Leading Special Education at the School Site:
A Comprehensive Workshop for Principals

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Part One:

Principal’s Tips for Special Education Law
Reasons

• Hearing Officer
• 580 hearings
• Principals serving as LEA’s
• Testifying without a clue
• Making things worse
More Reasons-National Survey

- National Survey of state requirements
- All 50 and District of Columbia
- Return rate 98%
- Web search of state depts of ed
- Phone interviews with ambiguous states (n=49)
National Survey (cont)

- I am interested in certification/competency standards necessary to become a principal in <state>. I am particularly interested in any competency/class work standards related to special education. Could you please send me a copy of requirements necessary for principal certification?
National Survey (cont)

- Realization important for some
- 17 states-intro to sped
- 2 states-mainstreaming
- 9 states-other competencies
- 22 states-no competencies/coursework
Recent Survey from CASE

Last Week’s Polling Question:
In your district, who supervises the special education teachers?

- Principal: 57%
- Special Education Supervisor: 18%
- Program Specialist: 0%
- Master Teacher: 0%
- Combination of General Ed and Special Ed administrators/ coordinators: 25%
- Other: 0%
## Six Principles of IDEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle of IDEA</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Zero Reject</td>
<td>Locate, identify, &amp; provide services to all eligible students with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection in Evaluation</td>
<td>Conduct an assessment to determine if a student has an IDEA related disability and if he/she needs special education services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free Appropriate Public Education</td>
<td>Develop and deliver an individualized education program of special education services that confers meaningful educational benefit.</td>
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<td>Least Restrictive Environment</td>
<td>Educate students with disabilities with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate.</td>
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<td>Procedural Safeguards</td>
<td>Comply with the procedural requirements of the IDEA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental Participation</td>
<td>Collaborate with parents in the development and delivery of their child's special education program.</td>
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Eligibility

• 1. Special Ed!
• 2. Be thorough, be accurate
• 3. Timelines
• 4. The right people
• 5. Parents!
• 6. Don’t fight over disability label
• 7. More than test scores
More eligible

8. School performance is more than just educational performance
10. Use doctors
11. Treatment centers
IEP Purposes

- Communication
- Management
- Accountability
- Compliance and monitoring
- Evaluation
The IEP Mandate

• An IEP is a statement of a student’s special education and related services

• The IEP must be in effect by the beginning of the school year

• LEAs have sole responsibility for development and implementation

• The IEP team meeting
  – Discusses assessment results
  – Develops an educational program
  – Determines placement
Important

• All unique needs arising from the disability must be addressed

• The IEP is individualized

• If a service is needed it must be provided

• IEPs are a legally binding commitment by the LEA

• The IEP must have all the required components

• The IEP must describe all services
Review IEP’s at least annually.
Review more frequently if the student is having problems.
Every reporting period (most likely quarterly) consider an IEP meeting for the students not making progress
Provide a written notice to the parents before the meeting at the beginning of the meeting. If there is a difference between what was sent to the parents and the list of who is actually attending and the purpose, provide an amended notice to the parents.*

* keep a copy.
The invite notice provided to the parents only needs to list district invitees, the parents, and possibly the student. Make sure the invite states the parents can bring others to the meeting.
After providing the parents a draft, ask for feedback from all and state the IEP has not been finalized, and spend time on the parts where there might be disagreement or there needs some modification. Do not spend time on agreed upon parts.
When a parent requests a specific service the district does not feel is necessary to provide FAPE, state this service is not necessary for the student to receive an appropriate education. Make sure you SERIOUSLY review the request and what you are providing is FAPE.
IEP’s do not go longer than a year!
IEP

• 1. Words to use (and mean)
• 2. Implement
• 3. Parents!
• 4. Educationally suitable
• 5. Check or internal audit
• 6. Implementers
• 7. Copy and paste
More IEP

• 8. Vote v. consensus
• 9. Do not segregate
• 10. Costs
• 11. Parents requests for private
• 12. Use your words very carefully
Bi-Weekly

bi-weekly
/biˈweklɪ/

*adjective & adverb*

1. appearing or taking place every two weeks or twice a week. "a biweekly bulletin"

*noun*

1. a periodical that appears every two weeks or twice a week.
Procedural Safeguards

• 1. Draft IEP’s! Draft placements!
• 2. Keep meeting notes
• 3. Kill trees
• 4. Prior written notice
• 5. Allow parents quick access to records
• 6. Quick response to IEE requests
• 7. Mediation/IEP Facilitation
• 8. Stay put. But move when necessary.
ESY

