

# ALIGNING LEARNING FOR STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES WITH GRADE-LEVEL STANDARDS IN THE MASSACHUSETTS *CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS*

## GOALS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

- To make the learning standards accessible to all students
- To raise expectations that this can and will occur for all students
- To develop and adapt instruction to allow students with significant disabilities to access key information in the Curriculum Frameworks at appropriate levels of complexity and difficulty
- NOT to promote the use of an alternative curriculum unlinked to state standards
- NOT to revise or rewrite the learning standards themselves

## RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR ALIGNING LEARNING STANDARDS:

1. Review each Learning Standard with your content area panel (consisting of content experts, special educators, higher education faculty, advocates/parents, and assessment experts)
2. Discuss:
  - “What is this standard saying? What is the ‘essence’ of this standard?”
  - “What content does it address?”
  - “What skills will be assessed?”
3. Determine how a student would achieve this standard at the lowest level of complexity and with the least difficulty?
  - Express this as a measurable and observable student outcome, NOT how a teacher could teach this. Classroom examples (“snapshots”) can be included, but should not be the primary focus.
  - Complete the following statement to guide your work:  
As a result of instruction in this standard, a student will be able to.....
  - Reflect on whether the outcome addresses the ‘essence’ of the learning standard and its original intent.
4. After determining the lowest level of complexity for this standard, identify at least two additional (higher) levels of complexity for this standard that approach the standard as written.

WORKSHEET for Aligning the Learning Standards

CONTENT AREA: \_\_\_\_\_

Learning Standard: (Number) \_\_\_\_\_

“Essence” of this learning standard: What is this standard saying?  
What differentiates this standard from others in the same content area?

**Less Complex**



**More Complex**

<p>Provide a classroom example or instructional idea for using this learning standard.....</p>		