

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

Chapter 1 : Benefits of Inclusive Education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a continuum of placement options be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Not everyone is excited about bringing students with disabilities into the mainstream classroom setting. Tornillo, president of the Florida Education Association United, is concerned that inclusion, as it all too frequently is being implemented, leaves classroom teachers without the resources, training, and other supports necessary to teach students with disabilities in their classrooms. We are testing more, not less. We are locking teachers into constrained curricula and syllabi more, not less. The imprint of statewide accountability and government spending [is increasingly] based on tangible, measurable, tabulatable, numerical results. The barrage of curriculum materials, syllabi, grade-level expectations for performance, standardized achievement tests, competency tests, and so on, continue to overwhelm even the most flexible teachers. Indeed, the range of abilities is just too great for one teacher to adequately teach. Consequently, the mandates for greater academic accountability and achievement are unable to be met. Citing numerous concerns expressed by many of its national membership, the AFT has urged a moratorium on the national rush toward full inclusion. Their members were specifically concerned that students with disabilities were "monopolizing an inordinate amount of time and resources and, in some cases, creating violent classroom environments" Sklaroff, p. They further cite that when inclusion efforts fail, it is frequently due to "a lack of appropriate training for teachers in mainstream classrooms, ignorance about inclusion among senior-level administrators, and a general lack of funding for resources and training" p. One additional concern of the AFT and others Tornillo, ; Leo, is a suspicion that school administration motives for moving toward more inclusive approaches are often more of a budgetary cost-saving measure than out of a concern for what is really best for students. If students with disabilities can be served in regular classrooms, then the more expensive special education service costs due to additional personnel, equipment, materials, and classrooms, can be reduced. Regular educators are not the only ones concerned about a perceived wholesale move toward full inclusion. Some special educators and parents of students with disabilities also have reservations. The Council for Exceptional Children CEC, a large, international organization of special educators, parents, and other advocates for the disabled, issued a policy statement on inclusion at their annual convention in This statement begins with a strong endorsement for a continuum of services to be available to children, youth, and young adults with disabilities. It is only after making the point quite clear that services to the disabled, including various placement options besides the regular classroom, are to be tailored to individual student need that the policy actually addresses inclusion. The concept of inclusion is a meaningful goal to be pursued in our schools and communities. However, some parents of children with disabilities and others have serious reservations about inclusive educational practices. Their concerns are forged out of their struggles to get appropriate educational services for their children and those of others. They are concerned that, with the shift of primary responsibility for the education of these children from special education teachers to regular classroom teachers, there will be a loss of advocacy. Further, by dispersing children with special needs across the school campus and district, services and resources will be "diluted," and programming will be watered down. Indeed, like many in regular education, special education advocates assert that in some instances educational programming in a regular classroom setting may be totally inappropriate for certain individuals. They acknowledge that the ideals on which inclusion rests are laudatory. However, they remain skeptical that the present overall, broad-based capacities and attitudes of teachers and school systems toward accommodating students with disabilities into regular classrooms is adequate. They argue that the current special education system emerged precisely because of the non-adaptability of regular classrooms and that, since nothing has happened to make contemporary classrooms any more adaptable. Perhaps the greatest concern and opposition comes from many in the deaf community. Cohen is one of many who suggest that inclusion is inappropriate for most students with hearing impairments.

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

He notes that "communication among peers is crucially important to the cognitive and social development for all children" p. However, because "most deaf children cannot and will not lip-read or speak effectively in regular classroom settings He points to supportive research suggesting that greater intellectual gains are made by deaf students enrolled in schools for the hearing impaired, where a common language and culture may be shared, than for similarly disabled students in mainstream classroom settings. Even with an educational sign-language interpreter of which there is a shortage throughout the United States , students with impaired hearing miss out on many of the experiences targeted as rationales for inclusive environments by inclusion advocates e. Social, emotional, and even academic development is difficult when communication must be facilitated through an interpreter. Informal communications and friendships with peers, participation in extracurricular activities, dating, etc. Consequently, many argue that the more appropriate educational placement option for the hearing impaired is a residential school with a "community" of others similarly disabled. Lieberman points out that many advocates primarily parents for those with learning disabilities also have significant concerns about the wholesale move toward inclusion. Their concerns stem from the fact that they have had to fight long and hard for appropriate services and programs for their children. They recognize that students with learning disabilities do not progress academically without individualized attention to their educational needs. These services have evolved primarily through a specialized teacher working with these students individually or in small groups, usually in a resource room setting. Some parents of students with more severe disabilities are concerned about the opportunities their children will have to develop basic life skills in a regular classroom setting. They are also cautious about inclusion because of fears that their children will be ridiculed by other students. It is discussed under the concept of "heterogeneous grouping" rather than "inclusion. Some advocate, with research support, that gifted students are better served when they are able to work with other gifted students usually in a "pull-out" program. However, their parents and other advocates have fought for specialized services occurring in segregated settings , and they are reticent to allow what is perceived as a move backward. Input from Legislation and Litigation Published in Issues

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

Chapter 2 : Teaching Students with Disabilities | Center for Teaching | Vanderbilt University

A national push to take students with disabilities out of isolation means most now spend the majority of their days in general-education classrooms, rather than in separate special-education classes.