- Make a determination in February to avoid comp ed claims later
- Document discussion
- Not just for ed services, but regression and recoupment
- No cut and paste services
Transition

• 16 (or earlier is necessary)
• Get agencies involved, with parents permission
• IEP responsibilities if others don’t help
Words To Use

1. Tell us your concerns
2. Individual
3. Individualized
4. Fully-considered
More Words to Use

5. Appropriate

6. Consider

7. Meaningful

8. Progress
Again, More Words

9. This is the plan that we feel is appropriate

10. We will consider that request

11. Let us research some other options

12. We appreciate your input
Tell us about your child

The child’s NAME
General Ed Teachers
Keep The Informed

Most kids, most of the time
IEP

Give them copies of the relevant sections of the IEP

Full description of responsibilities

Include teachers in IEP goals

Ensure understanding of responsibilities
Encourage

Let teachers know they can ask for help

Check with them

Obstacles to implementation?

Problems?
Support

Provide support for the teachers

Aide? Para?

Really implement strategies in the classroom with 26 other students?
Discipline

• 1. Tell principals to check re: eligible
• 2. Manifestation v. causal
• 3. Parents!!
• 4. Bring all info on student to meeting
• 5. Bring all people to meeting
• 6. Consensus v. stonewall
• 7. Really a manifestation? Or not?
• 8. Provide services
Section 504

- Two-part test
- Parents!
- May not need accommodations but still are protected
- Students on health or medical plans eligible!
- Make all your programs accessible
- One responsible person
Finally

- Visibility
- Diversity your interests
- Active in curriculum
- Proactive in interactions
- Thick skin
- Humor
Expectations

- Happy
- Friendly
- Athletic
- Good natured
- Pretty
- Well-mannered
- Well-behaved

- Outgoing
- Smart
- Independent
- Optimistic
- Hard worker
- Enthusiastic
- Teacher pleaser
Reality

- Intellectual disability
- ADHD
- LD
- Autistic
- Deaf
- Blind/Visually Impaired
- PDD

- EBD
- At-risk
- Needy
- Teacher dislikes
- No friends
- People shun
- Lonely
- Not independent
Understanding Section 504

Important Components

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The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as “Section 504,” is a federal statute that prohibits discrimination against persons on the basis of their disability by institutions, that receive federal assistance.

Section 504’s purpose is, among other things, to assure that students with disabilities have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

If a student is covered by Section 504, the district must provide such accommodations as are necessary to ensure the student has equal access to services, programs or activities offered by the school.
# IDEA v. 504

## IDEA
- The student must have a disability (specific qualifying condition)
- Some conditions require a doctor’s certification
- The student’s disability must adversely affect educational performance
- Comprehensive educational evaluation
- Parent consent required
- Strict timelines
- Comes with Federal $$

## Section 504
- The student must have a physical or mental impairment
- Doctor’s certification not required
- The student’s disability must prevent equal access to or benefit from the school’s programs or services.
- Evaluation using relevant information from a variety of sources. Decision by a group of knowledgeable persons.
- Parent consent required
- “Reasonable” timelines
- No Federal $$
It should be noted that students who qualify for special education services would also qualify for Section 504;

However, a 504 Plan is not necessary because the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must include the needed accommodations.
How to evaluate for 504?

- Must have written parent consent for initial evaluation.
- “Evaluation” does not necessarily mean “test.”
- Evaluation refers to a gathering of data:
  - Parent
  - Medical Provider
  - Teacher(s)
  - School Nurse
  - Counselor
- Based on this information the team answers the three questions to determine eligibility.
504 evaluation questions

1. Does the student have a physical or mental impairment?
2. Does the impairment affect one or more major life activities?
3. Is the affect substantial?

In order to be eligible for a 504 plan the student must:
1 - have all three questions answered “YES” and
2 - accommodations are required to meet the student’s needs.
Mental or Physical Impairment?

