

Strengthening Collaboration Between General and Special Education to Ensure Least Restrictive Environment

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Learning Objectives

- Examine the regulatory definitions related to collaboration between general and special education teachers to ensure common use of terminology
- Identify barriers students with disabilities (SWD) experience in general education classrooms
- Explore options to remove these barriers in the context of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Share additional tools and strategies for removing barriers/promoting successful participation of SWD in general education classrooms

Consultant Teacher and Integrated Co-Teaching Services (from Part 200 Regulations)

Consultant Teacher Service

- **Direct consultant teacher services** means specially designed individualized or group instruction provided by a certified special education teacher to a student with a disability to aid such student to benefit from the student's regular education classes.
- **Indirect consultant teacher services** means consultation provided by a certified special education teacher to regular education teachers to assist them in adjusting the learning environment and/or modifying their instructional methods to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability who attends their classes.

Integrated Co-Teaching Service

- means the provision of specially designed instruction and academic instruction provided to a group of students with disabilities and nondisabled students provided by a special education teacher and a general education teacher to meet the diverse learning needs of all students in a class.
- The maximum number of students with disabilities receiving integrated co-teaching services in a class shall not exceed 12 students. There is no regulatory maximum number of nondisabled students in an integrated co-teaching class. However, the number of nondisabled students should be more than or equal to the number of students with disabilities in the class in order to ensure the level of integration intended by this program option.

Multiple Means of Engagement - options that motivate, interest and challenge students in learning

- **Provide a task checklist:** break a project into tasks, attach a timeline for completing each step, have students track their own progress as they complete required components; teach students to make their own to-do list
- **Incorporate movement:** provide opportunities for students to move and use gestures for engagement as well as tapping into motor memory pathway - for example, human timeline, human bar graph, tableau
- **Check for understanding:** use strategies that capture responses from all students to ensure students know and can do what you are teaching before moving on or introducing independent practice
- **Use timers:** a timer can help keep students engaged when they can see the time left for completion

Multiple Means of Engagement - options that motivate, interest and challenge students in learning

- **Read the first section/chapter to the whole class:** especially effective for fiction as characters, setting and motivation are often introduced in the beginning and students may have greater motivation to continue once they are "hooked"
- **Model problem solving through a "think aloud":** students often don't know how to engage in the thinking we are asking of them, hearing us think out loud can be a window into how to solve a problem on their own
- **Use stations:** affords opportunity for movement and varying task type/skills
- **Teach students strategies to set and achieve learning goals:** for example, use the Plan, Do, Review, model to establish intended goal, develop action plan, execute the steps in the plan, assess, monitor and adjust plan, and reflect on ways to take positive action in the future

Multiple Means of Representation - how students acquire new information

- **Provide visual examples of content:** when reading Julius Caesar, provide pictures of characters, setting and key events in story; provide images to accompany new vocabulary
- **Provide a model of a completed project:** when assigning a DBQ Essay, provide a completed DBQ Essay and highlight critical required elements; when assigning a Life Cycle diagram, provide a sample life cycle diagram
- **Provide maps when discussing geographic locations:** when reading current events about Dubai, show Google Earth view of where the city is located, as well as an image of the cityscape; provide printed maps when discussing new region/area to create context for location

Multiple Means of Representation - how students acquire new information

- **Create charts that provide illustrations of commonly used vocabulary or steps:** for example when teaching metric conversion, provide a metric conversion chart; when teaching solving inequalities, create a chart of the rules for solving inequalities
- **Write key information, directions and assignments on the board**
- **Provide print information in alternate (audio) format** - using text-to-speech software, using audiobook CD, using Playaway books; using digitized textbooks, Select and Speak - Text to Speech (SpeakIt!) in Chrome Web Store
- **Demonstrate using manipulatives** - for example, when teaching solving algebraic equations, use algebra tiles to represent variables and constants; when teaching density use a lightly or tightly packed suitcase to demonstrate the space between molecules

Multiple Means of Action and Expression - how students demonstrate their knowledge in various ways

