Special Education in the 21st Century

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About the Presenter

• Shemica S. Allen is the founder of Personalized Learning Solutions, LLC.
• Former educator with 15 years of teaching and administration experience working with students/individuals with disabilities and their parents/guardians.
• Received a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Arkansas in 1999 and a Master of Science in Kinesiology with a specialization in Adapted Physical Activity in 2005 from Texas Christian University. Certified to teach Special Education and Physical Education and also received her Principal certification in 2010.

Current Work With Organizations:

Named to the Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC) for Texas in December 2017 to help make decisions that will improve Special Education in the state.

Special Education Advocate Training (SEAT) Instructor & Teaching Assistant for the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) where she will help to train others to advocate for students with disabilities.

Co-chair of the Advocacy Committee for National Allies for Parents in Special Education (NAPSE) where she will help NAPSE to develop educational content, events, etc. that will help train others to advocate for students with disabilities.

Grants Manager for Dominique CARES helping the non-profit with it’s Parent Empowerment Workshops.
Presentation Objectives

Participants Will Learn:

➢ An update on the Texas Education Agency’s Special Education Strategic Plan/Corrective Action Plan and how it’s affecting implementation of special education services.

➢ Definition of Least Restrictive Environment as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

➢ Examples of transferable skills/21st Century Skills and how to incorporate these skills into an IEP.

➢ How special education supports and services can be delivered in an inclusive education setting in the least restrictive environment.

➢ Difference between the different models of support for students including hybrid, external support, internal support, co-teach, and specialized support in order to better advocate for needed supports in the general education classroom.

➢ Which supports, services, and activities to advocate for to help students transition across grade levels.
Federal Investigation of Special Education-On January 11, 2018, The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSEP) released their findings after an extensive investigation in 2016 & 2017 into Texas’ performance indicator that capped special education enrollment at 8.5%. The DOE determined that Texas systematically denied students with disabilities the federally required services and supports they needed to succeed in school and make. Specifically they found that the following violations:

**Violation #1**-TEA failed to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the State who are in need of special education and related services were identified, located, and evaluated, regardless of the severity of their disability, as required by IDEA section 612(a)(3) and its implementing regulation at 34 CFR §300.111. **TEA failed to ensure the proper implementation of Child Find for students suspected of having a disability and need for special education.**

**Violation #2**-TEA failed to ensure that FAPE was made available to all children with disabilities residing in the State in Texas’s mandated age ranges (ages 3 through 21), as required by IDEA section 612(a)(1) and its implementing regulation at 34 CFR §300.101. **TEA failed to ensure availability of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).**

**Violation #3**-TEA failed to fulfill its general supervisory and monitoring responsibilities as required by IDEA sections 612(a)(11) and 616(a)(1)(C), and their implementing regulations at 34 CFR §§300.149 and 300.600, along with 20 U.S.C. 1232d(b)(3)(A), to ensure that ISDs throughout the State properly implemented the IDEA Child Find and FAPE requirements. **TEA failed to exercise its responsibility and duty to supervise and monitor school districts and open enrollment charter schools.**
Special Education Strategic Plan/ Corrective Action Plan

TEA was given the opportunity to develop a Corrective Action Plan to address the violations found by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSEP). Below are the steps of the Corrective Action Plan:

Corrective Action #1 - All public schools engage in Child Find & provide FAPE.

Corrective Action #2 - All public schools will evaluate students who were previously denied evaluations and reassess the needs of students who received services late.

Corrective Action #3 - Educators would not use the Response to Intervention process to delay referrals for evaluations and parents would be given clear information about the differences among available programs and laws.

Corrective Action #4 - TEA will effectively and systemically monitor public schools to protect struggling learners suspected of having a disability and who may be in need of special education services.
So What Does The Corrective Action Plan Mean for Parents Trying to Access Special Education Services For Their Child:

Corrective Action #1
✓ Communication to all local education agencies the Child Find requirements, FAPE requirements, and IDEA obligations
✓ More emphasis on monitoring, document reviews, and compliance checks of districts
✓ Better information for families on dispute resolution programs such as mediation, IEP facilitation, and due process
✓ Better training of staff performing dispute resolution such as hearing officers, meditators, and complaint investigators

Corrective Action #2
✓ School districts will notify every student’s family about Child Find requirements, FAPE requirements, IDEA obligations, and their rights under IDEA
✓ Provide supplemental guidance to schools about their legal responsibilities under state and federal law & compensatory services guidelines

Corrective Action #3
✓ Emphasis on the State Board of Education’s revision of the Texas Dyslexia Handbook
Distribute resources focused on differences between IDEA, Section 504, the State’s Dyslexia program, and Response to Intervention (RtI)

Corrective Action #4
✓ Restructuring of the special education monitoring teams
✓ Conduct regular meetings with special education stakeholders from across the state
Understanding Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

In the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) the LRE is the general education classroom with access to peers without disabilities. If a student needs a more restrictive environment or placement because of their unique situation or needs then it’s a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) discussion. LRE is in the general education setting or classroom.

