



Table of Contents

- [Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders. By Krista Garcia](#)
- [Special Women, Special Leaders: Special Educators and the Challenge of Leadership. By Ibis Paneca](#)
- [Lehigh University Section 504 Coordinators Institute – June 22-23, 2017](#)
- [Special Education Legal Alert. By Perry A. Zirkel](#)
- [Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission. By Kellecia West](#)
- [The Importance of Parent and Teacher Collaboration to Help Students with Disabilities Reach Their Maximum Potential. By Rebecca A. Timmer](#)
- [Factors That Breakdown Communication Between Families of Children with Disabilities and Schools. By Christopher M. McIntyre](#)
- [Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET](#)

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Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders

By Krista Garcia

Abstract

Although there is no specific leadership framework that works in all situations, *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* by Mark Goldberg (2001) presents the reader with a plethora of strategies to improve his/her educational leadership skills. The recommendations provided are based on 43 interviews with experts in various areas related to education and educational leadership. The book addresses the following topics related to educational leadership: (1) forming beliefs, (2) staff development, (3) broadening leadership, (4) situational mastery, and (5) discrimination, racism, and poverty. Each topic covered has a description of the issue, recommendations for improvement, and situational examples. *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* aims to improve educational leadership through applying research-based strategies, including broadening leadership, effective staff development, self-reflection and self-assessment, finding the situation where one's skills meet the unique needs of a school, and more (Goldberg, 2001).

In *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* (2001), Mark Goldberg seeks to provide practical advice related to broad areas of concern to current and prospective school leaders for the ultimate purpose of improving schools. The practical advice is derived from a compilation of 43 interviews, conducted and published by Mark Goldberg, with exceptional school leaders, including John Goodland and Ernest Boyer. All of the leaders interviewed had expertise and experience in one or more areas of concern related to educational leadership, validating their input. *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* derives the common themes and suggestions from the interviews to provide a practical guide to improving school leadership. Each chapter of *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* delves into a broad area of concern to provide an overview and practical recommendations for leaders (Goldberg, 2001). The premise of the book is that, although, there is no "one size fits all" program for exceptional leadership, exceptional leadership can be achieved through self-evaluation, using that self-evaluation to find a school or district that is a "match," applying best practices, and using one's skills and abilities to improve a school or district. The areas of concern addressed in the book are as follows: (1) forming beliefs, (2) staff development, (3) broadening leadership, (4) situational mastery, and (5) discrimination, racism, and poverty.

The first major theme addressed in *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is forming beliefs (Goldberg, 2001). As the ultimate goal for educational leaders is to improve schools, it is critical that "...teachers and administrators at all levels know what improvements they want to make" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 5). When teachers and administrators establish clear goals, they are able to act with direction and purpose, hone in on possible solutions to problems, explore those solutions, and make an informed decision that will have the highest benefit to the school. Goldberg recommends that schools practice intervisitation to see examples of excellence in other schools, involve teachers in the belief-forming process, form teams and study groups to explore issues and possible solutions, have teams and study groups present their ideas, and make informed decisions based on the research-based presentations by the study groups. Administrators must be aware that the process takes time, but it is critical that the process is conducted with fidelity to ensure that teachers feel included, research is conducted to make informed decisions, and staff understand why certain solutions or programs were selected.

The second major theme addressed in *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is staff development (Goldberg, 2001). According to Goldberg (2001), "Staff development is one of the most important aspects of any approach to improvement in education" (p. 21). Teaching is a fluid profession, as best practices, strategies, policies, etc. are always being changed, removed, or added, and it is not possible for teachers to keep up with all of these changes on their own.

Goldberg highlights the importance of staff developments being focused, having appropriate time and funds dedicated to them, following a schedule (i.e. create a timeline of events to avoid the change becoming stagnant), valuing teachers' time, and being cost effective. When staff developments meet the aforementioned criteria, maximum efficiency can be achieved.

The third major theme addressed in *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is broadening leadership (Goldberg, 2001). Broadening leadership involves including staff members, other than just administrators and district personnel, in school policy making, decision making, and change implementation, which spreads knowledge and commitment across more people. Often, when an idea is forced onto staff via "top-down" leadership, the program dwindles when the administration changes. According to Goldberg (2001), "If you want a program to take root, grow, and last, your goal should be high leadership capacity" (p. 47). Some suggestions to broaden leadership include: (1) form study groups, (2) use action research, (3) distribute expertise and skill, (4) have an involved administrator, (5) include new teachers and parents, (6) use problem-based learning, and (7) ensure that there is follow-up for changes (Goldberg, 2001). Using these strategies will help to broaden leadership and help ensure continuity of a program, even when administration changes.

The fourth major theme addressed in *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is situational mastery (Goldberg, 2001). Situational mastery refers to the phenomenon that, "Success in a leadership job is a function of the fit between a person's skills and the leadership work to be done" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 63). It is critical that educational leaders engage in self-reflection to determine their beliefs regarding education, skills, inclinations, strengths, and deficiencies to find a school or district that is a "good match," rather than trying to impose oneself in a situation that does not fit. Some recommendations to find a "good match" include: (1) examining a school or district's beliefs, policies, and level of flexibility, (2) ensure that other staff can compensate for your self-identified weaknesses or that staff members with strengths in those areas can be hired, (3) evaluate the school or district through observations and interviews to determine if their beliefs are a good fit, and (4) remain informed through continuous professional development (Goldberg, 2001). The aforementioned recommendations will help an administrator find a school or district where his/her skills and inclinations match the job at hand, which increases performance, comfort, and happiness.

The fifth major theme addressed in *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* encompasses discrimination, racism, and poverty (Goldberg, 2001). The United States is a country that exemplifies great diversity. Students in schools come from a variety of cultural, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. According to Goldberg (2001), "Every educational leader has a stake in seeing that all children are well educated and that color, ethnicity, religious background, and economic status never bar a child from a good education" (p. 84). Many students from diverse backgrounds do not receive the same treatment and opportunities as students from the mainstream culture (i.e. white, middle class). Exceptional school leaders must place great emphasis on eliminating prejudice at all levels in their schools; "After ensuring the physical safety of students and staff, defeating every form of prejudice must be of the highest priority in school districts" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 85). Some suggestions for eliminating prejudice in schools include: (1) immediately addressing any prejudiced behavior, (2) taking a public, strong stand on the issue of prejudice, (3) follow-up after prejudiced incidents, (4) involve the community, (5) conduct a self-examination, resulting in attitude and policy changes, (6) academically pursue diverse students (i.e. early intervention, involve parents, remedy deficiencies), and (7) work to understand and adapt to diversity. All children, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, etc., should have equal opportunities and access to an appropriate education that provides them with the maximum opportunities for success (Goldberg, 2001).

Some strong points that emerge from the book include: the importance of finding the right fit and the importance of time. *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* places careful emphasis on encouraging leaders to find jobs where their unique skills and talents meet the needs of the school or district (Goldberg, 2001). Too often, teachers and leaders take whatever position is available to them, rather than researching and searching for a position that is a good fit. This phenomenon leads to teachers and administrators not reaching their fullest potential, being uncomfortable, and experiencing feelings of tension and frustration. Another strong point that emerges from *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is the importance of time (Goldberg, 2001). The book emphasizes that change does not occur overnight; administrators must be patient, guide the change, and ensure that the change is implemented with fidelity, rather than "...rush[ing] a half-baked idea into implementation" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 32). Change takes time, but that time should be used wisely, as time is a valuable, irreplaceable resource.

Overall, the *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is well-written, well-organized, and provides valuable insight to educational leaders. The book addresses a variety of key topics in education and provides a plethora of recommendations related to each topic. The book is organized in a pattern that is easy to follow: topic, description, recommendations, and examples. The recommendations are derived from a series of interviews with educational experts, which increases the validity of the recommendations. The quality of the book is greatly increased by the insights from various experts, situational examples, and detailed descriptions of how to apply the recommendations. All of the explanations, situations, and recommendations are explained in layman's terms, allowing any reader to gain an in-depth understanding of issues in educational leadership. *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is a valuable resource for any current or prospective educational leader (Goldberg, 2001).

One weakness of *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is that it fails to address the educational leadership topic of providing feedback to, effectively communicating with, and building relationships with teachers (Goldberg, 2001). Although these topics are briefly brushed upon in relation to other topics, there is no chapter dedicated to any of these topics. Many administrators struggle to provide constructive, applicable feedback to teachers following observations, but this effective constructive feedback facilitates teacher growth and development. Further, many administrators struggle to effectively communicate and build relationships with teachers, despite relationships being critical to development. Constructive feedback, effective communication, and relationship building are cornerstones of effective leadership, and as such, *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* would have benefited from including these topics in the scope of discussion.

In *Leading in a Culture of Change*, Fullan (2001) provides a framework for leadership that can be applied in a variety of settings (i.e. educational and business settings). In *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders*, Goldberg (2001) writes about the importance of building broad support and leadership base to support and sustain change, even when administration changes. Similarly, Fullan (2001) presents steps to achieve bottom-up leadership, and included in those steps, are similar recommendations, such as mobilizing commitment, developing a shared vision, and spreading change across departments without pushing from the top. Both authors convey the importance of building commitment through involving personnel from all levels, not just administration or management.

Another similarity between *Leading in a Culture of Change* and *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is, in both books, the idea of leadership being situational and having no "right answer" is conveyed to the reader. Fullan (2001) states, "It is not that leadership and management books don't contain valuable ideas – they do – but rather that there is no 'answer' to be found in them" (p. 34). Goldberg (2001) reiterates throughout *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* that leadership is situational, and there is no "one size fits all" framework for leadership. Both authors acknowledge and convey that what works in one situation, may not work in another; consequently, effective leaders must assess their situations and determine what would work best in their unique set of circumstances.

