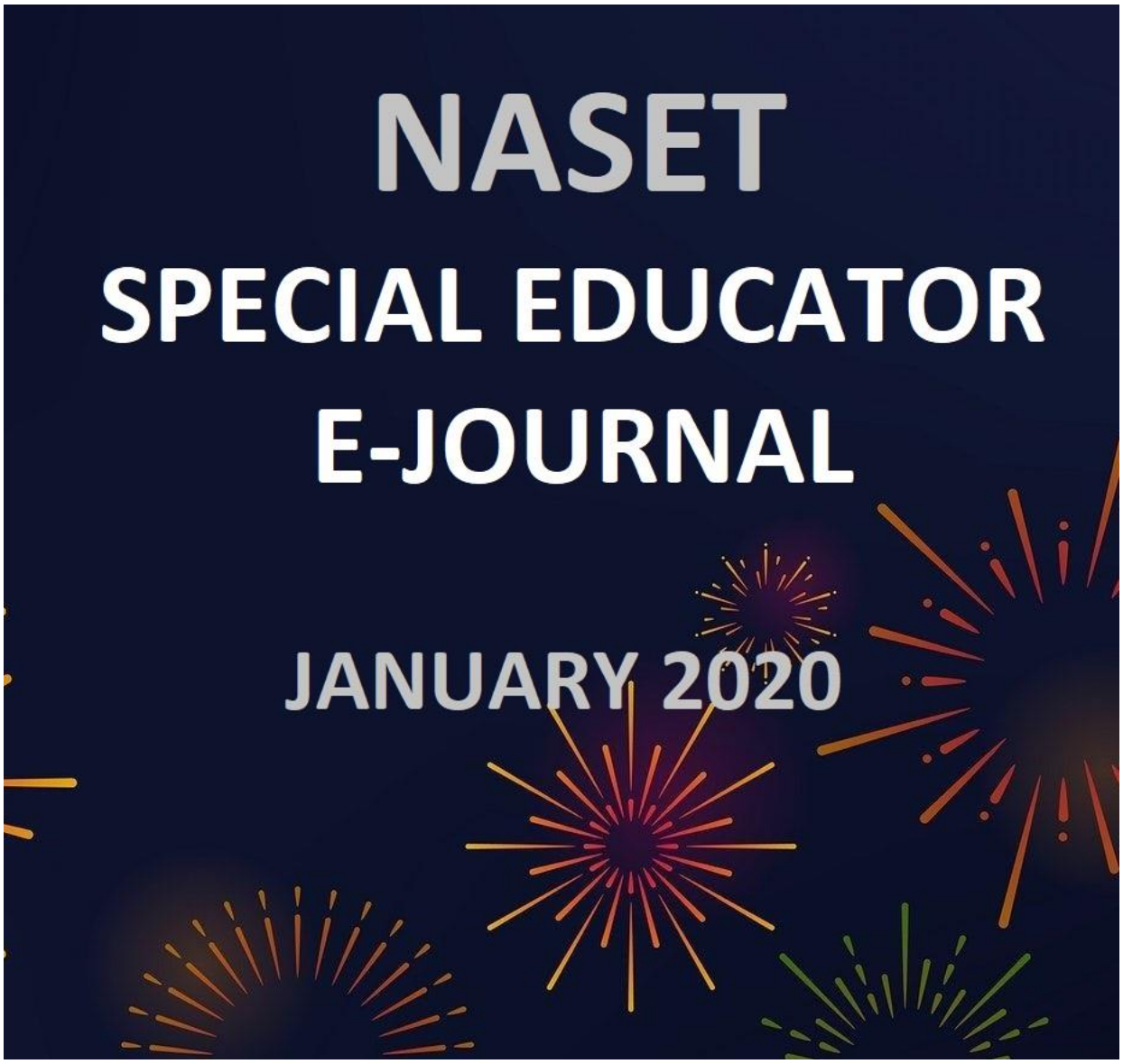
NASET
SPECIAL EDUCATOR
E-JOURNAL
JANUARY 2020

# Table of Contents

# Special Education Legal Alert

**By Perry A. Zirkel**



This month's update concerns issues that were subject to recent, unpublished federal court decisions of general significance: (a) the continuing issue of the need prong for eligibility under the IDEA, and (b) the occasional issue of "reverse attorneys' fees," i.e., where the district rather than the parent is the party seeking payment. For both of these issues, see Publications section at **perryzirkel.com**.

