Inclusive Teaching Practices

Washington State Inclusionary Practices Handbook
Chapter 3

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Inclusive teaching practices make curriculum and instruction accessible to diverse learners and increase the likelihood that students with disabilities will experience meaningful participation and learning in general education. Historically, students with disabilities have not had equal opportunities to access general education. Increasing opportunities for inclusion depends upon a shared vision, inclusive school culture, and ongoing examination of barriers in mindsets and school practices. The Inclusionary Practices Handbook is designed to provide a foundation and framework for inclusionary practices in Washington state. Chapters 1 and 2 have focused on collaborative practices for inclusion, and inclusive learning environments, research studies and policies that support inclusion, as well as structural and philosophical barriers to inclusion. Highlighted in those chapters is the importance of building a schoolwide culture of inclusion and practices that foster a growth mindset, build capacity for collaboration, and create learning environments that are welcoming, adaptive, and flexible. Chapter 3 discusses components of inclusive teaching for all and the integration of special education services to support students with disabilities.

Note to the Reader on Navigating this Chapter

Inclusive teaching practices require intentional, collaborative structures across general education and special education, along with time and strategies for working together. As such, the contents of this chapter dive deeper to provide necessary background and framing for these approaches. We recommend unpacking this chapter in sections (I-IV), allowing time for reflection and learning in between sections. Each section includes reflection activities to guide this approach, as outlined in the table below:

Chapter 3 Sections	Leading Questions	Activities
I. Access and Equity in Education	• What is general and basic education? • How can an equity framework help reduce opportunity and achievement gaps for students with disabilities? • How can inclusive teaching partnerships support equity for students with disabilities?	1. Reflections: a. Culturally Responsive Habits. b. Teaching Styles. c. Access for Students with Disabilities. d. IDEA mandates. 2. Voices of adults with disabilities.
II. Inclusive Teaching Practices: General Education	• What are inclusive teaching practices in general education settings? • How can inclusive general education teachers support students with variable abilities? • How can inclusive teaching practices in general education support meaningful participation and learning for students with disabilities?	1. Case studies: a. Gabriel - meaningful participation b. Andy - strengths-based c. Ian – Executive function 2. Reflection: Presuming competence. 3. Accessible curriculum analysis 4. Comparison: Traditional, UDL, and differentiation. 5. Self-assessment: Technology Integration.

Chapter 3 Sections	Leading Questions	Activities
III. Inclusive Teaching Practices: Special Education	• How can IEP learning goals foster access to general education? • How can specially designed instruction be integrated into general education settings?	1. Inclusive IEP goal writing. 2. Specially Designed Instruction Process Analysis
IV. Collaborative Planning, Teaching, and Assessment	• How can general and special education teachers work together to support access and general education in inclusive settings for students with disabilities?	1. Inclusive Teaching Plan Template 2. Adapted Lesson Review

I. Equity Framework for Inclusive Teaching

The OSPI equity statement makes a commitment to go beyond equality in education by maintaining ongoing examination of practices and action to ensure equity for all students by providing the support needed to succeed in school.[1] Equal and equitable opportunities to learn and participate in general education with support are essential for improving performance on assessments, graduation outcomes, and closing achievement gaps. In Chapter 2 of the handbook, equity is described as giving students what they need and different levels or types of support so they can take advantage of opportunities and accomplish goals. Equitable access for students with disabilities depends upon appropriate support, and educators working collaboratively to develop thoughtful strategies and create appropriate adaptations.

Equality means all students have the same (equal) opportunities to learn content standards and have meaningful participation in general education settings.

Equity means all students have the support and resources they need to benefit from equal opportunities to learn and participate in all aspects of school.

Stembridge describes an equity framework as a theory regarding fairness in opportunity and, a commitment to equity is performative within a culturally responsive framework.[2] In a culturally responsive framework, teacher mindsets and practices are focused on an inquiry-based approach that seeks understanding of student needs rather than relying on checklists and unidimensional approaches. Inclusive educators focused on access and equity continuously explore new strategies to improve student learning and reflect on practices to; 1) identify barriers to learning and participation in school systems and environments 2) recognize the

[1] OSPI Vision, Mission, Values, and Equity

[2] Stembridge, A. (2020). Culturally Responsive Education in the Classroom. An Equity Framework for Pedagogy. Routledge. NY

negative effects of barriers on marginalized groups, and 3) take action to mitigate barriers and ensure access to learning and participation.

Activity: To what extent do you practice the following culturally responsive habits of mind when planning and teaching (Stembridge, 2020):

- ❏ View teaching and learning as a journey and not a destination.
- ❏ Regularly think about one's thinking.
- ❏ Listen / observe with understanding and empathy.
- ❏ Engage in questioning and innovative problem-posing.
- ❏ Design learning experiences with a focus on engagement.
- ❏ Mine actionable data from student's learning experiences.

Washington state is committed to a basic education whereby all students engage in evolving programs of instruction to become responsible and respectful global citizens, to contribute to their economic well-being and that of their families and communities, to explore and understand different perspectives, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives.[3] Ensuring access to a basic education means doing whatever is necessary to give students the opportunity to master the state's four learning goals and the Essential Academic Learning Requirements.[4]

The Washington State Goals of Basic Education for All:

1. Read with comprehension, write effectively, and communicate successfully in a variety of ways and settings and with a variety of audiences.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history, including different cultures and participation in representative government; geography; arts; and health and fitness.
3. Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate technology literacy and fluency as well as different experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems; and
4. Understand the importance of work and finance and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities.

Washington is committed to preparing all students for skills beyond academics using Mastery-based learning as a meaningful and scalable way to engage students in the learning process and foster growth and understanding consistent with the Profile of a Graduate.[5] General education includes programs, systems, standards, curriculum, and instruction for achieving the goals of basic education and preparing all students for adult life to include; **learning standards** that

[3] OSPI Revised Code of Washington (RCW). Basic Education.

[4] OSPI Learning Standards and Instructional Materials

[5] Washington State Board of Education Mastery-Based Learning in Washington State. 2020 Report

describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade-level in subject-area categories; **content** that consists of facts, concepts, principles, and skills specific to the subject area of each standard; **curriculum** course of study and materials for teaching the content; **pedagogy** for how to teach based on theories of how children learn; and **supports** as needed to create equitable access. Details of these elements of general education are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Elements of General Education

Learning Standards	Pedagogy	Education Supports
The "what" (content) that is taught through curriculum State Learning standards ○ The Arts ○ Computer Science ○ Early Learning ○ Educational Technology ○ English Language Arts ○ English Language proficiency ○ Environment and Sustainability ○ Financial Education ○ Health and Physical Education ○ Math ○ Science ○ Social Studies ○ Integrated World Languages	• The "how" of teaching and learning • The methods, curriculum, and assessments for teaching the standards • The design and implementation of curriculum • The study of instructional design and strategies • The philosophy and science behind instructional methods • The theory and practice of instruction	• Supplemental materials, supplies, and specialized staff • Learning Assistance Programs as supplemental instruction for "underachieving" students • Transitional Bilingual Instructional Programs as supplemental instruction for English Language Learners • Special Education as appropriate education and supports for students with disabilities • Highly Capable Programs for highly capable / talented and gifted students • Transportation • Education Technology[6]

Activity: Review the elements of general education listed above (Table 1) and reflect on the following questions based on your experiences in schools:

1. To what extent do you observe students with a range of disabilities accessing ALL content standards?
2. To what extent and, in what ways, is pedagogy different for students with and without disabilities?
3. To what extent does special education support facilitate access to general education?

Students with disabilities have historically missed opportunities to participate in the same comprehensive and enriched general education curriculum as students without disabilities.[7] In addition, they have demonstrated persistent achievement gaps in academic performance and graduation rates across the country.[8] Historically, special education teachers developed

[6] OSPI Basic Education Technology
[7] 43rd Annual Report to Congress on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2021)
[8] National Assessment of Educational Performance (NAEP) BASIC knowledge and skills (2019)

curriculum and learning goals separate from general education curriculum and standards, which perpetuated opportunity gaps to learn the same academic content as students without disabilities. Since the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 2001, and the reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997/2004), students with disabilities are required to be included in systems of accountability in K-12 education. Therefore, students with disabilities are now required to take the same standards-based assessments as students without disabilities, strengthening the need to ensure access and alignment with standards-based curriculum. Table 2 shows the percentage of students with and without disabilities in Washington state who met 2018-2019 grade-level standards on statewide assessments, as well as graduation rates. [9]

Table 2. State Assessment Proficiency and Graduation Rates[10]

Washington State	Math	English Language Arts	Science	Graduation Rate	Drop-out Rate
Students without disabilities	54%	65.7%	51%	85.5%	8.5%
Students with disabilities	15.9%	20.8%	16.9%	64.5%	12.0

Inclusionary practices in schools builds capacity to ensure equal and equitable access to standards-based general education for all students. Inclusive teachers plan for learner variability from the outset and uses evidence-based practices for meeting the needs of diverse learners. Inclusive teaching is about creating the conditions for inclusive learning, where all students experience a sense of belonging and growth because they get the support they need. Inclusive learning, teaching and instructional strategies are described in Table 3.

Table 3. Inclusive learning, teaching, and instructional strategies

Inclusive Learning	Inclusive Teaching	Inclusive Instructional Strategies
When the **learner experiences** a sense of belonging, has positive social interactions, and is engaged in learning. When student learning opportunities and outcomes are the same as general education	What educators do to **create the conditions** for students to feel a sense of belonging, trust, relevance, empowerment, and community to foster social, academic, and personal growth.	The **tools and techniques educators** use to teach students while recognizing that every student learns differently and needs different types of support to participate, learn, and develop relationships in general education environments.

[9] Washington State Report Card 2018-2020

[10] OSPI (2021). State Report Card; November Child Count and LRE Report; Data Performance Profile

The work of inclusion involves adapting to minor and major changes when teaching to ensure access, remove barriers, and collaborate with others. Inclusive teachers take into consideration the full range of human diversity when planning instruction such as ability, language, culture, race, gender, and other forms of human difference. When teaching diverse students, it is important to recognize personal biases toward student behavior, engagement, communication styles, work ethics, organization, and management of schoolwork and personal belongings that may be due to a student's personality, culture, biology, or lack of opportunity. When teachers reflect on preferred teaching styles and potential bias related to teaching, learning, and inclusion they can engage in performative actions that support equitable and culturally responsive education.[11] Through reflection, teachers can recognize what they know, what they are good at, and what they need to learn.

Activity: Participate in the following self-assessment activity to learn more about your personal teaching style, values, and beliefs: Staffordshire Evaluation of Teaching Styles (SETS).

- What teaching style(s) scored highest for you? Lowest?
- What strategies or flexibilities could you explore if you recognize your preferred styles of teaching might be mismatch for one or more of your students?

Equitable Access for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities have historically been marginalized from general education curriculum and content, further perpetuating marginalization in society. When students with disabilities experience opportunity gaps in accessing general education curriculum, there is an increased risk of achievement gaps.[12] Student who are segregated from general education often lack opportunities to develop the academic, social, and emotional skills taught and modeled in general education settings. In addition, school dropout rates for students with disabilities are shown to be due in part to experiences of school failure, absenteeism, and disengagement.[13] Inclusive practices can meet the needs of a range of students, including students with moderate and complex disabilities. Numerous studies have concluded that education in a separate setting for students with disabilities has not reduced the achievement gap, and inclusion has many benefits for students with and without disabilities (Table 4).

[11] Stembridge, A. (2020). Culturally Responsive Education in the Classroom. An Equity Framework for Pedagogy. Routledge. NY

[12] Gilmour, A.F., Fuchs, D., and Wehby, J. (2019). Are Students with Disabilities Accessing the Curriculum? A Meta-Analysis of the Reading Achievement Gap Between Students with and Without Disabilities. Exceptional. 85 (3) pp 329-346

[13] The National Dropout Prevention Center

Table 4. Research on outcomes of inclusion for students with disabilities

- Inclusion does not harm non-disabled students and may even confer some academic and social benefits (Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007).
- The inclusion of students with disabilities does not impede the learning of students without disabilities, and has many positive academic and social effects (Kart & Kart, 2021)
- Students with disabilities who are included at high or medium rates are more likely to have higher access to the general education curriculum than students with low inclusion rates. (Wehmeyer, 2006)
- Time spent engaged in the general education curriculum is strongly and positively correlated to math and reading achievement for students with disabilities. (Cole, Waldron & Majd, 2004: Cosier, Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2013).
- Students with disabilities included in general education classes have fewer absences from school, fewer referrals for disruptive behavior, and better outcomes after high school in the area of employment and independent living. (Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Levine, P. & Garza, N. 2006).
- Students with disabilities who were educated in general education classes academically outperform their peers who had been educated in segregated settings (Castro, 2007; Katz & Mirenda, 2002)
- Inclusion provides children greater exposure to language and academic instruction, which facilitates both language and memory growth (Laws, Byrne, & Buckley, 2000).
- Students with disabilities in mainstream placements demonstrate more independence and self-sufficiency (Newman & Davies-Mercier, 2005).
- Students with disabilities in inclusive settings had higher test scores in math and reading, fewer absences, and less disruptive behaviors than students in non-inclusive classes (National Center on Inclusive Education, 2011).

The role of schools is to foster development of the whole child by ensuring each child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.[14] All students need opportunities to learn content knowledge, skills, and habits of success, gain real-world experiences, build social capital, and learn about their own unique strengths and needs. Social and emotional wellbeing are not separate from academic learning, but integral and essential for executive functioning, managing stress, and maintaining relationships. Learning standards, pedagogies, and supports should prepare all students to achieve to the best of their ability to meet the goals of basic education, engage in a democratic society, find meaningful careers, and have quality of life in adulthood. A whole child approach looks beyond academics in preparing students for adult life. School

[14] The Whole Child. ASCD

curriculum teaches state learning standards, but must also help students develop habits for learning, organization, socialization, critical thinking, self-determination, collaboration, communication, and 21st century skills in technology. These habits are fundamental to academic success, and are developed over time, through opportunities to be present and share the experience of general education, alongside same age peers.

Activity: To understand more about the importance of meaningful participation in general education for meaningful engagement in adult life, listen to the voices of individuals with disabilities who share personal experiences about school and learning. Reflect on the following quotes from individuals with disabilities and explore the links to learn more about their experiences and perspectives. What did you learn, and what do you have in your power to change?

1. Jonathan Mooney "As a student with learning and attention differences, it was a journey of exclusion [and] very traditional special education services as remediation of executive function, writing, reading. I realized in college I did not have to fix myself but, I could get accommodations. It wasn't me that had to change but the environment around me".

2. Stella Young "My disability exists not because I use a wheelchair, but because the broader environment isn't accessible".

3. John Franklin Stephens "Let us decide from this day forward to include, not exclude," Stephens proclaimed. "Educate, not isolate; and, celebrate, not terminate. A life with Down Syndrome can be as full and exciting as any other".

4. Keith Jones "People really did not have high expectations of students with disabilities. I am told because of my physical condition I have to be secluded, stashed away and talked to in a way. There are no expectations about doing anything, and they expect me to succeed? Teachers didn't really push. They said, here is some paper and crayons: color. I asserted myself. I didn't care about paste and popsicle sticks. I wanted math."

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) federal mandates are based on the premise that the best place for students with disabilities to learn is alongside students without disabilities. Students with disabilities are first and foremost general education students, and general education settings are the primary learning environment for accessing general education. The following IDEA mandates are designed to ensure equal access to general education curriculum and settings for students with disabilities.

Activity: Reflect on what you know, understand, and do in relation to these mandates. How do these mandates help ensure instructional equality and equity for students with disabilities?

- FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education): Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that students with disabilities receive the same free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that is available to all students without discrimination due to a disability.
- IEP (Individualized Education Program): A program developed by an IEP team for individual students that outlines goals for accessing general education through specially designed instruction.
- LRE (Least Restrictive Environment): The extent that a student with disabilities will have opportunities to interact and learn with students without disabilities.
- A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum.[15]
- Supplementary aids and service, and other supports are provided in general education classes or other education-related settings to enable students eligible for special education to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with the least restrictive environment requirements.[16]
- General education teachers must be a part of the IEP team to participate in the development of the IEP including the determination of appropriate standards-based goals, school support, supplementary aids and services, and program modifications.[17]

A shared understanding of these IDEA mandates is critical for recognizing the rights of students with disabilities to FAPE and LRE. However, neither federal policy nor state learning standards provide guidance on how to provide access to general education, what instructional methods or materials to use, how educators should collaborate, or the best ways to provide special education services. IDEA places decision making authority for special education programming with IEP teams to meet individual needs, but meaningful participation in general education settings and access to learning are features of inclusive instructional design.

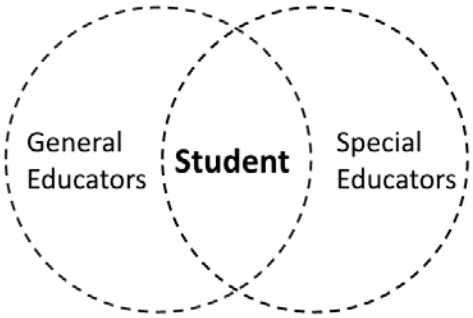
The next section of this chapter will explore how inclusive teaching can ensure access for students with disabilities to participate and learn alongside students without disabilities in general education settings. Finally, the chapter will explore how special education services and

[15] IDEA Section 300.116 (e) Placements
[16] IDEA 300.42 Supplementary Aids and Services
[17] IDEA: Section 1414d IEP/General Education

collaborative planning, teaching, and assessment play an essential role in building and sustaining inclusionary practices for students with disabilities.

Inclusive Teaching Partnership

wso the setting where all students learn how to learn together in groups, using age-appropriate communication, socialization, and cultural norms. Inclusive practices require that schools and educators reimagine the relationship between general and special education, and recognize the interdependence needed to not only close the achievement gap for students with disabilities but prepare them for meaningful participation in society.



General education teachers can sometimes lack confidence and a sense of efficacy for teaching students with disabilities.[18] In addition, special education teachers have concerns about having students included because they believe general education teachers lack specific skills for meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities.[19] In fact, neither general nor special education teachers can accomplish effective inclusion alone. Closing the achievement gap using effective instruction and appropriate support depends upon a partnership between general and special education teachers.[20]

- *General educators* have expertise in quality core instruction for diverse learners, grade-level standards and content, knowledge of typical child/adolescent development, identification of gaps and barriers to learning, strategies for fostering social competence, and teaching reading and math.

- *Special educators* have expertise related to special education laws and requirements, various disability categories, research-based practices in specially designed instruction, supplemental aids and services, and designing adaptations to environments, curriculum, and instruction based on individual student needs.

[18] American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). National Center for Learning Disabilities.
[19] Rosenzweig, K. (2009). Are Today's General Education Teachers Prepared to Meet the Needs of Their Inclusive Students? University of Connecticut. Open Commons. NERA Annual Conference.
[20] O'Conner, J.L. (2021). Great instruction, great achievement for students with disabilities. A roadmap for special education administrators. (2ed). Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)

Through partnership and in collaboration with families and the student, inclusive teachers work as instructional teams bringing together skills and expertise. Effective teaching is done in community with others, and effective teachers must know when and how to access resources and collaborate with others to support student learning.[21]

II. Inclusive Teaching Practices: General Education

Inclusive teaching practices create conditions in general education settings for meaningful participation and access to learning for all students, including students with disabilities. Opportunities for inclusive learning depends upon a shared vision, inclusive school culture, and ongoing examination of barriers in mindsets and school practices. Ensuring access to general education involves recognizing and removing barriers to learning and increasing teacher efficacy for inclusion through reflective practice and professional development.

Figure 1 highlights the inclusive teaching practices in general education that support meaningful participation for *all* students, with integrated special education support for students with disabilities. While general education teachers have the content expertise and are the chief architects of inclusive core instruction, special education teachers and staff are essential partners for providing resources and support for students with disabilities. The dotted line represents services that facilitate access to standards-based general education to include the IEP, high leverage practices (HLP), supplementary aids and services, and specially designed instruction (SDI). This next section will summarize the inclusive teaching practices that support diverse learners while highlighting how these practices can address equity, access and reducing the achievement gap for students with disabilities.

