

- Define procedures for implementing individual performance criteria:
  - What is the communication structure for sharing individual performance criteria for courses?
    - records review, IEP chart/folder for each student
  - Who is responsible for tracking student progress throughout the year?
    - regular education teacher, special education teacher
  - When/how often is data reviewed to ensure student is on track?
    - continuously, progress report time, report card time
    - Will your district set minimum times?
  - What procedures will be established for the IEP team to make adjustments to performance criteria if appropriate?
  - How could you use the SER Report “Act 833 Application Report” to assist with monitoring the successful application of performance criteria?

# Individualized Performance Criteria

- Define procedures for documenting successful completion of individual performance criteria.
  - How will the teacher communicate successful completion of the individual performance criteria to the data person responsible for entering this information into the transcript system?
  - Who communicates this information?
    - regular education teacher (teacher of record)
    - special education teacher
  - What are your district's procedures for closing out achieved IEP goals and objectives?

# In Summary

- The provisions of Act 833 and the pathway for students assessed on LAA1 offer our students tremendous opportunities to pursue a diploma.
- The opportunity to pursue these alternate pathways relies on the procedures established in the district.
- Clear, concise procedures understood by all stakeholders in a district lend to successful implementation of alternate pathways to a diploma for students with disabilities.

# Questions/Comments