There are greater numbers of students with disabilities receiving their education in general education classrooms. The National Center for Education Statistics notes that the number of students with disabilities who spend most of their day in the general education classroom has gone from 33 percent in to 62 percent in Transitioning students with disabilities from self-contained special education classrooms to inclusive general education classrooms is not an overnight process. It requires thoughtful planning. Teacher training, appropriate student supports, resources, personnel, and a meaningful individual educational program need to exist prior to the new class placement. Students in the general education class might be curious about the situation, may feel anxious about having a student with disabilities in their class, or have misconceptions about students with disabilities. Here are some tips to help facilitate a smooth transition for students with disabilities to the inclusive education classroom. These tips are also helpful for preparing the general education students for their new classroom member: Establish Basic Principles Establish general concepts about students with and without disabilities through class discussions, books , movies or a guest speaker. Primarily, teach students that: Everyone wants to belong and be included Everyone is different Everyone has areas of strengths and areas of weaknesses 2. Let Each Student Share Give all students an opportunity to talk about themselves, their strengths and interests. Allow others to ask questions. Make sure you talk about the types of questions that can be asked prior to the activity. Dispell Myths Dis-spell any myths and misunderstandings about students with disabilities. Address The Challenges Address student-specific issues that are important for the class to know about in order to interact and learn alongside each other. For example, if a student has a peanut allergy, invite the class nurse in to talk about allergies and the importance of keeping peanut products out of the classroom. We will all live, shop, drive and work beside a person with a disability at some point in our life. Highlight Famous People Identify famous people with disabilities and highlight their contributions to society not as a source of inspiration but as an important to human growth. Give Disability Awareness Lessons Provide an opportunity for students to become more understanding of people with disabilities by giving disability awareness lessons. Make A Positive Classroom Community Establish and maintain a positive classroom community throughout the entire school year. Encourage respect for one another, the use of appropriate language, and pro-active social skills. Remember, that discretion should be used when discussing the needs of the student with disabilities with others. A conversation with the student prior to any of the above strategies can determine how comfortable the student is with sharing information about his or her disabilities. Latest Special Needs Products.

Chapter 3 : Including Students with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms

In , the number of students ages receiving special education services was million, or 13 percent of all public school students. Among students receiving special education services, 34 percent had specific learning disabilities. Enacted in , the Individuals with Disabilities.

This is a multi-step process: Review your curriculum to figure out which units will help you meet which year-end goals. Map out individual lessons within the units that align with these goals. For example, if you plan to have students complete a cross-curricular research project, you need to know when you will schedule a visit to the school or public library so that you can ask a parent or aide to support students with special needs.

Embrace Universal Design One of the buzzwords in contemporary education is universal design. This approach makes your curriculum accessible to all students, regardless of their backgrounds, learning styles and abilities. There are several ways for you to accomplish this feat: Relay content in diverse ways visually, verbally, written. Ask students to share what they are learning in diverse ways speaking, illustrating, writing. Utilize multiple materials to engage students software, art, theater, video, object lessons. Showing videos about the solar system. Making models of the planets. Visiting a science museum or planetarium with an astronomy display and program. Looking at books with images of the solar system. Making up songs, poems, rhymes and chants about the cosmos. Drawing or painting images of stars, meteors, galaxies and planets. Acting out a scene of astronauts in flight. However, integrating some basic, daily strategies can make a profound difference in your students. Organizing school supplies, art materials, learning centers and the classroom library teaches valuable life skills while making all students feel part of the classroom community. Being in charge of homework collection, attendance charts, computer equipment or record-keeping teaches organizational skills. Incorporating life skills training into your curriculum is not a one-time proposition.

Employ Collaborative Teaching Techniques No classroom is an island, particularly an inclusive classroom. Two or more teachers shift roles between leading whole-class instruction, observing instruction and monitoring learning. One teacher leads small-group instruction while the other teacher works with the rest of the class. This model works particularly well if a small group requires reinforcement or reteaching to master a concept. This approach functions well when teachers require a high level of focus and participation from students. This technique helps students stay on task as they complete shorter activities and transition clearly from task to task. With many students, those with special needs and otherwise, a rigid behavior management plan will not serve you in every circumstance. For example, if you have a student who has a shorter attention span due to developmental issues, it is unfair to expect that student to stay focused on seatwork for as long as students with longer attention spans. It can list, with short phrases, symbols or cutouts, how to review work, put away supplies and find an independent task to do, such as writing in a journal, drawing in a sketchpad or reading a book from the classroom library. Posting a schedule and sticking to it. Encouraging peer instruction and leadership. Using signals to quiet down, start working and put away materials. Giving students folders, labels and containers to organize supplies. Checking in with students while they work. Speaking to students privately about any concerns. Employing specific, targeted positive reinforcement when a student meets a behavioral or academic goal.