In addition, *Leading in a Culture of Change* and *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* both contain information regarding the benefits of intervisitation. Fullan (2001) describes how intervisitation allows administrators and teachers to observe other school's instructional practices. From this observation, the visiting school can provide feedback and adapt strategies observed to work in their own school. Goldberg (2001) also emphasizes the benefits of intervisitation, specifically that it allows schools, which may be struggling in a particular area, to visit and learn from other schools that area high-achieving in that particular area. According to Goldberg (2001), "Your purpose [related to intervisitation] is to learn about excellence and how you can apply it to your school" (p. 8). Intervisitation should be used to observe, adopt, and adapt best practices from high-achieving schools.

An additional similarity between *Leading in a Culture of Change* and *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is that the authors of both books communicate that effective change takes time. In regards to understanding the change process, Fullan (2001) states, "It is not so much that they [effective leaders] take their time, but rather that they know it takes time for things to gel" (p. 124). Goldberg (2001) also writes about the importance of not rushing into change, but rather taking the time to adequately explore the problem, research possible solutions, and discuss among colleagues the best solution to implement. It is critical that effective leaders understand and accept that effective change takes time.

Although similar, *Leading in a Culture of Change* and *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* have some differences. A major difference between the two books is the overall structure. Although both books provide real-life examples and applicable strategies, *Leading in a Culture of Change* is structured around a specific framework for leadership, while *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* is structured around addressing specific issues related to educational leadership. Further, the purpose of *Leading in a Culture of Change* is to specifically prepare administrators to adequately navigate change, while *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* addresses a broader scope of topics, although that scope includes change. Additionally, *Leading in a Culture of Change* focuses on how to navigate the implementation dip that occurs when new change is implemented and resistance that will be encountered. In contrast, *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* touches upon navigating resistance, but the focus is more on avoiding the resistance through generating broadened leadership, support, and commitment. Also, *Leading in a Culture of Change* targets educational and business leaders, as the author sees leadership and management as intertwined principles not bound by setting (i.e. business or schools), but *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* focuses specifically on educational leadership and treats leadership and management as two separate principles.

Overall, both *Leading in a Culture of Change* and *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* are resources that can be used by administrators to improve schools. Both books provide a plethora of valuable information, applicable strategies, insights from experts, and real-life examples of strategies in practice. The small differences in beliefs and approach to sharing those beliefs (i.e. different text structure) do not diminish the remarkable similarities between the two books.

In summary, *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* aims to provide applicable insight and strategies to school administrators. The book addresses key issues in educational administration, including: (1) forming beliefs, (2) staff development, (3) broadening leadership, (4) situational mastery, and (5) discrimination, racism, and poverty. Specific strategies for improvement in each of the aforementioned areas are provided. Readers of *Lessons from Exceptional School Leaders* should pay careful attention to the importance of situational mastery and finding a “good fit” when selecting a leadership position to provide optimal likelihood for contentment and success.

References

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Goldberg, M. (2001). *Lessons from exceptional school leaders*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

About the Author

My name is Krista Garcia. I received my Bachelor's in Special Education in 2016. I am currently a graduate student at Florida International University, studying special education with a concentration in autism. I have been working with children with autism for the past seven years. I run a special needs ministry at my church, nanny a young boy with autism, and work in a classroom with students with autism. I find joy in helping children with autism reach their fullest potential in every area of life!

Special Women, Special Leaders: Special Educators and the Challenge of Leadership

By Ibis Paneca

Lupi, Marsha & Martin, Suzanne. *Special Women, Special Leaders: Special Educators and the Challenge of Leadership*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005. 145pp. \$34.99.

"They did - with great hardship, courage, pluck, prayerfulness, sadness, joy, energy and humor - what women do. They put one foot in front of the other in remarkable circumstances. They carried on." Cokie Roberts' quote succinctly captures what women in positions of leadership must undertake. Editor Marsha H. Lupi was an associate professor at the City University of New York (CUNY) for twenty-seven years. Presently, she is the Associate Dean for the College of Ed & Human Services at the University of North Florida, in Jacksonville, Florida. Her efforts are concentrated on mentoring women special education educators into leadership roles as well as preparing culturally competent special education teachers. Editor Suzanne M. Martin, Ph.D. is a professor of Exceptional Education in the Child, Family, and Community Sciences Department of the College of Education at the University of Central Florida. From 2000-2006, Martin served as the Assistant Dean of Education for the College. Her focus has been teaching students with special needs from the elementary to the middle school level as well as preparing college students to become special education paraprofessionals. Both have taken on improving and empowering the special education movement and applied their knowledge to editing this book.

At first blush the book, *Special Women, Special Leaders: Special Educators and the Challenge of Leadership*, appears to be set up as a self-improvement book with chapter titles that appear to give an inkling of what the chapter will discuss. However, after reading, it became apparent that instead of a progression of thoughts that came to a head, the book is a compilation of essays written by several leaders in the special education and higher education community. The authors' points were detached from each other and in many instances could stand alone as individual opinions or contributions. The authors provided personal narratives on the trials they faced in the evolution of their leadership roles. Nevertheless, the editors, Martin and Lupi, were able to tie in a theme throughout the book where the reader could take home a central message; there is a direct connection between special education skills and the type of leadership needed to foment positive change. Overall, Lupi and Martin convey the idea that women, trained and tried in the services of special education, make effective leaders - but that too often, they are burdened with the task to prove their grit and in doing so must juggle a number of aspects that the traditional white male leader would not have to face.

The chapters were inscribed by women who have accepted the challenge and responsibility of leadership in the fields of special education and higher education (Lupi & Martin, 2005). They share their experience and make recommendations on how women can successfully navigate the tests of the evolving educational landscape and provide insight into how we, as women can further the shattering of Ann Morrison's proverbial glass ceiling. Departments in many universities lack diversity in gender, culture, race, and ethnicity. To wit, only one third of special education doctoral recipients enter the professoriate (Smith, Pion, Tyler, & Gilmore, 2003). Should a minority woman such as myself choose to enter a leadership role in a university or in a nonprofit institution, it was recommended that we both establish support networks and understand the rules of the game. To counter the feelings that may grow from being underrepresented, Correa and McHatton recommend that minority faculty "create a rich network of supports" both formally and informally. A formal support group would be by joining a mentor program for new faculty. Additionally, one could join a support program or workshop that would open networking opportunities for the individual. Informally, minority faculty can create a peer support group where they can freely express any concerns to others with similar backgrounds and shared experiences (Lupi & Martin, 2005).

Similar to Fullan's book, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, the book designates opportunities in the fields of education and in the fields of business, where the leadership strategies will be beneficial. However, *Special Women, Special Leaders* focuses on nonprofit associations instead of for profit businesses. The U.S. Department of Labor developed a framework which was researched by Tecker and Fidler to identify five competencies and seven personal characteristics for achieving a high performance workplace (36).

Of these competencies and characteristics, women leaders far outshine male counterparts in effectiveness (37). Additionally, special education teachers are able to take satisfaction in the accomplishments of others (40). The book highlights how strategies of patience, malleability, resourcefulness, collaboration, and interpersonal skills are in line with what special educators face daily. The book has many useful snippets for the special education teacher seeking a leadership role nevertheless, it does not provide enough best practices to be an effective book. Much of the information edited by Lupi and Martin contained narrative experiences and there was little empirical evidence of the strategies themselves to prove that what these individuals found to be effective would continue being effective in other instances. Just as Fullan was able to base his work on District 2 in San Diego, the study in Canada and New York, and the Numeracy Strategy in England, it would have benefitted the reader to be able to review a long term study that proved Shanley's reflections on leading as a dean.

Special Women, Special Leaders: Special Educators and the Challenge of Leadership provided inspiring "stories" which I could identify with. Specifically, I connected with "Prioritizing the Professional and the Personal". The fact remains that women are underpaid, underrepresented, and underestimated when it comes to leadership positions in the United States. While women have climbed in the ladder of success, it is an actively discussed topic that there is still much room for improvement. Individuals like Sheryl Sandberg have encouraged all women to find a "seat at the table" and to "lean in". Lupi and Martin, too, encourage women to take the lead. They have the added benefit of tailoring their work to a group of individuals who have not really been addressed yet, the special education leader. Their book provides inspiration to a group of women who have the skills to make lasting change.

LeHigh University Section 504 Coordinators Institute

June 22-23, 2017

School leaders are not well versed in the “other” federal disability law, Section 504—along with its sister statute, the Americans with Disabilities Education Act (ADA). The most common errors include appointing as the 504 coordinator an overburdened special education director or a newly minted school counselor. Another problematic practice is providing a 504 plan as a parent appeaser or consolation prize without a careful individualized evaluation according to current standards. The results include under-identification of low-income and minority children and over-exposure to not only federal court litigation but also Office for Civil Rights investigations.

To help close the gap in legal literacy and prudent practices in relation to Section 504, Lehigh University is offering a two-day institute for 504 coordinators on June 22–23, 2017. The program includes:

- a systematic comparison between the IDEA and Section 504/ADA
- a practical review of recent court decisions specific to P–12 students under Section 504 and the ADA
- a nuts-and-bolts session on effective forms and procedures that comply with the current requirements for identifying and serving 504-only students

Presenters include

- Perry A. Zirkel, University Professor Emeritus of Education and Law, Lehigh University
- Mark Weber, Vince DePaul Professor of Law, DePaul University School of Law
- Lisa Hardcastle, Section 504 Coordinator, Clear Creek (Texas) Independent School District

This two-day institute is in coordination with the week-long Lehigh University Special Education Law Symposium, which is available optionally for the days preceding June 22–23. Information about, and registration for, the Symposium and the 504 Institute are available at <http://go.lehigh.edu/spedlaw>.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LEGAL ALERT

Perry A. Zirkel

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This monthly legal alert provides, in the format of a two-column table, highlights (on the left) and practical implications (on the right) of major new legal developments. To sign up to automatically receive these monthly alerts, go to perryzirkel.com

Special Education Legal Alert

Perry A. Zirkel

© May 2017

This latest monthly legal alert examines the immediate effects of the Supreme Court's *Endrew F.* decision on current cases specific to the substantive appropriateness of IEPs. It follows the usual format of a two-column table, with highlights (on the left) and practical implications (on the right). For a detailed analysis, see the following article, which will be posted after publication in late May at perryzirkel.com:

Perry A. Zirkel, "The Supreme Court's Decision in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1*: A Meaningful Raising of the Bar," *West's Education Law Reporter* (May 2017).