➢ When making placement decisions priority must be given to placement in the general education classroom with any necessary supplemental aids and services to make that placement successful.
Understanding Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

➢ When an IEP committee suggests a student be removed from the general education setting the IEP committee must show that the removal of the student to a different setting can only occur if the IEP committee determines that the nature or severity of the student’s disability is such that education in regular or general education classes, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

➢ IEP committees must provide the data to show that the student could not be educated in the general education classroom satisfactorily even with the use of supplementary aids and services. Remember to ask for the data that supports removal of your child to a more restrictive setting. Only after the LRE which is the general education classroom is considered should districts move to more restrictive placement options.
LRE in the Wake of COVID-19

• **Distance Learning** - Use of distance/remote platforms for educational services. Student remains home every day of the week.

• **Hybrid** - Students follow an alternating schedule to reduce the number of students on campus & in each classroom. Students will report to school 2-3 days a week & will use virtual platforms at home the remaining days of the week.

• **Traditional** - Students report to school every day of the week.
Jennifer will be entering the 4th grade at the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Her class will have 30 students. She qualifies for special education services as a student with a specific learning disability. She receives 45 minutes a day of special education services in the general education classroom for English Language Arts & Math & 30 minutes a week of speech-language therapy outside of the general education classroom. Susan’s IEP will be implemented & FAPE provided in each of the operational models.

• **Distance Learning-**Jennifer will participate in a virtual learning model with her 4th grade class. Her special education teacher will host a virtual break out with her & other students in ELA & Math after large group instruction has taken place. Jennifer will participate a weekly virtual session for speech.

• **Hybrid-**While on campus Jennifer’s 4th grade class will be split into two sections. Jennifer will remain in one classroom all day with her peers & her teachers will rotate. Her special education teacher will provide 45 minutes of support in ELA & Math each day while Jennifer is on campus. Jennifer will follow the distance learning model the other days of the week. Jennifer will participate in a virtual speech session once per week.

• **Traditional-**Jennifer will receive her special education services in the general education classroom & speech services outside of the general education classroom once a week.
Need For Transferable Skills

Business leaders, educational organizations, and researchers have begun to call for new education policies that target the development of broad, transferable skills and knowledge, often referred to as “21st century skills.” 21st century skills are viewed as knowledge that can be transferred or applied in new situations or generalized to new situations.

- **Cognitive Skills** - critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, interpretation, decision making, oral & written communication, executive function, active listening, creativity, and innovation

- **Intrapersonal Skills** - flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self-direction, perseverance, productivity, integrity, professionalism & ethics, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement

- **Interpersonal Skills** - communication, collaboration, teamwork, cooperation, leadership, responsibility, conflict resolution, negotiation, trust, and service orientation

Can you think of other examples of some 21st Century Skills that students need to develop?
Ways to Increase Student’s Use of 21st Century Skills

Knowing that students with disabilities will face countless similar scenarios throughout their lives, it is the responsibility of public education to effectively prepare them.

1. **Create Specific Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination IEP Goals**

- IEP goals emphasizing and targeting these 21st Century Skills are essential for students and should be included in every IEP. These skills will help students to build a foundation for being the change agent in their own lives and must be more than simply expressing their needs and wants. The purpose of using goal setting with students is to help them understand their role during the learning process.

Students Should Be Taught To:

- Understand their needs, wants, and rights/How to effectively communicate them
- Solve problems & Set goals
- Engage in active self-reflection

Example-

By the next annual ARD, given a problem-solving rubric and role-play scenario, Zach will be able to state the problem, identify possible solutions, identify the appropriate person to talk with or available resource, and explain how the identified person resource can help with 70% accuracy on 4 of 5 opportunities as measured by student work samples and teacher observations.
2. **Involve Students in the IEP and Transition Process** - As part of the IEP and transition process, IEP teams need to actively ensure it’s more engaging and inclusive of students. All students with IEPs, even those at the elementary grades, have a role to play in their IEP meetings.