The Power of Inclusion Practicing these planning, teaching and management strategies is underscored by a recognition of the unique gifts of all your students. You model respect for and celebration of who they are as individuals. This appreciation transforms your room from a mere meeting place into a genuine community.

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

Chapter 4 : CSE/CPSE Process and IEP Development: Special Education : EMSC : NYSED

Work collaboratively with special education teacher to assist in development of a support plan that meets the needs of all students in the classroom, assist in the development of the paraeducator's schedule, and supervise the paraeducator's completion of designated activities when in the general education classroom.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA requires that a continuum of placement options be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The law also requires that: One of the educational options that is receiving increasing attention is meeting the needs of students with disabilities in the regular classroom. This digest is written for the practitioner who is working in the regular class environment with students who have disabilities. Years of research have contributed to our knowledge of how to successfully include students with disabilities in general education classes. Listed below are the activities and support systems commonly found where successful inclusion has occurred. The composite scenario below is based on reports from several teachers. It provides a brief description of how regular and special education teachers work together to address the individual needs of all of their students. Jane Smith teaches third grade at Lincoln Elementary School. Three days a week, she co-teaches the class with Lynn Vogel, a special education teacher. Their 25 students include 4 who have special needs due to disabilities and 2 others who currently need special help in specific curriculum areas. Each of the students with a disability has an IEP that was developed by a team that included both teachers. The teachers, paraprofessionals, and the school principal believe that these students have a great deal to contribute to the class and that they will achieve their best in the environment of a general education classroom. All of the school personnel have attended inservice training designed to develop collaborative skills for teaming and problem-solving. Smith and the two paraprofessionals who work in the classroom also received special training on disabilities and on how to create an inclusive classroom environment. The school principal, Ben Parks, had worked in special education many years ago and has received training on the impact of new special education developments and instructional arrangements on school administration. Parks works with the building staff to identify areas in which new training is needed. For specific questions that may arise, technical assistance is available through a regional special education cooperative. Smith and Miss Vogel share responsibility for teaching and for supervising their two paraprofessionals. In addition to the time they spend together in the classroom, they spend 1 to 4 hours per week planning instruction, plus additional planning time with other teachers and support personnel who work with their students. The teachers use their joint planning time to problem-solve and discuss the use of special instructional techniques for all students who need special assistance. Monitoring and adapting instruction for individual students is an ongoing activity. For some students, preorganizers or chapter previews are used to bring out the most important points of the material to be learned; for other students, new vocabulary words may need to be highlighted or reduced reading levels may be required. Some students may use special activity worksheets, while others may learn best by using media or computer-assisted instruction. In the classroom, the teachers group students differently for different activities. Sometimes, the teachers and para-professionals divide the class, each teaching a small group or tutoring individuals. They use cooperative learning projects to help the students learn to work together and develop social relationships. Peer tutors provide extra help to students who need it. Students without disabilities are more than willing to help their friends who have disabilities, and vice versa. While the regular classroom may not be the best learning environment for every child with a disability, it is highly desirable for all who can benefit. It provides contact with age peers and prepares all students for the diversity of the world beyond the classroom. Collaboration Skills for School Professionals. The School Administrator," 2, The Council for Exceptional Children. How it really works. A guide to planning inclusive education. Policies and practices that work. Further, this site is using a privately owned and located server. This is NOT a government sponsored or government sanctioned site.

Chapter 5 : The Power of High Expectations in Special Education

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Washington, D.C. September More and more high school students with disabilities are planning to continue their education in postsecondary schools, including vocational and career schools, two- and four- year colleges, and universities.