**In *William V. v. Copperas Cove Independent School District* (2019), the federal district court issued the latest decision in the wake of its original ruling summarized in the April 2019 Legal Alert and its partial reversal on appeal, as summarized in the September 2019 Legal Alert. In the original decision, the judge ruled that (a) the district violated the IDEA by exiting the child from eligibility under the classification of specific learning disability (SLD) after originally diagnosing him with dyslexia but (b) the violation was harmless because the district had continued to implement the student's IEP (due to stay-put). On appeal, the Fifth Circuit concluded that the district court was legally wrong or at least incomplete by failing to reach the second essential element for eligibility—the need for special education.**

Revisiting the case for the second time, the court concluded that William met the need prong for eligibility based on his continuing below-average reading skills and the resulting dyslexia services, which included 45 minutes per week of 1:1 tutoring in the Wilson Reading Program in addition to other, daily dyslexia services.

The IDEA defines special education in terms of adapting "the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction" for the individual needs of the child. The court concluded that the Wilson program, along with the various accommodations and daily interventions that William received under the state's dyslexia law, met this definition.

The judge also reaffirmed his original ruling that this violation amounted to a harmless procedural error. The reason, according to the judge, was that the IEP, which the district had continued to implement, met the substantive standard for FAPE; thus, the eligibility violation resulted in no loss to the student.

The oddity is that stay-put required the district to continue the IEP; thus, the only way the parents could prevail was to prove that either the IEP was not reasonably calculated for progress, which they argued, or the district had deprived them of a meaningful opportunity for participation, which they did not claim.

The dividing line between general and special education is, as the Fifth Circuit observed, "murky." Yet, this particular case warrants two cautions against over-generalization: (a) the non-eligibility issue was upon the exiting, not the entering,

stage for an IEP, thus triggering a saving effect of stay-put; and (b) the child received individualized dyslexia services that went beyond limited accommodations, such as preferential seating and extra time.

**In *Oskowis v. Sedona-Oak Creek Unified School District #9* (2019), the federal district court in Arizona addressed the issue of whether a parent, who filed a series of due process complaints against a school district, had to pay for the district's attorneys' fees. In the 2004 amendments, Congress added a provision that allowed courts to order a parent or the parent's attorney to pay such "reverse attorneys' fees" to a prevailing local or state education agency if the parent's hearing complaint or appeal was frivolous and for an improper purpose, "such as to harass, to cause unnecessary delay, or to needlessly increase the cost of litigation." In this case, the parent of a child with autism filed, on a "pro se" basis (i.e., without legal counsel), three successive due process complaints within a nine-month period, and each one resulted in dismissal as being frivolous. The parent appealed to the federal court, which upheld all three dismissals. The district filed a claim for attorneys' fees for the judicial appeal, not the due process hearing, stage of these dismissals. All three complaints concerned alleged district denials of FAPE for the child, and they came in the wake of several previous due process complaints from the same pro se parent.**

| | |
|---|---|
| First, the court easily concluded that the district prevailed. | The court pointed to its previous upholding of all three dismissals |
| Second, the court concluded that all three complaints were frivolous, because they lacked any "reasonable foundation in fact or law" and, thus, were "wholly without merit." The court rejected the parent's retaliation claim, which was based on the three hearing officer decisions being within one day of each other, as speculative conspiracy theory. | What a district perceives as frivolous is often not what a court would determine to be frivolous, because the only way to change case law is to raise novel claims and arguments, which may gain acceptance based on the evolving values of society. For example, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) may have seemed frivolous in light of the Supreme Court's separate-but-equal ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) |

To top

# Buzz from the Hub

**All articles below can be accessed through the following links:**
**https://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-nov2019-issue2/**

## Videos for Families and Staff

**How to Request a Special Education Assessment**
This 7-minute video from Parents Helping Parents (CA) introduces the assessment process used when considering a child for special education services. It's great for anyone who is new to the process and in need of a simple explanation.

**Consent and Kids with Disabilities**
Talking about consent with children may feel like a daunting task, but the speaker in this 4-minute video discusses why understanding consent is important for all children, especially those with disabilities. The video comes with a written guide, *A Step-by-Step Guide to Talking about Consent with Disabled Kids*.

**Person-Centered Career Planning Exercise**
This 33-minute video from Person Centered Planning demonstrates a person-focused career planning exercise.

## Videos for Professional Development and Program Planning

**Webinar | Cultural Competence: What it Means for Person-Centered Thinking, Planning, & Practice**
Cultural competence is widely recognized as essential to delivering high-quality services and supports. This 1-hour webinar, which includes Diana Autin as a presenter, explores what this means in terms of actual practice and includes real-life examples and personal narratives. (The link above will take you to a webinar archive page. **Scroll down to October 2019**, and find this webinar's slides, recording, Spanish transcript, and handouts.)