Figure 1. Inclusive Teaching and Special Education

Inclusive Learning Culture

Components of an inclusive learning environment are described in Chapter 2 of the Inclusionary Practices Handbook to include a sense of belonging that comes from feeling welcomed, curriculum and instruction that can be adapted as needed for a student, flexible options for participation, connection to families and community, cultural responsiveness, and valuing the unique strengths of every student. Understanding learner variability and factors that influence the learning process helps teachers to recognize that challenges with learning are a problem of

[21] Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) 7(m). CCSSO

design, and not a problem with the student. Research on neuroplasticity shows that the brain is malleable rather than fixed and unchanging.[22] A growth mindset is the belief that learning is a process, all students are capable of growth, and a growth mindset for students will encourage them to persist when learning is difficult or challenging.[23]

Special education services are provided to students who meet eligibility criteria in one or more of the thirteen IDEA disability categories.[24] These categories are based on common disability characteristics for each category but, student abilities and disabilities cannot be predicted or assumed based on eligibility categories. Students eligible for special education are diverse in how they are impacted by disability. Every student with a disability will experience different types of barriers and have different strengths and needs. Understanding learner variability and factors that influence the learning process helps teachers recognize that student learning challenges are a problem of design, and not a problem with the student. When learning challenges are perceived as a deficit in the student (something lacking), expectations may be lowered, and students may not reach their potential.[25]

Presuming competence means making the least dangerous assumption about what a student with disabilities are capable of learning and accomplishing in school. Rather than view student challenges or inability to meet a teacher's learning objective as a deficit in the student due to a disability, recognize how unidimensional instruction or environments may be affecting what a student learns and how they can show what they know. The following are assumptions of presumed competence:[26]

- Intelligence is not a single measurable characteristic.
- All students have different talents and skills.
- Students learn best when they feel valued and when people hold high expectations.

Activity: To learn more about presuming competence in education, you can view the following video by Shelley Moore and read the article and reflect on how your perceptions change:

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[22] Nelson, L. L. (2014). Design and Delivery. Planning and Teaching Using Universal Design for Learning. Brooks Publishing, Maryland.

[23] Dweck, C.S. (1989) Motivation. In: Lesgold, A. and Glaser, R., Eds., Foundations for a Psychology of Education, Hillsdale, Erlbaum, 87-136.

[24] IDEA Sec. 300.8 Child with a Disability

[25] Dear Colleague Letter (2015). United States Department of Education. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

[26] Jorgensen, C.M., McSeehan, M., & Sonnenmeier, R. (2007). Presumed competence reflected in the educational programs of students with IDD before and after Beyond Access professional development intervention. Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 32(4), 248-262.

1. Watch the Video: Five Moore Minutes. The Importance of Presuming Competence with Shelley Moore (link) [27]
2. Read the Article: Presuming Competence (link to citation below).[28] A conversation with a high school student with autism using text to speech to share experiences of low expectations and invisibility in school, and the need to build relationships and understanding to see potential.

Teaching students with a range of disabilities is not a menu or checklist, but a process that starts with known strategies and becomes something to be discovered through thoughtful collaborative planning and active monitoring. An inclusive teacher *asks not*, "can or should" a student participate and learn in general education. Rather, inclusive teachers ask, *HOW* can we help students with disabilities maintain access to the skills, knowledge, and experiences of their peers in general education?

It is through participation in general education settings that all students learn age-appropriate social skills, organizational skills, collaboration and communication skills, and academic content. However, it is not enough for students with disabilities to just be present in general education settings. Closing the achievement gap for students with disabilities requires both access to general education and research-based intensive intervention.[29]

It is not enough for students with disabilities to just be present in general education settings. Meaningful participation in general

Meaningful participation in general education leads to deeper learning through purposeful planning and connections with general education goals. Inclusive teachers improve access to learning by identifying and reducing or removing barriers to learning and designing scaffolds to provide the appropriate challenge.

Observation of Gabriel:
Gabriel is in grade 7 and receives special education services. Gabriel was recently observed in the general education math class at an individual desk, in the last row alongside other general education students. Gabriel smiled constantly, and randomly waved at the students around him. His peers said hi, some gave a high five, and the student next to him helped get his folder ready for the next activity. A paraeducator sat in a chair near the door prepared to help Gabriel when needed. The class was studying how to measure the area of a rectangle (related to geometry CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.7.G.A.1). The students

[27] Shelley Moore video (2021): Five Moore Minutes. The Importance of Presuming Competence

[28] Biklen, D. & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming Competence. Excellence and Equity in Education. (39). Pp. 166-175. Routledge

[29] Gilmour, A.F., Fuchs, D., and Wehby, J. (2019). Are Students with Disabilities Accessing the Curriculum? A Meta-Analysis of the Reading Achievement Gap Between Students With and Without Disabilities. Exceptional. 85 (3) pp 329-346

were using rulers and protractors to draw and measure rectangles and share them for others to measure. All of the students had tools and blank paper to do the task and were passing papers as directed. Gabriel was given a box of tangrams and given free rein to move them around on the desk and make a design. He appeared content and made shapes that other students praised. After fifteen minutes, the activity ended, and students were asked to repeat the activity as a group using the white board. Gabriel continued making some tangram designs, and occasionally looked around at his peers and smiled as they were exchanging ideas, laughing, and following the teacher's directions. After ten minutes of whole group practice ended, the students were given a formative assessment on paper to complete and put in a basket before taking a break, and Gabriel was prompted to put away the tangrams.

Activity: Although this observation lacks specific information about Gabriel's present levels and IEP goals, it is evident that Gabriel's academic skills, social skills, and communication skills are not commensurate with his same-age peers. What is your impression of Gabriel's participation in grade 7 general education math activity-

1. What was the learning goal of this math activity?
2. What were the barriers to learning the goal for Gabriel?
3. Was Gabriel happy in the general education class?
4. Do you think he experienced a sense of belonging? Why or why not?
5. Do you consider his experience meaningful participation?
6. Did he have the support he needed to learn and be successful at the task?
7. What did he have learned about math, his peers, and himself?
8. Was he learning what other general education students were learning in the class?
9. What could be done differently to better connect Gabriel with the general education learning goal and concepts?

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for students with disabilities to have a seat in general education and yet, not experience meaningful participation. In the observation of Gabriel, the learning goal was to measure the area of a rectangle. Gabriel had tangram shapes to manipulate on his desk, but there were no obvious scaffolds to support connection with the learning goal in a meaningful way or a plan to expand and deepen learning. The activity Gabriel was given was not connected to the grade 7 math standard in geometry. He used related materials, but the progression for geometry shows his activity was more closely aligned with the grade 1 geometry standard. Table 5 illustrates various scaffolds that may reduce barriers and increase access to the general education learning goal for Gabriel, based on his present levels of knowledge and skills.

Table 5. Scaffolding Standards-Based Curriculum

Grade 1 Geometry	Possible Scaffolds	Grade 7 Geometry
Distinguish between defining attributes (e.g., triangles are closed and three-sided) versus non-defining attributes (e.g., color, orientation, overall size); build and draw shapes to possess defining attributes.	• Same materials (protractors, rulers, pencil and paper) • Highlighted shapes drawn on paper • Pencil to trace shapes using protractor • Numbers on sides of shapes • A template equation with highlighted numbers • Peer assistance • Participates in group discussion	Solve problems involving scale drawings of geometric figures, including computing actual lengths and areas from a scale drawing and reproducing a scale drawing at a different scale.

Learning Standards and Progressions

Learning standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade-level.[30] Learning standards are designed to create common learning experiences and content knowledge in grades K-12 for all students. Many of the standards include broadly applicable skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, problem solving, and the use of technology. Learning standards follow a developmental sequence/learning progression where skills and content areas increase in depth and complexity with each grade and build upon the target standards of the previous grade. What students learn at any grade-level depends upon what they have learned before. The math standards progression in Table 6 below highlights the knowledge and skills that come before and after the grade 3 standards for the domain of numbers and operations in base ten. More detailed information on progressions for identifying prerequisite skills and planning instruction are available for Common Core Math on the OSPI website.[31]

Table 6. Learning Standards Progression. Math: Numbers and Operations in Base Ten[32]

Grade 2 Understand place value.	**Grade 3** Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.	**Grade 4** Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers.
MATH.CONTENT.**2.NBT.A.1** Understand that the three digits of a three-digit number represent amounts of	MATH.CONTENT.**3.NBT.A.1** Use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100.	MATH.CONTENT.**4.NBT.A.1** Recognize that in a multi-digit whole number, a digit in one place represents ten times what it represents in the place

[30] OSPI Learning Standards & Instructional Materials

[31] Progression Documents for the Common Core Math Standards. University of Arizona

[32] Common Core State Standards: Math Numbers and Operations Base Ten

Grade 2 Understand place value.	**Grade 3** Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.	**Grade 4** Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers.
hundreds, tens, and ones; e.g., 706 equals 7 hundreds, 0 tens, and 6 ones. Understand the following as special cases: MATH.CONTENT.**2.NBT.A.1.A** 100 can be thought of as a bundle of ten tens — called a "hundred." MATH.CONTENT.**2.NBT.A.1.B** The numbers 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900 refer to one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine hundreds (and 0 tens and 0 ones).	MATH.CONTENT.**3.NBT.A.2** Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction. MATH.CONTENT.**3.NBT.A.3** Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10-90 (e.g., 9 × 80, 5 × 60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.	to its right. For example, recognize that 700 ÷ 70 = 10 by applying concepts of place value and division. MATH.CONTENT.**4.NBT.A.2** Read and write multi-digit whole numbers using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded form. Compare two multi-digit numbers based on meanings of the digits in each place, using >, =, and < symbols to record the results of comparisons. MATH.CONTENT.**4.NBT.A.3** Use place value understanding to round multi-digit whole numbers to any place.

The standards tell *what* concepts and skills students should learn at each grade-level, but do not define the methods for teaching, recommend a curriculum, or suggest materials necessary to teach or assess learning. It is the role of teachers to create a standards-based learning goal, design instruction, and assess learning for all students based on grade-level standards. All students need access to all standards-based curriculum, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. Learning progressions are a way to help students with disabilities build knowledge and skills toward grade-level learning standards, and when developing IEP goals in connection with grade-level skills and knowledge. Access points are places in learning progressions where learning can start based on student's present levels of understanding and skills.[33] The Washington Access framework is a tool for developing standards-based IEP goals and planning instruction, for the 1% of students who have significant cognitive disabilities and take the alternative state assessment (WA-AIM).[34] The essential elements in WA-AIM are aligned to maintains skills and knowledge of standards, while reducing the depth and complexity. Table 7 illustrates how access points from WA-AIM can reduce the depth and complexity of grade-level standards.

[33] OSPI Access Point Frameworks and Performance Tasks

[34] Assessment for Students with Cognitive Disabilities (WA-AIM). OSPI

Table 7. Comparison of WA-AIM Numbers and Operations Base Ten.

EE.3.NBT.1. WA-Aim Math Access Point Framework Essential Elements	Grade-Level Standard CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NBT.A.1
Use decade numbers (10, 20, and 30) as benchmarks to demonstrate understanding of place value for numbers 0–30. Access Points (in order of complexity) 1. Student will identify numbers between 0 and 10. 2. Student will use base-ten to identify numbers between 10 and 30. 3. Student will round two-digit numbers (10–30) to the nearest 10.	Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.[1] CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NBT.A.1 Use place value understanding to round whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NBT.A.2 Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction. CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NBT.A.3 Multiply one-digit whole numbers by multiples of 10 in the range 10-90 (e.g., 9 × 80, 5 × 60) using strategies based on place value and properties of operations.

The access point framework for Washington students is limited to five standards in the areas of math, language arts, and science. An additional, comprehensive resource for learning progressions for reducing the depth and complexity of performance expectations across content areas is the Learning Progressions by Karin Hess.[35]

Standards-Based Curriculum

Curriculum is the course of study for teaching content and skills using lesson plans, materials, teaching strategies, and learning activities. A combination of evidence-based practices and the professional judgment of educators is essential for maintaining alignment between standards and curriculum and providing quality instruction and adaptations to ensure access and positive outcomes for all students.[36] When curriculum is not aligned with assessment there can be performance gaps because students are not receiving instruction on what is being assessed.

Curriculum is designed and/or adapted by the teacher to facilitate learning in ways that are both explicit and implicit (hidden). Explicit curriculum has clearly stated learning goals tied to standards with clear outcome measures (e.g., students will identify adjectives in a sentence). An implicit or hidden curriculum refers to the unspoken or implied values, behaviors, procedures, and norms that exist in the educational setting that are not expressly communicated but learn

[35] Access Point Framework and Performance Tasks. OSPI

[36] The Access Center. Improving Outcomes for All Students K-8. Strategies to Improve Access to the General Education Curriculum. Ideas That Work.

through routines.[37] The routines and procedures in classrooms set expectations which are most often learned through embodied experiences and participation, such as entering the room, taking a break, asking for help, etc. When students lack understanding of the hidden curriculum, it can cause tension and negatively impact a sense of belonging and learning.

Extracurricular activities in school are not standards-based but are another opportunity to participate in supplemental academic and social learning that promotes growth of the whole child (music, art, games, and athletics). Equal access to curriculum means that all students have opportunities to learn the same hidden, extra-curricular, and standards-based curriculum as other students in their grade. Equitable access means that all students get the support they need to participate in these experiences and engage in the lessons, materials, and learning activities.

Students with disabilities have traditionally had limited opportunities and insufficient support in standards-based, hidden, and extracurricular curriculum, which puts students who are taught in separate settings at a disadvantage. Limited opportunities to participate perpetuates gaps in both understanding of the routines and cultural capital that comes from being in general education classrooms and learning standards-based content. When teachers recognize assumptions and expectations in the hidden curriculum they can make those expectations explicit by using clear language, visuals and role-play, social stories or, scaffolds as needed to minimize the dissonance that some students experience when there is a gap in understanding of expectations. Barriers in the environment or the program can be reduced or removed through collaborative planning to ensure equitable access to curriculum for students with disabilities. The following is a list of barriers in the curriculum or environment to be aware of and avoided:

- An alternate curriculum that has limited standards-based content (i.e. functional life skills or IEP goals only)
- Absence from general education classrooms where both hidden and standards-based curriculum are experienced and taught.
- Lack of adaptations to curriculum content, goals, materials, and activities.
- Lessons, activities, and materials that are limited, inflexible, and lack cultural relevance.
- One-size-fits all curriculum
- Curriculum that does not promote learning habits of the standards, to include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, problem solving, and the use of technology.
- Missed opportunities to learn content and engage in formative assessment by content experts.

[37] Alsubaie, M. A. (2015). Hidden curriculum as one current issue of curriculum. Journal of Education and Practice. IISTE Vol 6(33), pp 125-128.

Accessible curriculum has multiple access points and pathways to learning for all students of different races, backgrounds, cultures, genders, languages, socio-economic status, and abilities. Curriculum access planning can guide the development of an inclusive IEP for the grade-level general education context. When determining access opportunities, IEP teams work together on a curriculum analysis to evaluate standards and curriculum for bias and accessibility, enhance curricula for all learners, and adapt curriculum for individuals as needed. Table 8 includes key questions and resources that teams can explore to ensure accessibility for students with disabilities.

Table 8. Curriculum Access Analysis

Steps:	Access Questions:	Resources:
Evaluate for curriculum accessibility	Is the curriculum motivating, challenging, relevant, and interesting to the student?	Washington State Learning Standards and Instructional Materials National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Standards National Council of Teachers of English Language Arts Standards (NCTE) Screening for biased content in curriculum Universal Design for Learning Curriculum Toolkit
Enhance accessibility for all	What options do students have for engaging in curriculum?	Learning Pathways in Education WA-AIM Access points Framework
Adaptations technology, supplemental material.	What IEP goals can be targeted or overlap in the lesson or unit?	Social stories Special Education Technology Center Curriculum Replacement Goal Planner by Shelley Moore

Students with Significant Disabilities

All students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, need access to all standards-based curriculum,[38] Students with significant cognitive disabilities or complex needs are no exception to the mandates of IDEA meant to ensure students with disabilities have access to grade-level general education curriculum and standards. *There is no alternative curriculum for students with disabilities in Washington State.* All students are general education students, and the IEP learning goals of all students in special education must be aligned and ambitious to help

[38] The General Education Curriculum—Not an Alternate Curriculum! (TIES Brief #5)

close achievement gaps.[39] Students cannot be removed from grade-level general education settings solely because of modifications needed to the general curriculum".[40]

Learning progressions help students with disabilities build knowledge and skills toward grade-level learning standards and can be referenced when developing goals and planning access to grade-level skills and knowledge. Access points are places in progressions where learning can start based on a student's present levels of performance and skills, then expand or deepen knowledge. The Washington Access framework is a tool for developing IEP goals, planning instruction, and preparing a limited number of students to take the alternative state assessment (WA-AIM).[41] The essential elements in WA-AIM are derived from standards, with adjustments to the depth and complexity. Students with significant cognitive disabilities require specially designed instruction to acquire, maintain or generalize skills in multiple settings to successfully transfer skills to the home, school, workplace, and community

Standards-Based Assessment

Student growth and progress in education are measured using a variety of classroom, district, state, and federal assessments.[42] States are required under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to administer annual statewide standardized tests to all students in reading/language arts, mathematics in grades 3-8 and 10. Washington state uses Smarter-Balanced to assess standards-based performance in English Language Arts (ELA) and math consistent with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).[43] Students also take the Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) in grades 5, 8, and 11.[44] The assessment outcomes (scores) are used to identify gaps and discrepant patterns across student groups (e.g., race, disability, multi-language learners).

Barriers to taking standardized assessments for students with disabilities occur when students have not had opportunities to acquire content knowledge, related skills (such as reading at grade level), test-taking strategies, and when accommodations are not made to minimize the impact of a disability (e.g vision impairment, executive functioning, dysgraphia or dyslexia). Language and cultural differences can be additional barriers. Reducing and minimizing barriers

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[39] Providing General Education Curriculum Access to Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (TIES Center Brief #4).

[40] IDEA Placement in General Education (34 CFR 300.116[e])

[41] OSPI Access Point Frameworks and Performance Tasks

[42] OSPI State Testing

[43] Learning Standards and Best Practices for Instruction. OSPI

[44] Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS)

in assessment means identifying barriers and finding flexible ways for students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Assessments can be made more accessible with universal tools and support available to all students, including students with an IEP or 504 Plan. Assessment accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access by allowing flexibility in the presentation of material, translations, test responses, the test setting, or flexible use of materials. Washington's Guidelines on Tools, Supports, & Accommodations (GTSA) for State Assessments identifies embedded and non-embedded assessment strategies for improving accessibility.[45] The following are additional accommodations added in 2021-22:

- Expandable items and passages are now available for all tests.
- Speech-to-text is now an embedded accommodation available for ELA, math, and science. Text-to-speech (student responses) is a new feature available for ELA, math, science.
- A student's response can be read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology.
- Hybrid Masking Tool is a new support available for all tests that combines the masking and line reader supports. It assists the student in reading by showing a single line of text in a stimulus or question, while masking the rest of the content on the screen.
- The multiplication table and 100's number table are available as an accommodation for all grades, instead of grades 4- HS.

In addition to classroom-based accommodations, the IEP includes accommodations necessary for an individual student with disabilities to participate in state assessments, as described in the IEP.[46] General and special education teachers must work together to design and implement the assessment accommodations, and use of accommodations should be practiced by the student and teachers in the context of classroom instruction.

Standards-Based Learning Goals

Learning standards describe what students at each grade should be taught over the course of a school year. Learning goals are derived from learning standards. English Language Arts (ELA) standards develop literacy and comprehension skills so students can learn from a variety of texts and media across multiple subject areas. Math learning standards include mathematical concepts, operations and relations, procedural fluency, and productive habits of mind for flexible

[45] Washington's Guidelines on Tools, Supports, & Accommodations (GTSA)
[46] IDEA Section 1414(d)

thinking, problem solving, questioning, and communicating evidence and representations of math concepts and procedures.

All students can work toward the same grade level standards. Adjustments to learning targets are not about simply changing or lowering standards, but rather making standards accessible to variable learners. Common Core State Standards guidance encourages educators to make appropriate accommodations to ensure maximum participation of students with special education needs such as the use of Braille, screen-reader technology or other assistive devices, a scribe, computer, or speech-to text technology. In addition, standards for speaking and listening should be interpreted broadly to include sign language.[47]

Activity: Review the ELA strands and math domains in Table 9.