For those students with disabilities, the classroom setting may present certain challenges that need accommodation and consideration. Terminology Types of Disabilities Access to Resources Confidentiality and Disclosure Inclusive Design Learn More References Terminology In order to create an inclusive classroom where all students are respected, it is important to use language that prioritizes the student over his or her disability. Disability labels can be stigmatizing and perpetuate false stereotypes where students who are disabled are not as capable as their peers. In general, it is appropriate to reference the disability only when it is pertinent to the situation. For more information on terminology, see the guide provided by the National Center on Disability and Journalism: Types of disabilities may include: For instance, you may not know that a student has epilepsy or a chronic pain disorder unless she chooses to disclose or an incident arises. For example, if you ask the students to rearrange the desks, a student may not help because he has a torn ligament or a relapsing and remitting condition like Multiple Sclerosis. Or, a student may ask to record lectures because she has dyslexia and it takes longer to transcribe the lectures. Access to Resources When students enter the university setting, they are responsible for requesting accommodations through the appropriate office. This may be the first time the student will have had to advocate for himself. For first year students, this may be a different process than what they experienced in high school with an Individualized Education Program IEP or Section plan. Department of Education has a pamphlet discussing rights and responsibilities for students entering postsecondary education: As part of the required paperwork, the student must present documentation from an appropriate medical professional indicating the diagnosis of the current disability and, among other things, the types of accommodations requested. All medical information provided is kept confidential. Only the approved accommodation arrangements are discussed with faculty and administrators on an as-needed basis. It is important to note that this process takes time and certain accommodations, like an interpreter, must be made within a certain time period. However, students with disabilities may feel nervous to disclose sensitive medical information to an instructor. Often, students must combat negative stereotypes about their disabilities held by others and even themselves. Similarly students with physical disabilities face damaging and incorrect stereotypes, such as that those who use a wheelchair must also have a mental disability. Your attitudes and values not only influence the attitudes and values of your students, but they can affect the way you teach, particularly your assumptions about studentsâ€which can lead to unequal learning outcomes for those in your classes. Strategies A statement in your syllabus inviting students with disabilities to meet with you privately is a good step in starting a conversation with those students who need accommodations and feel comfortable approaching you about their needs. Here are two sample statements: The Department of Spanish and Portuguese is committed to making educational opportunities available to all students. In order for its faculty members to properly address the needs of students who have disabilities, it is necessary that those students approach their instructors as soon as the semester starts, preferably on the first day of class. They should bring an official letter from the Opportunity Development Center explaining their specific needs so that their instructors are aware of them early on and can make the appropriate arrangements. If you have a learning or physical disability, or if you learn best utilizing a particular method, please discuss with me how I can best accommodate your learning needs. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all learning styles. However, I can only do this successfully if you discuss your needs with me in advance of the quizzes, papers, and notebooks. I will maintain the confidentiality of your learning needs. If appropriate, you should contact the Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services Department to get more information on accommodating disabilities. Provide an easily understood and detailed course syllabus. Make

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

the syllabus, texts, and other materials available before registration. If materials are on-line, consider colors, fonts, and formats that are easily viewed by students with low vision or a form of color blindness. Clearly spell out expectations before the course begins e. Make sure that all students can access your office or arrange to meet in a location that is more accessible. Think of multiple ways students may be able to participate without feeling excluded. Inclusive Design One of the common concerns instructors have about accommodations is whether they will change the nature of the course they are teaching. However, accommodations are designed to give all students equal access to learning in the classroom. When planning your course, consider the following questions from Scott, What is the purpose of the course? What methods of instruction are absolutely necessary? What outcomes are absolutely required of all students? What methods of assessing student outcomes are absolutely necessary? What are acceptable levels of performance on these student outcome measures Answering these questions can help you define essential requirements for you and your students. For instance, participation in lab settings is critical for many biology classes; however, is traditional class lecture the only means of delivering instruction in a humanities or social science course? Additionally, is an in-class written essay exam the only means of evaluating a student who has limited use of her hands? Could an in-person or taped oral exam accomplish the same goal? Instead of adapting or retrofitting a course to a specific audience, Universal Design emphasizes environments that are accessible to everyone regardless of ability. By focusing on these design principles when crafting a syllabus, you may find that most of your course easily accommodates all students. For instance, a syllabus with clear course objectives, assignment details, and deadlines helps students plan their schedules accordingly. Similarly, some instructional material may be difficult for students with certain disabilities. For instance, when showing a video in class you need to consider your audience. Students with visual disabilities may have difficulty seeing non-verbalized actions; while those with disorders like photosensitive epilepsy may experience seizures with flashing lights or images; and those students with hearing loss may not be able to hear the accompanying audio. Additionally, it allows other students the opportunity to engage with the material in multiple ways as needed. Additionally, the EAD office can help students and instructors address any questions or concerns they may have Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33 1 , Universal design in higher education: From principles to practice. Accommodationsâ€™or just good teaching?: Strategies for teaching college students with disabilities. Stereotypes of individuals with learning disabilities: Journal of Learning Disabilities, 43 6 , Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities: Issues Related to Empowerment and Self-Determination. Developmental Disabilities Bulletin, 38 , Accommodating College Students with Learning Disabilities: How Much Is Enough?. Innovative Higher Education, 22 2 , Universal Design for Instruction. Remedial and Special Education, 24 6 , Universal Instruction Design in Higher Education: An Approach for Inclusion. Students with disabilities preparing for postsecondary education: Know your rights and responsibilities. Toward an Accessible Pedagogy: Technical Communication Quarterly, 19 4 , Students with Asperger syndrome: A guide for college personnel.

Chapter 6 : Collaboration/Cooperative Teaching | Special Connections

This website provides strategies and resources for making science accessible for all students, including those with disabilities. By clicking on one of the links below, you can find general information, teaching strategies, and resources on working with students with disabilities in the science classroom.