Example - Students can create presentations about themselves, their interests, their strengths, areas they want to improve upon, and future plans including academic, social, or career plans.
Ways to Increase Student’s Use of 21st Century Skills

3. **Connect Students to In and Out of School Experiences That Promote IEP Goals** - Need to connect in-school and out-of-school experiences more cohesively to allow students more practical opportunities to practice and generalize 21st Century Skills. Encourage growth, ownership, awareness, and learning in both in and out of school experiences so students feel more confident and successful. When in and out of school experiences are aligned student learning is reinforced and student independence increases.

Example - If students are learning how to navigate the grocery store the classroom teacher could set up a simulated grocery store in the classroom for students to practice. Next, the teacher could take the students on a series of field trip to an actual grocery store to practice and generalize the same navigation skills.
Special Education Supports and Services Utilized in an Inclusive Education Setting

12 INCLUSION SUPPORTS FOR SUCCESS

- Individual Education Plans
- Universal Design for Learning
- Peers
- Modifications
- Assistive Technology
- Learning Materials
- Differentiation
- Teacher Training
- Accommodations
- Paraprofessionals
- Parents
- Positive Behavior Management

8 ways to SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS in INCLUSIVE classrooms

- Encourage active learning through hands-on activities and small-group, project-based assignments that promote collaboration.
- Give students choices whenever you can to show that you respect each student’s individuality, strengths, and needs.
- Model skills yourself, and give students with disabilities lots of chances to work directly with their classmates and watch them model academic and social skills.
- Apply research-based strategies like constant and progressive time delay, most-to-least or least-to-most prompting, and other direct instruction strategies.
- Boost participation by giving all students lots of opportunities to respond in class, and many different ways to participate (e.g., speaking instead of writing).
- Consider alternative grading approaches that more meaningfully capture the progress students with disabilities are making toward their academic goals.
- Teach students self-management skills to help them manage behavior and learning. Adapt strategies to students’ needs and preferred forms of communication.
- Reinforce skills valued by families. Find out which skills they value and would like you to encourage through practice in the classroom.

5 types of ADAPTATIONS for your INCLUSIVE CLASS

- Alter the instructional arrangement. Groups of the same size don’t work for all students. Keep an eye on what arrangements different learners respond best.
- Alter the physical or social environment. Make changes to the learning environment to meet the needs of students with sensory and attention issues.
- Alter your methods & materials. Offer learners many different ways to learn content: maps, videos, graphic organizers, enhanced texts, etc.
- Alter the process or task. Modify or reduce the requirements of assignments and let students show what they know in a variety of innovative ways.
- Alter the level of personal assistance. Enlist helpers such as peers, a special educator, or a paraprofessional to provide extra supports and prompts.

Read the full blog post: bit.ly/InstrucAdapt

Adapted from The New Transition Handbook by Carlsyn Hughes & Erik Carter

www.brookesinclusionlab.com
Adapted from Modifying Schoolwork, by Janney & Snell
Special Education Supports and Services Utilized in an Inclusive Education Setting

The following is a list of Special Education supports, modifications, adjustments, strategies, and services that may be provided to meet the needs of Special Education students in an inclusive setting:

- Alternate curriculum
- Curriculum modifications—A student with a disability must not be removed from education in age-appropriate general education classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum (34 CFR §300.116(e)).
- Specific reading materials
- Use a variety of instructional formats—use of whole group instruction, small groups, stations/centers, peer teaching/peer support (paired learning)
- Learning strategies—universal design for learning is an approach to curriculum planning and mapping that makes learning engaging and accessible to a wider range of learners with different strengths and needs.
- Presenting content to students and allowing students to present learning back in different ways such as the use of modeling, images, manipulatives, graphic organizers, oral and written responses, and technology.
Special Education Supports and Services Utilized in an Inclusive Education Setting

- Active learning-use of active learning strategies such as "think, pair, share"
- Behavior & classroom management-posting of daily schedule, use of signals to indicate transitions such as time to quiet down, start working, and put away materials (plan for transition times), use of specific, targeted positive reinforcement
  - Anger, stress, or and anxiety management protocol
  - Special education teacher support-collaborative teaching
    - Teaching assistant support (paraprofessional)
      - Test and exam support
  - Classroom modifications-alternate seating arrangements, dim lighting
    - Technology support
  - Facility modifications or adjustments
    - Small group instruction
    - Smaller class size
    - Student choices
    - Modeling of skills
    - Alternate grading approaches
    - Modified or reduced assignments
Different Models of Support

Inclusion refers to a classroom that has a diverse group of students with a variety of learning needs. Usually, inclusion can mean a mixture of regular education students with students with IEPs.