As described in the special, second legal alert in March 2017, the Supreme Court ruled in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1* that the substantive standard for FAPE under the IDEA is that the IEP must be "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances." The court decisions within the immediate few weeks thereafter illustrate whether this refinement of *Rowley* is, as *Endrew's* attorney asserted, a "game changer."

The clear majority of the court decisions during this limited post-*Endrew F.* period have affirmed district-favorable substantive FAPE rulings, which hearing officers had based on a pre-*Endrew F.* standard:

- In *Davis v. District of Columbia* (D.D.C. 2017), the court applied stricter scrutiny than did the hearing officer to reach the same district-favorable ruling for a mainstreamed child with SLD.
- In *Brandywine Heights Sch. Dist. v. B.M.* (E.D. Pa. 2017), the court reached the same result under *Endrew F.* as the hearing officer had obtained with the "meaningful benefit" standard for a child with autism in a self-contained placement.

It is too early to be definitive, but thus far the courts have not found *Endrew F.* to be a game change in the dramatic sense of a dramatic reversal in the pro-district outcome skew for substantive FAPE issues.

Although certainly subject to more experience, as the attorneys and judges become more familiar with the nuances of *Endrew F.*, the early decisions seem to suggest that courts have not clearly applied the *Endrew F.* Court's distinction from the mainstreamed context of *Rowley* and its seeming emphasis on the individual child's potential as another major factor.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In <i>A.G. v. Bd. of Educ.</i> (S.D.N.Y. 2017), the court’s affirming substantive FAPE analysis did not seem to differ from the hearing and review officer for a mainstreamed child with SLD. • In <i>E.D. v. Colonial Sch. Dist.</i> (E.D. Pa. 2017), the court concluded that <i>Endrew F.</i> was not higher than the hearing officer’s “meaningful benefit” analysis, affirming the outcome for a mainstreamed child with SLI • In <i>K.M. v. Tehachapi Unified Sch. Dist.</i> (E.D. Cal. 2017) and <i>N.G. v. Tehachapi Unified Sch. Dist.</i> (E.D. Cal. 2017), the court affirmed the district-favorable substantive FAPE rulings with regard to two separate children with autism • In <i>T.M. v. Quakertown Cmty. Sch. Dist.</i> (E.D. Pa. 2017), the district-favorable outcome was the same with regard to a child with autism in a self-contained class as the hearing officer had decided under the “meaningful benefit” standard. 	<p>One of the significant baseline variables in such a pre- to post-<i>Endrew F.</i> analysis is whether the jurisdiction had previously adopted a “some benefit” or a “meaningful benefit” analysis. However, this factor has not been as consistently distinctive as one might have expected.</p> <p>Overall, the results for the first few weeks is that <i>Endrew F.</i> has not yet resulted in an outright reversed ruling concerning the substantive appropriateness of an IEP, but that its ad hoc, “it depends” formulation leaves substantial latitude for wide differences in outcome in light of the circumstances of each case.</p>
<p>In a second, smaller group of decisions, the courts have remanded the district-favorable ruling back to the hearing officer to reconsider in light of <i>Endrew F.</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In <i>M.C. v. Antelope Valley Union High Sch. Dist.</i> (9th Cir. 2017), the federal appeals court send the case back to the district court to determine whether it would reach the same district-favorable ruling under <i>Endrew F.</i> that it had obtained under meaningful benefit standard, with “commensurate opportunity” translation • In <i>C.D. v. Natick Pub. Sch. Dist.</i> (D. Mass. 2017), the court summarily remanded the case back to the hearing officer to determine whether the standard applied was different from <i>Endrew F.</i> and, if so, whether the outcome would be the same. 	<p>This smaller group of decisions fits more in an intermediate, inconclusive category than a definitive game-changing characterization, because on remand the outcome could be either the same or the opposite, depending on not only the interpretation of the extent of the difference but also the application of this difference, which may not necessarily reverse the result.</p> <p>In these decisions, the reviewing court did not carefully or directly address this two-part analysis, instead delegating it to the lower adjudicative level.</p>
<p>In only one case thus far has the court interpreted <i>Endrew F.</i> with marked expansiveness, although only to affirm a parent-favorable ruling rather than to reverse a district-favorable one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In <i>Parish Sch. Dist. v. A.H.</i> (W.D. Ark. 2017), the court affirmed the hearing officer’s ruling that the successive BIPs were not substantively appropriate, first concluding that <i>Endrew F.</i> is “markedly more demanding” than the violated “some benefit” standard and second, in dicta, suggesting that <i>Endrew F.</i> might have implicitly expanded the entitlement for BIPs. 	<p>In this single decision, the most significant part was not the outcome, which was merely a reinforcement of the hearing officer’s ruling, but the possible, albeit speculative, effect of <i>Endrew F.</i> in terms of strengthening not only the appropriateness standard but also the threshold entitlement to BIPs (and presumably FBAs).</p>

Special Education Legal Alert

Perry A. Zirkel

© June 2017

This latest monthly legal alert summarizes a recent published, federal appellate court decision that is significant for its multiple issue rulings. It follows the usual format of a two-column table, with highlights (on the left) and practical implications (on the right). For automatic emailing of future legal alerts, sign up at perryzirkel.com

In *M.C. v. Antelope Valley Unified School District* (2017), the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals made several rulings that were completely or partially against the defendant district that appear to have notable implications for special education practice and litigation. Although not at all limited to these particular facts, the child in this case was a high school student who had a genetic disorder that rendered him blind and with a host developmental delays in all academic areas. This decision is binding only in the nine states in the Far West that encompass the Ninth Circuit. However, it is not unusual for published federal appellate decisions to have a radiating, persuasive effect on other jurisdictions. Some of these rulings are much more likely than others to “stick” in jurisdictions beyond the Ninth Circuit.

In the first ruling, the appellate court held that the district’s unilateral change to the proposed IEP (in this case correcting a mistake in the itinerant services from 240 minutes per month to 240 minutes per week), without either notifying the parents and obtaining their consent or re-opening the IEP process is was a fatal procedural violation of the IEP process for two independent reasons—depriving parents right to participate in (a) the formulation of the IEP and, separately, (b) the enforcement of the IEP. According to the court, the correction in the child’s favor, which in this case was even more so because the district alleged providing 300 minutes of these services per week, also resulted in a loss to the student, because the resulting uncertainty caused him and his parents to incur unnecessary legal expenses to resolve this issue.

Although the facts of this case are a mix of possible good intent (namely the successive corrections in favor of increased services) and seemingly bad practice (burying the amended IEP in the various documents at the hearing without prior notification to the parents), the lesson for district personnel is rather obvious: don’t change the IEP, even to increase services, without either obtaining consent from the parent or holding another IEP meeting that shows proposed revision.

The other, less obvious significance of this ruling is that the court reached it by treating the IEP as a contract. Among the possible implications of such treatment is that it may (a) strengthen the standard for denials of FAPE that are based on failure to implement the IEP, and (b) support the “four corners” approach for FAPE cases more generally, which causes the formation and implementation of IEPs to be lengthier, while diminishing the value of other FAPE evidence.

Second and similarly, the Ninth Circuit ruled that the IEP’s failure to specify the assistive technology (AT) devices and services that the child needed and was receiving, at least where the parents did not know these specifics, was a procedural violation that seriously infringed on the parents’ participation to monitor implementation.

This ruling relied on a California law providing that when a child needs particular AT devices or services, the IEP must specify them. Without such a state law, it may be argued the more general IDEA regulatory requirements for the IEP to state the supplementary aids and services extends to specifying the particular AT devices and services.

<p>The third ruling in <i>M.C.</i> was that the district's failure to respond to the parents' due process complaint put the parents at a disadvantage; in such cases, the Ninth Circuit held that the hearing officer must (a) stop the hearing for the district to provide its answer, and (b) allocate the cost of the delay to the district regardless of which party ultimately prevails.</p>	<p>This ruling, unlike the previous two, was not necessarily fatal to the district in this case; the appellate court sent the case back for a determination of the harm to the parents and "an award of appropriate compensation." It is unclear what the Ninth Circuit specifically meant in terms of said compensation not only in this case but also for the "cost of delay" under its required procedure for hearing officers in other such cases.</p>
<p>The fourth ruling was that when the parents, as a result of the first and second procedural violations (above), do not know the specific services being provided to the child, the burden of proof for substantive FAPE shifts from the parents to the district.</p>	<p>Such a burden-shifting analysis is unusual under the IDEA, particularly for burden of persuasion (i.e., who wins in a close case) as contrasted with burden of production (i.e., who must go first in presenting the evidence). Although creative, this shift would seem to be overkill in light of the denial-of-FAPE rulings for this same IEP except to the extent that it may affect the nature and scope of the remedy.</p>
<p>The final ruling was to remand the issue of substantive FAPE, including other alleged inadequacies (e.g., mobility services), back to the lower court to reconsider its ruling, which was in favor of the district, in light of the new, refined standard in the Supreme Court's recent <i>Endrew F.</i> decision.</p>	<p>As shown in the May legal alert, the reconsideration in light of <i>Endrew F.</i> Court's refinement of the <i>Rowley</i> substantive standard is not surprising. However, the Ninth Circuit's translation of <i>Endrew F.</i> is controversial and questionable because it approximates the commensurate-opportunity standard that <i>Endrew F.</i> rejected. In any event, this interpretation illustrates the inkblot-like nature of this new Supreme Court decision at least for the near future.</p>

Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission

By Kellecia West

Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission, by Hilde Reno with Janet Stutzman and Judy Zimmerman: Pearson Education, Inc. (2008). 288 pages.