For me, these are very personal issues. Growing up, my older brother Vance had significant intellectual and developmental disabilities. At the time, there were few resources or services for the individuals with disabilities or their families. My parents had two options: By , the available community-based options had developed to the point where he could move into a group home with three other adults and a live-in staff. He remained there until he passed away in Changing Policies, Changing Attitudes Thankfully, the world for students and adults with disabilities today looks much different than the one my brother grew up in. The key concept in this shift is in the name of the organization I have the privilege of directing, the Institute on Community Integration. This shift towards integrated, community-based services and supports for children, youth and adults with disabilities is all around us. Special education students now are encouraged and empowered to earn a diploma and pursue post-secondary education. More Work to Be Done Despite all these positive changes, we still have significant work to do in improving our special education practices and improving outcomes for students and adults with disabilities. In most key measures, our special education students still lag behind their peers. The dropout rate for students with disabilities is twice that of the general high school population. Special education students are three times less likely to pursue post-secondary education. Perhaps the most troubling statistic is that fewer than half of individuals with disabilities who exit our public schools are fully employed even one or two years out from their special education program. Though I believe we are headed in the right direction, statistics like these are why we continue to look for opportunities to create open communities in which people with disabilities can have real jobs, live in real homes and participate in the culture of a community just like anyone else. Improving outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities once they leave the educational system is one of the reasons we worked on the National Longitudinal Transition Study with Mathematica Policy Research , Inc. This study included 12, students with and without disabilities to develop a better understanding of their educational experience and post-school aspirations. In fact, 86 percent of students in special education have mild disabilities and function much like anyone else in society. What they primarily lack is the self-confidence and support to plot their own course in life. As we move forward as a nation and a state, we need to continue to maintain high expectations for students with disabilities. Secondly, as we evolve public policy, we must consider students with disabilities in shaping these policies. Finally, we need to consider how we are preparing special education students to be self-advocates in their adult lives. Beyond academic achievement, we need to teach them the ability to leave school and be self-directed “ to identify and pursue opportunities. Those are skills necessary to becoming a successful adult and making good decisions as you move forward in life. Empowering them to succeed and live independently has been our mission for the past three decades.

Chapter 7 : Support and Advice for General Education Teachers on Inclusion

disabilities cannot receive individualized supports in general education classrooms. Outcomes for Students with Disabilities: Most research studies examining educational outcomes have found positive effects for inclusion.

However, what constitutes a team often varies from teacher to teacher and even from school to school. Despite the increasing popularity of this service delivery model, the field currently lacks a strong empirical database on the overall effectiveness of this model. Research has been limited to case studies, observations, survey research, and reports from teachers involved in the process. Nonetheless, from the work currently completed, a number of benefits are presented in the literature including: Within the research literature on co-teaching, several common themes emerge that are critical for this model to be successfully implemented. These themes focus on a need for communication between co-teachers, administrative support, similar philosophies, and planning time. Co-teaching is typically perceived as two educational professionals working together to service a group of heterogeneous learners. The most common teams of educators found to engage in co-teaching relationships are: These teams may have a long-term agenda for working together an entire academic year or short-term agendas such as completing a unit together or preparing students for some specific skills e. Despite the numerous co-teaching relationships that can exist, for the purpose of this module, the examples will focus on collaboration between general and special education teachers in the general education classroom. If you have other types of relationships in your school, then simply reflect on how those roles relate to the ones described. What does co-teaching look like? The literature illustrates that when two professionals work together 5 types of co-teaching emerge. These 5 models were introduced in the literature in and continue to be refined and further developed by researchers in the field. Remember, the jury is still out on the effectiveness of co-teaching, but research has shown that when clear expectations and meaningful use of the skills of both educators are not evident, this model can be ineffective in both the eyes of the teachers involved and in relation to the ever increasing pressure of measuring student learning. With this caution in mind, this module will focus on how to increase the effectiveness of this model and provide tools that can be used to increase teacher satisfaction and to emphasize a stronger focus on student learning outcomes. Here are some things to consider about co-teaching at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. A barrier that exists across all levels is finding time to plan. The following discussion on various grade level information is provided to assist with finding time across grade levels. Elementary School The primary benefit of co-teaching at the elementary level is that students with disabilities typically are taught by one teacher and may visit other teachers for specials. The downside of co-teaching at the elementary level is that most students with disabilities have deficits in the area of reading and often reading is scheduled for all grade levels in the morning. If only one or two special educators are employed at the school, then co-teaching in the area of reading can be very challenging to schedule. One thing that teachers should keep in mind is that collaboration with a teacher may not need to be at the same time every day or even for 5 days a week. For example, teachers at this level have found greater success in trying to work 2 days a week in one classroom and 3 days in another and the next week switch. Another strategy to consider at this level is to have a floating planning period. If the special educator has a different planning period each day of the week, this structure allows him to work 4 days a week with the general educators but also provides for planning periods across the day instead of only one specific period. Middle School If you are functioning as a true middle school, then read on for ideas. If your school follows more of a junior high model, then the ideas suggested in the high school section are better to consider. At this level several issues come into play related to co-teaching that are primarily centered on student and teacher issues. For teachers, the primary issue is making sure that "true" collaboration is occurring between content area teachers and special educators. In many middle schools, the special educators are a team and 4 content teachers are a team. In a strong, co-taught middle school setting, special educators are assigned typically by grade level to be a member of the interdisciplinary team. Also at this level, as is true at all levels,

students with disabilities who are included in a co-taught setting must feel positive about themselves. Some ideas to address this might be to have a resource period once a day in which students are given a 5-minute overview of the content they will be learning the next day. For students at this level, positive self-esteem is critical, and helping students feel like they are ahead of their class instead of behind their peers can be helpful.