- No medical diagnosis is required
  
  BUT

- If the team determines a medical assessment is necessary in order to determine if the student has a disability – then it must be done at no cost to the parent. (Parents may choose to use their own resources but if they can’t the school must pay)
Major Life Activity

- Consider **all** life activity, not just “learning”

- **Example:** A student with bone cancer – the impairment did not affect learning but affects his ability to walk, climb stairs, participate in PE, attend field trips and walk to school. Does this student qualify for a 504 Plan?
Major life activities, as defined in the Section 504 regulations at 34 C.F.R. 104.3(j)(2)(ii), include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. This list is not exhaustive. Other functions can be major life activities for purposes of Section 504. In the Amendments Act (see FAQ 1), Congress provided additional examples of general activities that are major life activities, including eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. Congress also provided a non-exhaustive list of examples of “major bodily functions” that are major life activities, such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.
Mitigating Measures

- Shall be made without regard to the positive affects of mitigating measures such as:
  - Medication, medical supplies/equipment, prosthetics, hearing aides or cochlear implants, mobility devices, low vision devices (which do not include eyeglasses or contact lenses)
  - Use of assistive technology
  - Reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aides and services
  - Learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications
Questions?

- How would the student perform without the intervention/accommodation (mitigating measure)?

- If the answer is: the student would be substantially limited – then the student would be eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan!
Temporary Impairment – must have a substantial limitation for an extended period of time (6 months or more) in order to constitute a disability.

Impairments that are episodic or in remission constitute a disability if the condition would substantially impair a major life activity when active. Have a 504 Plan in place for when the condition is active.
Accommodation Plan

What is it?

✓ A (written) plan that lists the necessary accommodations to minimize the impact of the impairment. The goal is to level the playing field and grant equal access.

✓ Accommodations, not modifications
Plan Development

Who creates it?

✓ The TEAM includes people knowledgeable of the student and their needs

✓ Consider all school environments (bus, cafeteria, playground, field trips)
504 Plan Distribution

Who gets a copy?

✓ Each teacher serving the student (don’t forget rotating classes)
✓ Student, if able to understand and self-advocate
✓ Provide the necessary pieces of the plan to people that might encounter a situation where needed.
✓ Cumulative file - so it is sent along with other records when records are requested by another school
✓ Teachers’ plan books (available to subs)
✓ Confidentiality applies
Updates

✓ Good practice is once a year
✓ If the impairment changes significantly
✓ If classes are changed or added that may have an impact on the Plan’s appropriateness/effectiveness
✓ Before transitions (Elementary to middle school, middle school to High School)
✓ When student moves in with existing plan
Any student with a Health Care Plan may also qualify for a 504 plan.

They are entitled to a 504 evaluation.

The 504 Plan may state, “See Individual Health Care Plan”. (This will allow for changes on an “as needed” basis.)
Service Animals

• Title II (2010 amendments)
  – School can ask only two questions:

  1) Is the animal required because of a disability?

  AND

  2) What work or task is the animal trained to perform?
Delivering Lack of Progress News to Parents
1. Not all students make progress

2. Still have to deliver the news
Build Early Relationships with Family

1. Try face-to-face

2. Allows for more feedback
Remove Jargon

Focus on what you can do to help
Focus on Student’s Potential Growth

The student’s disability is the beginning of the conversation
Put Student’s Progress In Context

Graphics
Visuals
Where improved
Choose Words Wisely

These are the significant issues we see

This is what we are using in the school setting
Allow Time

At the meeting
At another meeting
For one-on-one
Watch for defensiveness
Correct Misconceptions

Special education students are all bad

No progress will ever be made
Next:

Bullying and FAPE
Meaningful educational progress

1. School officials (plus the IEP team)

2. Assess the impact of bullying on the student (academic and nonacademic)

3. Meeting to determine impact on the disability, not punishment for other students
Progress

Is an evaluation necessary?

What additional information would be helpful?
Services

Additional?

Different?

Additional supervision?
Placement

Change necessary?

LRE!

Do not victimize the student any more
Prior Written Notice

Make sure parents receive written information about changes
Train Staff

Notify staff of any changes to the IEP

Notify staff of need to monitor the student
Take actions against perpetrators

Investigate ALL complaints

Take seriously
Address Problem Behaviors

Don’t wait for additional problems

Make sure students feel safe
Email
Problems and FERPA
Problems with Email
Could Be Many

Too many
Too quick
Too much
Inappropriate language
Other
Time frame

Respond in a reasonable time frame

Weekends?
Nights?
During class?
Lengthy

Set up a meeting

Waste of time to go back and forth
Inappropriate language

State will not respond to emails with such language
Too Many?