Introduction

Purpose and Thesis

For many administrators, leadership is a sophisticated task that is built on fundamental principles and rooted in theory. The overall goal of the book being examined was designed as an introductory tool to be used by administrators to establish and use various tenets of value-driven management to guide leadership as they sought to establish and operate a successful early childhood education program. To direct with a mission, one must have clear goals in mind; as they seek to impart the knowledge and expertise needed to bring about change. The Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission, seeks to provide its readers with an in-depth tool that can be used to steer administrators to the successful operation of an early childhood establishment. To "direct with a mission" requires that the administrator understand the key purpose for the existence of the program as well as innovative strategies that must be put in place to ensure that the program achieves its targeted objectives. As postulated by Reno, Zimmerman & Stutzman (2008), the mission of the program should be visible in the work climate, policies, interactions, staffing, physical environment and goals for the students. In a critical analysis of the text, "Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission," I will seek to examine key components of the main themes outlined to include a detail analysis of the theory. I will also seek to examine various strengths and weaknesses relating to the authors' arguments; whereby making a comparable analysis to other educational leadership framework.

Content Analysis and Key Quotes

A careful analysis of the book identified various themes relevant to the creation of a successful early childhood program. Within the first chapter of the book, the authors noted the importance of the establishments of a clear organizational vision and mission. As I examined the details associated with this theme, it was indeed evident that administrators needed to have a clear vision and mission for the institution if they were to become effective leaders. A clear vision is needed to guide the program so that all stake holders involved will know the critical features needed to carry the program into the future. With the opening of each chapter, the authors sought to use key quotes to guide the framework of the program. As quoted in chapter one, the author states, "Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work, And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal." As I examined this key quote, it was indeed evident that the effects of great leadership is nurtured over time, through constant practice and collaborative efforts.

Analysis of the second chapters seek to highlight key components of the organizational structure that speaks to effective leadership. Without a doubt, the organizational structure provides a framework so that work can be done effectively within the institution. The organizational culture will also influence how that framework is seen to be supportive by the members of the organization. To guide the framework, in chapter two of the literature, the authors used a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which states, "The ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where he/she stands in the moment of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." Without a doubt, leaders will be faced with critical decisions as they seek to direct with a mission. These critical decisions will be the basis on which the organizational structure is built and sustained.

As I examined key tenets of the book, it was indeed evident that the authors covered all the essential basis needed to execute a successful early childhood educational program. Highlights from the literature also reveals the need for clear establishment of program policies and procedures; whereby ensuring that the programs within the institution runs smoothly and staff feels comfortable within the environment to which they are apart. Also, staffs need to know that their contributions are valued and that they are also valuable parts to the establishment of the program being brought forward. In reference to these statements the authors seeks to use a quote from Dave Longaberger, which states, "Having a good time is the best motivator there is. When people feel good about a company, they produce more." When administrators establish a climate of collaboration and knowledge sharing, the staffs are able to buy into the overall mission and vision of the program.

For any institution to function effectively, a clear system for management must be established. This will guide and direct the day to day operation of the business. In the field of education, teachers and other staffs often assume many roles. Various tasks and events must be carried out to fulfill the overall mission of the program. Managing the program systematically is an effective way to ensure that all of the pieces necessary to maintain the program are in place and that they work interactively. When each system is in place and working collaboratively, things run smoothly. If one or more systems break down, it places a great deal of stress on the entire program. Without a doubt, it is of key importance that administrators put the necessary steps to place to establish and develop a functional management system. In an effort to express the thoughts of the authors, a quote from Madeleine L'Engle is used, and states, "A life lived in chaos is an impossibility." The development of clear systems can bring about order and normalcy to the many day to day task within an institution.

As I examined the data provided, it was evident that ethics and ethical behaviour played a key role in the fundamental principles within an early childhood program. Ethics may reflect the personal and public expression of basic values. On analysis of the literature, it was evident that the authors viewed ethical standards as one of the hallmarks of a high-quality early childhood program. The authors postulated that principles such as confidentiality, professional development, honesty and reliability are essential to maintain an ethical culture that is fair and supportive of staff, children and families. As I examined the principles outlined, it was evident that the authors' perspectives were valid and was built on a strong philosophical premise. Leading with a mission, requires that leaders uphold key morals and must lead with moral purpose. In abiding by ethical guidelines within the educational sector, administrators must be guided by evidence based practices and must be knowledgeable about key standards and issues within the system. As a means to support the ethical statement, the authors used a quote by James Baldwin, which states, "Children have never been good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them." Without a doubt, the essence of this quote provided key principles that all could use. Leaders must lead by example if they are to direct with a clear mission in mind.

Analysis of the literature also highlighted the value the authors placed on the building of a collaborative climate between home and school. In building a sustainable program, parents must be keen of the overall mission of the institution and how that mission is aligned to the care and education of their child. Administrators must provide key ways to inform parents about the plans and objectives within the program. Providing parents with a clear guide can help in this manner, and this may take the form of a comprehensive parent handbook. From this document, parents can learn about fundamental issues relating to the program's mission and philosophy, to include many other aspects needed for their day to day functioning. As indicated by the authors in a quote by Sue Baldwin, "It takes a whole team approach to build positive relationships and to build a program in which parents and providers work together for what's best for the children." Without a doubt, the application of this quote was indeed valid and reflects the passion that I hold.

Leading with a mission takes a collaborative approach, each stake holder must play their part to achieve the goals of the program. Leaders have a deeper and more lasting influence on organization and provide a comprehensive leadership if their focus should extend beyond maintaining high standards. Leaders should keep in mind, the changing world to which they are apart, hence they will keep abreast of new and innovative ways to appeal to their target audience. Analysis of the various themes within the literature, clearly outlines the intent of the authors to provide administrators and practitioners with the tools needed to be successful within the field. The use of the various quotes by the authors lend its self to thought and reflection; critical components that are needed if leaders are to be effecting in a changing world. Effective leadership begins with extensive knowledge of the instructional environment.

Upon careful analysis of the text, it was indeed evident that the authors emphasized the need to establish a well-organized educational program; one in which the needs of the students are met and expectations and achievement is at its hallmark. Administrators must understand the needs of the students they serve and use creative strategies to evoke changes in their lives. Teachers must offer an environment of warmth for the students to discover and explore the world around. If early childhood administrators are to direct with a mission all the relevant components must be established within the institution.

Authors' Arguments- Weaknesses and Strengths

When a critical analysis was made of the book, it was indeed evident that the authors postulated key points of strength. The organization of the text allows the reader to easily follow through the various themes and chapters identified; while noting supporting resources that the administrator could use to guide the establishment of his/her educational program. The book is divided into fifteen chapters and the author's examination of an institution's organizational vision and mission at the opening chapter was strategically executed. If any educational program is to become effective, a precise vision must be established and carried out throughout the program. I found the opening quotes stated at each chapter to be profound; as it provided the reader with a glimpse of the authors' thoughts and overall intent for the chapter. From analysis of the contents within the text, the overall goal and thesis of the book was achieved; whereby equipping early childhood administrators with the tools to effectively lead a successful early childhood program.

A critical analysis of any literature will lend itself to grave scrutiny and evaluation; as various weaknesses are examined. From analysis of the text, I found the literature lacking in that the authors failed to establish and outline the use of a clear leadership framework to guide the administrator's management skills. Analysis of the literature also showed a shortfall, as there were no clear leadership strategies proposed for use by the administrator. In achieving the objective of providing the leaders with essential elements to lead a value-driven management, leaders must be equipped with the skills and strategies needed to execute their roles effectively. It is indeed key that administrators are guided by a leadership framework that provides them with a clear definition of the core values that are needed to direct with a mission. The use of a leadership framework would provide the administrators with the fundamental layout to guide with a mission in mind. Contrary to the authors' statement, to direct with a mission involves more than an understanding of the primary purposes for the existence of the program, it involves the core tenets of leadership and the roles played by the administrator in making the vision and mission a reality.

Evaluation

As I examined several critical components of the text, alignments of comparison was made to that of Fullan's literature, "Leading in a culture of change." From analysis, it was evident that the theoretical framework on which these two books were based shared both similarities and differences. For starters, the fundamental principles in Fullan's text, "Leading in a culture of Change," is supported by a key leadership framework that is used by administrators to guide successful leadership. Although the fundamental principles on which Reno's text is based is different from that of Fullan's, a clear leadership framework could have been used to supplement the functionality of the early childhood program. In Fullan's text, moral purpose is high on the agenda of leading in a culture of change. Fullan (2001), postulates that leader must have moral purpose. "Moral purpose without an understanding of change will lead to moral martyrdom." Similarly, Reno, Zimmerman & Stutzman (2008), also speaks to ethics and morals as an instrumental facet to leadership and suggests that an institution must be guided by ethics and adhere to ethical standards.

Effective leadership should be built on a culture of knowledge sharing. Reno, Zimmerman & Stutzman (2008) in the text, "Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission," share this point and suggests that staffs are instrumental part to the establishment of a successful early childhood program. Similarly in the text, Fullan also shares this view and suggest that the differences between effective and ineffective leaders are how much they really care about the people they lead. Knowledge of the teacher is very important but administrators must move them into professional

learning communities to channel changes into a coherent program. Fullan postulates that "change doesn't happen when you place changed individuals into the environment. You have to create a new environment and new settings." Leaders must create learning communities that will enhance the skills and knowledge of the people in the organization; whereby achieving the overall goals within the educational program.