High School At this level the structure can be the most accommodating for co-teaching and yet the most challenging to schedule. If your school is using a block schedule, this structure can be of great benefit with a more hands-on learning environment for students with disabilities. However, for the special educators, this may mean that they are limited in the number of classes that can be covered in this type of structure. Therefore, what might need to occur is splitting time between 2 blocks or attending one class 3 days a week and another class 2 days a week. The other barrier that occurs at the high school level is the lack of interdisciplinary planning. Often the structures in many high schools focus on planning within content teams also true in a junior high model, which makes learning at times disjointed and causes the special educator to need to work across numerous content teams. This disjointedness may limit the planning time the special educator can find with the general educator and can be a huge barrier if the special educator has limited content knowledge. One idea to consider at this level is to start assigning special educators by content areas instead of by disability which requires them to teach across content areas. In this time of high stakes testing, this type of structure can provide a more effective model for special educators to become skilled in content areas to ensure students are successful in meeting state competency requirements. This type of structure also allows for greater parity between special educators and content specific teachers.

Keys to Successful Co-Teaching As with any teaching technique, the skill of the teacher is as important, if not more important, than the technique. However, in co-teaching there are at a minimum three critical issues that teams should address prior to starting the process. If you are currently co-teaching, you may want to reflect on these issues to refine what you are already doing.

Planning - This seems obvious, but co-teaching teams need time to plan and a commitment to the planning process. If one teacher shows up on time and the other always arrives late, then this lack of commitment can hinder the teaming process. At a minimum, teams need 10 minutes per lesson Dieker to plan. This figure was gathered from teams not in their first year of teaming. Therefore, in the first year, additional time for planning may be needed. Teams should not start their planning period with kid specific issues. Kid specific issues should be addressed throughout the planning process or after the lesson planning is completed. Remember, if no planning time is available, this will limit the types of co-teaching that can be used in your school.

Disposition - The philosophy of the two teachers working together is important to consider. If one teacher believes all students should be included and appropriate accommodations are essential, while the other believes that having high standards means treating all students the same, these differences can greatly hinder the co-teaching process. Before starting the co-teaching process, discussing your perspectives on issues such as fairness, grading, behavior management, and philosophy of teaching are important in order to become an effective team.

Evaluation - This area is one that is lacking in many individual classrooms and in many schools which have adopted a co-teaching approach. If co-teaching is happening school-wide, then a systematic method should be used to evaluate both teacher satisfaction and student learning with this model. If teachers are working in a team setting, then at least every 4 weeks, they should set aside a few minutes to discuss two critical questions: If such issues arise, it does not necessarily mean that co-teaching should not continue, but modifications and adjustments should be an expected part of the co-teaching process.

Barriers to Effectiveness Several things can stand in the way of effective teaching in general. However, some issues that are unique or critical to the co-teaching process are described below with some suggestions as to how to address these issues.

Time - The amount of time to plan, the time spent developing a school-wide support structure for co-teaching, the time spent to prepare the students, and the time teachers are given to develop a personal as well as a professional relationship can all greatly impact the co-teaching process. This statement does not mean that co-teaching has to take more time, but initially the time must be dedicated to create a school and classroom that support teaching teams as well as including