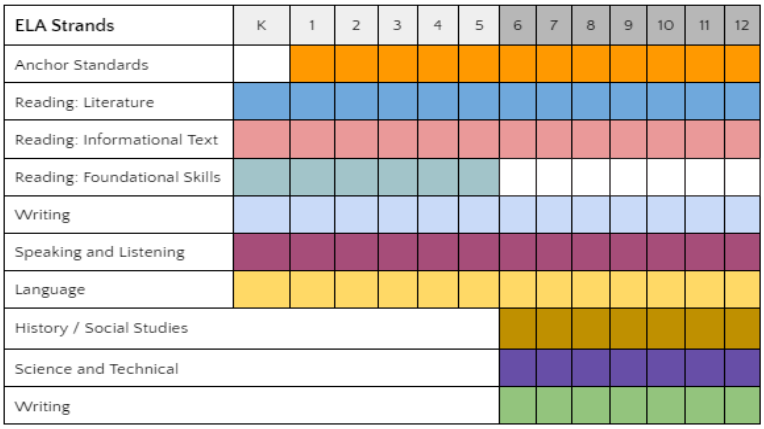
1) Select a grade and consider, to what extent do all students in special education access a comprehensive ELA and math curriculum at that grade level?
2) To what extent are accommodations used to expand access to the curriculum?

Table 9. Summary of ELA and Math Standards. (The two tones of gray at the top of each graph indicate a shift of the curriculum in depth and complexity from elementary to secondary).

Key features of K-12 English Language Arts Standards[48]

ELA Strands:

- K-5 comprehensive English Language Arts (literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and speaking)
- 6-12 specialty content areas: 1) ELA and, 2) history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.
- Grades 6–12 build on K-5 standards and add College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards

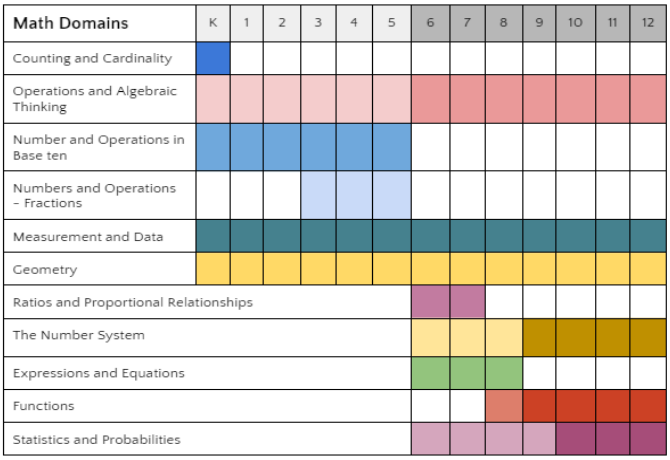


Key features of Mathematics K-12 Learning Standards:[49]

[47] Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy
[48] English Language Arts Learning Standards and Best Practices. Washington State
[49] Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Washington State

Math Domains:

- Emphasis is on mathematical understanding with math concepts continuing to build in each grade.
- Procedural skills, processes, and proficiencies are developed to support these conceptual understandings and develop fluency with current and prior learning.



The graphics in Table 9 illustrate the range of content standards in just two subject areas: ELA and Math. IEP goals must be aligned with the learning standards.[50] However, this does not mean students need an IEP goal for every standard but rather, IEP goals should enable access to standards-based curriculum at their grade level. Many students with disabilities have not had opportunities to access a comprehensive math and ELA general education curriculum, or other standards-based curriculum. Instead, the primary curriculum for students with disabilities has historically been the IEP goals to address deficits and gaps in knowledge and skills in a separate setting before they can participate in general education classrooms and curriculum. However, in the 2016 case of Endrew F. v. Douglas, the court ruled that "a child need not master the general education curriculum [to be included], and the appropriate yardstick is whether the child, with appropriate supplemental aids and services, can make progress toward the IEP's goals in the regular education setting". [51] Separate curriculum and settings perpetuate gaps in learning opportunities and marginalization in society. It is the creative and dedicated work of teachers to identify barriers and make curricujlum accessible.

[50] Dear Colleague Letter (Nov. 2015). Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Office of Special Education Programs

[51] Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1 (2016) Supreme Court of the United States

Case study: Andy is a student in grade 5. He has strong oral language skills, is very social with his peers and adults, and loves plants. He has learned the common and scientific names of most plants in the school playground. However, Andy has struggled throughout school to learn to read and write. He has been through multiple interventions in a resource room with little growth. The teachers recognized the extent of grade-level curriculum he was missing in general education and made the decision to include him a majority of the day. While in general education, he could not complete reading and writing assignments in the the same way as other students, but when text was read aloud to him and discussed in class, he exceeded many peers in comprehension, plot connections, and predictions.

Andy's disability is impacting his ability to read at grade level. Although it is important to continue building skills for reading, seperation from the 5th grade general education setting to work on skills for decoding text can cause him to miss conceptual aspects of grade-level literacies. Reading is a mode for accessing information but, there are other modes. The example demonstrates how the student's strengths in listening and organizing auditory information can help him access standards-based grade-level curriculum across ELA strands. Identifying the student's strengths, and gaps in skills and knowledge gaps can help with writing IEP goals that are challenging, strengths-based, and facilitate access to general education. The collective expertise for designing access comes from the English language arts general education teacher and the special education teacher to design adaptations such as text to speech and speech to text and specially designed instruction for reading.

Students with disabilities need access to inclusive learning goals in both general and special education to address gaps in skills and knowledge and foster growth of the whole child. Standards-based IEP goals are aligned with standards-based grade level curriculum, but not written to specific standards (i.e., IEP goals should not be a cut-and-paste of learning standards). The development of standards-based IEP learning goals depends upon a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and needs of the student, the learning standards and routines in general education (from general educators), and evidence-based practices for teaching students with disabilities (special educators). Standards-based IEP goals include the following features:

- ✓ Developed with input from grade-level homeroom general education teacher(s).
- ✓ Aligned with grade-level expectations, standards, and curriculum.
- ✓ Have a broad impact within and across content areas.
- ✓ Written to be accomplished over the course of one year (and often spanning the standards of two grades depending on the date of the IEP).
- ✓ Aligned with formative and summative assessments.

Aligning IEP goals with standards-based grade-level curriculum involves examining the multiple concepts and progressions within and across each standard. There are multiple points of access and possible goals for every student, and it is critical that teams design goals and services that are age appropriate. In the example of Andy, he has struggled with reading throughout school,

but it would not be developmentally appropriate to give him first-grade reading material when he is in the fifth grade. Creating the conditions for equal and equitable learning opportunities is the goal of inclusion, and it happens when we priortize meaningful participation and keep the vision of inclusion for every student at the center of collaborative planning and problem solving.

Evidence-Based Practices

Evidence-based practices help educators make good pedagogical decisions about how to teach to achieve positive outcomes and close achievement gaps.[52] The U.S. Department of Education (2016) defines "evidence-based" as activities, strategies, or interventions that have been proven through rigorous research to improve student outcomes.[53] Evidence-based practice is *a process* that involves seeking out and using the best available evidence from multiple sources. Evidence-based practices can ensure high quality outcomes when implemented with fidelity and, inform instructional decision making. However, what constitutes evidence can vary and, some evidence-based practices can have a degree of uncertainty. Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) identifies four levels of evidence that support effective teaching.[54] Level 1 represents the strongest level of evidence and, therefore, the strongest level of confidence that a strategy will work. Table 10 includes ESSA's definition for each of the four levels, along with a practical interpretation of each level.

Table 10. ESSA Levels of Evidence

ESSA's four evidence levels in Section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA	
Level 1	Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study that the strategy improves a relevant student outcome Well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies in level 1 meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards *without* reservation.
Level 2	Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study. Well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards *with* reservation.
Level 3	Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study. The research base does not meet the sample size of level 1 or 2 but the strategy likely improves a relevant student outcome
Level 4	A strategy has not yet been evaluated or does not yet have enough research backing to be Level 1, 2 or 3 but there is reason to believe the strategy will be effective, and

[52] Evidence-based teaching practices. Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
[53] Leveraging Evidence-Based Practices for Local School Improvement. US Dept. of Education
[54] U.S. Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments

	implementation must be carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure students are benefiting.

Schools and educators must follow a process for evaluating and implementing evidence-based strategies when teaching and monitoring student outcomes. ESSA allows flexibility for schools to choose evidence-based interventions and strategies as long as the following steps are followed as part of the process; 1) Identification of local needs, 2) Selection of evidence-based interventions, 3) Implementation, and 4) Reflection. Following evidence-based practices involves taking the time to reflect on how well the evidence you have can be trusted. Level 1 evidence-based strategies are proven effective through systematic review, but these reviews often take years to complete, and are not available in all aspects of education. Research-based practices are based on theories related to how students learn and are the basis of many teaching strategies and practices (level 3-4). Best practices are based on anecdotal evidence and/or professional judgment, translating the many research-based instructional practices that exist into daily classroom instruction (theory to practice). The IRIS center has information on how to identify research-based practices, and what to do when research is insufficient. [55] Table 11 shows examples of evidence-based strategies for inclusion using Regional Education Laboratory (REL) at Education Northwest[56] and Institute for Education Sciences (IES) What Works Clearinghouse.[57]

Table 11. Evidence-Based Strategies for Inclusion

Strategies for Inclusion	Research Base
Universal Design for Learning	Universal Design for Learning Research
Growth Mindset	Article: A Growth Mindset Improves Achievement
Peer Assisted / Cooperative Learning Small groups	Annotated Summary of Research Evidence on Peer-Assisted and Cooperative Learning Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
Variable groupings	Inclusion and Problem-Based Learning: Roles of Students in a Mixed-Ability Group
High Leverage Practices ● Adaptations ● Explicit Instruction	High-leverage classroom practices and reflection on application

[55] Evidence-based Practices in Instruction. IRIS Center

[56] REL Northwest

[57] What Works Clearinghouse

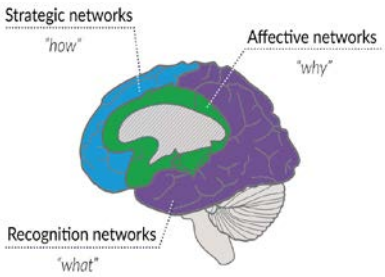
• Scaffolds	

High Leverage Practices (HLP) include evidence and research-based practices designed for students with disabilities to be successful in inclusive settings.[58] There are twenty-two HLPs for special teachers to follow in the areas of collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/ and behavioral support, and instruction. These practices are derived from evidence-based research regarding what works for educating students with disabilities across settings, including the general education classroom. Twelve of the twenty-two HLPs are related to instruction and enhancing teachers' implementation of content-specific, evidence-based practices in such areas as reading, writing, mathematics, and social-emotional learning, to include:

1. Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals
2. Systematically design instruction toward a specific learning goal
3. Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals
4. Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence
5. Provide scaffolded supports
6. Use explicit instruction
7. Use flexible grouping
8. Use strategies to promote active student engagement
9. Use assistive and instructional technologies
10. Provide intensive instruction
11. Teach students to maintain and generalize new learning across time and settings
12. Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to enhance accessibility in curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all students by building in multiple means of recognition, engagement, and expression.[59] The framework is based on educational psychology and neuroscience that identifies three primary networks of the brain involved in learning (Figure 2). The strategic network of the brain regulates what happens when we learn, how to plan and monitor learning, and methods for sharing what we learn. The affective network regulates social interactions, emotions, and communication. The recognition network regulates how we make connections and find meaning through our senses (sights, smell, touch, sound, taste). The UDL framework consists of principles,



[58] High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities. Council for Exceptional Children
[59] CAST. Universal Design for Learning

guidelines, and checkpoints for each of these networks to guide the planning of instruction and assessments for diverse learners.[60]

A key premise of UDL is that learner variability in the classroom is the norm, and barriers to learning are in the environment and the curriculum, rather than the student.[61] UDL teaching approaches reduce the barriers to learning and use multi-dimensional, rather than one-size-fits-all, instructional strategies.[62] Critical features of UDL are flexibility, choice, and creativity for both the teachers and the learners to reduce or eliminate barriers to learning and participation. Implementing UDL teaching practices means that principles of UDL guide planning, and redesign is an inherent feature of lessons and units as teachers learn more about the learners and make adjustments that increase student engagement. Figure 3 includes guiding questions for UDL lesson planning.[63]

Figure 2. UDL Brain Networks

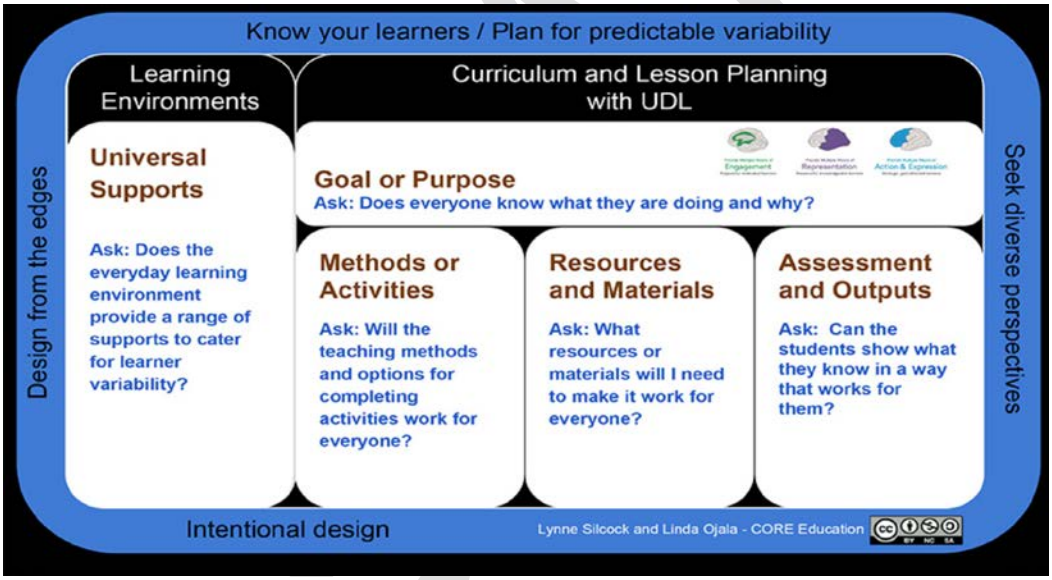


Figure 3. UDL Lesson Planning

UDL is an essential feature of inclusive teaching as it focuses on learner variability and proactive instructional design to meet the needs of the greatest number of students, rather than modifying instruction for specific learners. It can be used by general and special educators to ensure all students have meaningful access to grade-level curriculum, authentic assessments, and opportunities for meaningful participation. The UDL wheel is a tool provided by CAST as a

[60] UDL Guidelines (CAST)

[61] Barriers 2.0 UDL Barrier ID Flow Chart

[62] Rose, D. H., & Meyer, A. (2002). Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

[63] Universal Design for Learning in curriculum planning and lesson design. CORE Education

reference for teachers for planning multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.[64]

Table 12 lists UDL strategies that support students with and without disabilities. These strategies become universal when they are incorporated into the general education classroom, which can eliminate stigma when only allowable for identified individuals. When any of these strategies are written on an IEP, they would be considered an accommodation or modification for a student with disabilities and must be provided as indicated.[65] An accommodation is a change in how a student learns the content, while meeting the same goal as general education students. A modification is a different assignment, expectation, learning objective, or assessment than general education students.[66] (see Chapter 2 of this Handbook for more information on accommodations, and modifications).

Table 12. UDL Principles and Strategies

UDL Principles	UDL Strategies
Multiple **means of representation** give students various ways of acquiring information and knowledge	• Use of media in addition to text, such as video, digital books, audio, data displays, and concept maps. • Closed captioning for students with reading disabilities, students with attention deficits and students who are distracted by background noise. • Text to speech, visual symbols and electronic dictionaries • Braille, tactile graphics, physical models and screen readers, screen magnification, adjusted font size and contrast for students with vision disabilities
Multiple means of expression to provide students with alternatives for demonstrating what they have learned	• Multiple media such as video, voiceover PowerPoint Presentations, animations, visual art, photographs, storyboards, posters, digital books • Presenting ideas orally • Word prediction, text embedded prompts, auto correction and speech to text • Alternative keyboards, touch screens
Multiple means of engagement to tap into diverse interests, challenge students appropriately, and motivate them to learn	• Self-reflection and self-monitoring • Choices that meet learning objectives while maintaining expectations aligned with grade-level content standards • Attending to student interests and preferences • Cooperative learning groups and peer mentors • Project-based learning • Frequent feedback and specific praise

[64] UDL Wheel. CAST

[65] Universal Design vs. Accommodation. DO IT, University of Washington

[66] UDL and Differentiation and How they are Connected. TKI Inclusive Education

Collaborative planning with special education teachers and related service providers will be critical for gathering information about student strengths, needs and interests, and for extending support and providing supplementary aids and services for meaningful participation and access to learning. UDL practices are also helpful for students who identify as both highly capable/gifted and are identified as having a disability (twice exceptional). Learning experiences for twice-exceptional students should address the student's disability and provide enhanced learning experiences in the student's areas of strength.[67] Professional development and UDL resources can be found at the Special Education Technology Center (SETC) website.[68]

Differentiated / Tailored Instructional Strategies

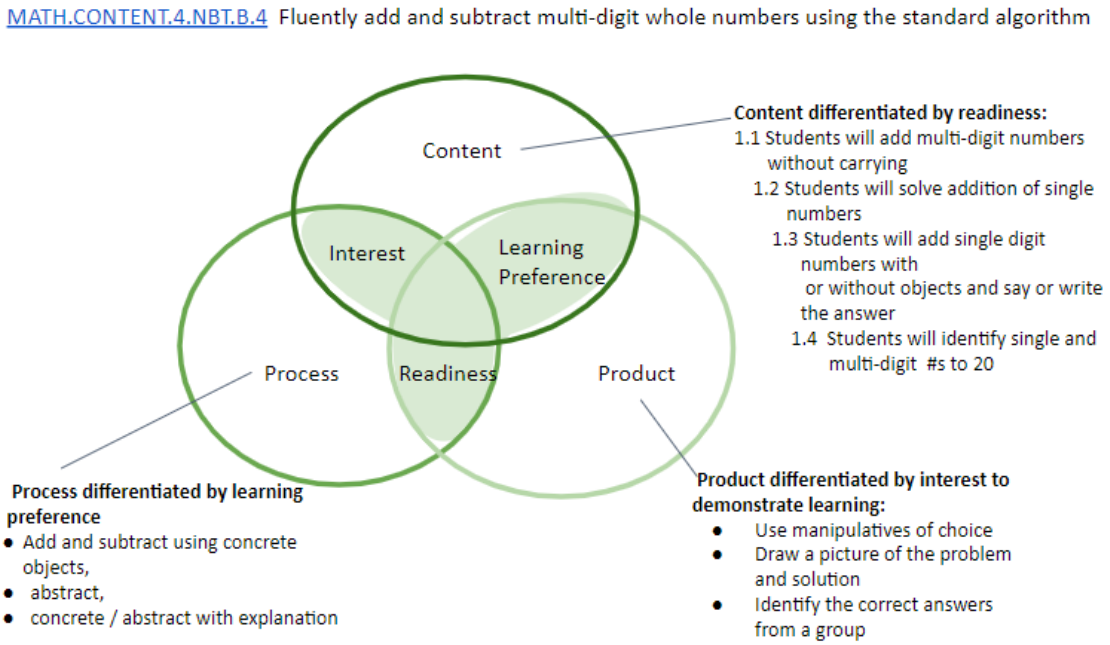
Differentiated and tailored strategies can facilitate access to learning for all students, including students with diverse abilities. Differentiated instruction offers students choice in what they are going to learn (content), the learning activities (processes) and/or the learning outcomes (products). Differentiation customizes lessons and activities to teach individuals or small groups in response to their interests, readiness, and learning style. Tomlinson identified differentiation as entry points to curriculum and instruction to allow for various rates of instruction and varied degrees of complexity.[69] Tomlinson states differentiation is not a strategy or a teaching model but a variety of ways to structure lessons and activities, which are consistent with UDL for multiple means of engagement, recognition, and expression. UDL planning might include some aspect of differentiation when creating for choices and flexibility but, can also be a strategy for responding to student needs that were not anticipated. Figure 4. provides examples of different ways learning activities can be structured using differentiated instruction.

[67] OSPI Highly Capable Program

[68] UDL Resources. Special Education Technology Center

[69] Tomlinson, C. (1999). *The differentiated classroom. Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Figure 4. Differentiation Intersection Examples



UDL and differentiation overlap and are similar in many ways, as both focus on accessibility and evidence-based practices.[70] UDL is described as an overarching approach to advance planning of inclusive instruction and the learning environment, and differentiation is a strategy for responding to individuals and groups of students. Table 13 shows a comparison of the differences between a traditional teaching approach, UDL and differentiation.