Summary

Leading with a mission takes a collaborative approach and each stake holder must play their part to achieve the goals of the program. The Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission, seeks to provide its readers with an in-depth tool that can be used to steer administrators to the successful operation of an early childhood establishment. When critical components of the text was examined, both strengths and weaknesses were noted. The organization of the text allows the reader to easily follow through the various themes and chapters identified; while noting supporting resources that the administrator could use to guide the establishment of his/her educational program. Analysis however, revealed that the authors failed to establish and outline a clear leadership framework. Contrary to the authors' statement, to direct with a mission involves more than an understanding of the primary purposes for the existence of the program, it involves the core tenets of leadership and the roles played by the administrator in making the vision and mission a reality. Leadership is a sophisticated task that is built on fundamental principles and rooted in theory. In the text, "Handbook For Early Childhood Administrators: Directing With A Mission," Reno, Zimmerman & Stutzman (2008) postulates that to direct with a mission, one must have a clear goal in mind; as they seek to impart the knowledge and expertise needed to bring about change.

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The Importance of Parent and Teacher Collaboration to Help Students with Disabilities Reach Their Maximum Potential

By Rebecca A. Timmer

Abstract

Most parents of students with disabilities have difficulty navigating the special education system. This literature review considers the barriers that parents face within the special education system and examines the importance of communication and collaboration between teachers and parents. With effective communication and collaboration between teachers and parents, students with disabilities can reach their greatest potential.

The Importance of Parent and Teacher Collaboration to Help Students with Disabilities Reach Their Maximum Potential

Federal laws regarding special education recognize the importance of involving parents of children with disabilities in their child's education. In 2001 the No Child Left Behind Act called for a more parent involvement in the education process. The Law stated that parents and schools needed to work together to hold students to high standards. In 2005 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2005) required that parents be involved in the educational process and decision making of their children with disabilities. Despite the federal mandate to include parents in their child's education, many barriers exist that keep parents from participating in the special education process (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Students with special needs require additional supports and services in the school setting to reach their full potential. It is important that these students have teachers who can clearly communicate and collaborate with parents. When parents and teachers work together in true collaboration, students with special needs achieve positive outcomes that help them reach their maximum potential (Al-Shammari & Yawkey, 2008).

Barriers Parents Face

In her role as a resource room teacher Valle (2001) recognized that parents of her students did not know how to be partners in their child's education until they understood the special education system. Narrative inquiry was used to learn how mothers can inform educators about experiences with the special education system. This type of research allows for the discovery of what parents think is important rather than trying to decide what research thinks they need to know about parents (Valle, 2011). This article focused on the stories told by 15 mothers of children with Learning disabilities who are diverse in race, generation, class and culture. At some time during the narrative every mother suggested that they felt like they were on a journey that that did not choose to go on (Valle, 2011). Valle compares the difficulties that mothers of children with special needs faced in the special education system and the journey that they were on to the story of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. For the mothers the unplanned journey began when they realized that something was different about their child. When the mothers attempted to find out why their child had a disability it led them to fall "down the rabbit hole" where they tried to find answers but often only found more confusion (Valle, 2011). In Carroll's story, Alice found herself in a world that did not make any sense to her.

Per Valle, mothers of students often felt like they had entered a world that did not make any sense to them and it left them feeling inadequate, guilty and like failures (2011). One reason that mothers had difficulty navigating the special education system was to the amount of jargon and terms used in special education. The language used in the special education system often left parents uncomfortable about needing to admit they did not understand what was being said (Valle, 2011). Most current research on parents and special education focuses on if parents were present in the special education processes and does not look at the extent and quality of parents' experiences (Valle, 2011). Valle suggested that if educators were committed to fulfilling the spirit of special education law, frameworks need to be created where parents and teachers work in true collaboration so students benefit (Valle, 2011). Teachers need to understand the journey of learning and acceptance that parents are traveling so that they can more effectively partner with them. Partnering with parents involves parents and teachers sharing the decision making, resources and information so that they can address all aspects of the student's needs. (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001).

Children with disabilities from disadvantage backgrounds are at a greater risk of having parents who are not involved in their education (Gomez Mandic, Rudd, Hehir, & Acevedo-Garcia, 2012). While IDEA (2005) clearly states that procedural safeguards need to be written in language that is both readable and understandable, this is often not the case. Gomez Mandic et al. (2012) examined the readability of procedural safeguards from the state departments of all 50 different states in the spring of 2006. Previous readability studies looked at average sentence length and word difficulties to determine a reading level of the written material. The formulas used did not take into account the jargon used, sentence structure or style. In this study the procedural safeguards were assessed using the SMOG readability formula. The SMOG formula looks at both the readability and comprehension level of the procedural safeguards and relates them to a grade level. Gomez Mandic et al. (2012) used the results of the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) to determine the educational reading levels of adults between 25 and 49 years of age who represented most of the special education parent population. The results showed that very few states provided documents that could be read and understood by the parents they were written to help. In fact, many of the procedural safeguards were written at very high education levels. When literacy and language demands are greater than the skills of parents, it becomes extremely difficult for them to access services and their rights are compromised (Gomez Mandic et al., 2012). To make parents' rights more clearly understood, Gomez Mandic et al. (2012) stated that procedural safeguards need to be written in understandable and simplified language. The goal of clearly communicating with parents what their rights are is to try to create a more effective partnership with parents (Gomez Mandic et al., 2012).

Strategies to Increase Student Achievement and Parent Involvement

Many students with special education services spend at least half of their day in the general education classroom. This makes it important for general education teachers to understand how to work with students with special needs. Lack of teacher understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and not knowing effective interventions for students with ASD was noted as a major reason for parents not being satisfied with their student's education (Starr & Foy, 2012). Starr and Foy (2012) reported that lack of teachers' understanding of students with ASD led to higher levels of suspension for this population of students. The purpose of this study was to determine what the major factors were that contributed to parents' satisfaction with services and what were perceived priorities for maximizing student success. Parents of students with ASD were recruited for the study through newspaper articles, flyers and ASD parent support groups. To participate in the study, parents needed to have a child enrolled in a publicly funded school with a diagnosis of ASD (Starr & Foy, 2012). A survey was sent to parents asking open ended questions about their student's experiences, services they desired for their student and ultimate goals for their student. The results of the survey demonstrated that parents were not satisfied in the level of communication about or the strategies used with their student to address behavior concerns. Parents that reported positive experiences suggested that there was effective communication and collaboration between parents and teachers (Starr & Foy, 2012). According to Starr and Foy (2012) parents in the study stated that their ultimate goals for their children were happiness and achieving maximum independence. In other words, parents in this study want their children to "reach their maximum potential" (Starr & Foy, p. 213, 2012). The study suggested that lack of communication and collaboration were a problem for parents. Starr and Foy (2012) suggested that educators need to be aware of parents' perceptions of their child's education so that collaborative partnerships can be formed. Creating positive family school-community relationships is associated with student success (Collier, Keefe, & Hirrel, 2015)

As educators it is important to work with families to help students succeed. Parents of children with special needs need to have teachers who will work with them and advocate for them and their child to get the services that are best for the family (Sheehy & Sheehy, 2007).

When parents try to navigate the special education system, many of them encounter difficulties (Burke, 2013). Special education law requires that parents are part of the special education process; however, Burke suggests that barriers stand in parents' way of full participation. Scheduled meeting times, procedural safeguards that are difficult to understand, transportation issues, parents feeling intimidated by the school, communication issues and feeling unwelcomed by the school are all barriers Burke (2013) suggested that parents faced. Yet the research supports that the more parents are involved in the planning of goals and the daily completing of homework, the better the achievement is for students with disabilities (Burke, 2013). In order to discover strategies to improve parent involvement in students with disabilities education, Burke examined two different special advocacy training programs to determine if the programs would help parents of children with disabilities better navigate the special education system. In turn, parents could then better advocate for their child's needs. The Special Education Advocacy Training (SEAT) was a project that was tasked with creating a formal curriculum that could be used to train individuals in how to become special education advocates. SEAT trained 3 cohorts of 144 individuals from the United States. 80% of the individuals in the cohorts were parents of children with disabilities. SEAT has 6 core components that are comprised of 13 different modules. Individuals were trained over a 4-month period of time. When training was complete, Burke (2013) suggested that the training was effective for the individuals who went through the training. However, the rigorous amount of work required could discourage underrepresented groups of parents from participating in the training (Burks, 2013). The other program that Burke examined was the Volunteer Advocacy Project (VAP) from the state of Tennessee. This program was based on Georgia's parent advocacy training program. The goal of VAP was to provide parents with advocacy training and then to require them to advocate for four other families (Burke, 2013). The program taught parents about the different federal and state special education laws along with how individuals qualify for special education services. 129 different individuals were trained in the VAP program over two-years. Almost 60 % of the individuals trained were parents of children with special needs. The study suggested that more shadowing opportunities were needed for participants and it was necessary to find ways to bring the program to more rural areas (Burke, 2013). Burke suggested that special education advocates are one way to support parents of special needs students and to improve the home-school relationship, but more research on how to best train advocates is needed (2013).