- **No Personal Support** - Students are receiving instruction in the general education classroom with no personal support. The special education teacher periodically consults with the general education teacher to monitor the student’s use of advance supports to determine if adjustments should be made.

- **Advance Support** - Support prepared prior to instruction such that when the students require specific scaffolds and accommodations or modifications they are already available in the general education classroom. As these supports are available in advance of instruction, no staff support is needed during the lesson. The student with an IEP will have access to materials, technology, and other resources before it is actually needed.

- **Blended** - A blended learning environment is a traditional learning setting merged with technology. This model is especially useful for inclusive environments as students with a variety of learning needs can have better individualized and supported learning experiences with the aid of technology.

Inclusive education propels a critique of contemporary school culture and thus, encourages practitioners to reinvent what can be and should be to realize more humane, just and democratic learning communities. Inequities in treatment and educational opportunity are brought to the forefront, thereby fostering attention to human rights, respect for difference and value of diversity. (Udvari-Solner, 1997, p. 142).
Different Models of Support

• Peer Support—Generally two levels of peer support:
  – 1) Peer Assistant—informal assistance with physical, social, or personal management needs—minimal level of responsibility for peer assistant
  – 2) Peer Tutor—formal, instructional tutoring following teacher direction & oversight

• Itinerant—The itinerant model features a traveling specialist, usually a certified teacher who is also trained to supplement student learning in specialized areas. The itinerant teacher is not the regular classroom teacher, but rather a support.

• Support Facilitation—Instructional/behavioral support provided on the basis of student needs in the general education classroom. This support may look identical to the more formal co-teach model with the exception that it is not needed every day of the week and the number of special education students in the class does not exceed the natural proportion. Support can be provided by a certified Special Education teacher or teaching assistant. When services are provided by a certified Special Education teacher both teachers have equal status in the classroom. The teaching assistant carries out the responsibilities specified by the classroom teacher.

• Push-In Service—Special Education teachers schedule services on a flexible basis. Schedules are coordinated with the General Education teacher based on student need in inclusive classrooms where students with disabilities are accessing general education curriculum. The push-in model is not a traditional co-teach model. The Special Education teacher may provide services in multiple classrooms within the same instructional period.


**Different Models of Support**

- **Co-Teach/Team Teaching** - The co-teach/team teaching model pairs two (can be more, but usually two) teachers together to cooperatively teach a class. The typical team includes one teacher who specializes in content (such as an English or Math teacher) and a Special Education teacher. Also referred to as Collaborative Teaching. Both teachers have equal status in the classroom.

- **Pull Out Service** - The Special Education teacher or specialist provides the instruction that does not have to be integrated with the general education curriculum. Pull-out services typically happen in a setting outside the general education classroom. Students may need to receive small group or individual instruction with the Special Education teacher in another setting outside of the general education classroom.

- **Specialized Support** - Support provided in a setting outside of the general education classroom to address specified goals. Reviewed frequently to ensure that a less restrictive setting would be appropriate. Specialized support provides instruction to small groups of students who are working on the same, or closely related learning objectives. Example of specialized support include self-contained classrooms such as preschool program for children with disabilities, life skills classes, functional academic classes, classes for students with autism, and behavior support & intervention classes.
# Different Models of Support

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# Different Models of Support

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<td>Support materials prepared prior to instructional delivery. The need for these materials is identified through the IEP process and collaborative planning between the general education teacher and special populations personnel. Supports may include accommodations, supplementary aids and services and supports for school personnel.</td>
<td>Services for special education students are provided inside the general education classroom. The models could include:  - Support Facilitation  - Co-Teaching</td>
<td>Services for special education students that are provided in a location other than the general education classroom. One or more learner objectives are addressed in a setting other than the general education classroom for a period of the school day. The decision is reached through an analysis of individual student. Traditional names for these services include resource or self-contained.</td>
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| **Co-Teacher**  
A formal, year-long or semester-long commitment between a general education teacher and a special populations teacher to jointly plan, deliver, and assess instruction for all students in the general education class. | **Support Facilitator**  
An individual who provides a variety of supports, either to students and/or to the general education teacher, which meets the needs identified through collaborative planning. | **Instructional accommodations/curricular modifications**  
Instructional accommodations/curricular modifications delivered in the general education classroom by general education teachers and/or special populations personnel that should:  - Benefit all students (when possible); and,  - Respond to the unique needs of special needs students. |
| Instructional accommodations/curricular modifications prepared in advance of instruction. Can be prepared by both general and special populations personnel (or as an assigned responsibility to special populations personnel). | **Accommodations and curricular modifications**  
Accommodations and curricular modifications prepared and delivered in a specialized learning environment. | **PEIMS Codes**  
Mainstream: 37.4% of students receiving special education services have an instructional setting of mainstream. |
| **PEIMS Codes**  
Mainstream: 37.4% of students receiving special education services have an instructional setting of mainstream. | **PEIMS Codes**  
Resource Services: 25.9% of students receiving special education services have an instructional setting of resource. Self-Contained: 20.6% of students receiving special education services have an instructional setting of self-contained. |
Different Models of Support