Table 13. Comparison of Traditional Teaching, UDL, and Differentiation

Traditional Teaching	UDL	Differentiation
Generalized plans and expectations for all students	Proactive planning for variable learners	Responsive to individuals and small groups
Curriculum- and teacher-centered	Evaluates fit between student, curriculum, and environment	Evaluates individual student
Teacher follows script or past practice	Intentional plan	Cause/effect
Teacher follows lesson delivery, pacing, and activities as	Designed before students arrive with options and choices built-in	Responsive to student needs for slower pace, choices, etc. after

[70] UDL and Differentiation and How they are Connected. TKI Inclusive Education

Traditional Teaching	UDL	Differentiation
designed	for learner variability	students arrive
Focus on "average" student	Focus on variability	Focus on individual and group
Does not consider margins	Plans for margins	Adjust to individual margins
Ignores barriers	Removes barriers	Works around barriers

UDL and differentiation are approaches for planning, teaching, and responding to student variability to include diverse languages, background, interests, culture, and ability.[71] Tailored instruction provides targeted adjustments in time, intensity / frequency, explicitness, strategy, and responses for individual students (Table 14). [72]

Table 14. Examples of Tailored Instruction

Time	• Increasing the amount of time (duration) that students have to interact with the content. • Increasing the quality of instructional time with the content
Intensity/ frequency	• Targets specific skills a student needs to acquire • Guided by progress monitoring data • Delivered in small groups to allow the teachers more time to work with and interact directly with the student(s)
Explicitness	Focuses on the most important and distinct features of a concept through: • Highlighting the concept through multiple methods • The use of graphic organizers, manipulatives, etc. • Increasing math vocabulary through structured language experiences • The delivery of clear and transparent meaning of concepts
Strategic	• Teaching students general and specific problem-solving strategies that help to build metacognitive awareness • The use of graphic organizers and manipulatives • Problem solving strategies that are implemented systematically and consistently to build student independence
Response Opportunities	• Allow students to interact with the content and with each other by: • Let students explain and justify their thinking to the teacher and peers • Facilitate discussions by asking questions that allow multiple entry points for all students to participate

[71] Culturally Responsive Differentiated Instructional Strategies. NYU Steinhardt (2008)

[72] O'Conner, J.L.(2021). Great instruction, great achievement for students with disabilities. A roadmap for special education administrators. (2ed). Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)

Social and Emotional Learning and Disability

Social and emotional development are fundamental to the learning process. Positive emotions improve engagement, memory, motivation, social interactions, and satisfaction in learning experiences.[73] Social competence is the ability to infer and respond to the emotional states of others based on verbal and physical communication.[74] Social and emotional learning happens across a variety of settings in life and school. Figure 5, represents three interconnected dimensions of social and emotional learning (SEL) to include the learning context, student-teacher relationships, and the competencies of students.[75]

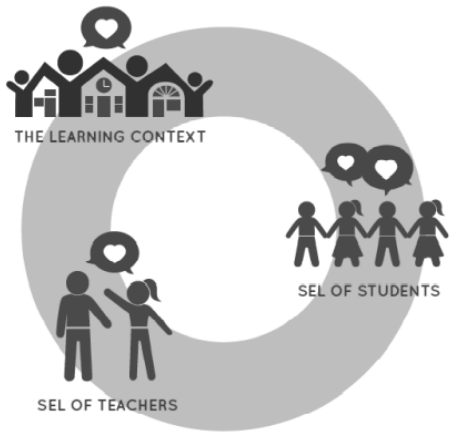


Figure 5. SEL Dimensions

The best way to support the social and emotional development of students in school is to maintain a safe and positive learning environment where all students feel valued and supported by the community to learn and grow. Students benefit from SEL curriculum that teaches the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as productive ways of interacting, building relationships, and learning. Chapter 2 of the Inclusionary Practices Handbook describes the components of a SEL curriculum as suggested by Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), to include skills for adapting to change, managing stress, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.[76]

In January 2020, Washington state adopted SEL standards aligned with CASEL, using the lens of four guiding principles: equity, cultural responsiveness, universal design, and trauma-informed practices.[77] Implementation of the standards is supported by family involvement, evidence-based practices, administrative support, and professional development for educators. SEL strategies should be developmentally appropriate to grade-level peers, culturally responsive to

[73] Immordino-Yang, M.H. (November, 2015) Emotions, Learning and the Brain: Exploring the educational implications of affective neuroscience. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

[74] Semrud-Clikeman, M. (2007). Social competence in Children. Springer. New York, NY

[75] Schonert-Reichl, K., A. (Spring, 2017). Social and Emotional Learning and Teachers. In Social and Emotional Learning. The Future of Children. 27 (1) Princeton Brookings. Wallace Foundation pp. 137-156

[76] CASEL. Fundamentals of SEL

[77] Social Emotional Learning, OSPI

the background and language of families and students, and strengths-based to support short and long-term student outcomes.[78]

Social and emotional development is affected by a variety of factors including age, biology, temperament, past experiences, trauma, stress, cultural and language differences, and ability/disability. When students lack age-appropriate skills in social and emotional development, it can affect relationships, learning, and lead to challenging behaviors. The personal management of misunderstandings and behaviors involves skills in perspective taking, problem orientation, flexible thinking, communication, and executive functioning.[79] Perspective taking is recognizing how others might perceive or feel about a situation, which helps with identifying or defining a problem. Flexible thinking enables one's own perspective to change or adapt to situations based on interpretations of the problem and different perspectives, and communication is essential for expression of thoughts and feelings. Executive functioning is the personal management system that helps students self-regulate behaviors, impulses, and emotional responses.

Students who learn in separate settings may lack opportunities to develop the social and emotional skills taught and modeled in general education settings. Social and emotional challenges, feelings of failure and, negative emotions toward school can increase the risk of dropping out.[80] Social experiences and observations of social interactions with mentoring are essential in the development of perspective taking, which is required for understanding another's desires and beliefs and the impact of one's behavior on others. Students with disabilities may have difficulty with executive function, reading social cues, facial expressions, and gestures, or accurately interpreting problems, perspectives, and possible solutions. Students with cognitive, sensory, and language disabilities may have difficulty finding verbal labels of emotional states to describe their feelings and needs and may need additional support when feeling frustrated, such as visual communication tools and verbal cues.[81] SEL can help students with disabilities develop self-awareness, social-awareness, and skills for self-regulation but, some may need additional support to learn skills and make gains in social and emotional strategies.

Activity: Case Study Reflection on Executive Function and Social Skills
Read the case study on Ian. Review the ways executive functions are related to social competence (Table x) and consider the skills and needs of Ian.

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[78] Jones, S.M. & Doolittle, E.J. (Spring, 2017). Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue. In Social and Emotional Learning. 27 (1). Wallace Foundation. The Future of Children. pp 3-12.
[79] Semrud-Clikeman, M. (2007). Social Competence in Children. Springer, New York, NY
[80] National Center for Disabilities. Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Challenges (2017)
[81] Visuals. SEL Spaces

Case study: Ian is building a structure with large wood blocks on the carpet by himself. Another child takes blocks to build his own structure nearby. Ian stops building and watches the other child for a short time. Before long, the teacher observes Ian pick up a large block and bring it over his head with both hands while looking at the other child. The teacher calls Ian's name and when he looks up, she shakes her head 'no', then Ian lowers the block. Ian was feeling emotional about sharing his space and materials and did not have the language or social skills to communicate his feelings. He did not have the executive function skills to see the problem, stop his impulse, and plan an appropriate action. However, with the help of his teacher, the problem was identified, his feelings were acknowledged, and communication and problem solving were modeled in the moment.

Table 15. Links between executive functioning and social competence

Executive Function	Social Competence	What are the skills and needs of Ian?
Response inhibition	Self-regulation of own actions / reactions (stop, wait) Ability to wait for a reward or positive outcome	
Working memory	Retrieving previously learned material / lessons Holding information in mind while solving a social problem Organizing a behavioral response based on experience	
Cognitive flexibility	Changing responses to meet the current need	
Self-regulation	Modulating behavior and emotional responses	

Source: Adapted from Social Competence in Children[82]

Ian had strong emotions but was not able to communicate his feelings, nor was he able to inhibit his actions without mediation from an adult. A lack of social skills and executive functioning skills can inhibit problem solving when feeling emotional, and negatively affect relationships. Responding to behavior challenges that disrupt or impede learning and relationships requires adult skills and training in social and emotional competencies, broad collaboration, and evidence-based strategies. Special education teachers, specialists, and counselors are crucial for helping students with disabilities develop skills and strategies for identifying the causes of stress and negative behaviors, reducing the intensity of emotions, and avoiding impulsive reactions that interfere with learning and relationship building. Technology can also be a tool to support social emotional development using activities, apps, and videos to illustrate concepts and help regulate moods and emotions.[83] Technology, media resources, questionnaires, and checklists are available to help teach students the skills necessary to regulate social and emotional behaviors and develop executive functioning.[84]

[82] Semrud-Clikeman, M. (2007). *Social Competence in Children*. Springer, NY
[83] Social-Emotional Learning. Special Education Technology Center
[84] Executive Functioning. Special Education Technology Center

Pedagogical approaches for teaching and supporting SEL for students with disabilities are both behavioral and relational. Behavioral and relational approaches work together to support social-emotional-behavioral learning and development. Behaviorism is focused on using reinforcement, environmental modifications, and discrete teaching practices to decrease problematic behaviors and increase functional replacement behaviors for students to get their social and emotional needs met. Relational approaches focus on understanding student emotions and skills for socialization and self-regulation in relation to expectations and demands of the environment to adapt expectations and support the development of lagging skills.

Behavioral Approaches to Challenging Behaviors

Behaviorism is a theory and pedagogy that focuses on ways that experiences and the environment influence changes in behavior when learning takes place.[85] A principle of behaviorism is that learning is demonstrated by the actions or reactions to stimulus. Interventions are designed to increase or decrease targeted behaviors using discrete teaching and reinforcement. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a scientific approach to designing, implementing, and evaluating instruction based on analysis of interactions between what the teacher does and student learning or behavior.[86] Key features include high rates of student practice with contingent feedback and ongoing instructional decision-making based on direct and frequent measures of student performance. Table 16 lists behavior modification interventions used to change behaviors.

Table 16. Behavioral Strategies to Change Behaviors

Interventions to change behavior	
• Rewards (praise and approval) • Modeling and shaping • Observation charts / contracts • Token economy • Self-monitoring and sanctuary	• Shaping • Teaching / reinforcement of alternative behavior • Self-monitoring • Extinction

Source: Adapted from Woollard, J. (2010) Psychology for the Classroom: Behaviorism

The following are behavioral strategies to support learning:

- Behavior specific reinforcement and praise (for example, "thank you for raising your hand to share" in place of "good job")
- Modeling a skill or behavior which helps a student learn through observation and imitation
- Shaping which changes a behavior by prompting and rewarding successive approximations to scaffold learning.
- Charts and behavior contracts which support student's self-management of behavior.

[85] Woollard, J. (2010). *Psychology for the classroom: Behaviorism*. Routledge, NY

[86] Behavior Analysis Certification Board

- Token economies can reinforce specific behaviors and increase a students' work endurance.

Behaviorism focuses on the use of positive behavior interventions and supports. Studies show that punishment can cause students to avoid the person and the learning activity and increase the chance the student will feel frustrated. Lost privileges, removal, suspension, and even arrest have proven ineffective in improving behavior.[87]

Relational Approaches to Challenging Behaviors

Historically, disruptive behaviors in school have been perceived as a problem in the child; a lack of willpower, self-control, poor character, poor role-models, or defiance. Such views have centered social, emotional, and behavior challenges in the student with punishment as a primary deterrent. Relational approaches assume a mismatch between understanding and expectations, and utilize collaborative problem solving, mentoring, restorative justice, and relationship building. They engage students in the process of identifying problems and solutions through listening, understanding what is hard for the student, building skills, and adapting environments or expectations as needed.[88]

Kids do well when they can
~ Ross Green

Ross Green states that kids do well when they can. He describes how challenging behaviors are often the result of lagging skills in social and emotional development in areas of executive function, language processing, emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, and social interaction. Ross states that behavior challenges are often in response to expectations that students would meet if they could, but they cannot.[89] Tools for identifying lagging skills in students and understanding unsolved problems can be found on the Ross Green *Lives in Balance* website:[90]

Shanker describes how behavior is highly affected by feelings of stress and, explains that misbehavior is often stress behavior.[91] Emotional states of calm or stress when learning is influenced by the learning context, but also past experiences, trauma, biology, temperament, and sensitivities such as types of lighting, sounds, temperatures, smells, and visual stimulation. Shanker states that stress is the inability to cope with stimuli that require expended energy to maintain a sense of balance, and in states of high stress it is difficult to learn and listen.[92] Self-

[87] Beyond Suspensions: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections to the School-to Prison Pipeline for Students of Color with Disabilities. (2019). The US Commission on Civil Rights Briefing Report
[88] Ross Green: Collaborative and Proactive Solutions. This is how problems get solved.
[89] Green, R.W. (2008). Lost at school. Why our kids with behavioral challenges are falling through the cracks and how we can help them. Simon & Schuster. New York. NY
[90] Ross Green, Lives in Balance. ALSUP21.pdf (livesinthebalance.org)
[91] Shanker, S. (2016). Self-Reg. How to help your child (and you) break the stress cycle and successfully engage with life. Penguin Press. NY.
[92] Diamond, A. (2013). Executive Functions. Annual Review of Psychology. (Vol. 64). pp. 135-168

awareness and self-regulation can help students cope with stress when self-control is difficult. Causes of stress are different for each person, and reducing misbehaviors of students related to stress involves the following five steps:

1. Recognize when a child is overstressed
2. Identify stressors
3. Reduce stressors
4. Help the student become aware of when they need to do this for themself
5. Help them develop self-regulation strategies

Students with challenging behaviors are more than twice as likely to be suspended as students without disabilities, and suspensions rates are disproportionately higher for Black and Latino students.[93] IEP goals and supplementary aids and services can address social and emotional skills and behavior. In addition, support can be provided from special educators, counselors, and specialists to identify the causes of stress and negative behaviors, reduce the intensity of emotions, resist impulsive reactions, and develop skills and strategies for coping. Guidance from the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is for schools to avoid harsh and exclusive disciplinary actions when responding to challenging student behaviors and instead, use positive, behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior.[94] Figure 6 illustrates how behaviorism and relational approaches support prosocial behaviors.

[93] US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2021). An overview of exclusionary discipline practices in public schools for the 2017-2018 school year.

[94] New Guidance Helps Schools Support Students with Disabilities and Avoid Discriminatory Use of Discipline (July 2022). U.S. Department of Education

Figure 6. Collyer, L (2022) Positive, Proactive, Supportive Discipline, OSPI

Positive, Proactive, Supportive Discipline

Relational and Engaging

Examples

- Teach, model, and reinforce expected behaviors
- Developing consistent rules, that are visible and practiced
- Relationship development
- Behavior specific praise
- Catch students engaging in appropriate behaviors, then praise
- Pre-correction
- Correct misbehaviors before escalations or once a student has deescalated
- Increase opportunities to respond
- Encourage flexibility and build in frequent opportunities for choice (pen or pencil, 5 problems or 7 problems, what are we working for?)
- Supporting Functional Communication as a replacement for maladaptive behavior (break, help etc.)

Transactional and Exclusionary

Non-Examples

- Public shaming (clip charts, color charts, public call out of misbehavior, comparing to peers or siblings)
- Calling home/threatening to call home
- Timeout
- Loss of privileges
- Loosing access to a reinforcer for the day (students should always have a chance to self correct and earn when possible)
- Requiring the use of a reflection room or calm down space (these should be encouraged but optional)
- Restraint and isolation
- Bribing or bartering.

Information on challenging student's behaviors exhibited by students with disabilities can be gathered from a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) to identify antecedents and underlying causes of behaviors. Multiple sources of information on behavior can be used to decide on a consistent response that is relational and culturally responsive. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) can be developed with guidance from an appropriately qualified provider (for example a School Psychologist, or a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst).[95] Social and emotional learning is a component of a positive behavior support system within the MTSS framework. [96] In addition, High Leverage Practices promote social and emotional well-being for students with disabilities include the following: [97]

- Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment (HLP 7)
- Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior. (HLP 8)
- Teach social behaviors (HLP 9)
- Conduct functional behavioral assessments to develop individual student behavior support plans. (HLP 10)

Additional resources on positive behavior interventions to support learning for all students:

- Positive Behavior Strategies: What You Need to Know (Understood)
  Information on positive behavior strategies, including additional guidance on implementing this approach in the classroom.
- Tips for Responding to Challenging Behavior in Young Children (Pyramid Equity Project)

[95] Functional Behavioral Assessments & Behavior Intervention Plans (FBAs & BIPs). Education Ombuds. Washington

[96] Positive Behavior Strategies. An Approach for Engaging and Motivating Students. Understood. National Center for Learning Disabilities.

[97] High Leverage Practices in Special Education. Social/Emotional/Behavioral Practices: Research Syntheses

Strategies teaching social and emotional skills and for reducing the likelihood of challenging behaviors in young children.

- Reframing Classroom Management: A Toolkit for Educators (Teaching Tolerance)
  Strategies for understanding and distinguishing behavior, rethinking control and power dynamics, being proactive instead of reactive, and responding to the child and not the behavior.
- Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals (National Center on Intensive Intervention-AIR).
  Strategies on how to identify, prioritize, and operationalize behaviors, understand the function of behaviors, and measuring behavior progress.
- Enhancing Family-School Collaboration with Diverse Families (Center on PBIS)
  Information on strategies to support communication and partnerships that support social and emotional learning in ways that are culturally responsive and student-centered.
- Evidence-Based Behavior Strategy: Pre-correcting and Prompting (Understood)
  A detailed explanation of how teachers can use pre-correcting and prompting to tell and remind students of behavior expectations before potential behavior problems occur.
- Evidence-Based Behavior Strategy: Nonverbal Signals (Understood)
  A summary of how teachers can foster communication while limiting interruptions during instruction (and allowing students to communicate their needs without drawing attention to themselves) by using nonverbal signals.
- PBIS.org
  Website of the Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support schools, districts, and states in building systems capacity for implementing a multi-tiered approach to social, emotional, and behavior support. The website includes detailed information and resources.

Multi-Tiered System of Academic and Social-Emotional-Behavior Supports

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a schoolwide framework to support the social-emotional-behavioral and academic needs of all students. The MTSS model is a cascading system of coordinated efforts of district and school leadership teams for implementation of tiered interventions to ensure every student has equitable access to instruction and support.[98] The school leadership team provides guidance and manages implementation. School staff work together to provide evidence-based practices to support students across Tiers. General education teachers implementing tiered interventions will be most successful in a district and schoolwide system, vision, and resources.[99] Schools across the state may be at different phases of schoolwide implementation of MTSS however, teachers can develop data monitoring, tiered

[98] Washington State MTSS Framework (www.k12.wa.us)

[99] Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. OSPI

systems of support, and interventions in classrooms as schoolwide systems are being developed. A tiered system of support in the classroom can ensure students receive levels of support from universal to increasing levels of intensity as needed in academics and social-emotional-behavioral areas of development. Teachers can work together to develop a tiered approach in the classroom by leveraging assistance from administrators, specialists, coaches, and special education teachers in the school.

