

Nuts and Bolts of Special Education for School Administrators

Corrigan Rutherford

Hope Batten

November 2, 2022



OUR WHY

YOUR WHY



YOU WILL LEAVE WITH...

- Current trends/pitfalls in special education
- Administrators' role in the IEP process and at IEP meetings
- Questions to ask your special education teacher(s)
- Ways to support your teachers
- Tips on navigating tough cases
- A list of needed important easily accessible documents



Herding Cats



It CAN be done

ICANHASCHEEZBURGER.COM 🍪 🍪 🍪

CURRENT STATE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- All students have increased needs
- Exodus of special education teachers—49 states and D.C. reported shortages 21-22
- Decrease of graduates from special education teacher prep programs
- Increased sped population—percentage of students who were served under IDEA was higher in 2020–21 (15 percent) than in 2019–20 (14 percent), continuing the upward trend)
- You are not alone!



AVOID PITFALLS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Follow timelines.
- Obtain and consider current data when making changes.
- Ensure parental input is considered.
- Document services and accommodations. “If it’s not documented,
_____.”
- Must be in least restrictive environment.
- Implement IEP as it is written.
- If removed from class, document!
- [Follow Disciplinary Removal Process](#)



BRIEF SPECIAL EDUCATION REMINDERS

- The student must:
 - Have one of 13 disabilities as outlined by IDEA
 - Require specialized instruction
- Present levels of functional and academic performance drive the entire IEP
 - Provide Hope's resources/progress monitoring tools
- What does the student need to progress in the general education environment?
 - Specialized instruction
 - Accommodations v. Modifications



CLARITY OF ADMINISTRATORS' ROLE IN PROCESS AND AT IEP MEETINGS

- ◆ Member of IEP Team
- ◆ Ensure resources are available/can be provided to meet the the needs as outlined in the IEP
- ◆ Clarity of administrators' role at IEP meetings
 - Typically the LEA (Local Education Agent)
 - Timekeeper
 - Assist with efficient meeting, adhering to agenda
 - “Gatekeeper”
 - Don't be shy to table the meeting
 - Assist with timekeeping, adhering to agenda

REMINDER: Be present during meetings—start to finish



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

- How many referrals have been made? Are we meeting the 60 day timeline?
- Any upcoming re-evals? Evals?
- How many annual reviews each month?
- How is progress monitoring going?
- How can you be better supported?
- Have any students on your caseload been suspended repeatedly?



WAYS TO SUPPORT ALL OF YOUR TEACHERS

- Know who your high flyers are
 - Become familiar with behavior (triggers, travel patterns, sub presence)
- Facilitate positive ways to interact
- Provide uninterrupted time to collaborate as a student team (sped and gen ed)
- Encourage involvement in professional organizations
 - [AMLE](#)~Association of Middle Level Educators
 - [CEC](#)~Council for Exceptional Children
 - [NASSP](#)~National Association of Secondary School Principals
 - [ASCD](#)~Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development
 - [NAGC](#)~National Association of the Gifted Child



WAYS TO SUPPORT ALL OF YOUR TEACHERS

- Relationships with local schools, other charter schools
- Provide opportunity for sped teacher to share general sped information related to your school with the entire faculty
- [Share informational handouts](#)
- “Strength in community”
- Every kid belongs to every adult in the building.
- Clearly written and known processes for daily SPED operations
 - Ex. Who adds/removes access of teachers to sped student? Who ensures Enrich access is accurate? Who disseminate accommodations information to teachers/staff? Who provides testing coordinator with testing accommodations?



WAYS TO SUPPORT ALL OF YOUR TEACHERS CONT.

- Online Resources--Peer Comparison
 - [AIMSWeb Plus](#)
 - [Easy CBM](#)
- Online Resources--No Peer Comparison
 - [Intervention Central](#)

**Note: Norms stop at 8th grade for AIMSweb and Easy CBM



TIPS ON NAVIGATING TOUGH CASES

- Use student's support system
- Use data from
 - [Preference Inventory](#)
 - [Motivation Assessment Scale](#)
- Ensure each student has a preferred adult
- Make positive deposits as often as possible (use calendar)
- Contact prior school/administrator/teacher
- Familiarize yourself with school procedures and law
- Ask questions of authorizer; proactive approach far more effective
- [Sample Agenda](#)



EASILY ACCESSIBLE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Caseload, including students with BIPs
- Testing Accommodations
- Service Delivery Schedule
- Service Delivery Log (Utilize PS?)
- Documentation to support that IEP team members have been notified of students' plan and accommodations
- Documentation of accommodations provided (PS Comment Section)
- DO NOT SOLELY rely on Enrich
- Management suggestions: three ring binder with a tab for each student, digital folder each student, separate file folder for each student.



IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Have and know your process.
- Review and revise your process.
- Rely on the process, not the individual.
- Be proactive and request help.
- Resources
 - Authorizer site
 - [SCDE Office of Special Education Services](#)
 - [General Supervision Guide](#)
 - [US Department of Education–Office of Special Education Programs](#)



Park any thoughts on the way out...

Please share feedback
AND/OR
topic you would have liked included!