- **Provide note-taking frame/guided notes outline:** to remove a barrier related to difficulty listening and writing simultaneously, spelling, and/or writing efficiently enough to capture key ideas in notes, etc. use a partially completed organizer for students to add information into
- **Use graphic organizers:** offer graphic organizers to organize ideas as a prewriting activity
- **Provide opportunity to work in groups of varying size or alone:** processing new learning and higher order thinking prior to a task demand (writing, explaining, etc.) with peers may help some students while other students need time alone to process information
- **Encourage students to draw/illustrate notes:** some students think and learn in images more effectively than words

Multiple Means of Action and Expression - how students demonstrate their knowledge in various ways

- **Activity Passport:** when students have a range of tasks to complete, an activity passport can be used to keep track of completed tasks, at each station or after each completed component, students have passport stamped to show completion
- **Homework menu:** give options to choose from and students MUST do an entree, CHOOSE a predetermined number of sides, and MAY do dessert (often enrichment)
- **Use technology to demonstrate knowledge:** create podcast, video, prez, powtoon
- **Use technology to remove writing barriers:** speech-to-text dictation, word prediction, spell checking
- **Tic-Tac-Toe choices for projects to demonstrate learning**

General Education Teacher	Special Education Teacher
<p>Content and Curriculum Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYS Learning or Common Core Learning Standards for subject • Alignment of their grade/subject within the vertical K-12 curriculum 	<p>Strategies Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Instruction • Behavior Management Strategies • Adaptations and Accommodations
<p>Assessment Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience with state and/or end of year testing expectations 	<p>Disability Expert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of disability • Specific student strengths/needs
<p>GENERALIST – looking at Big Picture / whole class needs</p>	<p>SPECIALIST – looking at specialized / individual student specific needs</p>

Roles and Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and Special Ed administrators and educators share responsibility to ensure SWD reach the state learning standards • IEP goals are to be developed to attain grade level standards • Supports and services provided in LRE to assist student meeting grade level standards • Special education personnel must be knowledgeable of curriculum and standards

IEP is KEY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's critical that both teachers are knowledgeable about the needed specially designed instruction, goals and services for the identified students. • Collaborating teachers must spend time together reading, reviewing, discussing, and understanding each student's IEP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ It is not sufficient to say, "Here's Ron Weasley's IEP, let me know if you have any questions." • General Education Teachers need to have electronic access to IEPs • Discussions about IEP implementation should be ongoing

Aligning IEPs to the Standards

- IEP will assist the student to **be involved and progress in** general education curriculum
- CSE members must know the knowledge and skill expectations for the grade level
 - As well as how mastery of learning is demonstrated
- This information will determine the needed adaptations, accommodations or modifications
 - NOTE: modifications reduce learning expectations

Aligning IEPs to the Standards

- Goals should be chosen to accelerate students' ability to progress in general ed curriculum
- Goals should identify essential skills and knowledge that SWD needs to master grade level standards
- SWD should be working toward meeting grade level expectations and receiving grade level instruction

Intentional and Purposeful Planning to Address Student Needs

- Access occurs when students are actively engaged in learning the content and skills that define the general education curriculum
- Specially Designed Instruction relies on the classroom teachers to have intentionally and purposely planned for the needs of the SWD in their classroom
- IEP's should identify the accommodations, accessible materials, assistive technology and/or adaptive equipment to
 - Compensate
 - Remediate
 - Overcome the effects of the disability

Creating Planning Time for Co-Teachers

- Roaming Sub – Once a month a two subs come in to cover co-teaching teams for 45 minute rotations, so that all teams get dedicated co-planning time
- Use existing subs – Assign subs who are already in the building during the prep time of the teacher they are covering to assist in a co-taught classroom. The sub can supervise an independent practice activity so that the co-teachers have additional collaboration and planning opportunities
- Planning coverage provided by administrators and non-teaching staff
- Virtual planning/collaboration – Wiki, Schoology, Google Tools
- Additional paid planning time outside school day/calendar

Best Practices

- Administrative support for fidelity to the staffing, ratio and co-planning opportunities
- Clustering target students to make support efficient and possible
- Most effective co-taught classrooms will have no more than 30% students with disabilities
- The remainder of the class must be a heterogeneous group of mixed ability students
- Co-planning time is scheduled, not “fit in”; it is critical, must be made sacrosanct and protected at all cost