Special Education Continuum of Services

- **Self Contained**
  - Students with severe and profound cognitive disabilities
  - Access the state standards through prerequisite skills.
  - Student approved to receive modified curriculum.
  - Require instruction in communication, daily living and vocation.

- **Resource Pull Out**
  - Student stays in general education most of day.
  - Specialized support offered outside of class by special education staff for subject areas/IEP and time specified in ARD.
  - Instruction given with individually accommodated grade level TEKS.

- **Resource Push In Elementary**
  - Student stays in general education class for lesson.
  - Special Education teacher implements individualized accommodations and support in class during small group or independent work time.

- **Co-Teach**
  - Student stays in general education classroom.
  - Support provided by both general and special education teachers.
  - Teachers co-plan, instruct and assess together.

- **Monitoring**
  - Student stays in general education classroom.
  - Student does not receive direct support from Special Education Teacher.
  - Special Education Teacher provides support through observations or consultations with general education teacher.

Midway ISD
Woodway, TX
Different Models of Support

The Continuum of Special Education Services

- Hingham Public Schools
  - Hingham, MA
- Cambridge Public Schools
  - Cambridge, MA

The Continuum of Services:

1. General Education with No Direct Special Education Services or Supports (Traditional Mainstreaming)
2. General Education Class, Direct Special Education Services and Other Related Services in the General Education Class
3. Pull-out Special Education Services and Other Related Services for a Small Portion of the School in a Setting Other than General Education Classroom
4. Sub-separate Classes with Mainstreaming Opportunities in Academic & Non-Academic Classes as Specified in the IEP
5. Day/Residential Schools, Hospital Schools, Home Services

Move this way only as far as necessary

Return this way as rapidly & feasibly as possible
Different Models of Support

Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
Evansville, IN

Gananda Central School District
Walworth, NY
Supports, Services, & Activities to Help Students Transition Across Grade Levels

Transitions can be:

- From one grade to another
- From one school to another
- From one program to another
- From one teacher to a different teacher
- From school to postsecondary, college, vocational program, or another program

The major transition occurs at age 22, when a child ages out of IDEA programs and is then served by adult vocational and developmental agencies.
Supports, Services, & Activities to Help Students Transition Across Grade Levels

Supports, Services, & Activities to aid in Transition

➢ Supports to encourage friendship and socializing with peers—provide different coaching & role playing about friendships, making friends, taking turns, sharing, settling peer conflict, etc.
➢ Use social scripts to practice new skills social skills. Practice new skills during playdates.
➢ Supports to structure time for recreation & exercise—involvement in a structured recreation program, physical assistance, adaptive devices & equipment.
  ➢ Provide a map of the school.
  ➢ Provide a copy of his or her schedule. Provide a visual schedule.
  ➢ Establish methods and a schedule for communicating between home and school.

Provide written information or visuals about specific situations so your child can learn and rehearse for the change at his or her own pace.
Supports, Services, & Activities to Help Students Transition Across Grade Levels

Supports, Services, & Activities to aid in Transition

➢ Communicate the changes to your child. Develop scenarios for him or her to practice the specific changes.
➢ Visitations & tours should be conducted to allow you and your child to meet relevant school staff, locate the his or her locker, visit important locations within the new building, etc. Tour the school with your child and introduce him or her to members of their new special needs team.
➢ Schedule a conference with new teachers & administrators to discuss any concerns before transition takes place.
➢ Develop a videotape about the new class or school.
➢ Ask for peers who are willing to help your child with the transition and acclimation to the new class or school.
➢ Identify key people or a mentor your child can contact if he or she is having a difficult time.
➢ Provide a visual menu of coping strategies for stress, anger, and anxiety.
➢ Provide a quiet place for timeout.
Resources

- Education for Life and Work Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century- https://www.nap.edu/read/13398/chapter/1
- LRE in the Wake of COVID- https://www.nasdse.org/docs/NASDSE_LRE.pdf

Contact Information

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