An essential component of tiered interventions is quality core instruction with built-in universal support for all students. A tiered system has increasing levels of intensity to support all students as needed in academics or social-emotional-behavior. Universal support built into core instruction in Tier 1 can include UDL principles for accessibility and differentiated or tailored approaches for individuals and small groups.[100] Tiered supports are defined by the intensity of support and are determined through the systematic collection and analysis of data. Data-based individualization (DBI) is a process for determining student needs for tiered support.[101] If a student is struggling, and data shows that universal support and accommodations are not sufficient to make progress for some students in a particular subject or skill, extra support can be added through Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Specially designed instruction is supplemental to universal supports and should be embedded across all tiers, depending on a student's individual needs. Coaching ensures interventions are provided with fidelity, and leadership supports the collaborative teaming necessary to maintain a fluid and effective tiered system of support to all students. The conceptual framework for MTSS in Figure 7 illustrates how SDI can be provided across all tiers of intervention.[102] Students with disabilities benefit from tiered interventions in addition to SDI designed by special educators to address IEP goals. The IEP is not a comprehensive education; it is supplemental to general education. There is a common misconception that Tier 3 is special education, but special education is separate from MTSS.[103] The IEP includes goals to enable a student with disabilities to be involved and make

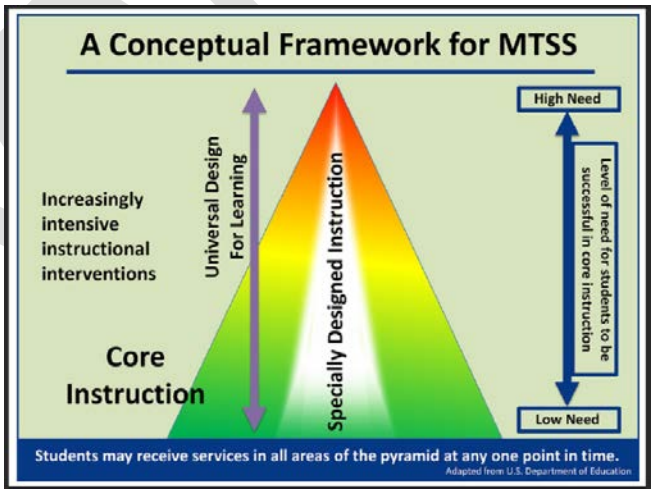

Figure 7. A Conceptual Framework for MTSS, USF

[100] PowerPoint Presentation (intensiveintervention.org)
[101] National Center on Intensive Intervention. What is DBI? American Institute for Research
[102] What Is "Special" About Special Education? Specially Designed Instruction for Students with Disabilities Within a Multi-tiered System of Supports. University of Southern Florida (USF)
[103] Intensive Intervention: Myths and Facts. (2021). AIR. National Intensive Intervention. American Institute for Research

progress in the general education curriculum. Individualized accommodations and modifications written into the IEP are designed to address unique needs arising from the disability across multiple settings or subjects as described. They are required to be implemented as stated and can be provided in core instruction *and* in tiers at increasing levels of intensity in an MTSS model. The modifications, supports and services on a student's IEP should supplement, and not replace, the tiered support available to every student within an MTSS framework. Accommodations on an IEP can support communication, access to the environment, instruction, motivation, self-management, and managing tasks.[104]

IEP goals are not written in areas of the general curriculum in which the student's disability does not affect the ability to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum with universal supports and accommodations.[105] Students with disabilities may have needs that do not require SDI if they can make progress with universal support or in a tiered intervention model such as MTSS. When a student with disabilities makes progress with universal Tier 1 supports, accommodations, and specially designed instruction, they may not need Tier 2 or 3 supports. Examples of students with disabilities receiving both MTSS and specially designed instruction include the following:

- A student has an IEP goal to improve organizational skills and is making progress with tier one universal supports such as graphic organizers, visual schedules, and checklists. SDI to support this goal is being implemented at Tier 1, and the IEP team has determined that the student does not require Tier two or three supports.

- A student with an IEP is receiving math SDI as part of Tier 2 small group to review the use of the partitioning strategy for comparing fractions. The IEP includes the use of manipulatives for mathematics. The special education teacher supports with planning for the use of math manipulatives as an additional support that the teacher would need to include along with the Tier 2 direct-strategy instruction.

- A student who does not have social-emotional-behavioral supports in their IEP has been demonstrating challenging behavior on the playground and in interacting with other students in the classroom. Tier 2 and tier 3 interventions that are supported through the school's MTSS efforts may be provided to the student. Inadequate progress in those interventions may be an indicator of need for the team to review the IEP and explore whether an evaluation is needed to make a determination for SDI.

[104] Improving Instruction, Accessibility, and Outcomes. MTSS/UDL/DI Module. CSULA
[105] IDEA Sec. 300.320 (b)

Tiers describe the intensity of supports provided. Tiers do not define students.

It is important to remember that neither students nor teachers are defined by Tiers. There are Tiers of intervention that increase in intensity for any student who demonstrates a need for extra support in understanding, communication, the environment, instruction, motivation, self-management, and managing tasks.[106] Also, the MTSS model can help inform referrals for special education but should not delay referrals by waiting for responses from tiered support. Parents may request an initial evaluation at any time to determine if a child has a disability under IDEA (34 CFR 300.301(b)), and the use of MTSS, such as Response to Intervention (RTI) may not be used to delay or deny a full and individual evaluation under 34 CFR 300.304-300.311 when a child is suspected of having a disability.[107]

Culturally Responsive Education

Equity is described at the start of this chapter and in the introduction of the handbook, as each student getting what they need to learn and participate in school. Culturally responsive education (CRE) is a performative commitment to equity.[108] It is a habit of thinking and an inclusive teaching approach to pedagogy that is useful for fostering engagement and closing opportunity gaps. Inclusive teachers do this by recognizing that learners have different strengths and needs, and therefore do not learn the same things or the same way. Students who are racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learn best in their own cultural frame of reference. Culturally responsive teachers learn to recognize the possible different points of entry to engagement in the learning, and the internal structure of ethnic learning styles, which may include the following dimensions:[109]

- Preferred content
- Ways of working through learning tasks
- Techniques for organizing and conveying ideas and thoughts
- Physical and social settings for task performance
- Structural arrangements of work, study, and performance space
- Perceptual stimulation for receiving, processing, and demonstrating comprehension and competence

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[106] Improving Instruction, Accessibility, and Outcomes. MTSS/UDL/DI Module. CSULA

[107] Dear Colleague Letter (November, 2015) United States Department of Education. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

[108] Stembridge, A. (2020). Culturally Responsive Education in the Classroom. An Equity Framework for Pedagogy. Routledge. NY

[109] Gay, G. (2010). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press. In Culturally Responsive Teaching. A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching All Students Equitably. Equity Assistance Center Education Northwest.

- Motivations, incentives, and rewards for learning
- Interpersonal interactional styles

Caution is needed when implementing SEL curriculum or positive behavior support to ensure that expectations are not biased or insensitive to different backgrounds, experiences, cultures, or languages. Many students experience intersections of identity in language and/or culture. Hidden curriculum is the implicit teaching of norms in school, which can be confusing for students who have different backgrounds and experiences. There are also a variety of ways culture influences development, including how emotions are expressed, ways of engaging in learning activities, and norms for communication. For example, when asking students to share feelings or opinions with the class, some students may not be comfortable due to cultural differences and need another way to express themselves. Sometimes tiered systems of support can be more focused on social norming and technical fidelity rather than taking into consideration the social and cultural complexities of motivation and engagement in learning.[110] Transformative SEL models include explicit teaching about rules and expectations and foster collaborative problem solving, social justice, and positive identity for both students and teachers.[111] Zerreta Hammond advocates for instructional coaches to help support culturally responsive teaching to improve instruction and help students of color who've historically experienced structural inequities in our education system.[112] Guidance on ways to support multi-language learners to access instruction is available by the WIDA consortium.[113]

Technology Integration and Online Learning

Technology and digital media are core components of UDL as tools for reducing and removing barriers to learning, enhancing instruction, preparing for the 21st century workplace, and providing additional methods for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Technology is essential for 21st century skills outlined in the OSPI Basic Education Act to "integrate technology literacy and fluency" in the curriculum.[114] Chapter 2 of the handbook describes features of a technology enhanced learning environment, and the integration of assistive technology to support students with disabilities.

The Technology Enhanced Classroom (TEC) embeds technology to strengthen instruction and increase student engagement. Assistive technology is a specific type of technology needed

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[110] Petrokubi, J., Bates, L, and Malinisy, C. (2019). SEL and Equity: Current Issues and Considerations. Education Northwest.

[111] Sabnis, S., Castillo, J.M, & Wolgemuth, J. R. (2019). RTI, Equity, and the Return to the Status Quo: Implications for Consultants. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation

[112] Hammond, Z. (2018). Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain. Corwin Press. Thousand Oaks, CA.

[113] WIDA. Educational Consortium. Proven tools and support to help educators and multilingual learners succeed.

[114] OSPI Education Technology Standards

consistently and across settings for students to make progress on goals, communicate, and / or to have access to learning, ensuring that students with disabilities have access to the same high standards and effective instruction that is available to students without disabilities.[115] Accessible classroom technology tools benefit all students and play an important role in the social and academic inclusion of students with disabilities (Table 17).

Table 17. Technology Options for Accessibility

Types of Tools	Accessibility Options
Teaching Tools	Focus & Engagement ❖ Reminder/Time Management Tools ❖ Visual schedules (low and high tech options) ❖ FM Systems (access for HOH) ❖ Alternative methods of presentation (videos/text/hands-on) Language & Communication: ❖ Large Core Vocabulary Boards (low tech picture communication symbols) ❖ Projection of core vocab/AAC onto Smartboards
Student Tools: Reading	❖ Text-to-Speech E-Books and Audiobooks ❖ Screen readers & magnifiers
Student Tools: Writing	❖ Graphic organizers ❖ Alternate pencils ❖ Adapted writing tools/materials (grips, easels, dry-erase, paper in multiple sizes, magnetic surfaces, etc) ❖ Talking word processors ❖ Touch screen devices ❖ Word prediction ❖ Speech to text ❖ Audio notes ❖ Word banks ❖ Sentence stems
Language & Communication	❖ Pre-recorded voice output messages for participation in routines ❖ Access to personal AAC systems at all times ❖ Multimodal communication tools and strategies
Organize and prioritize time and tasks	Visual schedules, mini-schedules or task analysis checklists, first-then boards, timers, lists, planning notes, "finished" folder Go to visual support kit
Self-regulation	Token boards, social scripts, symbols, power cards, self-monitoring tools, movement breaks, alternative positions (i.e. standing desks, ball chairs) etc.

[115] Quality Indicators of Assistive Technology. Special Education Technology Center (SETC)

Activity: Take the Technology Integration Self-Assessment to help identify your strengths and professional development needs with technology integration, ISTE. Turn Your Classroom into a Personalized Learning Environment [116]

Reflection Question:
What additional knowledge, information, and tools would you like to expand your use of technology for teaching, learning, and helping students access curriculum?

Personalized learning and technology-enriched learning environments are approaches that meet students where they are.[117] Personalized learning is a choice-based model that can enable learners to set their own pace and choose formats based on how they learn best, pursue their individual curiosities. Students also become active participants in setting their own educational goals, managing their own learning, and assessing their own progress. The following are ways that educators can attend to the personalized learning needs of students:

- Help students identify their interests and abilities.
- Support students in setting personal learning goals.
- Facilitate student involvement and learning in decision-making regarding their own learning and the use of power and responsibility in the classroom and school.
- Create a culture of care and community where students learn to support one another and take responsibility for the wellbeing of each other and the total community.
- Facilitate students learning together in diverse groups where they learn how to value contributions of others and manage productive group work.
- Teach students who are functioning at many differing levels of ability together in heterogeneous mixes.
- Assess student skills and learning preferences to facilitate learning and promote personal excellence.

Online learning
Technology is a tool for accessing general education within the classroom for in-person learning, and as an extension of the classroom in an online environment. Online learning is described as education in which instruction, content, and learning are mediated primarily by network technologies such as the internet.[118] Online delivery models can include blended learning, e-learning, virtual classroom, remote digital instruction, as well as any hybrid models that entail students learning at school part time and from home part time. Technology provides

[116] Technology Integration Self-Assessment. Ohio Higher Education
[117] ISTE. Turn Your Classroom into a Personalized Learning Environment
[118] Basham, J.D., Stahl, W., Ortiz, K.R., Rice, M. F., & Smith, S. J. Understanding Transformative Change (2015). In Equity Matters. Digital & Online Learning for Students with Disabilities. The Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities.

an alternate way for students to engage in personalized learning, and for teachers to deliver instruction. However, there can be multiple barriers to online learning to include student access to technology tools and internet, and the skills and motivation of students to engage in ways that require self-directedness and organization.[119] Inclusive teachers can create an inclusive learning environment and support online learning for students with various needs, but the techniques will be different than in-person learning based on the delivery model.

Online learning for students with disabilities in publicly funded education requires adherence to the same IDEA mandates as is in-person learning: FAPE, LRE, zero reject, protection in evaluation, due process, and parent participation. Equitable participation for students with disabilities in online learning environments requires educators to consider the demands of the environment and the students' strengths and needs accessing curriculum and using technology based on the method of delivery or mode of instruction. A special education teacher or staff must be involved in analyzing the demands of the online learning environment as part of the process of designing the SDI, and in monitoring the student's progress.

The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) provides guidance for teachers to support online / distance learning using High Leverage Practices to address barriers and strengthen distance learning instruction for diverse students in the following ways:[120]

1. Keeping students engaged.
2. Ensuring students feel connected and that their social and emotional needs are addressed.
3. Helping students manage their workload and avoid being overwhelmed.
4. Supporting students' learning so they can process and retain new content.
5. Addressing students' wide range of skills and experiences using technology for learning
6. Facilitating family engagement.

Additional resources for teaching students with disabilities online include:

- Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities (COLSD) has resources related to equity, access, UDL, the role of families, and professional development.[121]
- Understood has a toolkit to help educators meet the needs of all students during distance learning, which includes implementing positive behavior strategies.[122]

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[119] Remote Learning Barrier Flowchart Web (novakeducation.com)

[120] Removing Barriers to Effective Distance Learning by Applying the High-Leverage Practices, Tips and Tools. NCSI

[121] Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities (COLSD), Scholar Works. Kansas University

[122] Distance Learning Toolkit: Key Practices to Support Students Who Learn Differently (Understood)

- Special Education Technology Center (SETC) website provides student response and
- engagement tools for online learning.[123]
- ISTE website for online learning has books, podcasts, and articles on technology standards, certification, digital citizenship, technology tools, and online pedagogy.[124]
- National Center on Intensive Intervention. Professional Learning Series: Delivering Intervention through Virtual Learning.[125]

Family and Community-Centered

Children are more successful at school when families are involved in their education.[126] Family and community centered practices involve learning about the culture, values, and priorities of families and the communities that students are involved with outside of school. Inclusive teaching includes the families and extends learning by sharing information about what is happening in school and providing suggestions and strategies so families can support their child at home. Families will feel a connection with the school if they have opportunities to visit and volunteer, participate in decision-making, and receive clear and consistent communication.

Students with disabilities also benefit when their families know how to support learning at home. The impact of disabilities on learning is complex, and educators may need to take extra time and attention to communicate student progress with families, and understand the student's background knowledge, skills at home, and parent concerns. The special education processes, language, laws, and acronyms can be unfamiliar and alienating to families. Furthermore, families may lack the knowledge or skills to address the unique needs of their children and feel intimidated or less capable in relation to the expertise of special educators. Families may also have fears or preferences related to being included or in a separate setting. The following are suggestions for maintaining a family and community-centered general education experience for students with disabilities:

- Learn about the student by meeting with special educators, reviewing IEP, and talking with the student and family about their goals and needs.
- Develop student learning profiles and instructional plans as a team to identify barriers and design access to curriculum and instruction. (see Chapter 2)
- Have families share verbally or in writing about their child at home and in the community
- Model acceptance of the child's disability, and work as a team to support families.

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[123] Inclusive Learning with Technology at School and at Home (SETC)

[124] ISTE

[125] National Center on Intensive Intervention. Professional Learning Series: Delivering Intervention through Virtual Learning (59.06)

[126] Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

- Provide the family with information on the general education curriculum, learning goals, classroom activities, and multiple ways to participate.
- Listen and respond to unique concerns, fears, and mistrust or misunderstandings of the family or student.
- Clearly communicate the support and adaptations provided to promote meaningful participation, belonging, and student success.
- Treat all students with respect regardless of their disability or ability level.
- Keep expectations high and help students to rise to the occasion.

III. Inclusive Teaching Practices: Special Education

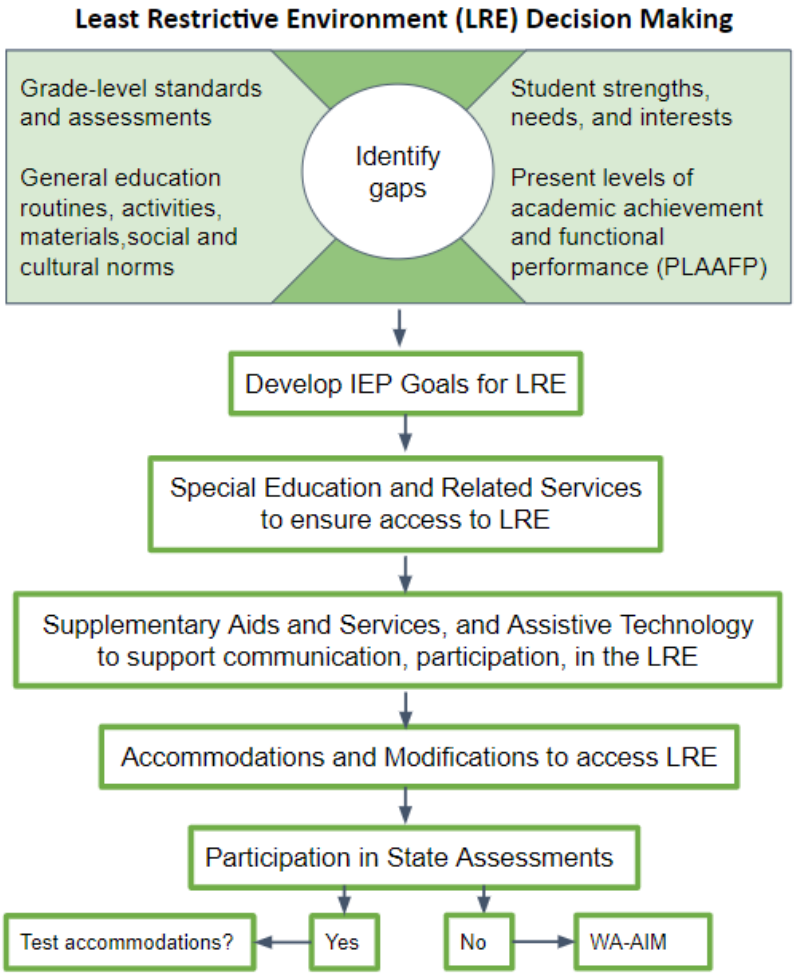
Inclusive teaching practices in general education support meaningful participation for *all* students and create conditions for students with disabilities to experience a sense of belonging and engage in learning by using multi-dimensional, flexible, and responsive approaches for variable learners. Inclusive teaching practices in special education build pedagogical access to standards-based general education in the least restrictive environment through inclusive IEP goals and services, high leverage practices (HLP), specially designed instruction (SDI), and supplementary aids and services.

Least Restrictive Environment

IDEA defines the least restrictive environment (LRE) as settings where students learn who are not disabled and, "removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.[127] Students who qualify for special education services due to the impact of disabilities are first and foremost general education students. IEP goals must enable the student to be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum across a range of general education settings and, meet other educational needs that result from the child's disability.[128] Figure 8 illustrates the flow of decision making in the IEP process for determining special education services in LRE. The process begins with identifying gaps in what the student knows, understands, and can do in relation to LRE. Based upon that information, goals and services are developed, as well as a description of supplementary aids, services, accommodations, and modifications for LRE.[129]

Figure 8. LRE Decision Making

[127] Least Restrictive Environment. IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1412[a][5][A]).
[128] National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET). Determining Measurable Annual Goals in an IEP.
[129] TAP #5. IEP Washington



If the IEP team determines in the decision-making process the student will not make sufficient progress on IEP goals in general education with supplementary aids and services, the school must provide a continuum of options for delivery of services to address IEP goals and implement a student's IEP in accordance with FAPE.[130] The IEP placement determination occurs after IEP goals and services have been developed by the team. The determination of placement of services is related to the type of placement (i.e., general or special education) and is not a specific physical location.[131] Students with disabilities can receive their special education and related services along a continuum from least restrictive to progressively more restrictive as needed to meet IEP goals. The placement decision begins with LRE, which is the setting where students can access the standards-based general education curriculum in a continuum of flexible options. Students with disabilities do not need to be at grade level to be included in general education, and progress can be reasonably calculated as appropriate in light of the

[130] IDEA Section 300.116 Placements
[131] Federal Register, 2006, p.46588

child's circumstances.[132] LRE is the starting point, and access to general education beyond IEP goals is essential for opportunities to learn general education curriculum and educating the whole child. The PLAAFP should be a summary of information from multiple sources for the team to develop a program based on IEP goals and services such as:[133]

- The strengths of the student.
- The concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their student.
- The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the student.
- The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student.
- How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children).
- For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities.
- Measurable IEP goals.
- A statement of how the child's progress toward the annual goals will be measured.