**On The Outs: Reentry for Inmates with Disabilities**
This 34-minute documentary follows 3 inmates with disabilities through the reentry process. Each person's experience is depicted at 3 points: in prison prior to release, on their release date, and life on the "outs" after release. The film can be used to raise awareness about people with disabilities in prison and to stimulate communication and collaborative relationship building for much-needed reentry reform.

To top

# Transforming School Culture: Book Review: Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader by Herminia Ibarra

**By Lymairy Checo**

**Abstract**

This article is a book review for *Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader*, it goes over the purpose and thesis of the book. In addition, some strength and weakness of the book are reviewed. Finally, the book is compared to *Leading in a Culture of Change* and how their theories apply to educational systems is explored.

## Introduction

In *Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader*, Herminia Ibarra explains to the readers how to become a leader, by going over her theories related to leadership. She expands her theories by going over examples of former students in her INSEAD course. Also, she includes assessments to help the reader improve their leadership opportunities by either building own their careers or transitioning to a new career. The main premise of Ibarra's theory is that leadership is created from the outside in, or how she refers to it as "the outsight principle." This principle relates to leaders becoming leaders by acting like a leader, the outside part, and by acting in such a way they start thinking like leaders, which would be the inside part. Ibarra explains that "the only way to think like a leader is first to act: to plunge yourself into new projects and activities, interact with very different kinds of people, and experiment with unfamiliar ways of getting things done. New experiences not only change how you think – your perspective on what is important and worth doing – but also change who you become" (2015, p. 5). Unlike many other theories of leadership, Ibarra values outsight over insight when it comes to becoming a leader, or becoming a more effective leader.

*Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader* is divided into five chapters. The first chapter goes over the outsight principle, which explains how doing things instead of only thinking about them is key to increasing your outsight; therefore, your leadership. Ibarra explains that the way we think is a result of our experience, which is why it is essential to act and create new experiences. The second chapter goes over the importance of redefining your job. Ibarra goes over what she refers to as "competency traps" this when people stick to doing what they are already good at and devote very little time to learning other skills. Ibarra describes leadership as "creating change in what we do and how we do it" (2015, p. 30). Creating and embodying change are important elements to becoming a good leader.

In chapter three, Ibarra goes over the importance of networking. More specifically, she points out that networking outside of the organization is the most important since it is this format of networking that can have more significant impacts on the organization. Chapter four discusses the "authenticity trap." Often when in leadership positions people have to change particular behavior of their persona, which might initially feel as being fake. Ibarra goes over the importance of playing

with your sense of self and envisioning your future self to improve overall leadership skills. Finally, chapter five discusses ways into stepping up to play bigger leadership roles.

## Discussion

### Strengths and Weakness

*Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader* has a lot of excellent materials for those stepping up, or looking to step up into new leadership positions. The author uses examples from different MBA students to expand on her theories of leadership. These examples do a good job of explaining Ibarra's theories in a familiar way to the reader. The book also includes sidebars, tables, and graphs, which further support Ibarra's work on leadership. For the most part, the assessments are also useful in giving the reader an idea more or less where they stand regarding their career and leadership role. It would be helpful if the book included more information on how to use some of the assessments, and what to do with the information from them. Despite this, the book is a great source to expand your knowledge of leadership.

### Theories on Educational Leadership

In *Leading in a Culture of Change*, Michael Fullan discusses the importance of change to improve an organization, including schools. He explains change is not about adopting all innovations, but "incorporating new ideas and practices…inside the organization as well as outside it" (2001, p. 44). Similarly, Ibarra explains the importance of change related to leadership. Ibarra focuses on the individual change of the leader. She expresses leaders should prioritize "unfamiliar and nonroutine activities that will increase [their] capacity to act more strategically through a wider view of [their] business" (2015, p. 27). Also, both Fullan and Ibarra agree with the importance of engaging people in the change process and embodying the means to improve the organization or school. Change is an essential component of leading a school successfully. Ibarra talks about the competency trap, in which people get stuck in their old way of doing things because it is the way they feel the most comfortable doing it. Regarding education, it is important not to fall in the competency trap since it can hinder the education of the students and the overall success of the school.

Moreover, Ibarra goes over the importance of networking out to improve leadership. By networking out, she refers to networking with people outside of the school or the person's immediate circle. Ibarra found that people most often network with people that are similar to them or in close proximity to them (2015, p. 74). This hurts their ability to improve their organizations because they are getting similar perspective and solutions to their problems. Similarly, Fullan warns about the danger in investing in like-minded innovators, since they "become more like-minded and more unlike the rest of other organizations while missing valuable new clues about the future" (2001, p. 75). Both Ibarra and Fullan agree in looking for outside sources to improve organizations or schools. Some networking activities that Fullan discuss that can improve schools include, intervisitations, monthly principles support groups, Principle peer coaching, supervisory walkthrough, district institutes, principals study groups, and individualized coaching (2001, p.127-128). Seeking outside expertise is crucial to improving results, and learning of the students in schools.

