

The High-Leverage Practices for Special Education

The Effective Special Educator Collaborates & Uses Assessments:

1. With colleagues
2. With families
3. To run effective meetings; and...

Co-teach, co-plan, intently listen to and learn from all, & respects students' cultures and backgrounds.

Collaborative Special Educators Use Data From Various Sources To:

4. Develop comprehensive understandings of students' strengths and needs, &
5. Interpret and communicate with stakeholders to effectively plan

The results of our collaborative efforts to gather assessment data and act upon it leads to...

Strategic Leveraging of Professionals' & Families' Knowledge Combined with Assessment Data Resulting In:

11. Writing long- and short-term goals
12. Systematically designing instruction to address those goals
- 13 & 15. Making adaptations & using scaffolded supports to achieve goals

The IEP is the heart of special education, and thus reflects the collaborative, data-driven efforts of professionals and families.

The IEP may specify use of instructional or behavioral practices that operate alongside other HLPs and evidence-based practices:

17. Use flexible groups
19. Use assistive and instructional technology
10. Conduct functional behavioral assessments and corresponding behavior support plans

Michael Kennedy, Ph.D., University of Virginia
mjk3p@virginia.edu

The Effective Special Educator Masters Key Instructional & Behavioral Practices:

7. Establish a positive, organized, & respectful learning environment

They do so using collaborative input from colleagues, understanding(s) of student needs, and through strategic leveraging of data:

- 6 & 20. A process of data-based individualization (DBI) is used to monitor progress, diagnose problems, make ongoing decisions, & revise instructional offerings

Core to the DBI process is use of a standard-treatment protocol for instruction or behavior support grounded in principles of explicit instruction (EI). EI is connected to each remaining HLP:

16. EI is used to explicitly teach (and re-teach) content and skills, as well as behavioral rules and expectations. We use EI to:

18. Promote student engagement

9. Support students' learning of social behaviors

14. Support learning and use of new cognitive and metacognitive strategies

21. Support students as they learn how to generalize knowledge and strategies and implement in new settings

Special educators also use EI when systematically designing instruction and utilizing adaptations, when implementing scaffolded supports, during instruction happening within groupings of various sizes, when teaching students to use AT or IT devices and tools, and when learning replacement behaviors.

The Effective Special Educator Ties Everything Together With Their Mastery of Formulating and Providing Feedback:

- 8 & 22. Providing meaningful feedback lets students (and colleagues) know how close their performance is to meeting expectation(s)