The processes of developing IEP goals and services must be nondiscriminatory and culturally responsive. Many students with disabilities have identities that intersect with other identities that have also been historically marginalized and are at risk for being over or under-represented in special education. A disproportionate number of students of color and multilingual learners continue to be referred, labeled, and placed in special education.[134] Everyone involved in educating students must take active steps to address potential systemic bias across the entire educational system, including the special education evaluation process. In addition, the IEP team must consider that LRE may be different for students whose non-disabled peer group is different from the dominant population such as, the deaf community whose primary mode of communication is sign language.

Developing Inclusive IEP Goals

IEP goals are developed based on a comprehensive PLAFP, which includes information from parents and the student, evaluations that determine impact of the disability on academic, social, and functional performance, information on standards-based grade-level general education curriculum, and general education grade-level expectations and routines. [135] The development of meaningful IEP goals depends upon the participation and collaboration of every member of the IEP team. [136]

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[132] Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1, 137 S. Ct. 988

[133] IDEA Sec. 300.320 Definition of individualized education program

[134] National Center on Learning Disabilities

[135] [1] IDEA Sec. 300.324 Development, review, and revision of IEP

[136] IDEA Sec. 300.324 Development, review, and revision of IEP

- General education teachers have expertise in grade-level standards and progressions, academic subject knowledge, and grade level classroom expectations to include routines, materials, required texts for ELA, classroom-based assessments, activities, and social and cultural norms for the age of the student.
- Families know their child's strengths, interests, and needs in various settings outside of school and are essential partners in the development of the IEP and monitoring of progress.
- Special educators and related service providers design specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications based on an understanding of the student and the impact of the disability on learning and participation.
- The student can provide information on what works for them, what's hard in academics and social skills, and what they need and want to accomplish in school and after graduation.
- Community partners can provide information on post school opportunities and support.

Collaboration between general and special education teachers and families is essential for identifying grade-level gaps, designing goals for accessing general education grade-level standards, and meaningful participation in general education settings. Special educators can write the goals or reference a goal bank[137] but, each IEP goal must be individualized and measurable. Paragraph 2 of IDEA Sec. 300.320 [138]states that an IEP must include: A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to—

A. Meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and
B. Meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;
   - For children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives.

When developing IEP goals, the team must consider what learning is important to focus on based on evaluations and present levels (content), how the assessment will be set up when evaluating progress (conditions), what the student is expected to do to demonstrate knowledge and understanding (actions/behavior), and the degree or extent correct needed to demonstrate proficiency (criteria). The traditional framework for creating measurable IEP goals to accomplish within a year of an IEP meeting includes the following components:[139]

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[137] UDL Strategies - Goalbook Toolkit Potential Resources: Center for Change in Transition Services

[138] IDEA Section 300.320 (2.i)

[139] OSPI Measurable Goals Quick Check Chart

- **Content:** What academic, functional, or social-emotional-behavior knowledge/skills the student will learn (i.e., fractions, vocabulary, routines, turn-taking).
- **Conditions:** Under what circumstances will the student demonstrate skills or knowledge (When given pieces of a whole and fraction numbers).
- **Behavior:** The actions (verbs) the student uses to demonstrate progress on the goal (the student will match the fractions to the pieces).
- **Criterion:** The accuracy, number of times and/or length of time required to demonstrate mastery (with 100% accuracy in four out of five trials).

The IEP is not a curriculum, and IEP goals are not prescriptions or strategies for teaching. IEP goals describe what the student will do to demonstrate mastery. It is not a description of the instructional plan but rather, it is a description of the assessment clearly stated; "When given pieces of a whole and fraction numbers, the student will match the fractions to the pieces with 100% accuracy in four out of five trials". The IEP goal does not typically describe the specially designed instruction, the curriculum, or the placement to use when teaching (with some exceptions) to allow for changes in response to student needs and progress over the year.

IEP goals should focus on the skills needed to engage in and learn from general education curriculum and settings. Goals should not be narrowly focused on curriculum content (i.e. geometry), or so specific they can only be demonstrated in settings separate from general education. For example, a goal to identify letters of the alphabet with 100% accuracy for a student in grade 5 is not something 5th graders are working on. A more inclusive goal could be to identify letters in sentences from grade-level text. In addition, the team could specify in the goal that proficiency is to be demonstrated in the context of a general education setting as a condition of meeting the goal, which has implications for the instructional setting.

Inclusive IEP goals reach beyond the basic measurable components to ensure learning goals are relevant, rigorous, and facilitate access to general education curriculum and settings. When determining what is important for students to learn to ensure involvement and progress in general education, IEP teams must understand the academic, functional, and social expectations of the standards-based, grade-level curriculum and how the disability affects participation in relation to those expectations. There are multiple standards taught at each grade-level, and the purpose of the IEP is to teach knowledge and skills that facilitate access and bridge the gap between the student's present level of performance and the grade-level, standard-based curriculum. Once the goals are written, the team proceeds with determining special education supports, related services, supplementary aids and services, accommodations and modifications, participation in state assessments, and the methods and schedule for monitoring progress. Table 18 shows the overarching learning components of an inclusive IEP to include: participation

in general education routines and transitions, engaging in grade-level academics and other essential skills, and interacting with others. [140]

Table 18. Learning Components of an Inclusive IEP

General education routines and transitions	Engaging in grade-level academics and essential skills	Interacting with others
Transitions can include students going into, out of, around, and between classrooms and other general education settings. Routines are schoolwide and classroom specific to include management of personal belongings, checking out books in the library or classroom, and cleaning up before the bell rings.	Can include learning the same academic concepts and skills as students without disabilities, or something related but with less depth or complexity. Essential skills can include the ability to follow directions, use of technology, keeping notes, seeking help, and completing tasks.	Can include initiating and sustaining reciprocal communication, building relationships with peers and adults, understanding emotions of self and others, sharing interests, recognizing cause and effect of actions and behaviors, and resolving conflict.

Adapted from Comprehensive Inclusive Education: General Education and the Inclusive IEP (TIES). Inclusive IEP Learning Components.

Each of these inclusive IEP components promotes growth of the whole child and learning experiences centered on full membership in school. Inclusive goal writing is about considering the strengths and needs of each student in these three areas of development to facilitate inclusion in the least restrictive environment to the greatest extent appropriate. Annual goals for students with significant disabilities need not necessarily result in the child's reaching grade-level within the year covered by the IEP, but the goals should be sufficiently ambitious to help close the gap.[141] Collaboration and input from general education teachers allows special education teachers and staff to plan specially designed instruction and supports to create an effective individualized program. When reviewing or developing IEP goals for inclusiveness, the following questions can be explored by the IEP team:

- What goals would be specific and rigorous enough to reduce the achievement gap?
- What goals are needed in alignment with the grade-level general education curriculum and routines?
- In what ways do the goals need to be sensitive to the student's identity, culture, communication, and/or learning preferences?
- To what extent does the student participate in identifying goals for the IEP?
- In what ways are IEP team members working together to contribute to the IEP, collaborate, and reach agreement?

[140] Comprehensive Inclusive Education: General Education and the Inclusive IEP (TIES).

[141] Dear Colleague Letter. (November, 2015) United States Department of Education. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

- How is the process of developing the goals reflective of family engagement and priorities?
- What goals are needed to prepare for post-secondary outcomes?
- To what extent will the IEP goals and services lead to continued and/or increased access to core instruction in general education settings?

Indicators of inclusive IEP goals are listed below in Table 19. IEP teams can utilize this process to analyze existing goals or draft new goals that are focused on closing achievement gaps, increasing functional skills, and supporting meaningful participation in the general education curriculum and settings.

Table 19. Inclusive IEP Goal Analysis

Gabriel's Math IEP Goal Selected for Analysis: Grade 7	
Gabriel will independently compute addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems on the calculator with 90% accuracy in 2 out of 3 consecutive opportunities.	
Gabriel's Present Levels from PLAPF or Progress Monitoring:	
Gabriel can independently add and subtract numbers using a calculator with 100% accuracy, but he continues to get confused with multiplying and dividing numbers using a calculator.	
Goal Analysis Across Indicators of Inclusive Goals:	
Measurable (content, condition, behavior, criteria)	The goal is measurable because the conditions for assessment are observable.
Rigorous (increasing levels of challenge beyond present levels)	The present levels indicate Gabriel can already add and subtract with a calculator with 100% accuracy. The goal should be to build the level of challenge rather than repeat skills mastered.
Achievable (can be accomplished with assistance over one year)	The focus of the goal is to use a tool (the calculator) to compute math operations independently. The goal is not to understand operations, but to use a calculator to follow a process for computing, which we can assume to be inputting 1) the first number, 2) the right operations symbol, 3) the next number, and 4) the equal sign. As stated in present levels, he can do the process independently on the calculator with addition and subtraction. A goal of doing the same process with two new symbols on a calculator is achievable but not rigorous for a one-year goal.
Aligned with grade-level standards-based curriculum and/or functional skills	This goal is functional to provide access to standards-based curriculum but not necessarily in a general education context.
Can be implemented by various educators	This goal can be completed in various settings and supported by various people, as long as there is a calculator.
Broad enough to be applicable across environments and content areas	The goal is to master functional use of a tool to do basic operations of math and could be applicable in a variety of settings, and with math operations, math literacy, and science.
Flexible enough to allow for multiple ways for the	The goal is not flexible to allow multiple ways to use a calculator or solve math operations

student to demonstrate understanding	
Enhances meaningful participation in general education settings	Using a calculator might enhance participation in general education and could be meaningful if it is something practiced by other students in the class and is a tool to facilitate participation.
Allows for multiple means of measuring progress (quantitative and qualitative)	The goal is not flexible to allow multiple ways to use a calculator or solve varied math operations.
Goal Analysis Reflections/Conclusions:	
Gabriel can use a calculator independently to do addition and subtraction. A revision to the goal could be to master the use of the calculator to solve mathematical operations he cannot yet do: multiplication and division. The goal is valuable as a functional goal for accessing State assessments, and for adapted problem solving of math operations. However, a more rigorous goal might focus on conceptual or procedural understanding of math operations, using a calculator as one tool. Note: Measurable IEP goals are designed to show ongoing progress and the learning outcome at the end of one year (not necessarily a school year). IEP goals do not generally describe the instructional strategies (SDI), or the specific location where goals will be measured. However, they do describe how goals are assessed. The following revision adds the context of the general education classroom in parenthesis as an option if the IEP team decides the location for measuring progress and outcomes is an important aspect of student performance.	
Gabriel's Revised Math IEP Goal:	
[During a math activity in the general education setting] Gabriel will independently use a calculator to solve two-digit multiplication and division problems with 100% accuracy in three out of four opportunities.	

Note: See Appendix 3-A for a Blank Inclusive IEP Goal Analysis

The Endrew F. decision in 2017 established that, if a student is not fully integrated in the regular classroom and not able to achieve on grade-level, the child's IEP "must be appropriately ambitious in light of his circumstances, just as advancement from grade to grade is appropriately ambitious for most children in the regular classroom, to include challenging objectives".[142] This means there should not be IEP goals that remain the same from year to year for any student. IEP goals should be incrementally more challenging and reasonably calculated to ensure progress, the instruction appropriate, and the progress monitoring should show the student received meaningful benefit. In addition, "a student with a disability may not be removed from an age-appropriate general education classroom solely because of modifications needed to the general curriculum".[143] However, the IEP team may determine some goals require specially designed instruction in an alternate setting to some extent, and special education and related services can be provided along the continuum of alternative placement options.[144]

[142] Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1, 137 S. Ct. 988

[143] National Archives and Records. Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR § 300.116[e])

[144] National Archives and Records. (Federal Register, 2006, p.46588).

Specially Designed Instruction

Inclusive teaching helps reduce barriers for all students, but students with disabilities also need individualized specially designed instruction to experience meaningful participation and close achievement gaps. Special education is defined as specially designed instruction provided to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities who face barriers to learning and participation that most students without disabilities do not experience. Specially designed instruction (SDI) is defined as adapting as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to: [145]

- Address the unique needs of the student
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum so that the student can meet educational standards that apply to all students.

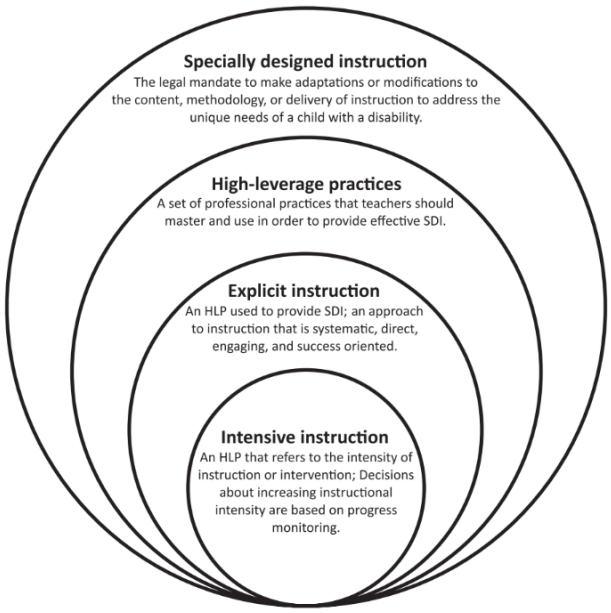


Figure 9. Big Ideas in Special Education. Riccomini, Morano, & Hughes, (2017).

SDI is not one theory or approach to teaching. It is the explicit, systematic, carefully planned and monitored set of instructional supports provided to a student based on IEP goals. SDI is designed by observing and analyzing the barriers, challenges, and learning patterns of a student, and developing an individualized approach to teach using research-based strategies, and to facilitate access to help each student achieve the learning goals. Figure 9 highlights that intensive, explicit, and high leverage practices are research-based practices for all students and individualized for students in special education[146] SDI is only developed for IEP goals, can be provided across multiple settings, and must be designed, supervised, and evaluated by certified a special education teacher or staff. Figure 10 shows the SDI process for designing SDI for each IEP goal to include:

1. Selection of a student's IEP goal
2. Identifying best practices and essential knowledge and skills related to the learning goal.
3. Identifying student strengths and preferences in relation to the essential skills and knowledge, and the learning context.

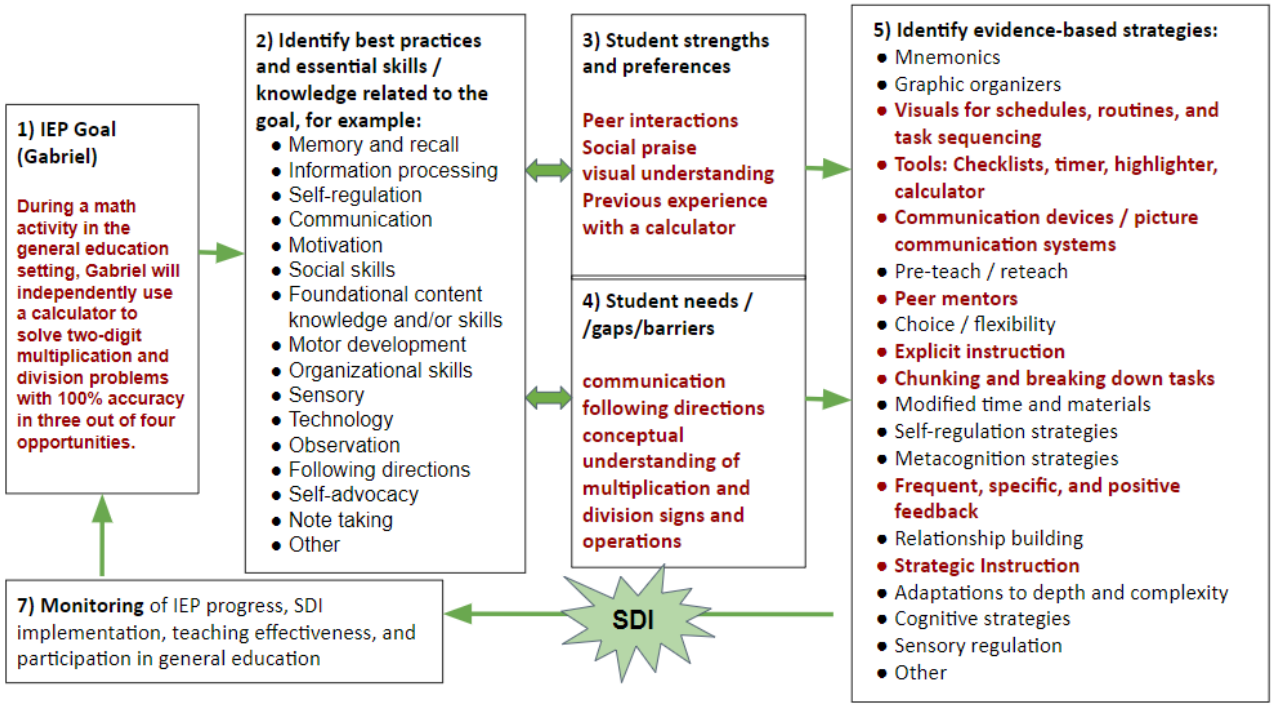
[145] IDEA 300.39 Special Education

[146] Riccomini, P. J., Morano, S., & Hughes, C. A. (2017). Big Ideas in Special Education: Specially Designed Instruction, High-Leverage Practices, Explicit Instruction, and Intensive Instruction. Teaching Exceptional Children, 50(1), 20–27.

4. Identifying student needs and barriers in relation to essential skills and knowledge, and learning context, and needed accommodations or modifications.
5. Identifying evidence-based strategies for instruction.
6. Designing instruction (SDI)
7. Monitoring progress on the IEP goal, SDI implementation, teaching effectiveness, and participation in general education, and revise or repeat SDI based on progress monitoring.

The SDI flow chart uses Gabriel's IEP goal to illustrate the decisions in red. A blank flow chart is provided in Appendix 3-B.

Figure 10. Specially Designed Instruction Flow Chart



The design and integration of specially designed instruction for IEP goals is led by the special education teacher. SDI for students with disabilities expands on methods or materials used to teach students without disabilities and can involve methods or techniques, accommodations, or modifications not used with other students. It is the role of special education teachers and related services providers to design the SDI for each eligible student based on the student's strengths, needs, goals, and the grade-level general education curriculum. General education teachers and paraprofessionals may assist in the provision of SDI if they understand the plan as designed by the special education teacher, related service provider, or certificated staff. Clear communication of the plan for SDI in writing or a lesson plan, modeling, and monitoring can ensure it is implemented with fidelity.

When designing and implementing SDI, a balance must be maintained between working on what is hard for the student, and conditions that foster positive feelings toward the learning, positive relationships, and a sense of progress for the student. Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) shows how learning and growth can be facilitated with scaffolds and support to prevent frustration and maintain an optimal space for learning (Figure 11).[147] Maintaining a comfortable and positive learning environment involves monitoring tensions between difficulty and complexity. Students may get frustrated if tasks simply increase in difficulty (i.e. more of the same type of problem). Increasing depth and complexity of learning tasks increases the challenge (i.e. applying skills or knowledge in different ways). One goal of instruction is for students to experience a sense of accomplishment and positive attitudes toward schoolwork by starting with what they can do with confidence and creating a positive experience from which to add challenge.