## Conclusion

Overall, *Act Like a Leader, Think Like a Leader* goes over strategies to become a leader. These strategies include both change and networking, among others. The strategies in this book could be used to improve leadership in schools and other educational environments. The theories in this book agree with those discussed in *Leading in a Culture of Change*. This book also points out relationships, networking, and changes as critical elements to improving schools.

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To top

# Literature Review: Providing Visual Models for Non-verbal Students to Improve Behavioral Outcomes in the Classroom

By Melanie Calise


## Abstract

According to Boutot (2017), "When someone has limited or no speech, she will use other methods to communicate wants and needs" (p. 8). In a self-contained Special Education classroom, this is seen every day. Williams (as cited in Rizzo-Wise, 2002) noted that autism is a relatively common developmental disorder diagnosed clinically on the basis of pervasive and qualitative impairments in communication, social interaction, and range of interests and activities. Children with autism often have difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, typically resulting in showing negative behaviors. There has been evidence showing that the Picture Exchange Communication System decreases negative behaviors among children with autism while increasing independence. This paper will review four articles: The effects of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to decrease impulsive behaviors and increase self-management skills of children with autism, Effectiveness of Interventions to improve Social Participation, Play, Leisure, and Restricted and Repetitive Behaviors in People with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review, Long-term effects of PECS on social-communicative skills of children with autism spectrum disorders: a follow-up study, and The effectiveness of Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): A South African Pilot Study. The databases used to find these peer reviewed articles were ERIC and SAGE. The purpose of this literature review is to compare four studies and review the effectiveness of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to decrease negative behaviors, increase independence and communication skills.


## Effectiveness of PECS on Decreasing Negative Behaviors

According to Rizzo-Wise (2002), the study found evidence that the Picture Exchange Communication System increases self-management skills while decreasing impulsive behaviors among children with autism. Rizzo-Wise found that functional communication has been used to reduce escape and attention seeking behaviors, such as aggressions, tantrums (Carr & Durand, 1985), stereotypic behavior (Durand & Carr, 1991), and other communication disorders (Durand & Carr, 1991). Lerna, Esposito, Conson, and Massagli (2014) found that PECS have been proven to be a key intervention to enhance social and communicative skills, therefore improving behavior. Statistics have shown that when an individual is given a way to communicate effectively, negative behaviors decrease. Beukelman, Mirenda, and Webb (as cited in Travis and Geiger) noted that children with ASD need a clear and effective way to communicate to reduce frustration and replace challenging or unacceptable behaviors. PECS give students with ASD a way to communicate needs effectively.

## Effectiveness of PECS on Increasing Independence and Communication skills

According to Tanner, Hand, O'Toole, and Lane (2015), Two Level 1 systematic reviews of single-participant studies showed improvements in social communication and socialization, with the best

efforts in younger children and children with comorbid intellectual disability. Both studies done by Lerna, Esposito, Conson, Massagli (2014) Rizzo-Wise (2002) refer to The Picture Exchange System (PECS) and how it was originally developed by Bondy and Frost to help children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities to acquire functional communication skills. PECS does not focus on verbal language, the goal is for the child to initiate communicative interactions (Frost & Bondy as cited in Rizzo-Wise, 2002). Overall, statistics have shown that PECS increase spontaneous communication within children with autism or other developmental disabilities.

## Discussion

A thorough review of the literature revealed that the Picture Exchange Communication System has been used to decrease negative behaviors and increase independence and communication skills among individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities who are nonverbal or have limited utterances. According to the literature evidence, there is an advantage to using PECS in all aspects of the individual's life to improve social participation. It is concluded, based on the current evidence, that the use of Picture Exchange Communication System can reduce negative behaviors and increase functional communication in children with autism or other developmental disabilities.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Picture Exchange Communication System has been a valuable tool in producing a functional communication for children with autism (Rizzo-Wise, 2002). It has been shown that by using PECS, individuals are able to communicate with others universally. This gives the individual the confidence needed to communicate needs effectively and in return, decrease the negative, attention seeking behaviors.