students. Leadership must either lead teachers in using this type of model or must empower teachers to develop their own skills. Also critical to making this type of structure work school-wide is that the schedules of students with disabilities and co-taught teams should be created first, and then other activities must fill in around these important structures. No matter how creative, a limited amount of time or structure for this process can jeopardize the success of this model. Grading - Just as the time and structure must be determined and scheduled prior to the start of a co-teaching relationship, the same should hold true for grading. Co-teaching teams must determine prior to the start of the semester how they will grade students with diverse learning needs in their classrooms. Other ideas for grading are provided below, but the most important variable to remember is to determine how students will be evaluated prior to the start of the semester instead of at the end of the grading period. Student Readiness - Even 10 years ago many students with disabilities were not included into the general education curriculum. They were often pulled out and taught separate skills or curriculum. It is important to remember that simply including students into general education co-taught settings may not ensure their success. One of the struggles that teachers at upper grade levels must acknowledge is that many students with disabilities have received a disjointed education and may have large gaps in their knowledge base. Just as teachers take the time to prepare themselves for a co-teaching relationship, this same type of preparation may be needed to assist students with disabilities who will be included in the class who have either academic or behavioral gaps compared to their peers. Teacher Readiness - Even in the strongest schools with the strongest teachers, resistance to a co-teaching model can occur because teachers often are considered to be autonomous. The best way to address a school-wide co-teaching model is to let teachers know preferably using a family model that they will be co-teaching next year. Then allowing teachers collective autonomy to design models or structures that will work for them but using collective accountability that these structures must show teachers should be allowed collective autonomy to design models or structures that will work for them, along with collective accountability which shows how they are using co-teaching to ensure all students are in their least restrictive environment and making strong achievement gains. High Stakes Testing - At the core for everyone at every grade level in every district is the issue of how co-teaching may impact testing. As mentioned earlier, clear evidence does not indicate a conclusive outcome for co-teaching, but with that said, some things are critical to consider in relation to the impact of co-teaching on standardized assessment. First, any initiative that is implemented must be done in a careful and planned manner to ensure the success of all students. For example, if 15 students with the same disability are placed into a classroom so that co-teaching can occur, how will this impact the other students in that class? Research clearly indicates that heterogeneous learning communities are the most productive, yet many times when we include students with disabilities, this factor is quickly forgotten. If students with disabilities are included without sufficient supports, this is not only against the law but will ensure failure of the co-teaching relationship. Third, is ongoing evaluation and data being gathered that reflect the intent of the co-taught setting? Whether co-teaching is occurring at a classroom or school-wide level, data on behavioral, academic, and social skills of all students must be gathered and assessed on an ongoing basis. If this does not occur, then waiting until the local or state assessment indicates that students are failing is too late. Fourth, as data is assessed, school leaders need to look across the data and within the data. Are students in a specific quartile moving up for the first time? Over and over again students who are considered "at-risk" but do not qualify for special services talk about their feeling of success for the "first" time in co-taught settings. Finally, listen to the data and the students. Summary Like any educational practice, co-teaching can be successful if implemented in a school that embraces the philosophy of inclusion, by teachers who have had time to define their roles and are given continued time to plan. In addition, the students with disabilities who will be served in the co-taught setting need to be prepared for this change of service delivery. Finally, administrators and teachers must develop tools to evaluate the success of all students in this model if they are to measure their success and to make changes when co-teaching is not working. In the following section there are numerous tools that can assist you in thinking about your school, your classroom, and most importantly your students in

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

attempting to create the most successful co-taught environment for all students.

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

Chapter 8 : Including Students with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms. ERIC Digest

Teaching Students with Disabilities. There is a newer version of this teaching guide. Visit [Creating Accessible Learning Environments](#) for the most recent guide on the topic. by Danielle Picard, Graduate Teaching Fellow Print version Students of all abilities and backgrounds want classrooms that are inclusive and convey respect.

The law also requires that: Years of research have contributed to our knowledge of how to successfully include students with disabilities in general education classes. Listed below are the activities and support systems commonly found where successful inclusion has occurred. Attitudes and Beliefs The regular teacher believes that the student can succeed. School personnel are committed to accepting responsibility for the learning outcomes of students with disabilities. School personnel and the students in the class have been prepared to receive a student with disabilities. Parents are informed and support program goals. Special education staff are committed to collaborative practice in general education classrooms. Services and physical accommodations Services needed by the student are available e. School Support The principal understands the needs of students with disabilities. Adequate numbers of personnel, including aides and support personnel, are available. Adequate staff development and technical assistance, based on the needs of the school personnel, are being provided e. Appropriate policies and procedures for monitoring individual student progress, including grading and testing, are in place. Collaboration Special educators are part of the instructional or planning team. Teaming approaches are used for problem-solving and program implementation. Regular teachers, special education teachers, and other specialists collaborate e. Instructional Methods Teachers have the knowledge and skills needed to select and adapt curricula and instructional methods according to individual student needs. A variety of instructional arrangements are available e. Teachers foster a cooperative learning environment and promote socialization. A Sample Scenario Classrooms that successfully include students with disabilities are designed to welcome diversity and to address the individual needs of all students, whether they have disabilities or not. The composite scenario below is based on reports from several teachers. It provides a brief description of how regular and special education teachers work together to address the individual needs of all of their students. Jane Smith teaches third grade at Lincoln Elementary School. Three days a week, she co-teaches the class with Lynn Vogel, a special education teacher. Their 25 students include 4 who have special needs due to disabilities and 2 others who currently need special help in specific curriculum areas. Each of the students with a disability has an IEP that was developed by a team that included both teachers. The teachers, paraprofessionals, and the school principal believe that these students have a great deal to contribute to the class and that they will achieve their best in the environment of a general education classroom. All of the school personnel have attended inservice training designed to develop collaborative skills for teaming and problem-solving. Smith and the two paraprofessionals who work in the classroom also received special training on disabilities and on how to create an inclusive classroom environment. The school principal, Ben Parks, had worked in special education many years ago and has received training on the impact of new special education developments and instructional arrangements on school administration. Parks works with the building staff to identify areas in which new training is needed. For specific questions that may arise, technical assistance is available through a regional special education cooperative. Smith and Miss Vogel share responsibility for teaching and for supervising their two paraprofessionals. In addition to the time they spend together in the classroom, they spend 1 to 4 hours per week planning instruction, plus additional planning time with other teachers and support personnel who work with their students. The teachers use their joint planning time to problem-solve and discuss the use of special instructional techniques for all students who need special assistance. Monitoring and adapting instruction for individual students is an ongoing activity. For some students, preorganizers or chapter previews are used to bring out the most important points of the material to be learned; for other students, new vocabulary words may need to be highlighted or reduced reading levels may be required. Some students may use special activity worksheets, while others may learn best by using