Set up a time for a regular phone conference
FERPA
Emails may be subpoenaed

Warn staff about statements about parents

IF statement made, reply stating this is inappropriate and suggest a follow-up phone conference
Learn District Policy About Email Retention

Educate staff

ALL possible for discovery
Print, file and save

Major emails from parents

Major descriptive pieces from teachers
Fulfill Records Requests

45 days

FERPA

These are all the documents maintained by the district pursuant to federal and state law. Teachers may have individual notes that are not maintained by the district.
Warning Signs

Next:

Placement Disputes
(location)
Define

IEP not same as a particular building

School selection is typically district responsibility
Explain IDEA

Can the location provide FAPE?
Parents Concerns
Predetermination?
Notify Parents

Very important
ASAP
Invite parents to visit
Close

LRE

Move back when possible

Consider natural transitions
Seek Permission to Speak to Physician

1. Monitor
2. Side effects
3. Report on behavior
Next:

Paraprofessionals
Develop a manual

First aid
Confidentiality
Accommodations
Behavior Management

Implement behavior plans

Consult with teacher

Take data
Child Development

What to expect

Strengths

Weaknesses
Stress

Very real

Little pay

Little support

Students push to the edge
Supervision

Model

Frequent observations
Next:

Parents and Boundaries
Parent spends a lot of time with the aide. Dinners. Little League. Cook outs.
Function?

To get information

Shared interests
Set Boundaries

Facebook

Cell phone numbers

NEVER OFF THE RECORD
Inform Teacher

Communications between aide and parent

Communication book? Have teacher read
Edit

Proper grammar and spelling
Limit Post-IEP Meetings

While waiting copies, say things that cause problems

Formally excuse people from the meeting
Professional Titles

Helps understand roles
Next:

Nurse Get Sick?
Develop a staffing plan

Determine coverage needs

Determine staffing responsibilities
Third Party Providers?

District has ultimate responsibility
Train a full-time nurse for the building
Work with Parents

IF child needs regular care from a nurse,
1) discuss specifics
2) Train others?
3) Parents?
General Ed Teachers
Keep Them Informed

Most kids, most of the time
IEP

Give them copies of the relevant sections of the IEP

Full description of responsibilities

Include teachers in IEP goals

Ensure understanding of responsibilities
Encourage

Let teachers know they can ask for help

Check with them

Obstacles to implementation?

Problems?
Support

Provide support for the teachers

Aide? Para?

Really implement strategies in the classroom with 26 other students?
What Principals Need to Know About Discipline and Students with Disabilities

David Bateman
Principals Role

SAFE SCHOOLS

In Loco Parentis
Zero Tolerance

1) Solve all problems?

2) Prevent all problems?

3) Teach kids what they need to know?
Principals Role
Understand what the law requires and how students with disabilities are different
Student Rights

1) Fairness
2) Nondiscriminatory Procedures
3) Due Process Rights
FAPE Requirement

School district responsibility to provide FAPE

Have student make progress!
Take DATA

Use this for programming decisions

Use this for analysis of concerns
School Wide Discipline

Follow the rules of everyone else

Purpose

Power not absolute
Students in Special Ed and Discipline

1) Different rules
2) Deserve an education
3) Balance
4) FAPE can prevent problems
Discipline Needs to be Addressed Through the IEP Process

1. Assessment data
2. Goals and objectives
3. Special ed services
4. Monitoring
Two Other Points

1. Positive behavior supports
2. Same manner as everyone else
Does the student exhibit behaviors that impede his/her learning or that of others?

PBIS

Supports
Addressing Problem Behavior

1. Document the problem
2. Do an A-B-C analysis
3. Cause problems for others?
4. Develop plan to change (either decrease or increase depending on the problem)
SWD and School Discipline

If the team decides:
  The student will be subject to the school wide discipline policy

The team may use the IEP to affirm a student will be subject to school wide discipline practices
More

Unless a disciplinary infraction is the direct result of a child’s disabilities (i.e., caused by or has a direct and substantial relationship to, or there is a direct relationship of a school’s failure to implement an IEP), the child will be disciplined in the same manner as a non-disabled child.

Well, mostly.
Honig v. Doe and Short Term Removals

Suspensions or changes of placement for not more than 10 consecutive school days are allowed.

More than 10 cumulative days in a school year may be considered a change of placement.
   Change of placement must be addressed by the IEP team (length of suspensions, proximity to each other).

After 10 days of suspension, educational services must be provided.
What Kind of Services?