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To top

# Book Review: School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results

**By Amanda A. Fernandez**

*Robert J. Marzano, Timothy Waters, and Brian A. McNulty. School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results.* Virginia*:* Association for Supervision & Curriculum*,* 2005. 198 pp. $34.29
Change is a word that might inspire or put fear into people. Leadership is challenging when it comes to dealing with change and how individuals react within the organization to the change. In the book *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results* Marzano, McNulty, and Waters (2005) use leadership research in the United States to teach schools how to cope with change and which leadership practices have the biggest impact on student achievement.

Author Robert J. Marzano is a Senior Scholar at Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning in Aurora, Colorado. He has truly grown in his educational career becoming Vice President of Pathfinder Education, Inc.; and President of Marzano & Associates consulting firm in Centennial, Colorado. He has developed programs and practices used in K–12 classrooms that translate current research and theory in cognition into instructional methods. Author Timothy Waters served as CEO for Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) since 1995; before that he worked for 23 years in public education and worked as Superintendent. He is able to provide a teaching perspective as well as an administrative one. Brain McNulty is Vice President of Field Services at McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. McNulty has more than 30 years of experience in education; his areas of expertise include leadership development, school effectiveness and improvement, early childhood education, and special education.

*School Leadership that Works: From Research* to *Results* consists of two parts and seven chapters. The first part of the book and three chapter consists of research base about leadership the second part consists of practical application. Based on the author's research they created a book to help encourage school administrators and teachers with 21 leadership responsibilities that have a significant effect on student achievement. Readers are given a breakdown of these 21 responsibilities and how to incorporate them into your everyday teaching and leadership. The author's also use the book to provide a five step action plan for leaders to follow in order to bring about achievement not only in students but from the staff as well. What is interesting about it is not only does it to speak to the "administrators" who are the leaders in the school, but to teachers as well empowering them to bring about their on change in their classroom as well.

In School Leadership that Works Marzano introduces 21 responsibilities of a school leader (Appendix A). These leadership responsibilities are used in the two change orders discussed by Marzano, McNulty and Waters (2005). "Some innovations require changes that are gradual and subtle; others require changes that are drastic and dramatic (Marzano, et. al.2005, p.66). The breaking change into two characters made me look at the changes that occur within my own school

environment and how relevant it is. The two categories of change happen often in a school environment and good leaders are able to handle these changes and help those around them as well. And with these types of changes occurring Marzano, McNulty and Waters propose five steps for a plan of effective school leadership to make it through these changes. The first step is developing a leadership team with purpose. The definition used for a purposeful community is one with the collective efficacy and capability to develop and use assets to accomplish goals that mater to all community members through agreed-upon process (Marzano, et. al, 2005). The second step is distributing some responsibilities throughout the leadership team. The third step is to select the right work. The fourth step is to identify the order of magnitude implied by the selected work. The last step is to match the management style to the order of magnitude of the change initiative.

However with the responsibilities associated with these changes, can feel overwhelming. It has two effects in that, it forces you to want to make yourself better and start to develop this responsibilities within; but the negative is that you feel pressured to take on all the responsibilities to feel like you are adequately leading. The books breaks these 21 responsibilities into the top nine leadership responsibilities in order to manage first order change are: 1) Optimizer; 2) Affirmation; 3) Ideals/Beliefs; 4) Situational Awareness; 5) Visibility; 6) Relationships; 7) Communication; 8) Culture: and 9) Input (p.115 ). The school leader with the help of a leadership team must address nine of the twenty-one responsibilities to be a purposeful community in first-order change.

*School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results* is very similar to Fullan's book *Leading in a Culture of Change* (2001). Fullan's book designates opportunities in the fields of education and in the fields of business, where the leadership strategies will be beneficial. They review the ideology of change and how effective leaders can help motivate their staff in the work place. The book highlights how strategies of patience, malleability, resourcefulness, collaboration, and interpersonal skills are in line with what educators face daily. Many of Fullan's and Marzano, McNulty and Waters ideas correlate as there list 21 responsibilities mirror Fullan's. Some responsibilities of Marzano, McNulty and Waters such as relationships, resources, communication and more are all traits in which effective leaders need to have.

Change affects people in different ways. Leaders need to be able to respond to the individuals throughout the change process. This book combines rigorous research with practical advice, School Leadership That Works gives school administrators the guidance they need to provide strong leadership for better schools.

To top

# Literacy Portfolio

**By Samantha Ashely Forrest**

**Abstract**

The purpose of this literacy portfolio is to explore the six literacy components: Oral Language Development, Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency. They each are important to a child's reading development and without the other it would negatively affect the other. Together they allow a child to succeed with the use of effective instructional strategies. These components influences teachers by extending their knowledge on how better to assist their students with literacy.

