

Understanding IEPs and 504 Plans in the CTE Classroom

Strategies for Differentiation and Supporting Students with Accommodations

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CTE Connects



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Developing Educators for a Workforce-Ready Illinois

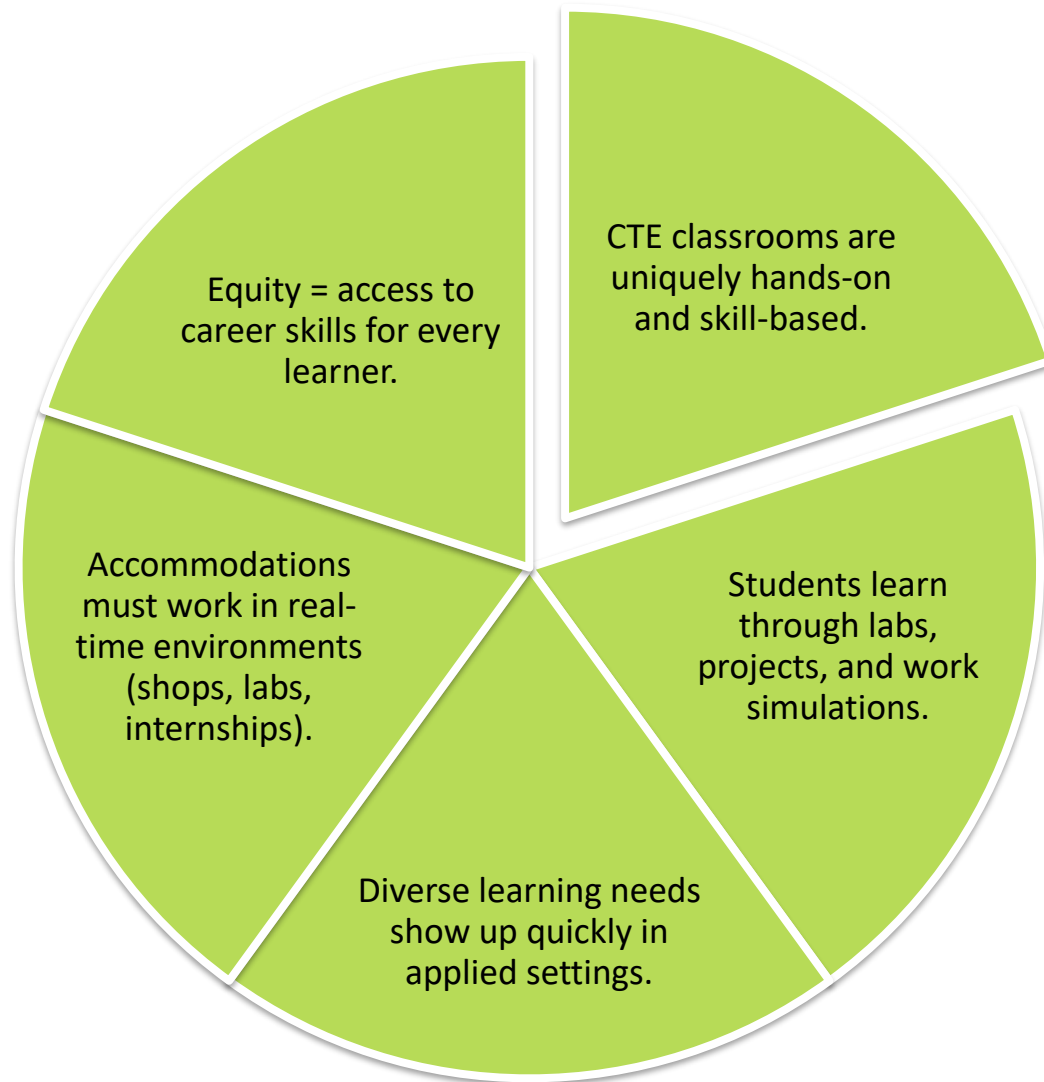
Professional Development

- If you are not a mentor or mentee in the CTE Connects program and would like PD for this webinar, please click the link:
 - [PD Plus Webinar](#)

Today's Objectives

- Strengthen CTE teacher understanding of special education supports
- Build confidence in implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans
- Apply differentiation strategies in hands-on, career-based classrooms
- Align instruction with Illinois compliance expectations
- Improve outcomes for all CTE students

Why This Matters in CTE



Key Legal Foundations

- [IDEA](#) -Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 - Governs the development and implementation of IEPs
- [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#)
 - Ensures access and accommodations
- [ADA](#) -Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Protects against discrimination
- [Illinois Department of Human Services: Pre-Employment Career Training](#)
- [ISBE Special Education](#)

Educational Acronyms

- CTE: Career and Technical Education
- IEP: Individualized Education Plan
- STEAM/STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math
- MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports
- PLC: Professional Learning Communities
- ESL: English as a Second Language
- LRE: Least Restrictive Environment
- DOK: Depth of Knowledge
- FBA: Functional Behavioral Assessment
- BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan
- SAT: Scholastic Aptitude Test
- ISBE: Illinois State Board of Education

What is an IEP?

- Legally binding document that details the special education services and supports a school will provide.
- Created for students who qualify under IDEA
- Includes:
 - Present levels of performance
 - Measurable goals
 - Accommodations and modifications
 - Transition planning (critical for CTE!)
- CTE connection: Transition goals often align with career pathways, certifications, and employability skills.

What is a 504 Plan?

- 504 plan is created by schools to outline accommodations and supports they will provide.
- Supports students who do **not** qualify for an IEP but still need access
- Focuses on removing barriers
- Examples in CTE:
 - Extended time on written assessments
 - Preferential seating in labs
 - Modified equipment setup
 - Breaks during long technical tasks

IEP vs. 504 PLAN

UNDERSTANDING THE KEY DIFFERENCES IN STUDENT SUPPORT



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
SPECIFIC DISABILITIES
LEGAL DOCUMENT



- PROVIDES ACCOMMODATIONS
- EQUAL ACCESS
- PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT
- CIVIL RIGHTS LAW

CTE impact: Both must be implemented in labs, shops, and work-based learning environments.

Differentiation, Accommodation & Modification



If the class is mountain climbing

- **Differentiation** = How instruction is delivered
 - Different paths to the top.
- **Accommodation** = How a student accesses learning or demonstrates knowledge
 - Tools or supports to help a student reach the same top.
- **Modification** = What a student is expected to learn or demonstrate
 - A different destination or a lower summit.

Frequently seen accommodations



Extended time

Chunking assignments

Graphic organizers

Study Guides

Preferential Seating

Read aloud supports

Frequent breaks

Accommodations that work in CTE Labs

- Practical, real-world strategies
 - Visual step-by step task cards in labs
 - Color coded stations
 - Audio instructions or QR coded demos
 - Extended time for skill demonstrations
 - Safety supports (checklists, buddy systems)
 - Reduced multi-step directions
 - Develop students' lab skills