Must be determined by the **IEP team**
- If under 10 cumulative days, services can be determined by an administrator and teacher

Must allow the student to:
- Receive special education and related services
- Advance appropriately to IEP goals
- Be involved in the general curriculum
Short Term Removals

as a **Red Flag**

Short-term suspensions for different incidents may be permissible as long as they do not constitute a change in placement (10 day rule)

IEP team must decide when suspensions are a change in placement
Length of removals
Proximity of removals to one another
Long Term Removals

1. Not allowed over 10 days
2. Change of placement
3. Unless parent agrees
4. Manifestation determination
Suspensions
Keep records
Tips on Discipline #1

When the parent(s) of a child and the school personnel are in agreement about the child’s change of placement after the child has violated a code of student conduct, it is not considered to be a removal under the discipline provisions if the parent(s) of a child and the school district agree to a specific change in the current educational placement of the child.
Tips on Discipline #2

When a parent consents to the initial provision of some, but not all, of the proposed special education and related services listed in a child’s initial individualized education program (IEP), the child has been determined eligible for services and is entitled to all the protections of the *IDEA*. 
Discipline Tip #3

If the child violates the school’s code of student conduct after a parent revokes consent for special education and related services under then they are non-disabled. Can be expelled.
In order to receive the protections for disciplinary purposes in 34 CFR §300.534, parents who are concerned that their child may need special education and related services must first express their concerns in writing. How are parents informed of this requirement?

- Procedural safeguards
- School web site
- Student handbook?
Discipline Tip #4
Have a disability or thought to be a child with a disability
Discipline Tip #5

If a teacher or other school personnel has specific concerns that a child may need special education and related services due to a child’s pattern of behavior, the concerns DO NOT need to be submitted in writing to school officials in order for the public agency to be deemed to have knowledge that the child is a child with a disability.

Teach ALL about the Child Find guidelines
Discipline Tip #6

The following are options available for school personnel when a student with a disability commits a serious crime, such as rape, at school or at a school function.

Must report to the appropriate authorities

Short/long term suspensions

Removal to an IAES

Serious Bodily Injury
Discipline Tip #7

What constitutes an appropriate IAES will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. An IAES must be selected so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child’s IEP.
Discipline Tip #8

Home instruction CANNOT be the sole option recommended for IAES
Discipline Tip #9

How can an IEP address behavior?

When a child’s behavior impedes the child’s learning or that of others, the IEP Team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior. Additionally, the Team may address the behavior through annual goals in the IEP. The child’s IEP may include modifications in his or her program, support for his or her teachers, and any related services necessary to achieve those behavioral goals. If the child needs a BIP to improve learning and socialization, the BIP can be included in the IEP and aligned with the goals in the IEP.
Parents and IEE’s

If a parent disagrees with the results of an FBA, may the parent obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at public expense?

• Yes.
  • But not absolute.
What occurs if there is no agreement on whether a child’s behavior was or was not a manifestation of his or her disability?

1) The public agency must make the determination and provide the parent with prior written notice.

2) The parent of the child with a disability has the right to exercise his or her procedural safeguards by requesting mediation and/or a due process hearing to resolve a disagreement about the manifestation determination.
Pre-Determination of Eligibility

If a child engages in behavior violating the code of student conduct prior to a determination of his or her eligibility for special education, the district is deemed to have knowledge of the child’s disability, and the child is entitled to all of the IDEA protections afforded to a child with a disability, unless a specific exception applies.
More Hints

Beyond ten days all eligible students with disabilities need to receive services due to discipline.

If during a removal, non disabled students receive services, then also provide them to students with disabilities.
More Hints Again

For a manifestation determination, a behavior was either a manifestation or not of a child’s disability. Do not say “related to” or “caused by” or “casually related to the disability.”

Parents often argue in manifestation determination meetings about whether the student did not commit the offense, or that the penalty is too harsh. This meeting does not look at whether the offense was committed or the penalty.
Again, More Hints

Principals are often the ones who determine penalties for rule infractions.

Removals from school include: telling a student to not come, telling a student to go home early, or telling a student to stay away for a few days to cool off.
Wait, There’s More

Review all discipline problems monthly. Use this to determine if the student might need a referral for testing.

Not every student with a behavioral problem needs special education.
More Still

Use Behavior Intervention Plans to help with triggers. Review these to make sure they are actually working.

The student does not need to be in special education to get an FBA.
More Still Part 2

If the team determines there is no manifestation, consider an FBA to prevent further problems.

Parental consent is required if an FBA is used for eligibility determination.
Not Very Original, But More

Make sure ALL staff are aware of the districts policies regarding restraint and seclusion. Review if necessary.

Write down any restraints and seclusion. Document strategies used to prevent more intrusive options from being needed.
Again. . .

Follow up with the parents after any restraint or seclusion. Give the parents details about reason and length.