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

media or computer-assisted instruction. In the classroom, the teachers group students differently for different activities. Sometimes, the teachers and para-professionals divide the class, each teaching a small group or tutoring individuals. They use cooperative learning projects to help the students learn to work together and develop social relationships. Peer tutors provide extra help to students who need it. Students without disabilities are more than willing to help their friends who have disabilities, and vice versa. While the regular classroom may not be the best learning environment for every child with a disability, it is highly desirable for all who can benefit. It provides contact with age peers and prepares all students for the diversity of the world beyond the classroom. Collaboration Skills for School Professionals. The Council for Exceptional Children. How it really works. A guide to planning inclusive education. Policies and practices that work. Enter the periodical title within the "Get Permission" search field. To translate this article, contact permissions ascd. Learn more about our permissions policy and submit your request online.

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

Chapter 9 : Inclusion: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions from the NEA - Wrightslaw

In fact, teachers in general education classrooms, even those viewed as "the cream," make minimal accommodations for students with learning disabilities and tend to sustain only those they feel benefit their entire class (e.g., graphic organizers make a topic clearer for all, extra practice helps everyone).

The IEP development process and implementation need to be premised on the research and experience that have shown that to improve results for students with disabilities, schools must: Have high expectations for students with disabilities; Ensure their access in the general education curriculum to the maximum extent possible; Strengthen the role of parents and take steps to ensure that families have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home; Ensure that special education is a service, rather than a place where students are sent; Provide appropriate special education services, aids and supports in the general education classroom, whenever appropriate; Ensure that all those who work with students with disabilities have the skills and knowledge necessary to: Help these students meet developmental goals and, to the maximum extent possible, the challenging expectations established for all children, and Prepare them to lead productive, independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible; Provide high quality research-based instruction and supports to all students who are experiencing learning difficulties to reduce the need to label children as having disabilities in order to address their learning needs; and Focus resources on teaching and learning. Because special education is a service and not a place, a high quality and effective special education program relies in great part on the quality of the school district as a whole, including, but not limited to the following: Administrative support for the CSE process, including access to training necessary for CSE members to understand and follow through on their responsibilities. Administrative support to ensure implementation of CSE recommendations. A philosophy and practices that support inclusion of students with disabilities in all buildings and classrooms. Effective communication systems among school principals, CSE chairpersons, special and general education teachers and service providers. Knowledgeable and qualified personnel to conduct individual evaluations, provide special education, and instruct students in core curriculum. Guide how the resources of a school will be configured. Identify how students will be incrementally prepared for adult living. Ensure that each student with a disability has access to the general education curriculum and is provided the appropriate learning opportunities, accommodations, adaptations, specialized services and supports needed for the student to progress toward achieving the learning standards and to meet his or her unique needs related to the disability. The IEP development process is a student-centered process. No other issues, agenda or purposes should interfere with this process. Individuals serving on CSEs can articulate their role and execute their responsibilities on the Committee. The IEP must be developed in such a way that it is a useful document that guides instruction and provides a tool to measure progress. Results of individual evaluations provide the information the CSE needs to make its recommendations. IEP development occurs in a structured, sequential manner. IEPs include documentation of recommendations in a clear and specific manner so that the IEP can be implemented consistent with the CSE recommendations. Annual goals are identified to enable the student to progress in the general education curriculum and meet other disability related needs. The CSE determines how student needs will be met in the least restrictive environment. The CSE demonstrates knowledge of grade level general education curricular and behavioral expectations and benchmarks. Professional development is provided to CSE members to ensure their understanding of their roles and responsibilities on the CSE. The district understands its child find responsibilities to identify students whose needs may need to be addressed by the CSE. Ongoing progress monitoring and formative assessment of student progress, goals and objectives are consistently implemented. Revisions to the IEP are made based on data indicating changes in student needs or abilities. Alignment between the written document and actual practice is evident. Did the CSE obtain a comprehensive individual evaluation of the student in all areas of the suspected disability? Is all evaluation information and prereferral

DOWNLOAD PDF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

information considered and discussed at the meeting? Does the CSE have information about the general education curriculum, context, services and assessments to support decision making to make meaningful recommendations for each student?