## A. Oral Language Development

Oral Language Development to the building stones of literacy. It relies on the listening and speaking skills of a learner to decoded and encode of written symbols and texts to relate to social situations. Within this process a learner acquires the skills needed to express knowledge, ideas, and feelings. Oral Language Development follows into different domains that occur at different stages of a learner as the student progresses.

Students learn about the different domains understanding of oral language development by phonology, grammar, morphonology, vocabulary, discourses, and pragmatics. Teachers led with having the students understand that words make sounds and have parts that are added to them to change the content of a sentence. They will be exposed to vocabulary when meeting and discussing with people of different social backgrounds. For example, dialect is the spoken language of a geographic region or be members of a social class. When students engage with other students, they might pick up slangs or different terms that they did not know before and begin using them in their conversations without knowing the rules. Teachers usually are limited to the amount of expose of dialect considering the different geographic locations students can be from as well as the teacher. Teachers might mistake dialect for errors in reading fluency.

Semantics and syntax play a role in correctly the context by following grammar rules. The student might pick up a patterns and cues that are not correct. For instance, "you crazy," is it missing the linking verb "are." The correct statement would be "You are crazy." Agreeing with the subject and predicate. Pragmatics follow the social component of conversation by making eye contact, pausing for responses, and taking turns. Some cultures do not have the same conversation skills, so expectations have to taught. The approach slowly becomes student directed and that will be led to higher level of thinking development. Discourses is when the student continuously stretch the spoken and written language forms in a sentence. An example, ELL students tend to add more sounds to words such as "and" making it "ands" when there is no "s." The teacher would correct through immediate feedback and practicing fluency with the student.

Casual talk is when students are engaging with a topic of their choice and talking amongst their peers. There is not explicit instruction or teacher led directing. Students are leading their own conversations. Academic talk is when students are given a purpose of conversation that has been initiated by the teacher. Students are structuring their conversation using academic language to foster their reading comprehension (Van Kleeck, 2015). They are being receptive and responsive by thinking of how they are going to express their ideas across to their peer.

To encourage more casual talk and helping students to connecting it to more academic talk is by having students engaging in conversation opportunities. A book sharing program can have students share their opinions and their ideas about a book of their choosing. The student would lead their own discussions with their peers. This can increase their metacognitive abilities by thinking on their own by applying what they have been taught. Having a novel study introduced to your class, will assist students with conversations about their favorite character or scene from the novel. Independently students can read assigned chapters and the teacher can play the audio version of the novel—increasing fluency. Students can have their led discussions again with their peers. This would benefit their reading comprehension by listening and responding to their peers. In addition, it would engage into high level of vocabulary with exposure by finding words in different contents. That they will add to their own vocabulary.

**B. Phonological Awareness**

Phonological Awareness is the ability to focus on and manipulative individual sounds in spoken words. This also includes "words, syllables, and onsets and rimes—as well as the smaller parts, phonemes (Honig, 2013)." Similar to Phonics, Phonological Awareness is about understanding the spoken language and how it can be broken into phonemes. There are not the same because phonics is the representation of sound in the written language. Phonological Awareness is a good indicator of a student's reading achievement that results with improvement in reading comprehension. This typically taught during the Emergent Literacy stage; in which learner is a beginner to the world of literacy between the ages of 4 and 6. The teachers are encouraged to give explicit instructions in a systematic and organized forms. The student will be able to review old skills to build on with more complex skills as the process in the progresses.

Phonological Awareness is taught in different developmental levels. During the initial stage of the Word Level, the student is determining how many sounds do they hear in a given word. They will work on identifying how to sentence segment as well as word segment, blending sounds, and deletion. This stage allows students to apply words to pictures of what they know to create words that would eventually lead them into making sentences within a sentence frame. For example, a comprehension questions would be a question that gives multiple choices of pictures for the student to answer.

Another stage is the Syllable Level, this is a continuation of Word Level with the use of blending, segmenting, and deleting. Now students are adding more syllables to words and counting how many sounds they hear. A teacher can have students clap out the sounds they hear in a given word.

Verbally asking students to change or take away sounds in words with or without having the word printed. Students are encouraged to create nonsense words that they can categorize as real words or not.

Onset - Rime follows up where the Syllable Level left off with incorporating the recognition of rhyming words and creating their own rhyming word to a given word. The student will begin to categorize words based on if they rhyme or not. They will again continue to manipulate sounds by changing the beginning sounds of a word to keep the endings the same. Students begin to build on what are word families and group them as such. An example would be giving the word "sit" and having the student break the sounds apart to tell what they hear. What letter do you hear in the beginning of the word "sit?" What if I change the beginning sound to "h" sound? What word does that make? The student will be able to blend the word "hit."