If restraint is possible, make sure the staff, the parents are aware, emphasize positive strategies.
Final More

Parse out suspension days carefully!

!Red Flag Alert!
Consider an FBA as soon as the student starts to accumulate short term suspensions. Principals should keep a count.
"What you need to know about special education teacher evaluation: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly."
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• Why?
  – Evaluation
  – Improvement
  – Accountability

TEACHING MATTERS!!
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• More Why

National Effort
  Race to The Top
  Waivers
  ESEA Reauthorization
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• What?
  – Area of high priority
  – Need good feedback
  – Improve learning on the job
  – Fair, effective, meaningful
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• Problems
  – Role
    • Supports
      – Specialists or generalists
    • Direct tutoring
    • Consultation
      – Part time v. full time
    • Co-teaching
      – Yours v. mine
    • Multiple buildings
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• More Problems
  – Staffing
    • Case load?
    • SELPA v. district
    • Others in classroom (PCA’s, and para’s)
    • Case manager role also?
• **More Problems Continued**
  – Students
    • What is normal?
    • Autism v. Emotional disturbance?
    • LD v. ID?
    • MDS

• How much do supervisors (principals) really know about each of these categories?
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• More Problems
  – Value Added Measurements
    • State assessments
A Modest Proposal

• Random assignment of **ALL** students statewide.

  – 1. Moving
  – 2. Some teachers get some good, some not so good
  – 3. Tie salaries to progress
  – 4. Done every third year
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• Proposals
  – Inputs
    • Meeting attendance
    • Forms on time
    • Answer parents questions in a timely fashion
    • Paperwork

Problems with each of these
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• Problems with Using IEP as a Tool
  – Purpose of the IEP
    • Not standardized
    • Child focused
    • Subjective interpretation
    • Intentional cheating
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

Policy Ahead of Research

• Real Proposal
  – Real and Meaningful
    • 1. Regular interaction
    • 2. Ongoing dialogue
    • 3. Constant feedback
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• 1. Professional Knowledge
• 2. Instructional Planning
• 3. Instructional Delivery
• 4. Assessment of and for Student Learning
• 5. Learning Environment
• 6. Professionalism
• 7. Student Academic Progress
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

ELEVATE PROFESSIONALISM!!
Special Education Teacher Evaluation

• Multiple Measures does not mean multiple standardized tests!
  – Problems with value-added measures
All educators must be included in one evaluation system.

Evaluation systems must identify appropriate professional development opportunities for teachers based on the results of their evaluations.

Evaluations must support continuous improvement.

Evaluation processes and all measures of teacher effectiveness must be open and transparent to the teacher being evaluated.
Teacher Evaluation Systems Shall:

- Evaluations must clearly identify and be based on a special education teacher’s specific role and responsibilities during a given school year.

- Evaluations must take into account the population of children and youth and their range of exceptionalities that special education teachers instruct.

- Evaluations must be conducted by evaluators with expertise related to evidence-based service delivery models and individualized teaching practices and interventions in special education.
• Evaluations must be based on multiple reliable measures and indicators that support valid measurement of special education teacher effectiveness.

• Evaluations should never be based solely on student growth.

• Statistical models that estimate a teacher’s contribution to student growth, such as value-added models, should not be applied to any teacher until there is a general consensus among researchers that the model provides a valid estimate of a teacher’s contribution to student growth.

Measure the Use of Evidence-Based Practices
Special Ed Teacher Evaluation

• Not just one special ed classroom
  • Similarities with general ed
    • lesson plan (overall focus)
    • teacher organized
  • Beginning, middle, and end
Special Ed Teacher Eval

- Differences
  - numbers
  - assistance
  - learning curve
  - lack of standardization
  - range (both grade and disability)
  - individualization
  - scheduling?
Special Ed Teacher Evaluation

- Differentiation
- Enrichment activities
- Active?
- Engaged?
- Efficient?
- Opening? Closing?
- Individualized?
Special Ed Teacher Evaluation

- Can be done
- Takes practice
- Steep learning curve
- Work with the teachers
- Work with other administrators
Five Rules for Principals

*How to be a part of the special education outcome without being a special educator (or wanting to be one)
The Rules

• Framework
• Priorities
• Become a better principal
• Separate but integrated
Rule One: Show Up

• Show up
  • keep your commitments
  • attend meetings
  • share your responsibilities
• Be there
This record for consecutive games played embodies the heroism of showing up, of doing a job faithfully, of taking one’s daily tasks seriously… [Ripken] demonstrates something almost ignored in our celebrity-saturated culture: that you can be loyal, methodical, quietly principled and still achieve — to use the popular word — excellence… [This is the kind of heroism that] most of us are called upon to strive for… the heroism of loyalty and commitment, of steady work, of the painstaking perfection of skills, of effort in the face of difficulty.”
Showing Up (more)