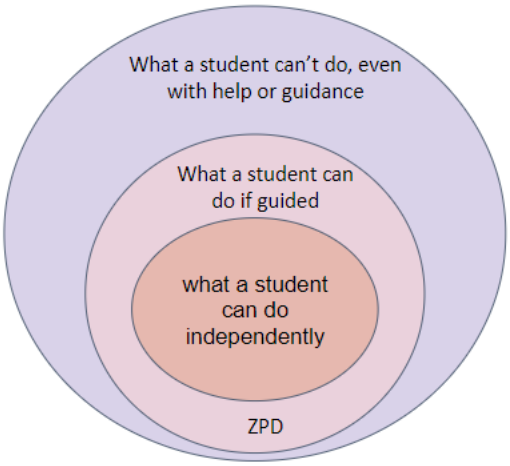


Figure 11. Zone of Proximal

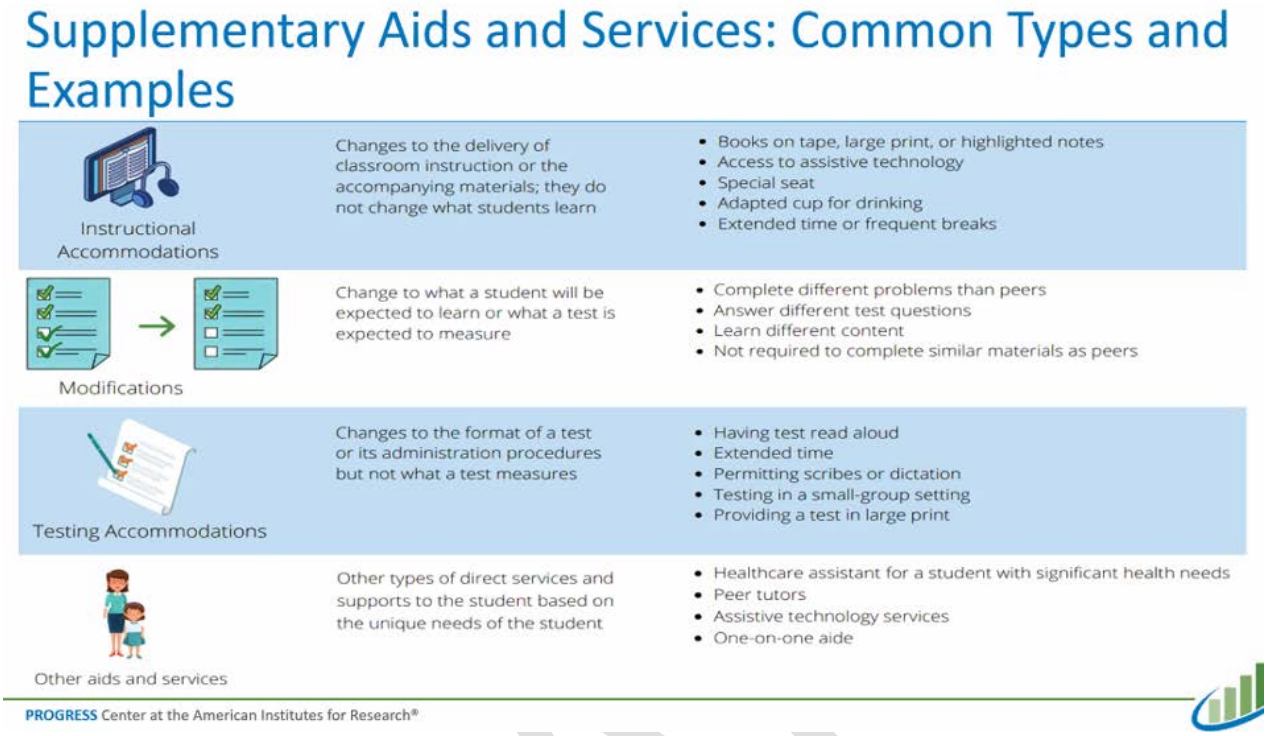
Supplementary Aids and Services and Accommodations / Modifications

Supplementary aids and services are components of the IEP to allow students with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled peers in general education settings. They are described as aids, services, and other supports that are provided in general education classes or other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.[148]

Supplementary aids and services can include direct or related services, and training for staff who work with the student to support participation in academics, routines, and various settings. Examples of supplementary aids and services can include support for physical accessibility, instructional supports, accommodations, modifications, assistive technology, equipment, assistance, materials, paraeducator, a behavior specialist, communication devices, a personalized schedule, and reinforcements system (Figure 12).

[147] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
[148] IDEA Section 300.42 Supplementary aids and services

Figure 12. Supplementary Aids and Services. Progress Center

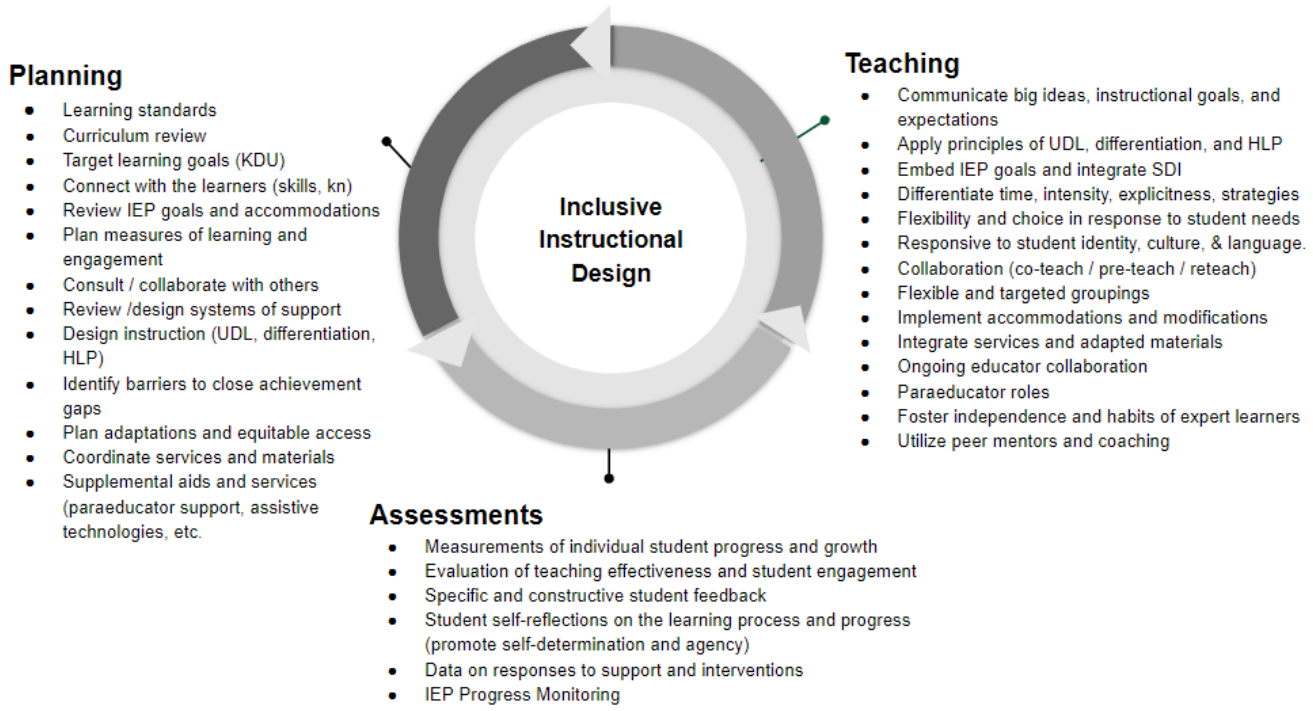


The IEP team develops a plan for supplementary aids and services based on input from the family, general educators, present academic and functional levels, and the IEP goals. Whatever is determined necessary by the IEP team will be required in general education settings, until it is revised or removed from the IEP. General education teachers are required to provide accommodations that are stated in the IEP and play an important role in determining what supplementary aids and services would benefit the student in the general education setting.

IV. Collaborative Planning, Teaching, and Assessment

The process of collaborative planning, teaching, and assessment between general and special educators depends upon a shared vision, goals, and expertise to improve outcomes and close achievement gaps for students with disabilities. Figure 13 illustrates a cycle of inclusive instructional design to include planning instruction, inclusive teaching, and monitoring student learning through formative and summative assessments. Collaborative planning can be for the school year and short term to integrate support and services into learning units and lesson plans for general education and other settings as outlined in the IEP.

Figure 13. Inclusive Instruction Design



Chapter 1 of the handbook explores collaborative practices as a feature of inclusive teaching. In the context of the general education setting, a backwards design approach to planning starts with the goal of the learning outcomes, standards, and evaluations or assessments of learning.[149] Assessments must be directly aligned with learning goals and guide the development of learning activities. The process of instructional planning using backward design includes the following process for all students, and will be helpful when planning instruction for students with disabilities:

1. Pre-planning- Identify and connect with the learners, instructional partnerships, and supports (classroom and individual student needs).
2. Planning - Identify curricular priorities (standards, IEPs, essential questions, prerequisite knowledge and skills, pre-assessments).
3. Assessment - Design assessment framework (performance tasks or projects, oral or written prompts, quizzes / tests, informal assessments).
4. Teaching - Create learning activities (sequence, best practices, integration of adaptations and technology).

A shared understanding of the general education setting and curriculum, as well as the goals and needs of the student with disabilities, is the foundation for planning inclusive teaching and assessment. With equity and inclusion for the student at the center of this process, educators

[149] Wiggins G. & McTighe, J. (1998). Understanding by Design: What is Backward Design? ASCD

become mutually invested in the learning outcomes. Teachers can document planning and instruction, review student progress and, make adjustments to the environment or levels of support using an Inclusive Teaching Plan (Appendix 3-C).

Pre-Planning

Understanding the needs of students with disabilities is essential for building support into core instruction and general education settings. It is also essential for special educators to understand the goals, transitions, and routines in the general education setting so support can be planned within that environment. Together, the general and special education teachers will discuss universal support in the classroom and determine the best way to ensure meaningful participation. General and special education teachers should also develop a schedule for sharing information and maintaining ongoing communication with each other and with families (see Inclusionary Practices Handbook Chapter 1).

Planning for Accessibility

The process of collaborative planning for accessibility includes a review of grade-level curriculum and standards, identification of barriers to learning and, development of a pedagogy for inclusion that adapts to the learner's strengths and needs, builds on a foundation of inclusive teaching strategies, and integrates special education support. Inclusive teaching practices create the conditions for meaningful participation and access to learning. Those practices include UDL, differentiation, and universal support for meeting the needs of diverse learners. Examples of a continuum of supports that are universal and provided with SDI in reading, writing, and math can be found in an article by Alisha Poling and Katie Novak titled, *UDL Strategies to Provide Specially Designed Instruction in the General Education Classroom.*[150]

A prominent feature of UDL is accessibility. The principles and guidelines of UDL can help teachers plan instruction that is accessible to variable learners and reduces or removes barriers to learning.[151] Barriers to learning are situations or things that prevent access to learning a personal goal or the goal of instruction. Barriers to learning for students with disabilities have historically been viewed as a problem that exists within individual students or as a manifestation of their disability. Barriers are a mismatch between what is expected and what a child can do, and they can exist in the environment, learning goals, materials, teaching approaches, and assessments. Designing a barrier-free learning experience means anticipating barriers and taking proactive steps before teaching begins to reduce or minimize barriers using principles of UDL.

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[150] Poling, A., & Novak,K. UDL Strategies to Provide Specially Designed Instruction in the General Education Classroom. Novak Education. Planning Professional Development Using a UDL Lens

[151] UDL Resources. Special Education Technology Center

Recognizing barriers and applying principles of UDL can help make the general education curriculum and setting responsive to students with disabilities.[152] Recognizing and removing barriers is the first step to creating access to participation and learning (Table 20).

Table 20. Identifying and Removing Barriers

Decisions	Possible Barriers	*Removing Barriers*
Student newspapers are kept next to the classroom door because it's easier to carry them in and out of the classroom. Students must remember to pick them up on the way into class and replace them neatly.	Some students forget to pick up or replace the newspapers and need to get out of the seat to go back and get one, which delays participation.	Student newspapers are distributed throughout the classroom so learners have easy access to them. Student helpers are in charge of distributing them, counting them, and collecting them for recycling.
Students know that each day they need to come having read a chapter, sit and make notes on what was read, receive a new assignment, and begin work. The consistency minimized classroom disruptions.	Some students may not read quickly or need help making notes, which can delay participation in the ongoing reading routine.	Students have access to the reading material in a variety of formats (audio, text, digital) along with comprehension support such as a graphic organizer. They are expected to review the content prior to class and can write a response or engage in discussion using prompts.

Adapted from Nelson, L. L. (2014). Design and Delivery. Planning and Teaching Using Universal Design for Learning. Brooks Publishing, Maryland.

Once barriers are identified and removed or reduced, inclusive teachers build bridges between what students know, understand, and do in relation to the learning goal. Vygotsky describes scaffolding as the "role of teachers and others in supporting the learner's development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level".[153] Scaffolds are gradually decreased as the learner increases competency and independence. Scaffolds can be procedural, conceptual, metacognitive, or strategic:

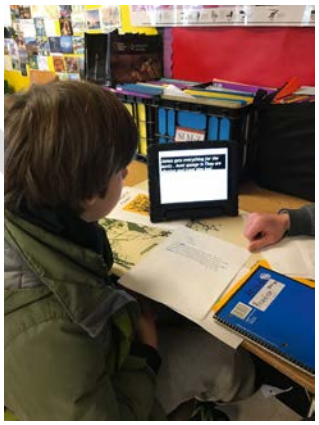
- Procedural scaffolds can support organizational skills, transitions, and other types of executive functioning needed to maintain engagement in learning.
- Conceptual scaffolds support understanding of the learning goal, cognitive and communication demands, and deeper learning.
- Metacognitive scaffolds help students monitor their own understanding and learning needs.
- Strategic scaffolds emphasize multiple pathways to learning and problem solving.

[152] Barriers 2.0 UDL Barrier ID Flow Chart

[153] Raymond, E. (2000). Cognitive Characteristics. Learners with Mild Disabilities (pp. 169-201). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, A Pearson Education Company.

The essential knowledge and skills related to the learning goals can be explored through concept mapping, a review of best practices, and review of learning progressions. Best practices for math, reading, science, SEL, and other areas can be found through related national organizations and in consultation with general education. When identifying student strengths and needs, the team must consider the learning context, learning profile, data from observations and comprehensive evaluations, and input from families. Levels of evidence-based strategies are described previously in this chapter as a practice and a process that involves seeking out and using the best available evidence from multiple sources, including research.

Activity: Adapted Lesson for Accessibility. Can you think of other adaptations beyond what is suggested below?



A grade 3 assignment is to independently read a short story in a textbook and write answers to comprehension questions. Billy reads slowly and has difficulty producing legible handwritten work. He gets frustrated when writing words and sentences and controlling the size and spacing of letters on lined paper.

1. What is the goal of the assignment? (big idea)
2. What is hard for the student? (barriers)
3. How can the assignment be made more accessible?

Possible adaptations:

- The story and questions can be scanned and uploaded to the student's tablet or read aloud by a peer or para.
- The student can listen to the story (live and/or using the built-in text to speech feature).
- If uploaded, the student can stop, start, and repeat sections as often as needed.
- The student can dictate answers, to partner or speech to text, save, and print or email to the teacher.

Planning Assessments

Teachers monitor the growth and the engagement of students and adjust as needed to help them be successful. When learning goals are clear and progress is monitored, teachers will see the impact of instruction on learning targets and, students will know what they are working on and toward. Transparency about the learning goals and the learning process can help students

play an active role in their education and advocate for their needs. Assessments should be consistent with principles of learning and do the following:[154]

- Mirror good instruction.
- Happen continuously, but not intrusively, as a part of instruction.
- Provide information (to teachers, students, and parents) about the levels of understanding that students are reaching.
- Systems of data collection on student progress and learning should reflect the development of the whole child as well as the effectiveness of instruction

Formative assessments are ongoing to provide information and feedback on student learning for both teachers and students.[155] Formative classroom-based assessments provide a comprehensive and authentic reflection of student progress in academics and social-emotional development. Authentic assessments such as rubrics, observations, portfolios, allow for flexible ways to demonstrate learning, and include feedback loops to improve instruction. Classroom assessments should reflect the quality of students' thinking, their learning process, and the application of what is learned to real-world contexts. Summative assessments measure student understanding on learning goals at the end of instructional units, or at the end of the school year. The following are UDL tips for assessment for educators: [156]

- Align assessment to learning goals
- Offer authentic opportunities for assessment.
- Access engagement as well as content knowledge
- Include frequent formative assessments
- Support learner variability through flexible assessments
- Use and share rubrics to clarify expectations
- Involve learners in assessing their learning progress
- Reflect on summative assessments for future design.
- Build communities of practice that support reflective design.

Alignment between standards, goals, and assessment is essential for continuity between what is being taught and what is measured. When there are gaps between the expectations of the target objective and the skills or ability of a student, educators can reduce or remove barriers to learning and participation, then identify access points to both standards and IEP goals. Standards-based learning goals include a verb that describes how students will demonstrate learning through classroom-based assessment (i.e. list, describe, build, write), as per Bloom's

[154] National Research Council. (2000). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School: Expanded Edition*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/9853

[155] Interim Assessments Overview. Smarter Balanced.OSPI

[156] UDL Tips for Assessment. CAST

Taxonomy.[157] Learning targets can be made accessible to all learners by differentiating the primary goal to allow for multiple access points and multiple ways to engage in the learning.[158] Differentiation of assessments in relation to objectives in general education settings facilitates access to participation and learning for students with disabilities who have IEP goals. Figure 14 illustrates differentiated learning objectives and a range of assessments based on essential skills that can make learning and demonstration of learning more accessible for all students.

Figure 14. Differentiated Learning Objectives and Assessments

Learning Standard	Prerequisite knowledge and skills	Student's present level	Related IEP goal
MATH.CONTENT.4.NBT.B.4 Fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm	• *Concept:* combining and reducing quantities • *Procedures:* process for addition and subtraction • *Vocabulary:* whole numbers	*Strength:* Knows numbers and quantities 1-40 *Learning:* Fluency adding single digits & subtraction	Independently add double digit numbers with no carrying with 90% accuracy (IEP goal to be met over one year)
Differentiated learning objectives 1.Students will add multi-digit numbers without carrying 1.2 Students will solve addition of single numbers 1.3 Students will add single digit numbers with or without objects and say or write the answer 1.4 Students will identify single and multi-digit #s to 20			**Assessments:** • Add and subtract using concrete objects, • abstract, • concrete / abstract with explanation.

Progress Monitoring

The purpose of the IEP is to describe an individualized program that facilitates access to general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment, and must be appropriately ambitious in light of the circumstances.[159] The purpose of progress monitoring is to determine if the student's program is working. Ongoing progress monitoring helps teachers understand what methods are effective, the student's rate of learning and, the amount of time, level of intensity, and support needed for the student to meet the goals.

The standard of progress for students with disabilities receiving a free and appropriate education when not at grade level can be determined based on review of progress indicators and improved outcomes as determined by the IEP team, to include parents. The IDEA requires that student progress toward meeting annual IEP goals be measured, and periodic reports on the progress toward meeting the annual goals be provided and used to make instructional, curriculum, or programmatic changes (Table 21).

[157] Bloom's Taxonomy
[158] ASCD. Differentiated Instruction: An introduction>Module4>Reading: Key Elements of Differentiated Instruction
[159] Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1 (2017)

Table 21. IDEA Requirement for Progress Monitoring

IDEA states an IEP must include a description of the following:[160]	Examples of Progress Indicators and Reporting:
➢ How the child's progress will be measured related to: ➢ Annual academic and functional goals. ➢ How the goals enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum. ➢ Benchmarks and short-term objectives (those taking alternative state assessments).	Data collection procedures / methods aligned with the IEP goal: • Observations (teachers, parents, student) • artifacts (writing samples, math samples, etc) • antecedents, behaviors, response to consequences • portfolio (collection of work) • data sheets (rate of learning, accuracy of responses, duration, frequency, interval, time sample, • classroom-based measures and grades
➢ [The schedule of] periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.	• Who will collect the data (i.e. special education teacher, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, paraeducator, etc.) • How often a summary of progress will be provided (i.e. monthly, quarterly, bi-annually) • In what form (data sheets, data summary, report cards, work samples, audio/visual, classroom assessments, etc).

Developing data systems to monitor student learning and the effectiveness of instruction requires a baseline understanding in data literacy to positively affects student learning.[161] Data-Based Individualization (DBI) is a system of data collection that can be used for establishing and resetting baseline data and monitoring the effectiveness of interventions. If a student is not progressing, decision rules can help teachers determine the effectiveness of instruction:[162] Once 6-10 data points are collected, the teacher can evaluate student progress to determine whether to stay the course, change the goal, or change instruction through a process of inquiry and reflection:

a. Are more data points above or below the goal line?
b. Is there variability in student responses?
c. Does the trend indicate goal will be met?
d. Was the intervention provided as often and as long as intended?

[160] Sec. 300.320 (a) - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

[161] Conn, C.C., Hohan, K., Bies-Hernandez, N., Powell, P., Luzader, J. Scholz, C., & Frederking, D. (2020). Teaching and Assessing Data Literacy: Resource Guide for Supporting Pre-Service and In-Service Teachers. OSEP.

[162] Lembke, E.S., Smith, A, Thomas, C.N., McMaster, K.L, & Mason, E.N. (2019). Using student assessment data, analyzing instructional practices, and making necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes. In *High Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms* (pp. 80–93). Council for Exceptional Children. Routledge NY.NY

e. Did I implement the intervention with fidelity?
f. Was the student fully engaged during interventions?
g. Does the student understand the intervention the way it is presented?
h. Is the student's cognitive ability affecting intervention?
i. Is the intervention having a negative effect on the student's behavior or progress?
j. Are accommodations or modifications effective or need to change?
k. Should the intervention continue longer?
l. Is the person implementing the intervention affecting the student's behavior?
m. Is the intervention being implemented with integrity?
n. Does the variability of data indicate that the intervention may not always be implemented consistently?