Parent involvement in education has resulted in positive gains for students. Students have demonstrated better grades, better attendance records and fewer behavior issues when their parents are involved with the school (Chen & Gregory, 2011). Because of the Response to Intervention (RTI) movement, Prereferral Intervention Teams (PIT) have been established to discuss interventions for students who are experiencing difficulties. It should be noted that RTI and PIT are not part of the special education system. Chen and Gregory (2011) examined what effects including parents in the PIT process had on the students receiving interventions that directly aligned with the students' presenting problems and later referral for special education testing. The study consisted of 88 PIT cases from the 2005-2006 school year. The cases came from 14 different elementary schools in a Southeastern public school district. Of the cases examined 51 were male, 61 were White, 18 were Black, 7 were Hispanic and 1 was Asian (Chen & Gregory, 2011). When parents were involved in developing the PIT process it was determined that the interventions were more closely aligned with the students' difficulties (Chen & Gregory, 2011). The current study found when parents were involved in the PIT process, the collaboration between parents and teachers allowed for a more comprehensive plan for the student. Parents were also more likely to be assigned a part in implementing the intervention. When the group of professionals and parents met, it allowed for the ideas and skills of the entire group to be used when determining student's needs (Chen & Gregory, 2011). Chen and Gregory suggested that parent involvement in the PIT led to greater alignment of the intervention with the student's needs and to a lower rate of referral for special education testing (2011). Parent involvement in the PIT process suggests a promising model to improve collaboration between teachers and parents and can provide struggling students with huge benefits (Chen & Gregory, 2011.)

The special education system is difficult for many parents of students with disabilities to navigate due the many different barriers that exist (Cobb, 2014). Research suggests that one promising way to eliminate some of the barriers is for teachers and parents to develop good communication systems with parents (Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2005). Collier et al. (2015) suggested that partnership with families requires two-way communication and shared responsibilities in making educational decisions.

A second strategy to help lessen barriers with parents is to have teachers and parents work collaboratively. When parents are involved in helping to choose appropriate Evidence Based Practices (EBP's) for their child, they can provide helpful insights that will make the implementation and use of EBP's more effective (Cook, Shepherd, Cook, & Cook, 2012). Sheehey and Sheehey (2007) suggested that teachers should make special education classrooms inviting to parents so that they will feel included in both the classroom and school community. To increase collaboration and parent involvement, teachers should plan activities and projects that include parents as work partners (Al-Shammari & Yawkey, 2008). When teachers and parents work together in true collaboration research demonstrates that students benefit and increase their ability to reach their maximum potential (Geenen et al., 2005). The goal of helping students with disabilities reach their maximum potential requires parents, teachers and administrators to work together and make the necessary changes so that students will realize the benefits of these changes.

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About the Author

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Factors That Breakdown Communication Between Families of Children with Disabilities and Schools

By Christopher M. McIntyre

Abstract

It is important to understand the factors that lead to communication breakdown between families of children with disabilities and schools because the issue cannot be resolved until we understand the factors that contribute to the breakdown. Factors such as the ability of school personnel to effectively manage children's behavior, teacher education and understanding of the disability, and effective collaboration between parents and schools are issues that continually emerge in schools across the country. The purpose of this study is to identify common factors that lead to a breakdown of communication between families of children with disabilities and schools, so that schools can have the information they need to correct this issue.

Families of children with disabilities are often dissatisfied by their level of participation in their child's education. Parents want to be included in the educational process that impacts their child, and they have valuable input to give about how to make the educational team function as a more cohesive group. According to Starr and Foy (2012), parents state that teachers lack knowledge about their child's disability, and lack knowledge about interventions that could help their child. These are some of the key reasons for parent dissatisfaction. In addition, school suspensions are a prominent concern for parents. Research shows that students with autism are more likely to be suspended than their peers. Dissatisfied parents think this difference in suspension rate is partly due to school personnel not having adequate training in behavior interventions for students with autism. Parents believe more staff training should occur to allow their child's disability to be better understood, and to allow staff to implement effective behavior interventions when needed. Ultimately, parents want to feel like they are part of the team. They want to collaborate with the staff and they want to be able to understand the educational process so they can be an active part of the team that is making educational decisions for their child. If the families of students with disabilities and staff can work together to ensure the educational team is up to date on effective behavioral interventions and effective strategies to educate students with disabilities, then productive team collaboration can occur and a breakdown in communication may be avoided.

The Need for Effective Behavioral Interventions and Effective Educational Strategies

Families of children with disabilities feel that unnecessary suspensions would not occur if school personnel were properly trained to deescalate behaviors and apply the correct behavior interventions for students with disabilities. In a study by Starr and Foy (2012), 144 parents of students with ASD (autism spectrum disorder) were participants in a study that collected data about parent's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their child's education, and about what they felt was needed to meet their child's needs more effectively. The data was collected using surveys. Then the surveys were compared to find emerging themes and commonalities. One commonality that was found was that all parents whose children had been suspended believed that the reason their child was suspended was because the school personnel was unable to deal with their child's behavior. In addition, parents felt dissatisfied due to the lack of knowledge about ASD among school staff. Parents felt that teachers needed more information about educational programming for ASD students, and needed better training on how to communicate with children who have ASD. Overall, the results of this study show that effective behavior management, educator training, collaboration and communication are important factors that lead to parental satisfaction. If parents are unsatisfied with their child's education a breakdown in communication between the parent and the school is more likely to occur.

One way to satisfy parents, which will increase collaboration and communication, is to increase the level of educator training for students with disabilities. If educators are trained to use and implement EBPs (evidence based practices) for students with disabilities parents may feel as though educators have the knowledge base needed to educate their child with disabilities.

A study by Odom, Cox, Brock, and the National Professional Development Center on ASD (2013), presents the National Professional Development Center (NPDC) Model to show an example of how implementation science can be used to develop professional development that will promote the use of evidence-based practices. This is a growing need because the increase of students with ASD has increased the need for high-quality special education services designed for students with ASD. Over three years the NPCD model was used in 58 school programs and included 142 students with ASD. The NPCD model was evaluated in five different areas. These areas were improvements in program quality, practitioner use and implementation fidelity of EBP's, student progress, family satisfaction, and sustainability of professional development efforts. Results of implementation were discussed in a case study about Creekside Middle School, a school that participated in the study. All staff team members reported that using implementation checklists and having coaching sessions were effective tools and resulted in changes of their practice. The students experienced a reduction in challenging behaviors, an increase in independence, and an increase in better communication. Parents also saw similar changes at home in the students. During just the first year of implementation the staff became more cohesive and understood why the model they were using was so important in relation to student success. In addition, they found that the model improved student success of all students not only students with ASD. Creekside Middle is now a model site for educating students with ASD and they have trained over 500 educators. This study is proof that when educators are trained to use effective behavioral interventions and effective educational strategies students with disabilities and their families are happy to report a positive change and will maintain open communication with the school.

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The Need for Effective Collaboration and Communication Between Parents and Schools

A study by Mandic, Rudd, Hehir, and Acevedo-Garcia (2012) focused on literacy-related barriers to understanding the rights of students with disabilities and their parents in the school system. The study explored the readability of procedural safeguards documents related to the limited literacy among some parents of students with disabilities. The results found that after scoring 51 different documents the readability of the documents was a mean and median grade level of 16, which is a college reading level. This becomes a problem when 86% of people aged 25-49 that have a high school education or less have limited literacy. When parents of students with disabilities attend meetings to collaborate with school staff about their child 86% of them may not be understanding their rights which are presented on the procedural safeguard document at the beginning of the meeting. When the parent faces this misunderstanding at the very beginning of a meeting the communication and collaboration between the parent and school staff can significantly decline due to feelings of frustration and confusion. Feelings of frustration and confusion are often caused by a parents' perceived unmet needs. A study by Brown, Ouellette-Kuntz, Hunter, Kelley, Cobigo, and Lam (2011) explored the association between children's functioning and parents' perceived unmet needs. Ninety-seven families of students with ASD participated in this cross-sectional study that examined the relative risk for unmet needs. The results showed that the relationship between functional independence and perceived unmet need appeared to change based on the extent to which families perceived their child's disability to be a burden. Therefore, those that had experienced greater impact of the child's disability had greater unmet need. This study provides needed input into how parents perceive unmet need which may be useful for service planning. If schools can address the perceived unmet needs of parents the educational team can communicate and collaborate in a more effective manner and come up with solutions to meet the perceived unmet needs. The communication and collaboration of the educational team can have a significant impact on the parent's experiences in the special education system.

A study by Valle (2011) examines what we know about the experiences of parents in the special education system. It provides an overview of how the special education system has changed over the years by explaining how the parent role in meetings used to be that of a passive recipient of information and now it should be more of a co-writing role.

It explains that it is important to remember that when we ask parents to tell their story about their experiences in the special education system we are learning about the consequences of our practices in their lives. If communication and collaboration between parents and schools can be the focus going forward maybe consequences can be transformed into rewards.

Ultimately, schools and parents of students with disabilities must maintain open communication to ensure student success. School staff and parents of students with disabilities are all part of the team that makes important educational decisions for the student with disabilities. The parents know the child better than anyone else and the school staff understands school policy and procedures that must be followed. Together everyone needs to work together to provide the child with the support they need to flourish in an educational setting. Parents need to feel the staff is knowledgeable about their child's disability and they need to feel the staff can implement effective behavior interventions and effective educational strategies for their child. Therefore, schools need to provide training for the staff on effective behavior interventions and effective educational strategies for students with disabilities. The parent needs to feel that they are an important part of the educational team and that the input they give is valuable. Parents and staff must collaborate in educational meetings to maintain open conversations and to avoid a breakdown in communication.

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About the Author

My name is Christopher McIntyre, and I am a second year special education teacher in a self-contained classroom, grades 3-5, at Seminole Trails Elementary school in West Palm Beach. I earned my B.S. in Exceptional Student Education with an ESOL endorsement. I am currently working on my Special Education Master's degree with an autism endorsement. My interests and hobbies include spending time with my wife and son, fishing, playing softball and kickball on my school's team, and learning as much as I can about the population of students I work with.

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Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

Hebrew Learning Specialist Grades 1-5

Rockville, Maryland

Description:

The ideal candidate will be a special educator who is fluent in Hebrew and will have expertise in teaching students with diverse learning needs to read Hebrew accurately and fluently, to improve their vocabulary acquisition, language comprehension and written expression in Hebrew. The Hebrew Learning Specialist will play a leadership role in our Judaic Studies Department, collaborating with teachers and providing ongoing professional development in differentiated instruction. The Learning Specialist will be part of a team of other special educators that work at the School through the Educational Support Services Department, providing a variety of strategies and interventions to students with diverse learning needs, both in and out of the classroom setting. In addition to providing direct remedial support to students, other responsibilities include design of individualized education plans, case management, and close collaboration with classroom teachers.

Requirements:

MA in special education or a related field and three to five years of prior demonstrated experience required; expertise in administering Hebrew reading assessments and data driven instruction preferred.

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to www.cesjds.org/careers Job Code **SE400**.

The Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School is an equal opportunity employer. We evaluate all applicants without unlawful consideration of race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

Benefits:

The School offers competitive compensation and a comprehensive employee benefits package.

Contact:

Qualified candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to www.cesjds.org/careers Job Code **SE400**

Early Childhood Special Educator

Lakenheath, UK

Job Category: Early Intervention

Description:

Home-based early intervention program providing services to developmentally delayed infants and toddlers of American military families stationed overseas.

Requirements:

Master's degree in Special Education, a minimum of two years experience within the last five years working with developmentally delayed children in the 0, 1 & 2-year age population in a home-based early intervention capacity, and a current state teaching license/certification to teach in this capacity.

Benefits:

Paid location, health and dental benefits, 401K Plan, generous paid time off, housing stipend.

Contact:

Lynn Romer at LynnR@magnummedicaloverseas.com for 800-852-5678 x.156, or fax resume to 513-984-4909

Special Education Teachers

Philadelphia, PA

Job Category: Full Time

Description:

The Invo-Progressus Team has incredible opportunities for Special Education Teachers...or, as we like to call them, Superheroes. If you use your super powers to help ensure that children have access to the best education possible in the least restrictive environment, we would love for you to join the Invo-Progressus team! We are currently hiring full-time Special Education Teachers in Philadelphia, PA for the 2017-2018 school year.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Instructional Certificate in Special Education
- Personal commitment to driving positive outcomes for students
- Certification in any of these the areas of English, Math, Science, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Life Skills and Emotional behavior

- Collaborative minded professional with strong oral and written communication skills
- Ability to work and build strong relationships with parents, teachers and school administrators
- Experience working in schools

Benefits:

- Competitive compensation with flexible pay options
- Medical/Dental/Vision Coverage
- Flexible Spending Plan for medical and dependent coverage
- Professional Liability Coverage
- Licensure reimbursement
- Annual Professional Development stipend
- Professional membership stipend
- Unlimited CEUs through the Progressus Pathways Learning Center
- 401(k) Retirement Saving Plan with a discretionary company match
- Relocation assistance
- Many More!

APPLY NOWSEARCH FOR MORE OPP

Contact:

Email your resume to careers@invo-progressus.com or call 800.434.4686 to speak with a dedicated Career Services Manager.

Certified Special Education Substitute Teacher

Pittsburgh, PA

Job Category: Substitute Teacher

Description:

Substitute teachers are an integral part of education as they provide the classroom continuity needed for effective learning. Source4Teachers, recently named one of Forbes' America's Best Large Employers of 2017, has daily and long-term substitute opportunities each day at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. In this role, you will provide meaningful instruction to students while the regular teacher is absent. You must adhere to the teacher's lesson plans, maintain a safe and orderly classroom environment, and perform additional duties as directed by school administration.

Requirements:

- Valid PA Teaching Certificate in Special Education
- PA State Criminal History Clearance (Act 34)
- Child Abuse Clearance (Act 151)

- Federal Criminal History Clearance (Act 24)
- Tuberculosis test reflecting negative results
- PA Department of Education Form 6004: Arrest/Conviction Report and Certification

Benefits:

- Healthcare, dental & vision benefits
- 401k
- Training & ongoing support
- 24/7 online access to job openings
- Employee discount program & bonus opportunities
- Retired PA teachers can substitute through Source4Teachers without impacting PSERS
- (EOE)

Contact:

Email Ashley Shaner at AShaner@Source4Teachers.com to learn more or visit www.S4T.jobs

SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR

RIISING SUN FARM AND GARDEN - VERNALIS, CA

Job Category: SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR - ADULT TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

Description:

Pioneers founded the Rising Sun School in 1870 in rural Vernalis, California and the campus operated continuously for 140 years until economic conditions forced its closure. Our district reopened the campus as an Adult Transitions Program, providing job skill training for young adults with developmental disabilities. The 8.5 acre site has now been transformed into a small working farm and plant nursery operation. Over \$1 million in facility improvements have been completed in the past three years. These include: a lavender field, plant propagation garden, state-of-the-art commercial greenhouse, large pond, and much more. We're searching for an innovative special education teacher to work with our wonderful young adults enrolled in the program. The selected candidate must have exceptional organizational skills, creativity, and passion. The special education teacher will be assisted by a full-time facility caretaker, full-time facility operations coordinator, and a team of dedicated paraeducators. See the video link below for more information about this unique program:

<https://vimeo.com/72067394>

Information and Directions to Apply:

For Complete Information and Directions to Apply, Visit EdJoin:

<https://www.edjoin.org/Home/JobPosting/923977>

Contact:

If you have any additional questions about this position and the Adult Transitions Program at Rising Sun Farm and Garden, please contact Dr. Philip M. Alfano at (209) 895-7700 ext. 20280. Please see the video below for more information about this exciting program: <https://vimeo.com/72067394>

Educational Support/Special Education Teacher

Severn, Maryland

Job Category: Educational Support

Description:

Do you LOVE helping students learn and succeed according to their unique learning style? We share your passion and have an opening for a full time Educational Support/Special Education teacher at our bustling Upper School (grades 9-12) for the 2017-18 school year.

Annapolis Area Christian School has been serving Christian families in Maryland since 1971, offering a college preparatory academic curriculum, a competitive athletic program, as well as outstanding fine arts in theater, choral, band, and visual arts. AACs serves more than 900 students in grades PreK through 12th on four separate campuses in beautiful Anne Arundel County.

The Educational Support program at AACs is designed to provide additional academic support to students with documented learning challenges as identified through educational testing, response to intervention protocols, individual education plans, and/or 504 plans. Educational Support teachers work closely with students, parents, and the Upper School faculty to facilitate student learning.

Requirements:

Candidates should have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and hold an endorsement or certification in Special Education. The ideal candidate will have a Master's degree in Special Education and a minimum of 5 years of experience working with learning challenged students at the secondary level. Candidates who can contribute to the school community by coaching a sport, sponsoring a club, or in other similar ways are highly valued.

Benefits:

Health/Dental/Vision insurance, Short-term & Long-term Disability, Life insurance, Flexible Spending plan, Tuition discount, free lunch

Contact:

Please visit our website www.aacsonline.org for more information about us and instructions on how to apply.

Teacher of the Visually Impaired

New Orleans, LA

Job Category: Teaching

Summary:

The Teacher for the Visually Impaired is responsible for providing itinerant services to students who are served under contract with schools in the Greater New Orleans area. In addition, TVI duties include collaboration with VRS team members to provide extra-curricular activities for skill development through transition, recreation, and summer camp programs.

Help Lighthouse Louisiana to build a better tomorrow for our students with vision impairment, while living in an exciting city with food, fun, and festivals galore.

Lighthouse Louisiana is seeking a Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired who is eager to use his/her skills and creativity to provide itinerant vision services and to develop youth programs for children with vision loss in the Greater New Orleans area.

Lighthouse Louisiana is dedicated to ensuring that our youth are receiving well-rounded opportunities to learn through quality instruction and play. Our programs expand beyond the classroom to include Goal Ball, recreation, transition skills training, and a summer camp. If you want to make a difference in the lives of children who are blind in a holistic environment with an interdisciplinary team, contact Lighthouse Louisiana today.

Requirements:

Applicants who do not meet the following requirements listed need not apply.

- 1. Education:** BA in Education or M.Ed. with VI certification from an accredited university.
- 2. Special Knowledge or Skills:** Proficiency with Braille, Assistive technology for the blind, magnification, and adaptations for children with varying degrees of vision loss; Able to screen for referral to O&M services; excellent written and verbal communications; proficient in use of Internet, email, and standard software applications (i.e. Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint); proficiency with Nemeth code Braille and methods of teaching math to blind students.
- 3. Experience:** At least 1-year teaching as a TVI. Itinerant experience preferred.

Benefits:

- Signing Bonus \$3000 / Moving Expenses \$2000
- Health, Dental, Vision, Flexible Spending Account, Employer paid Life, Voluntary Life, Short & Long-Term Disability, Sick, & Holiday

Contact:

Terri J. Brown, HR Manager
123 State Street
New Orleans, La. 70118
P. 504-899-4501, x229
tbrown@lighthouselouisiana.org
www.lighthouselouisiana.org

Special Education Teacher

Washington, DC

Job Category: Teacher

Description:

District of Columbia International School (DCI) is a public charter middle and high school in DC. We aim to provide our students with a world-class education that empowers them to follow their passions and change the world. DCI's education centers on the:

- International Baccalaureate curriculum framework
- Advanced language learning in Chinese, Spanish and French
- A culture focused on student agency supported by 1:1 technology

We currently serve 520 racially and economically diverse students in grades 6-9. We will move to the Walter Reed campus in 2017 where we will grow into a 6-12 middle and high school and serve 1500 students.

While only in our third year DCI has become IB World School and has been rated Tier 1, the highest rating by our authorizer the Public Charter School Board. We are dramatically increasing our staff in 2017-18 and look forward to receiving your application. Come join a great team building a great school!

DCI is hiring full time Special Education Teacher. Please submit your cover letter and resume to resume@dcinternationalschool.org. You will need to pass a background check. No phone calls please.