- Commitment
- Discipline
  - Grasp or seize
  - 60.3 % is just showing up
    - Not one workout but the trials of miles
Showing Up (sped)

- Attend CST’s
- Parent conferences
- Observe in special ed classes
- Stay knowledgeable
- Get answers to questions
- Advocate for the teachers (and the students)
Rule #2-Pay Attention

- SLANT
- The present is all there is
- iPhones/Androids
- Become connected with what is going on
Pay Attention-SPED

- Ask questions
- Review the paperwork
- Not other kids (count them)
- Closely linked with showing up
Rule #3 - Tell the Truth

- Tip O’Neil
- Can no longer be trusted-everything is in question
- Not a question of “What is truth?”
Rule #3 - More

- Check if the truth is welcome
- Timing matters
- Pay attention to your motive
Truth-Special Ed

• Money for more supplies
• New teacher to help
• Extra aide for the classroom
• How’s my teaching?
• Do you think I’d make a good administrator?
Rule #4-Detachment

• Hard
• Try this with golf (or your next hill climb)
• Requires openness and flexibility
• Do not be fixed on an outcome
• Focus on a good outcome-instead of THE OUTCOME
Detachment-SPED

- Team decision making process
- Need for supports
- Need for help from others
- Best for the teachers and the students
- Parents and families may be right
Rule #5 - The Little Things

- Socks
- Return calls
- Return emails
- Eye contact
- Greet people-note pad in store
The Solution

- The New Special Education- the road to a successful outcome!
Programming

- There are no longer students with emotional problems/behavior disorders in the District
- There are only students with learning disabilities that have gone bad
Child-Find

- Children in every elementary classroom will be asked to identify (by confidential check-off list) all of the weird kids in the class.
- These identified children will automatically be eligible for specialized services.
- Alternatively, all children will be labeled as “thought to be” eligible for specialized services until an evaluation determines them to be eligible for regular education.
Settlement of Horrendous Cases

- Parents will be given deeds or long term leases (until the child turns 21) in neighboring districts
Responsibilities

- Whole school safety
- Perception in public
- More than just suspension/expulsion
- Teachers as first line
IDEA Requirements

- Case by case
- Interim alternative placement for 45 school days
- New manifestation requirements
Positive Behavior Supports

1. Identifying behaviors that need to be changed
2. Identifying antecedents to the behavior and determining how to alter these so that the behavior no longer occurs and is thus irrelevant to the student
3. Identifying the function of the student’s behavior and determining an appropriate, functional replacement behavior
4. Determining effective consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.
5. Establishing a reinforcement schedule.
6. Verifying successful results through a system of data collection.
Working with staff and others

- Knowing staff
- Evaluating Staff
- Working with other administrators
Know your staff

- Be visible in each building; visit classrooms informally, not just to evaluate the teacher or when there is a problem.
- Find ways to bond with individuals; do not gossip or spread rumors.
- Try to find common interests.
- Schedule at least one meeting a year with each teacher to discuss individually how things are going, set annual goals, and establish instructional priorities.
- Schedule or attend regular building or district staff meetings to show support.
- Attend evaluation and IEP meetings as often as possible or insist that subordinate staff attend.
- Keep the lines of communication open; you may not want an “open door” policy, but you should invite teachers to schedule a time to discuss issues.
- Be honest and straightforward in your dealings with all staff. Even if there are personality conflicts, if you stay honest and forthright with teachers, you will eventually earn their trust and respect.
- Plan at least one social event a year for your staff
Working with staff

- Establish goals and commitments
- Learn to listen
- Conduct monthly meetings
- Be professional
Monthly Meetings

- Depending on the size of your district you can determine if building meetings versus entire staff meetings are more feasible. Either way, set meeting dates for the entire academic year; distribute a calendar with date, time, and place of meeting. Try to keep the date as uniform as possible (e.g. 3rd Monday of each month).
- Begin and end on time; efficiency is always appreciated by staff.
- Provide an agenda and follow it.
- Encourage participation toward the agenda goals.
- Stay on specific topics outlined on agenda.
- Referee any group disputes.
- Verbally summarize meeting.
- Write and distribute minutes as an official record.
- Do not meet if you do not have agenda items; in other words, do not meet for the sake of a meeting. Have a purpose.
Be visible and cooperative

- Teach a lesson once a year in each classroom. This small activity will enhance your own teaching skills. Moreover, you will experience the classroom dynamics and get to know the students.

- Attend as many evaluation or IEP meetings as possible; not just meetings that may be contentious or difficult. This shows the teacher that you care about their students and their parents; as well as support their program.

- Do not ignore your staff. Respond quickly to phone calls or e-mail.

- Show up at meetings when you are scheduled to be there; arrive on time, and call if you will be late.
Be peaceful (when you can)

- Model self-control and professional behavior by “hearing the individual out.” Do not talk or try to intervene until they stop talking.
- Do not take it personally; remember, it probably is not about you.
- Try to resolve the conflict by clarifying, restating, summarizing, and offering compromises, if feasible.
- Make sure you are in a private place during any contentious discussions.
- Do not feign that you care, or promise a course of action you are unwilling to execute just to appease a person. This may escalate their anger and subsequently diminish trust and respect.
- Allow your staff to “vent” their anger and frustration in a respectful manner; once they calm down you can successfully work toward conflict resolution.
- When engaged in a confrontation, stand your ground by being direct and forthright. Never raise your voice.
- Do not allow a subordinate to be abusive; it is unproductive, unprofessional and should not be tolerated.
Managing special education

- Get organized
- Computerized case management system
- Allocating district resources
A copy of state regulations and standards.
Referral procedures for the district including prereferral responsibilities.
A flow chart of multidisciplinary procedures with teacher responsibilities highlighted.
Hard copies of all pertinent forms including consent for evaluation and reevaluation, Notice of Procedural Safeguards, invitation to IEP team meeting, Notice of Recommended Educational Placement, and IEP forms.
Special Education report card supplements.
Forms for teacher, parent, and other staff to complete for assessment purposes.
Purchase order forms
A list of possible curricular accommodations for students.
Behavioral plan forms
Discipline procedures
A list with contact information of all other special education staff including central office administrators, secretarial staff, instructional assistants, and
Planning and Preparation

- Knowledge of content and pedagogy
- Knowledge of students
- Selects instructional goals
- Knowledge of resources
- Assesses student learning
Classroom Environment

- Respect and rapport
- Culture of learning
- Classroom procedures
- Student behaviors
- Physical space
Instruction

- Communicates clearly and accurately
- Uses effective questioning and discussion techniques
- Engages students in learning
- Provides feedback to students
- Demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness
Professional Responsibilities

- Reflects on teaching
- Maintain accurate records
- Communicates with families
- Contributes to school/district
- Interest in growth
- Professional
IEP Development

- Paperwork
- Prepares PLOP’s
- Reports PLOP’s
- Relates PLOP’s to goals
- Provides work samples
- Goals/objectives relate to PLOP’s
IEP Meeting

- Professional with parents
- Professional with staff
- Prepared
- Not jargon filled
- Takes time when needed
- Follows up
  - Timely
  - Accurate
Other Administrators

- The superintendent
  - Keep informed
  - Do homework
  - Show data
  - Be prepared
Assistant Principals

- Interviews
- Budget
- Book
- Training
  - Discipline
  - Data
  - Positive behavioral supports
- Model
Guiding Principles for Principals

- Students
- Administrative team
- Teachers
- Parents
  - Don’t pander
  - Don’t be rigid
Finally

- Visibility
- Diversity your interests
- Active in curriculum
- Proactive in interactions
- Thick skin
- Humor
Tips for Making Things Worse

- Don’t return phone calls
- Use the word NEVER a lot
- Say we don’t do that here
- Miss deadlines
- Use a cookie cutter
- Lose paperwork
- Don’t provide support for teachers
More Handy Tips

- Act superior
- Use tense posture
- Preach
- Use sarcasm
- Work to impress the parents with acronyms
- IEP meetings done before they start
- Don’t have right people at meetings
- Back them into a corner
- Ignoring the “Howler”
Expectations

- Happy
- Friendly
- Athletic
- Good natured
- Pretty
- Well-mannered
- Well-behaved

- Outgoing
- Smart
- Independent
- Optimistic
- Hard worker
- Enthusiastic
- Teacher pleaser
Reality

- Cognitive disability
- ADHD
- LD
- Autistic
- Deaf
- Blind/Visually Impaired
- PDD

- EBD
- At-risk
- Needy
- Teacher dislikes
- No friends
- People shun
- Lonely
- Not independent
Questions and Answers??