Assessment data play a key role in successful implementation of MTSS to monitor students' progress upon receiving supports. It should reflect the student's response to scientific research-based intervention to evaluate the evidence of interventions and supports and assess core programming effectiveness.[163] Table 22 highlights data-based decision-making in progress monitoring within an MTSS framework in general education setting for all students.[164]

Table 22 MTSS Data-Based Decision Making

Type	Purpose	Use
Screening	Predict level of risk for poor academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes	Identify students who may benefit from additional assessment and support; inform resource allocation and modifications to instruction and supports
Program Monitoring	Assess rate of growth in response to academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports	Determine impact of support: inform modifications to instruction and supports
Fidelity	Assess the extent to which evidence-based practices are being implemented as intended	Identify strengths and areas of improvement in implementation; inform modifications to implementation at the system, classroom, and intervention levels
Perception	Assess educator, student, and family perceptions of school environment	Identify strengths and areas of improvement in school climate; inform modifications to system and classroom environment

Adapted from Washington's Multi-Tiered System of Supports Framework

[163] Assessment Practices Within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports. National Center on Intensive Intervention. CEEDAR Center
[164] Washington's Multi-Tiered System of Supports Framework

Parents and students with disabilities should receive student progress reports on IEP goals and information on progress in general education participation to include grade-level progress. Progress monitoring should be culturally responsive by acknowledging bias in instruction and assessment approaches and materials, understanding perspectives of diverse groups, connecting with families, and ensuring assessment measures are aligned with the learning goal.[165] Considerations must be made regarding primary language proficiency, English proficiency, and background.

High schools are required to notify parents and teachers of progress toward graduation, review learning plans, address credit deficiencies or absences, and remediation strategies or alternative education related to the High School and Beyond Plan and graduation requirements.[166] Specific information about current performance and progress toward goals helps students develop awareness of their learning and the types of support that are effective for them. HLP lists the following 4 components of positive and constructive feedback for students:[167]

1. Goal directed - set clear goals and feedback about how to improve performance toward the goal. "I like that you started your paragraph with a strong topic sentence. Identify supportive details that will help develop a complete paragraph".
2. Constructive- supports progress toward mastery. Steps to take in response to the feedback "on right track but look back and see if you can find any errors in the calculation"
3. Immediate- monitor student as they work and monitor to intervene as needed to prevent patterns of mistakes
4. Respectful and positive- focuses on progress rather and effort than deficits of skills, knowledge, and character.

Planning to Teach

Planning to teach is the final stage in the cycle of backward instructional design. Teaching partners have explored who the learners are (background, strengths, needs), what to teach, and ways to assess student learning and participation. General education teachers have information for inclusive design that meets the various needs of students, including students with disabilities. General and special educators should have a shared understanding of universal and tiered supports in core instruction, and special education services from the IEP. Figure 15 includes common components in the order of planning a unit or lesson plan. The general education teacher can share the unit or lesson plan with the special education teachers and related

[165] Krasnoff, B. (2016). Culturally Responsive Teaching. A guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching All Students Equitably. Equity Assistance Center of Education Northwest.
[166] Revised Code of Washington. Student Support for Graduation. Student Learning Plans
[167] HLPs #8 and #22: Provide Positive and Constructive Feedback to Guide Students' Learning and Behavior.

services providers, and they can collaborate to ensure meaningful participation and plans for SDI before teaching begins.

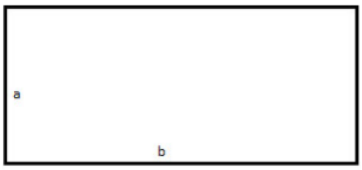
Figure 15. Lesson Plan Format

Unit / Lesson Planning - Envisioning

1. Standard: (content area, grade level progressions, content mapping)
2. Unit / lesson Goal: (content, verb/behavior, criteria/mastery)
3. Define / describe the learning goal: (big idea, related ideas, pre-requisites, differentiated, relation to IEPs)
4. Goal focus (describe):
    a. skill-based / procedural
    b. concept-based / conceptual
    c. both
5. Plan depth and complexity: (Blooms, variable learners, ZPD)
6. Plan/Align assessment (s): (formative and summative)
7. Plan tools and activities:
    a. Standards-based
    b. Evidence-based
    c. Universal Design for Learning
    d. Technology Enhanced
    e. Social-Emotional Learning
    f. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
    g. Culturally responsive
    h. Community-based
8. Teach (reflection to action)
    a. Collaboration:(special education, MTSS, ELL, TAG, paraeducator, co-teacher, student, family)
    b. Environmental arrangements (technology, texts, materials, seating, plan for co-teaching, schedule, supports etc.)
    c. Instructional Design: (UDL, collaborative learning, peer mentors, self-directed learning, technology use, lecture, direct instruction)
    d. Differentiated / Tailored (choice and accommodations)
    e. Specially Designed Instruction (IEP, related services, modifications)
    f. Formative assessments / progress monitoring
9. Summative assessment (s)
    a. Aligned with learning goal (verb and action) and IEP (when appropriate)
    b. UDL
    c. Accommodations
    d. Qualitative and quantitative data collection
    e. Individual and collaborative reflection

A lesson plan format like Figure 15 can guide teachers through multiple aspects of teaching and can be used to communicate lesson or unit plans to special education teachers and other staff. Understanding and communicating the big ideas of a lesson are critical for aligning assessments and activities, but also for planning accommodations. Learning goals can be focused on the acquisition of new information, fluent and accurate performance, generalizing something learned to related concepts or settings, or maintenance of learning habits or skills. Conceptual learning can involve big ideas and concepts. Procedural learning is process-oriented and involves steps, rules, or tasks. For example, at the start of this chapter, Gabriel's seventh-grade peers were measuring the perimeter of a rectangle CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.7.G.A.1. The goal of

the activity can be broken down to identify a big idea or target goal for the class and Gabriel as either conceptual, procedural, or essential skills as follows:



$P = 2 \times a + 2 \times b$

Content: perimeter is measurement of distance around a closed geometric shape.
Procedural: to select (or draw) rectangles and enter measurements according to the formula.
Essential skills: using a ruler to measure, numbering sides a and b, and multiplying a and b by 2.

Identifying the big idea can also help to recognize what is not being measured. Gabriel moved tangrams around on his desk, which differed in shape and color, but his activity did not appear to have purpose and was not a bridge to accessing the grade 7 learning standards-based goal. However, the activity could have been meaningful and challenging with advance planning and support in various aspects of learning. Figure 16 shows a redesign of the math lesson as an example of how inclusive planning can create conditions for meaningful participation and access to learning related to the same learning goal as other students in the general education setting.

Learning Goals	UDL/Differentiation	Universal Supports	Accommodations	Assessments
General Education: Solve the perimeter of a rectangle CCSS.MATH.CONTENT .7.G.A.1 **IEP Goal:** Gabriel will independently use a calculator to solve two-digit multiplication and division problems with 100% accuracy in three out of four opportunities.	❑ Highlights critical features/big ideas on white board: perimeters ❑ Review vocabulary ❑ Choice by preference of what size to create and who work with ❑ Connects with background knowledge of rectangle features and a/b unknowns ❑ Demonstration / model use of formula ❑ Adjust levels of challenge to provide half-done examples on paper and option to create own ❑ Mastery-oriented feedback ❑ Opportunities to practice with peer support ❑ Relevance to real-life (sewing, building, art)	Teacher and adults circulate room as students practice and provide feedback as needed Tools for measuring and drawing for all Example on paper for all White board for demonstrating skills Half examples on paper Practice Formative feedback as students check work with peers	Vocabulary and definitions stay written on white board Calculator to practice with formula Paraeducator or peer direct assistance Template with three equal triangles scaffolded in levels of depth and complexity Highlighter Calculator to solve formula	Students define: what is a perimeter Students mark two sides of a rectangle to set up unknowns a/b Students set up perimeter formula for a rectangle Students independently solve to find perimeter of two rectangles Added assessment of IEP goal: Student uses calculator to solve multiplication and addition related to perimeter formula

Figure 16. Lesson Redesign

Although Gabriel's IEP goal is to use a calculator to multiply two-digit numbers, the goal is for one year, and practicing with single-digits math problems is a logical benchmark for building to

mastery. The activity and template used by the other students could have been adapted with pre-drawn rectangles and scaffolds as follows:

1. Rectangles and a highlighter to trace and measure long and short sides and reinforce vocabulary (distance around is perimeter)
2. Rectangles with two sides highlighted (a/b) with numbers inserted
3. Formula with numbers inserted (same as sides) and highlighted numbers to put in the calculator and big circle around the equation sign to practice solving perimeter (with calculator)

Gabriel does not have an IEP goal that focuses on conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts and procedures but, may demonstrate a need for Tier 2 and 3 interventions in math to make progress with this general education content. Data collection on his learning progress and gaps in understanding could inform the IEP team and provide a rationale for additional goals and specially designed instruction. In addition, his IEP goal of using a calculator could have been worked on in the context of the standards-based general education lesson rather than a separate setting. In the general education lesson, he could be observing his peers, participating in discussions, having the activity adapted for him, and maybe even sharing his example along with the class, which has potential for growth beyond the IEP goal.

Co-teaching is a collaborative teaching practice described in Chapter 2 of the Inclusionary Practices Handbook for maximizing meaningful participation in general education, increasing access to learning, and minimizing time in separate settings. [168] Co-teaching is shared ownership of the room, instructional planning, adaptations, grading and assessments, and outcomes for all students. Paraeducators can support inclusion in multiple ways as directed by general and special education teachers. Observations of a student across settings can contribute valuable information to the instructional and IEP teams. Effective use of paraeducators as either an assistant to the general education classroom, or as a support on an IEP, requires building a positive relationship and clear communication on roles and expectations. Best practices for utilizing paraeducators to improve student outcomes and increasing meaningful participation in general education include providing resources, support, training, and feedback.[169] Families are also important sources of support for inclusive teaching. Inclusive and student-centered teaching seeks to understand and plan instruction based on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that learners bring to school. Student-centered instruction recognizes the primary learning

[168] Murawski, W. W. (2012). 10 Tips for Using Co-Planning Time More Efficiently. Council for Exceptional Children. (14) 4. pp. 8-15.

[169] Paraeducators and Students Eligible to Receive Special Education Services. OSPI TAP #6

environment for children of all ages is with the family, and children are more successful at school when families are involved in their child's education.[170]

The following are questions that can be explored when planning inclusive instruction:

- What do most students need to be successful?
- What groups of students are underperforming relative to others?
- Does the IEP team prioritize access to general education, and if not, why not?
- What is the student missing when not present in general education settings?
- What can we do to make sure all students feel a sense of belonging and that participation is meaningful?
- What are the assumptions we make about students and their abilities?
- What are the indicators we use to determine success?
- What different ways can students be able to demonstrate what they know and understand?
- How can instruction and assessment be designed to capture evidence of all students' learning?
- How do my teaching practices reflect my understanding of the social and cultural identities in the classroom?
- How can families be included in decisions and plans to support student growth and learning?

Chapter 3 Summary

All students need to feel a sense of belonging and experience positive relationships in the general education learning environment. Chapter 1 of the Inclusionary Practices Handbook focused on strategies for collaboration between general and special education, and families. Chapter 2 focused on creating an inclusive learning environment. Central to Chapter 3 is the inclusive teacher, and inclusive teaching practices that ensure equity and access to curriculum and instruction in the general education settings for all students, including students with disabilities. Inclusive teachers do this through ongoing collaboration, communication, co-planning for learning variability, and building systems of support.

The inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms means equal opportunity to access standards-based curriculum, and equitable access to learning experiences that are challenging and meaningful. Inequities are perpetuated for students with disabilities when teachers use unidimensional pedagogical approaches to teach content instead of universally designed instruction that is flexible and inclusive of variable student learning profiles. Collaboration can foster positive learning experiences for all students when teachers work

[170] Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

together to build accessibility, equity, meaningful participation, and support into core instruction from the start using inclusive teaching practices.

Leadership in schools and professional development is essential for building capacity in teachers and staff to support inclusion. However, the answers to inclusive teaching will not be found in a single checklist, book, or workshop. Inclusive teaching starts with recognizing the inequities in education and imagining possibilities for change. The desire and dedication to inclusive practices is not enough to sustain change. Educators need to build capacity in what they know and do and be supported by a school community that values a vision and mission of inclusion that celebrates inclusive teachers and inclusive practices. In the words of John Hattie; [171]

- "Know thy impact". Share collective understanding of what learning impact means, how big the impact should be, and if plans for impact includes all students.
- Share the job of making an impact. Teachers cannot do it alone. Teachers need to work with other teachers / educators and share expertise.

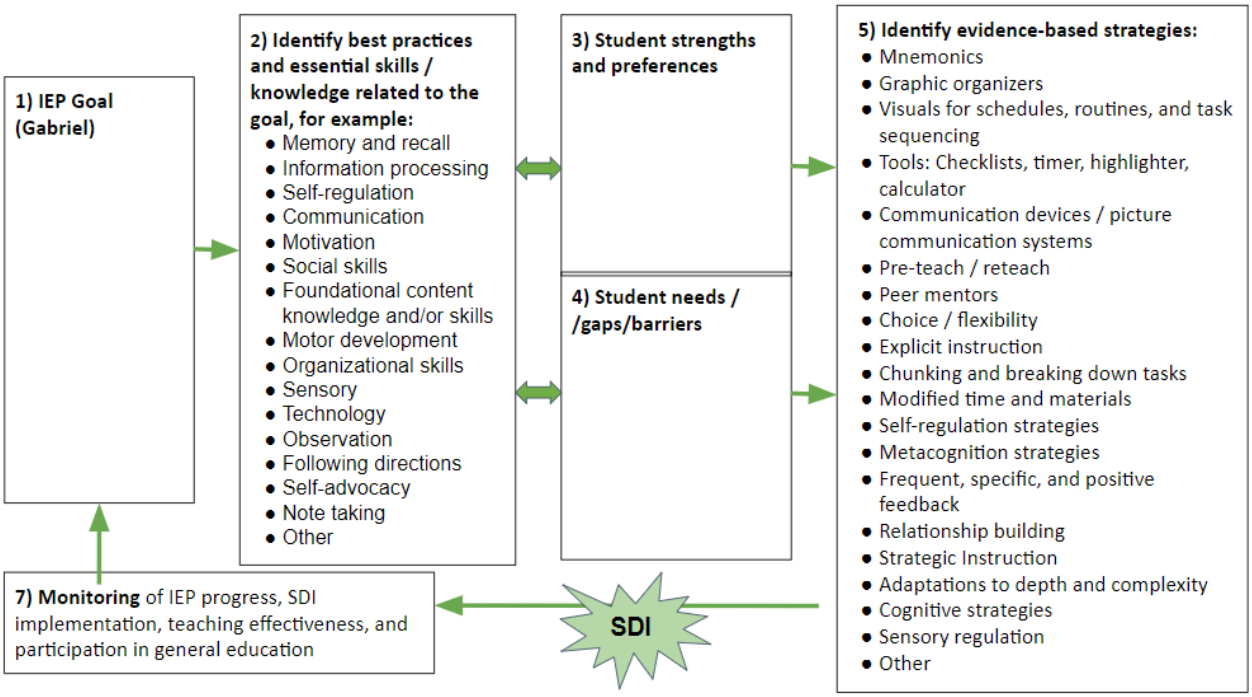
[171] Hattie, J. (2015). Leverage the Power of Collaborative Expertise. Education Week

Appendices

Appendix 3-A Inclusive Goal Writing Analysis

IEP Goal Selected for Analysis:	
Present Levels from PLAPF or Progress Monitoring:	
Goal Analysis Across Indicators of Inclusive Goals:	
Measurable (condition, behavior, criteria)	
Rigorous (increasing levels of challenge beyond present levels)	
Achievable (can be accomplished with assistance over one year)	
Aligned with grade-level standards-based curriculum and/or functional skills	
Can be implemented by various educators	
Broad enough to be applicable across environments and content areas	
Flexible enough to allow for multiple ways for the student to demonstrate understanding	
Enhances meaningful participation in general education settings	
Allows for multiple means of measuring progress (quantitative and qualitative)	
Goal Analysis Reflections/Conclusions:	
Revised IEP Goal:	

Appendix 3-B. Specially Designed Instruction Process



Appendix 3-C. Inclusive Teaching Plan (ITP)

Date: Teachers: Student:

The Inclusive Teaching Plan (ITP) identifies support for students with disabilities for accessing the general education setting, curriculum, and instruction using research based strategies known to be effective for all learners, and evidence-based practices proven to be effective with students with disabilities. The ITP is developed collaboratively by general and special educators to map access to general education curriculum and instruction using individual adaptations and services following a backwards design model. Instructional planning teams need to evaluate systems of support where the students with disabilities will be included. (grade-level curriculum goals, MTSS, experience with UDL, Collaboration time)

Pre-planning: General and Special Education (Setting and profile of the student)

The team:

- Reviews the general education lesson or unit plan (standards, goals, assessments, UDL) gen ed lead.
- Review the student profile (strengths, needs, interests, and preferences, culture, language, and IEP goals etc.)
- Identify barriers to learning in the environment, curriculum or instruction.
- Determine provision of special education services in the general education setting- special ed leads (leading questions).
- To what extent does the classroom implement inclusive teaching practices (UDL, differentiation, technology, culturally responsive education, SEL, etc)
- Identify universal supports to be provided in core instruction.
- Review schedules, routines, rules, and transitions in the general education setting.
- Identify supplementary aids and services on the IEP for LRE.
- Identify models of instructional delivery (online, hybrid, in person, etc.).
- Review secondary transitions goals (when applicable).
- Other:

Pre-Planning Notes:

Plan for Accessibility (participation and learning content / IEP goals)

- Identify essential concepts, skills, and knowledge of the general education lesson or unit
- Identify foundational prerequisite knowledge and skills (concept mapping)
- Expand lesson or unit learning goals, activities, or outcomes using differentiation.
- Plan multiple means of recognition and engagement (UDL).
- Identify universal supports, tailored responses, and accommodations in core instruction.
- Identify IEP goals to target and review the plan for SDI within the lesson or unit.
- Review use of technology tools available to all students.
- Identify assistive technology needs of the student within the unit or lesson.
- Identify ways that families can be involved to support learning and meaningful participation.
- Plan the paraeducator method of support if applicable.
- Review systems of Tiered support in social-emotional-behavior and academics.
- Determine methods for aligning general education assignments and activities with learning in separate settings, if applicable.
- Other:

Pedagogy Planning Notes:

Plan for Assessment (methods and materials for monitoring learning progress in relation to goals, big ideas, concepts, social skills, behavior, and meaningful participation)

- Plan multiple means of assessment.
- Determine formative and summative measures of performance on learning goals (work samples, art, observations, etc).
- Identify data decision making process for Tiered interventions.
- Identify systems/ procedures for monitoring progress on IEP goals.
- Identify methods of feedback and formative assessment.
- Determine method for evaluating student well-being and sense of belonging.
- Determine methods for evaluating progress in separate settings in relation to general education curriculum, if applicable.
- Other:

Assessment Notes:

Plan for Teaching (relationships with teacher (s) and peers, connection to big ideas and concepts, social skills, sense of belonging

- Communicate big ideas and instructional goals and expectations
- Adapt instructional methods and curriculum as needed in the context of a lesson or unit
- Embed High Leverage Practices such as explicit instruction, scaffolds, and feedback.
- Build and link background knowledge, vocabulary.
- Expand methods for communication to include verbal, visual, gestures, etc.
- Expand methods of recognition and engagement (UDL).
- Encourage participation in discussion in small and large groups.
- Maintain positive and flexible learning environment
- Co-teaching as planned.
- Direction for paraeducator support
- Peer mentors when possible.
- Universal supports, differentiation and tailored responses as needed.
- Tiered social-emotional-behavior and academic support

Notes:

IEP Planning (to inform IEP teams)

- Review progress and work samples in relation to general education goals and setting.
- Review progress on IEP goals
- Evaluate / revise effectiveness of accommodations and modifications
- Other:

Zone of Proximal Development (in relation to unit and/or learning goals)

What the child can do independently	What the child can do with adult or peer assistance	What the child can not yet do / know / understand without assistance

Notes: