

## Alignment to IDEA, Part B – Grants to the States

Together, **VariQuest® Visual Learning Tools** offer the differentiated instructional support necessary to raise educational success for all students and close the achievement gap. Teachers use the tools to create tangible, curriculum-based visuals and manipulatives that enhance instruction and learning in the classroom. Investing in **VariQuest Visual Learning Tools** can lead to lasting improvements in student achievement and engagement at all levels of education. The **VariQuest** suite of products includes:



**Design Center** – Create curriculum-based visual aids using its interactive, touch screen technology.



**Poster Maker** – Print easy-to-read visual supports to reinforce key learnings and encourage cooperative group work.



**Cutout Maker** – Bring your lessons to life by creating cutouts, 3-D manipulatives and interactive bulletin board displays for a hands-on learning experience.



**Awards Maker** – Recognize the achievements and positive behavior of students by presenting them with personalized award plaques, stickers and more.

**IDEA...** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. Funding for IDEA is approximately \$11 billion per year. In 2009, the standard IDEA estimated funding is \$11,505,211,000 and the 2010 estimated funding is \$11,505,211,000. In addition to the standard yearly appropriation, IDEA currently has two additional funding sources ARRA IDEA (\$11,300,000,000) and the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (\$ varies) – both programs funded by Obama’s stimulus funding program. A description of these funding sources follows.

Federal Legislation	
Grant	Description
<p><b>IDEA – Part B, Section 611, Grants to States</b> CFDA Number: 84.027 Program Type: Formula Amount: \$11,505,211,000</p> <p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/programs/osepgts/index.html">http://www.ed.gov/programs/osepgts/index.html</a></p>	<p>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Part B of the IDEA provides funds to state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) to help them ensure that children with disabilities, including children, aged three through five, have access to a free appropriate public education to meet each child's unique needs and prepare him or her for further education, employment, and independent living. Funds under this program are combined with state and local funds to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities. Funds are distributed on a yearly basis. IDEA, Part B focuses on ages 3-21. IDEA, Part C focuses on birth-3 (not included here).</p> <p><b>Fund Uses...</b> Permitted expenditures include the salaries of special education teachers and costs associated with related services personnel, such as speech therapists and psychologists. States may use funds reserved for other state-level activities for a variety of specified activities, including: for support and direct services, technical assistance and personnel preparation; to assist LEAs in providing positive behavioral interventions and supports; and to improve the use of technology in the classroom. Some portion of funds reserved for other state-level activities must be used for monitoring, enforcement and complaint investigation, and to establish and implement the mediation process. Each state has the option to reserve a portion of funds the state reserves for other state-level activities for a fund to assist LEAs in addressing the needs of high-cost children with disabilities. If the state opts to reserve for this fund, it may reserve a larger portion of its award for other state-level activities, and must reserve at least 10 percent of</p>

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	the amount set aside for other state-level activities for the fund.
<p><b>ARRA IDEA – Part B, Grants to States</b> CFDA Number: 84.391 Program Type: Formula Amount: \$11,300,000,000</p> <p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/index.html">http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/index.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b.pdf">http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b.pdf</a></p>	<p>The IDEA funds under ARRA will provide an unprecedented opportunity for states, LEAs, and early intervention service providers to implement innovative strategies to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youths with disabilities while stimulating the economy. Under the ARRA, the IDEA funds are provided under three authorities: \$11.3 billion is available under Part B Grants to States; \$400 million is available under Part B Preschool Grants; and \$500 million is available under Part C Grants for Infants and Families. The Department released 50 percent of IDEA, Part B funds on April 1, 2009 without requiring new state applications. The second allocation was released on September 1, 2009. States and LEAs must obligate all IDEA, Part B ARRA funds by September 30, 2011.</p> <p><b>Fund Uses...</b>The purpose of this funding is to supplement the yearly IDEA, Part B, Section 611 allocation and to stimulate the economy, as part of Obama’s stimulus program. Because the ARRA funds constitute a large increase in IDEA, Part B, Section 611 funding that will likely not be available at the same level beyond September 30, 2011, schools and LEAs have a unique opportunity to improve teaching and learning and should focus these funds on short-term investments with the potential for long-term benefits rather than make ongoing commitments that they might not be able to sustain once ARRA funds are expended. Specific guidelines are located at: <a href="http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b.pdf">http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/guidance/idea-b.pdf</a>; however, all IDEA ARRA funds must be used consistent with the current IDEA, Part B statutory and regulatory requirements and applicable requirements in the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).</p>
<p><b>State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act</b> CFDA Number: 84.394 Program Type: Formula Grant &amp; Discretionary Grants</p> <p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/programs/statestabilization/application.html">http://www.ed.gov/programs/statestabilization/application.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.ed.gov/programs/statestabilization/guidance.pdf">http://www.ed.gov/programs/statestabilization/guidance.pdf</a></p>	<p>The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) program is a new one-time appropriation of \$53.6 billion. Of that amount, the State Department of Education will award approximately \$48.6 billion by formula under the SFSF program in exchange for a commitment to advance essential education reforms to benefit students from early learning through post-secondary education, including: college- and career- ready standards and high-quality, valid and reliable assessments for all students; development and use of pre-K through post-secondary and career data systems; increasing teacher effectiveness and ensuring an equitable distribution of qualified teachers; and turning around the lowest-performing schools. Funds are allocated to states based on state population.</p> <p>Funds may be used in State fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Governors must submit an application that includes various assurances. A portion of the funds may be reserved for new state Incentive Grants and an Innovation Fund at the Secretary of Education's discretion. After the designated education allocation restores support for K-12 and postsecondary education (if needed), any remaining amounts should be given to local educational agencies (LEAs) through the existing Title I-A formula. LEAs receiving these sub-grants may use the funds for any activity authorized by the ESEA, the IDEA, the Adult and Family Literacy Act, the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, or for modernization, renovation, and repair of public school facilities. For 2009, approximately half of the states used SFSF funds to save jobs and fund other deficits in their education budgets.</p> <p><b>Fund Uses/IDEA...</b>With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, remaining amounts from the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) may be distributed to IDEA, Part B programs. The guidelines for using these SFSF funds should follow the statutory and regulatory of IDEA, Part B; however, accounting and accountability requirements are to be kept separate from the standard funds.</p> <p><b>Fund Uses/Modernization...</b> With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, remaining amounts from the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) may be distributed for the modernization of public school facilities.</p>

### ALIGNMENTS

The following chart demonstrates the alignment of IDEA, Part B statutes to **VariQuest Visual Learning Tools**. The statutes are listed first in blue and the alignment of the tools to the statutes follow.

IDEA, Part B and ARRA IDEA, Part B
<p><b>Purchasing Equipment</b></p>
<p>IDEA allows the purchase of equipment. Equipment is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Machinery, utilities, and built-in equipment, and any necessary enclosures or structures to house the machinery, utilities, or equipment [34 CFR §300.14(a)]; and</li> <li>(b) All other items necessary for the functioning of a particular facility as a facility for the provision of educational services, including items such as instructional equipment and necessary furniture; printed, published and audio-visual instructional materials; telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices; and books, periodicals, documents, and other related materials. [34 CFR §300.14(b)]</li> </ul> <p><b>Alignment:</b> <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> meet the requirement for instructional equipment, sensory, and other related materials. The tools assist in making a robust learning environment that emphasizes the use of educational best practices for <b>all</b> learners by creating exciting visuals that reinforce educational concepts and providing manipulatives to reinforce a kinesthetic approach to learning. In addition, the tools can be used to create content-specific study aids that encourage student practice and study skills, address activities that focus on promoting positive behavior in the classroom, promote personal responsibility and a sense of classroom community, and foster independent learning in the classroom. More specifically, examples of how the <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> can be used to nurture learning in the classroom are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Academic Results</i> – graphic organizers, cutouts, character education posters, criteria charts, storyboards, manipulatives, Venn diagrams, word walls, rubrics, and maps.</li> <li>• <i>Positive Reinforcement</i> – personalized awards, progress charts, honor roll awards, scholarships announcements, student-of-the-week posters, and staff appreciation posters.</li> <li>• <i>Increased Participation</i> – bulletin boards, anti-bullying posters, mission statement visuals, welcome signs, test instruction charts, parent/teacher association signage, state standards expectations, safety, rules, consequences posters, and sports activities banners.</li> <li>• <i>School Spirit and Activities</i> – school dance posters, birthday posters, athletic team bumper stickers, graduation posters, and fundraising events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Response to Intervention (RtI)</b></p>
<p><b>Response to Intervention (RtI) Eligibility for Special Education - IDEA regulations incorporate new requirements regarding the identification of children with specific learning disabilities (SLD) and early intervening services (EIS). Procedures other than the discrepancy model may be used, including allowing a local educational agency to consider a child’s response to scientific, research-based intervention (RtI) as part of the SLD determination process. Response to Intervention is so important, that a child cannot be determined to be a child with a disability under IDEA Part 300 if the determinant factor for that determination is lack of: 1) appropriate instruction in reading, 2) including the essential components of reading instruction, 3) lack of appropriate instruction in math, or 4) limited English proficiency. [34 CFR §300.206(b)(1)]</b></p> <p><b>Alignment:</b> <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> can be used to support the identification of a student in need of RtI services and also support the RtI learning experience after student identification and placement. Educators can use the tools to create multiple formats of assessments...maximizing the potential to identify student strengths and weaknesses while providing an informal assessment of the student’s learning style. The resulting information can become part of the student’s RtI identification package.</p> <p>For educators providing early intervention services, the <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> offer a vast array of educational aids that complement teaching and learning. Selected examples that could be used by both early readers and limited English proficient students in reading are:</p>

- using letter manipulatives to promote alphabet recognition;
- creating manipulatives of 100 most frequently-used English words;
- promoting phonemic awareness and decoding skills through “Big Book” creation of teaching materials or creating phonemic charts;
- motivating students with personalized reading materials and awards; and
- developing interactive word walls and other forms of vocabulary aids.

Selected examples that could be used for mathematics instruction are:

- posting state standards in every classroom;
- using math manipulatives to classify, reinforce, and organize key learning concepts;
- exploring simple and/or complex shapes through shape manipulatives;
- creating flash card to encourage computational fluency;
- developing logistical charts and post multi-step problem-solving process posters; and
- promoting number and symbol recognition through visual and tactile representations of abstract concepts.

Whether used for supporting the identification of students in need of RtI services or providing RtI services, **VariQuest Visual Learning Tools** can complement the assessing, teaching, and learning process.

### Promoting Positive Behavior

**Promoting Positive Behavior** - In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior; [34 CFR §300.324(a)(2)(i)] and

**Assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.** [34 CFR §300.34(c)(10)(vi)]

**Alignment:** *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* promotes positive behavior for **all** students and not just student identified as special education students. In general, the tools add an element of enrichment in classroom instruction which intrinsically motivates students and provides a feeling of satisfaction for educators.

*Positive Awards...* The *Awards Maker* helps all students make the connection between effort, achievement, and recognition. Examples of student applications are:

- recognizing individual progress with customized awards;
- providing immediate positive feedback;
- creating progress tracking awards; and
- generating stickers and success badges.

*Poster Maker...* The *Poster Maker* can be used to create positive behavior charts including charts consisting of:

- classroom chores that reinforce responsibility;
- positive character traits that reinforce respect of self, others, and property; and
- attendance and/or preparedness for the school day (supplies, homework, permission slips).

*Private Awards...* The *Awards Maker* produces stickers that can be used to privately reward students for positive behaviors. Stickers can be placed on school-to-home notes, notebooks, and other items for individual students. For students on IEPs, educators might record these behaviors to provide behavioral input at the time of the student's IEP team meeting.

### Assistive Technology Device

**Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the**

**functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device. [34 CFR §300.5]**

**Alignment:** *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* have been used to assist students with developmental disabilities. Activities have been developed specifically to address students with severe cognitive and developmental disorders and/or communication disorders that teach supplementary communication skills. Most of the activities involve giving students hands-on materials that can be manipulated, helping students with identification and recognition skills, as well as general fine motor skills. *VariQuest* has developed lessons, including extensions, based on objectives such as:

- Students will develop fine motor skills by lacing string through card.
- Students will use communication board to communicate basic needs.
- Students will use communication board to identify objects and discriminate between similarities and differences.
- Students will become familiar with the signed letters used by individuals with hearing impairments.

*VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* incorporate touch screen technology...providing students with special needs additional methods of communication and practice with 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology. Touch screen technology is known to assist students with:

- visual impairments (making it easier to use the applications);
- dexterity issues (reducing the reliance on fine motor skills); and
- autism or non-verbal concerns (fostering communication).

### Professional Development

**Professional Development - Receives high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction, before and while teaching; [34 CFR §300.18(b)(2)(i)(A)] and**

**For support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training; [34 CFR §300.704(b)(4)(i)]**

**Alignment:** *VariQuest* believes in maximizing the use of the tools to enhance teaching and learning. To accomplish this, educators can attend online webinars, review resources, and examine and download lesson plans. *VariQuest* provides a variety of times and dates for which teachers can sign-up and explore:

- *Product Training Webinars* that focus on how to use the tools effectively;
- *Application Webinars* that focus on sharing application ideas to maximize the investment; and
- *Lesson Plans* that provide ideas for integrating created designs into the curriculum.

Lesson Plans not only provide ideas for teachers, they also provide motivational activities, assessment suggestions, links to additional resources, and supplemental enrichment activities. More specifically, *VariQuest* provides teachers information in aligning instructional strategies across grade levels and curriculum areas by using graphic organizers, concept maps, and word walls to reinforce basic information.

*VariQuest* also provides literature that connects the tools to content mapping, Title I, and AYP. In addition, educators provide testimonials with descriptions on how they use their tools in their classroom.

### Acquisition of Technology

**IDEA encourages the use of technology, including technology with universal design principles and assistive technology devices, to maximize accessibility to the general education curriculum for children with disabilities. [34 CFR §300.704(b)(4)] *Special ARRA Note: ARRA suggests the use of stimulus funds to obtain state-of-the-art assistive technology devices and provide training in their use to enhance access to the general curriculum***

*for students with disabilities.*

**IDEA states: “to improve the use of technology in the classroom by children with disabilities to enhance learning.” [34 CFR §300.704(b)(4)(iv)]**

**Alignment:** *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* are easy-to-use and students can learn the technology with proficiency, increasing their feelings of self-sufficiency and accomplishment while preparing them for skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The tools encourage students to explore their own uses of technology, fostering both peer and self-learning. In addition, students reinforce the skills of following computer directions and learning and practicing how to use touch screen technology.

### Visual Impairments

**IDEA permits the use of instructional materials for students with visual impairment as stated: Visual impairment including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. [34 CRT §300.8(c)(13)]**

**Alignment:** *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* supports Individualized Education Program (IEP) requirements for visually-impaired or blind students. For the visually impaired, worksheets can be enlarged to clearly define expectations and content. In addition, kinesthetic cutouts can supplement the visual experience for students. Blind students can take advantage of the kinesthetic cutouts, for example, shapes in mathematics, letters for sound/symbol relationships, and even cutouts with white glue drops for Braille notations for the creation of study aids.

The following chart demonstrates the alignment of State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) guidance to *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools*. The guidance is listed first in blue and the alignment of *VariQuest Visual Learning Tools* to the guidance follows.

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF)	
<b>IDEA, Part B</b>	
<b>According to the SFSF guidance document, the state can determine how to spend funds remaining after the initial intent of the SFSF funding is met. One of the suggested methods is to spend the funds on activities that complement the regulatory and statutory elements of the standard funding.</b>	
<b>Alignment:</b> <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> aligns to this guidance as described in the IDEA, Part B and ARRA IDEA, Part B section of this document.	
<b>Modernization</b>	
<b>According to the SFSF guidance document, the state can determine how to spend funds remaining after the initial intent of the SFSF funding is met. One of the suggested methods is to spend the funds for modernization, renovation, and repair of public school facilities.</b>	
<b>Alignment:</b> <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> aligns to this guidance insofar as the incorporation of <i>VariQuest Visual Learning Tools</i> enhances the “modernization” of public school facilities. Modernization is not specific to IDEA.	

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