As stated earlier, phoneme is the smaller part of a word. In the Phoneme level, the student will be able to isolate sounds in a word by either chunking them as individual letter sound. Students are introduced to digraphs, letters joining to make sound like "th." They will be blending phonemes to create words to learn "to read and spell than any other phonological awareness skill (Honig, 2013)."

It is important to remember the process comes in stages of simple to difficult, each level building off each other. Phonological Awareness has to take place every day in the classroom and in small groups so that the teacher can better assist students who might be struggling. The lessons should take more than 15 minutes within a school day. The instructional techniques need to be engaging were the student wants to participate. During reading time, the teacher can ask the class to sit in a circle and together work together to blend sounds. At this time, the teacher can pick on individual students to blend, delete, or even segment with spoken words from a given story read aloud. Students can connect visual printing of the spoken word to think of ways to change it.

### C. Phonics

Phonics is the instruction method of connecting sounds to printed words. Students will begin to convert written words into spoken words in the process of decoding. They need a strong foundation in Phonological Awareness to apply those skills to the written word now that they know their sounds. Like Phonological Awareness, Phonics is another predictor in knowing if the student is reading ready. Students would be able to understand the purpose of the alphabetic principle. Phonics needs to be taught with explicit instructions in a systemic way for students to again build off with what they know. Systemic and explicit instruction effective in preventing students from falling behind and would be able to improve their reading comprehension when they begin to read texts. This is typically introduced before the usage of sight words. There are several different approaches of teaching phonics.

Synthetic Phonics takes what the student already knows about letter sounds and use it as a guided into predicting the blending of the next word. Students will practice using word family words to assist them with decoding words with the same ending sounds—using sound and spelling

relationship to blend unfamiliar words. These are words that will appear within a story for the students to see in different forms.

Analogy Phonics connecting the rime, that the students have learned, in an unfamiliar word. They will take start with sounding the rime separately to the new onset. The student is learning to analyze the structure of the word to determine the sounding of the word (Mesmer, 2005). An example would be having the student break the word "kick" with its' onset and rime and have them substitute the onset "k" for "br." The student would blend the work "brick" and say that it rhymes with "kick (Honig, 2013)."

Analytic Phonics is when the teacher has the student decode a written word by having the student identify the medial sound to think of other words that have the same sound (Honig, 2013). Students are using letter patterns to blend sounds. So, taking what they already know about letter patterns, students with begin to automatically say similar words without the need to blend individual sounds.

Embedded Phonics instruction is when students connect word solving skills to determine what an unfamiliar word is going to sound like. The teacher would ask the student to recall words that look familiar to word they are struggling with. Student would go through their memory bank to retrieve a similar word to sound out the word. This is making the learning process a more "authentic" experience for the student. The approach focuses on predicting sounds based on what they already know.

In order for students to succeed with phonics, they need to know their letter sounds during the phonological awareness process. They lend each other a hand by working together to improve one another. The ultimate goal is to have the student reading words in different forms by reading words in isolation, reading words in decodable texts, and writing words from dictation. Effective instructions techniques are monitoring the student's progress and correcting them immediately by providing the correct response to the entire class rather singling the student out. Also, avoid having students skipping and adding words as they read because then they will miss the content of what they author might being conveying. The teacher has to present the instructions in an engaging manner were the student keeps track of the reading by either pointing, spooling, looping, or sweeping when their reading a printed material from left to right (Honig, 2013). Student would be able to pick up on their own errors as they move along through the literacy process.

### D. Vocabulary

"Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meaning (Honig, 2013)." As a student progresses, they begin to apply word meaning into their conversation and sentences. Vocabulary comes in different forms between oral and print. Oral occurs when students are listening to a speaker and pick up on keys words in conversations with others. Print form refers to the word being presented in a written form for the student to see. Students will begin to see print form of vocabulary as they begin to become more literate. Students would start producing vocabulary as they speak to others and use it in their writing.

Written vocabulary becomes more dominate as they process because it allows abstract thinking by finding the words in different forms used in a text that would change the meaning of the word. This would require more explicit instruction and practices. Oral vocabulary is less literacy based and requires less explicit instruction. Students would be applying in more in a conversational piece. However, students are more likely to encounter vocabulary words as they become more literate than in conversationally. Both ensure the foundational skills of understanding of word meaning that can be used and learned in social and academic sittings. Exposure in home and school contexts that include frequent interactions of the vocabulary in different forms from print to attention to letters to seeing an object of the word can assist with understanding vocabulary (Hemphill, 2008).