Position Overview: This position entails both instructional and case management responsibilities for providing special education services and supports to students with exceptional learning needs at DCI during the school year.

Qualifications:

A Master's Degree in secondary education or this content area is preferred (Bachelor's Degree is required). Able to meet HQT requirements under NCLB. Experience with 1:1 technology a plus. Experience as a special education teacher at the secondary level preferred. Essential Attributes:

Faculty and Staff Development/Benefits:

- DCI is committed to the principles of servant leadership and to providing faculty and staff with the resources and training they need to provide an excellent education experience for every student and family.
- We have a benefits package that includes health and disability insurance and paid leave.
- We offer teachers daily planning time, professional development, and reasonable class sizes.
- Teachers and staff have the appropriate technology and support to do their work.

DC International School is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse faculty and staff committed to teaching and working in a multicultural and multilingual environment.

Contact:

Please send your resume and cover letter to resume@dcinternationalschool.org

Classroom Teacher - Special Education

Ridgely, MD

Job Category: Teacher

DESCRIPTION:

Come for a job, find a family. Where else but Benedictine? Be inspired to come to work every day knowing that you are making a difference in someone else's life. Our teams of professionals work together to improve the quality of life of adults and children with developmental disabilities by helping them achieve their greatest potential in all aspects of life; school, residential, and vocational.

The Teacher provides instruction to students with developmental disabilities in education, vocational, functional and self-help, social-emotional, and behavioral areas.

Implement each student's current Individual Education Plan (IEP), with updates as necessary. Supervise students in areas assigned and according to behavioral management plans designated. Evaluate each assigned student's attainment of goals as stated in the IEP. Submit progress and other reports as required by the school program or requested by School administrators. Implement strategies and provide materials and equipment as appropriate for the population served. Complete, in advance, and maintain lesson plans, protocol and schedules for daily planning. Attend and participates in faculty meetings, interviews, inservice sessions, Parent conferences and other activities as required. Supervise and document performance of classroom staff with follow-up on goals and outcomes of performance/coaching lessons. Administer state testing to students as directed by School administration and submit documentation in a timely manner.

REQUIREMENTS:

Must have Bachelor's degree and valid teaching certificate in Special Education, meeting the Highly Qualified criteria. A Conditional Certificate, valid for two years, may be requested by the Educational Director for an individual with a BA/BS who does not yet meet the certification requirements for a Standard Professional certificate or Highly Qualified criteria. This individual would be required to meet the requirements for the renewal of the Conditional Certificate until a SPC or APC is obtained and to meet the criteria for Highly Qualified. Classroom experience teaching children with developmental disabilities highly preferred. Must have a passion to specialize in teaching children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Must be highly organized, creative, and an effective collaborator.

BENEFITS:

Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance; Short-Term Disability, Long-Term Disability, Life Insurance, 403(b) Retirement Plan Dependent Care Benefits, Educational Assistance, Credit Union, Employee Assistance Program.

CONTACT:

Erin, HR Generalist at Benedictine

erin.negrete@benschool.org

(410) 364-9616

Arizona Special Education Teacher

Phoenix Metropolitan Area

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Description:

\$48,000/school year (185 days). Summers off with year round pay. Special Education Teachers needed in Arizona (Phoenix and surrounding cities). Needs are in the self-contained and resource settings serving students with emotional disabilities (ED), Autism (A), Severe/Profound (S/P), and Intellectual Disabilities (ID). STARS is the largest school contract agency in AZ. STARS is owned and operated by Occupational Therapists. You will be an employee and receive full benefits (see below). With a proven track record, STARS is able to offer you an unbeatable support system and resources. STARS is hiring for the 2017-2018 school year. STARS places Special Education Teachers throughout the Phoenix, Tucson and the surrounding area public schools.

Requirements:

Certification through the AZDOE, in Special Education. Arizona Fingerprint Card through AZDPS. We will help you get the credentials needed and reimburse you for the cost.

Benefits:

Salary: \$48,000/school year, based on 185 days. STARS also offers a fantastic benefit package including: 16 weeks off, 100% Company paid Health, Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance, \$1,000/year Continuing Ed Money, Paid DOE Certification Fees, Paid NASET Dues, Spanish Immersion trip, Hawaii Trip for two, 401K, 125 Plan, Direct Deposit, Evaluation tools and treatment supplies, Two company sponsored parties with professional entertainment, Company newsletter, STARS sponsored dinner meetings with national/local speakers, Yearly raises, Referral bonuses, Moving \$, Birthday gifts and other appreciation throughout the year, Genuine Appreciation. **YOU WILL FEEL LIKE A STAR!!!**

Contact:

Brian Paulsen, COO #480.221.2573; Please email your resume to Jobs@StudentTherapy.com; Apply Online at StudentTherapy.com, we would love to hear from you!

Teaching in New York City

New York City, NY

Job Category: Full Time Teaching

DESCRIPTION:

The New York City Department of Education is looking for bright, motivated, and dedicated teachers who are passionate about sparking opportunity for all students. With over 1,800 schools and 1.1 million students, New York City provides endless opportunities for you to hone your craft and build your career.

Whether in Coney Island or the South Bronx, our team of exceptional educators is passionate about urban education and is fiercely committed to success for all students. Our schools range in size (from 200-4,000 students) and are as diverse as our students and the neighborhoods we serve, allowing you to choose a school community that fits your needs as an educator. And with more than 200 innovative partnerships with leading arts, science and cultural organizations around the city, you will never run out of ways to expand your curriculum and pique students' interest.

New York City public schools are committed to fostering curiosity and confidence in all students, and jumpstarting the next generation of innovators, leaders and citizens. Now is your chance to help us make that happen.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:

New York City public schools offer competitive starting salaries ranging from \$54,000 to \$81,694, based on prior teaching experience as well as your undergraduate and graduate education.

You may also become eligible for additional income through a wide array of incentives and school positions that will stretch and challenge you as an educator. You might earn additional grants by teaching in a select, high-need school as part of our Teachers of Tomorrow program, or by helping your colleagues develop in one of our many teacher leadership roles .

REQUIREMENTS:

To apply to teach in New York City, candidates must first meet the following requirements:

- Possess or be on track to earn a New York State Department of Education (NYSED) teaching certification by the start of the 2017-18 school year. If you are not already NYSED-certified, there are several ways to obtain certification .
- Complete an online teacher application at TeachNYC.net

Learn more about our application requirements and deadlines and apply to teach in New York City today!

APPLY:

http://teachnyc.net/?utm_source=job-board&utm_medium=job-posting&utm_campaign=2017-applications&utm_term=Spark&utm_content=Naset

Special Education Specialist

Multiple Locations

Job Category:

Description:

The primary responsibility of the Special Education Specialist is to provide instruction and other related services to Special Education students. The Special Education Specialist will also facilitate diagnostic assessment including administration, scoring and interpretation. Will review and revise IEP's as needed. Will support instruction in reading, math, and written language for students, tutor individual and small groups of students, administer and score academic testing, write individualized education plans and support other academic programs as needed. The Special Education Specialist will work under the leadership of the Program Specialist and the Director of Special Education. This position will be available to provide direct instruction to students 6 hours a day.

Essential Functions include, but are not limited to the following:*

- Provide instruction to students with special needs and identified learning disabilities in a special education program.
- Tutor individual and small groups of students, reinforcing language and reading concepts.
- Administer and score individual and group tests.
- Schedule IEP meetings, coordinating schedules with parents, general education teacher(s), administrator, and all appropriate special education staff.
- Conduct IEP meetings.
- Communicate and coordinate special needs evaluation and testing with speech teacher, psychologist, and other service providers.
- Communicate with parents regarding individual student progress and conduct.
- Maintain progress records and record progress toward IEP goals.
- Record progress within the independent study program.
- Perform other duties in support of the Special Education Specialist program.
- Support other academic programs offered within the independent study program.

Various openings in Burbank region, San Gabriel region, Victor Valley region, Inland Empire region, San Bernardino region, and San Juan region.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

- Special Education Specialist Certificate or ability to obtain Mild/Moderate Certificate.
- Ability to teach students of grades K-12.
- Ability to work with children of all ages.
- Ability to understand, adopt, and support the independent study program, concepts and their philosophies.
- Ability to organize and present ideas effectively in oral and written form.
- Ability to make skillful decisions.
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.
- Ability to operate a PC computer, word processor, copier, FAX, and other office machines.

Education and Experience:

- BA/BS Degree
- Valid California Teaching Credential in Special Education (Mild/Moderate)

Contact:

Nehia Hearn
Human Resources Assistant
Direct: 626) 204-2552 Fax: 626) 685-9316
nhearn@ofy.org

[To top](#)

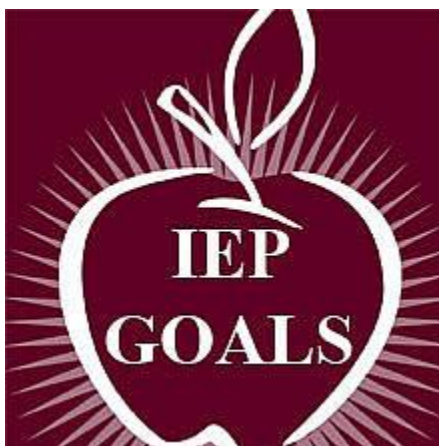
Acknowledgements

Portions of this month's *NASET's Special Educator e-Journal* were excerpted from:

- Center for Parent Information and Resources
- Committee on Education and the Workforce
- FirstGov.gov-The Official U.S. Government Web Portal
- Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals (JAASEP)
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth
- National Institute of Health
- National Organization on Disability
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Education-The Achiever
- U.S. Department of Education-The Education Innovator
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- U.S. Office of Special Education

The **National Association of Special Education Teachers** (NASET) thanks all of the above for the information provided for this edition of the Special Educator e-Journal

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