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Region 17 Education Service Center
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**FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC CURRICULUM
FOR
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS, REVISED
(F.A.C.E.S.)**

ESC Region 17

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FORWARD

A “Functional Academic Curriculum for Exceptional Students” (F.A.C.E.S.) was originally developed in 1988 as a result of an identified need in the Grand Prairie School District and Region 10 Education Service Center. These two entities collaborated with eight other districts to complete the F.A.C.E.S. curriculum with funds provided by discretionary funds allocated through the Region 10 Education Service Center.

In 1989 the Lubbock Independent School District implemented the F.A.C.E.S. curriculum in the Supported Education Program to provide a framework for teachers of students with moderate disabilities. The curriculum has been used in this district since that time. Due to the change in cultural expectations and legal guidelines, teachers in that district, as well as those at Region 17 Education Service Center, felt the curriculum needed to be revised and updated. Region 17 undertook this project in 1998 in collaboration with four districts in Region 17, with funding provided by decentralization funds allocated through Region 17 Education Service Center.

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this project was to revise and update the F.A.C.E.S. curriculum, which was initially developed with the L.I.F.E. philosophy as the foundation. It was developed to incorporate the four domains of the L.I.F.E. program (domestic, community, vocational and recreation/leisure) in a format which would coincide with traditional subject areas. This approach was taken in an effort to facilitate its understanding by general educators and those teaching on a general education campus. A primary purpose of the curriculum is to teach functional age-appropriate skills within integrated school and nonschool settings and to base instruction on the systematic evaluation of students' progress. Another purpose of the curriculum is to provide a framework for classroom teachers to use as they prepare students with disabilities to lead successful and personally fulfilling lives now and in the future. This functional curriculum will assist in the effort to prepare students to function as independently as possible in an integrated society.

The curriculum was originally designed to incorporate several principles which are the key to the successful implementation of the curriculum. Those principles remain as relevant today as they were when the curriculum was originally developed.

- Educators must portray high student expectations and teach meaningful and functional skills necessary to develop independence.
- Targeting skills must be chronologically age appropriate and functional from early childhood through graduation.
- Parents must be involved throughout the training process in order to ensure the development of functional and pertinent objectives and the transfer of skills.
- Individual adaptations or modifications must be developed in order to meet student needs. The criteria for mastery should reflect this philosophy.
- Community Based Instruction should be an integral focus of the training process so as to ensure skill development in natural environments. Instruction within the community must not be considered a one-time event, but rather a continual process. Activities should have social significance and provide opportunities for social interaction.
- Community instruction should be provided a minimum of one time per week, with increased frequency as students become older. It is suggested that several additional simulation sessions be scheduled on a weekly basis if opportunities for CBI are limited.
- Once individual students have achieved criteria for mastery of specific objectives, opportunities to perform the skills in a variety of settings with numerous trainers should be provided. Intermittent practice should be scheduled to ensure maintenance.

- Instruction in all areas must include development of appropriate behaviors and communication skills.
- Goals must be based and prioritized on their potential for enhancing independence.
- The activities are designed to be taught in the setting where they would naturally occur. If a natural setting is not feasible, the skills may be taught indirectly through classroom simulation.

The F.A.C.E.S. curriculum is composed of six modules. These include:

Personal Health	Science
Social Studies	Functional Math
Vocational	Language Arts (to be developed)

Each module consists of content areas and each objective is correlated with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (T.E.K.S.) Generally, more than one teaching activity is suggested. Used as a continuum of skills from early childhood through high school, this curriculum helps to foster the development of skills that increase independence and encourages constructive cooperation and mutual problem solving in the home, school, workplace and community.

There is a necessary overlapping of objectives for skill development across areas and modules which have been cross-referenced throughout the curriculum. Areas are coded according to school age levels for organizational purposes: E-elementary; M-middle/junior high school; H-high school. Each is also assigned a specific color across all modules of the curriculum (pink-elementary; blue-middle/junior high school; green-high school; white-information pages; yellow-bibliography). Each page number is coded by area with an icon. For example meal preparation is coded with the icon for lunch. The levels are developed along a developmental continuum and are not binding, only a guideline. They do provide a structure and format from which a creative teacher can design and implement additional learning activities.

Social competency is of primary importance in a functional curriculum. Social competency is critical to the child's acceptability in the classroom, peer relationships, current life settings and future social and vocational settings. Regardless of age or grade, students should be prepared for the challenges of life after they graduate or leave school. Thus, the functional curriculum has an adult-outcome emphasis.