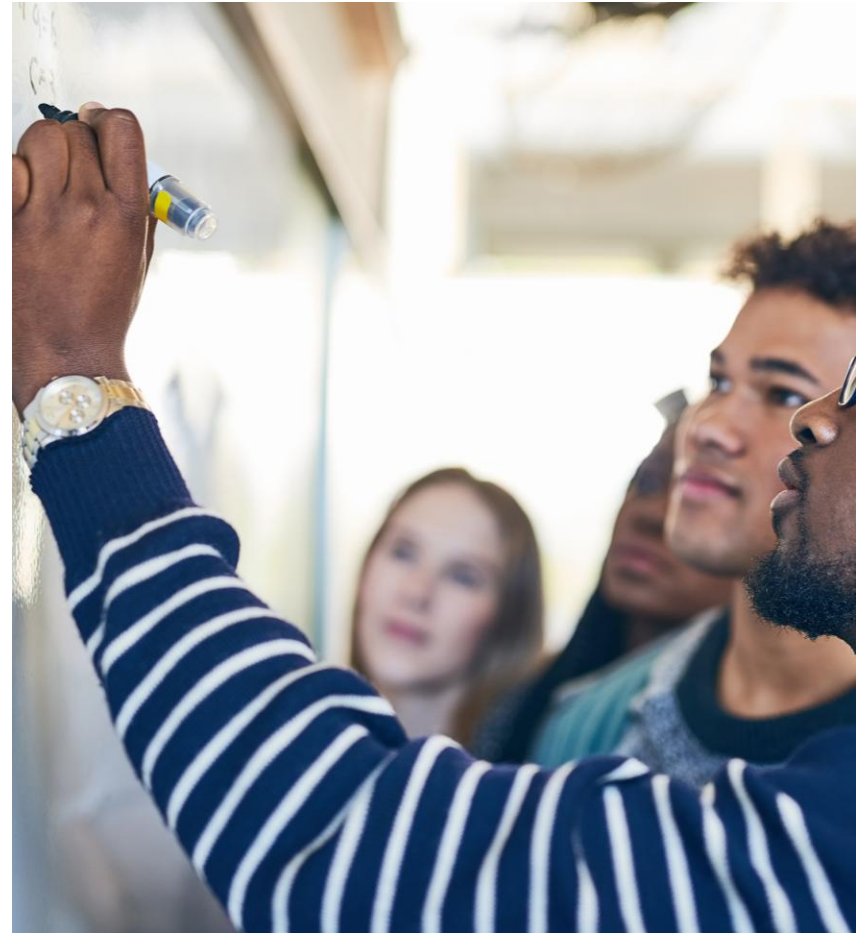
Differentiated Instruction in CTE



- Differentiation means adjusting what is taught to meet the needs of all the students in your classroom.
 - Content (how students access information)
 - Process (activities the student does)
 - Product (what they produce to show their learning)
 - Environment (learning setting)
- **CTE examples:**
 - Tiered welding practice tasks
 - Choice boards for business marketing projects
 - Scaffolded blueprint reading
 - Peer-supported lab stations

First 30 Days Packet Resources

- Tiered assignments
- Choice Boards
- Scaffolding and supports
- Flexible grouping



Common Challenges in CTE

- Large class sizes in lab settings
- Safety requirements limiting modifications
- Fast-paced skill demonstrations
- Equipment access variability
- Balancing rigor with accessibility

Solution: proactive planning + collaboration + structured differentiation

Collaboration is Key (CTE & Special Education)



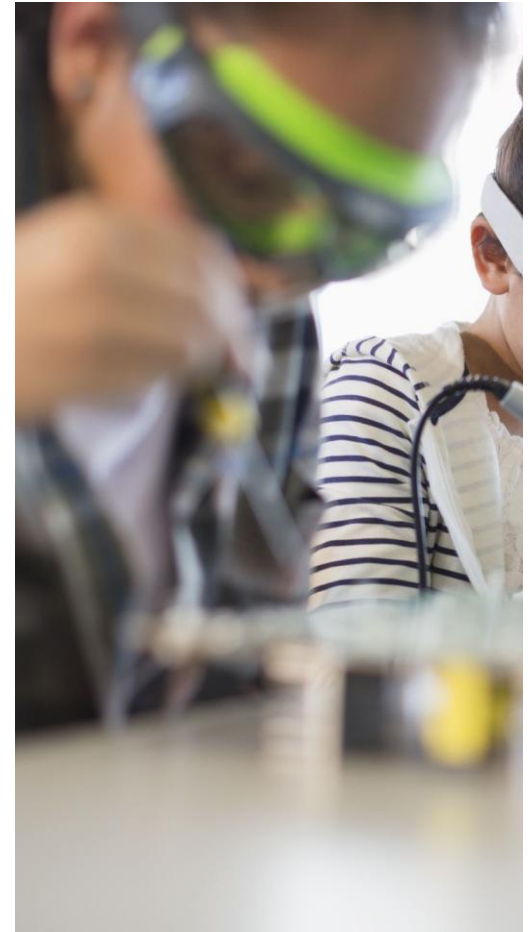
- Co-planning with special education teachers
- Reviewing IEP/504 accommodations before units
- Communicating lab safety expectations
- Adjusting assessments for skill-based evaluation
- Engaging related service providers when needed

Tips for Attending IEP Meetings

- Make sure to talk about student strengths and growth as well as challenges
- You will be asked to give an update on progress. You might bring a few examples:
 - Work samples and current grades
 - Information on accommodations in your classroom
 - Notes on any behavioral issues and interventions

What to Document:

- Accommodation implementation
- Parent communication
- Safety instruction provided
- Concerns and communication shared with case managers
- Student progress
- Example: [IEP/504 Accommodations Tracker](#)



Key Takeaways

- Every CTE classroom includes diverse learners.
- IEPs and 504s must be implemented in hands-on environments.
- Differentiation is essential for skill mastery.
- ISBE provides compliance and instructional guidance.
- Collaboration drives student success in career readiness .

What's Next?



Teacher Evaluations:

What to Expect- Including
Reflections & Evidence