Instructing vocabulary with explicit instruction has been effective to the vocabulary development. Explicit instruction should focus on words in contextual literature, rich, clear, and be presented in multiple forms (Honig, 2013). When selecting vocabulary words, there is no specific way, but thinking of how the student might use the word in different scenarios. You would want students to find meaningful vocabulary words that they might encounter throughout their reading, but not done in the same way of knowing the meaning of the word. Providing clear definitions and examples. An effective strategy is having the students create a three column note by labeling the titles of each column as vocabulary, definition, and example. Student would be able to have discussions with their peers to come up with examples to share with the class. This would give the teacher an opportunity to assess any misconceptions.

When selecting vocabulary words for English-Language Learners (ELLs) is a little bit different. Teachers are recommended to present vocabulary words with concrete or abstract examples as well as find out if the word has a cognate word in their native language. Students need to be able to connect to the vocabulary word in a way that might useful for them to apply in their conversations and writing. ELLs would need to have a clear explanation of the word or phrase and how might the word be presented indifferent ways. This is similar how you would teach vocabulary to native English speakers.

There are several effective instruction presentations that will assist students with their vocabulary development (Honig, 2013). A common method was reading aloud with students to increase vocabulary. Students would be able to see the printed word and connect it to the spoken word. During the process of repeated readings, students can hear the words over and over again to help them to be able to produce it in conversations with practice. Students would be able to apply it to their writing. Written vocabulary often reflects spoken vocabulary. When assessing students on vocabulary words, students focus on the definition of the word rather than the application of the word. Vocabulary assessments should be done by having the student fitting the correct vocabulary word in a given sentence and checking if the sentence makes sense with the word.

### E. Fluency

Fluency is getting students to read without stopping to decode each individual word. Students stop thinking about decoding but begin to actually read. “Teachers can think of reading fluency as a bridge between the two major components of reading—decoding and comprehension (Honig, 2013).” Fluency is broken two three categories: accuracy, automaticity, and prosody.

Accuracy is the percentage of words read correctly. Rate determines the quickness of word recognition—how many words read per minute? This is not to be confused with speeding reading. "Students do not need to read as fast as possible to become good readers (Literacy Leadership Brief: Reading Fluency Does Not Mean Reading Fast, 2018)." Students begin to read with automaticity, quick and effortless of reading words without having to stop for decoding. Words are read instantly or by sight. When the student is unable to read with automaticity, they begin to get frustrated which will negatively affect their reading fluency (Honig, 2013). Prosody is the rhythmic and tonal features of speech. It reflects tone, volume, and expression. Grammatical rules are applied during the reading. For instance, pausing for periods, hesitating for commas, and increase of tone for explanations marks. Students use their metacognitive abilities to control their reading flow. They will be able to gain meaning from nonlanguage stimuli.

When assessing student fluency, teachers will conduct quick reads. Quick reads are short texts that are to be read quickly and with meaning. Teachers follows along as the student reads aloud to the quick read and checks off their errors. Students require immediate feedback of a missed word and/or miss pronounced words. This provides teachers with a better understanding of students who are at risk for reading literature (Honig, 2013) and assist with identifying students' instructional level. Oral reading fluency have assessments that can be compared to the national norm to see where a student is supposed to be amongst their grade level throughout their school year.

Fluency instructions can vary from independent reading to reading aloud, students need to practice their skills to improve their fluency. Rereading and reading aloud give students the opportunity to hear and see a model of a fluent reader. Students will mimic their expressions into their own readings. Echo reading is another example of improving reading fluency by having students repeat specific phrases or words from a given text. This practice came about when people were not able to have printed materials but relied on repeating a sentence of phrase from a speaker. The teacher can even play the reading off a tape player or present an audio of the story.

Fluency does not need to implement every day; however, it needs to be done often throughout the week (Montero, 2016). Readers Theatre has been shown to be an effective instructional strategy work assisting students with fluency. It uses a form of drama from a story that the students read and act out loud. They will use their body language to convey emotions. It also lends it hand to helping with comprehension, using visual strategy to see words come alive and rereading to discuss a how they want to present the text. Teachers can incorporate technology while using Readers Theatre by having the students practice reading a script that would allow them to record themselves for a final product. Podcasting allows students to control how they want to convey their voices without having to stress creating props, sets and costumes (Vasinda, 2011). Students would focus on making a final product for people to listen to like their families and friends.

### F. Comprehension

Comprehension refers to the process of understanding the meaning of a text. Students interact with the text by "thinking guided by print (Honig, 2013)." Comprehension occurs when the students either listening to a speaker or reading a printed material. Students are now applying all the components to process what they will be reading without getting frustrated. Contextualized language

is when people are engaging through a conversation using common text language. Students will discuss a topic of their choice and talk about it or the topic can be picked by the teacher. The focus to be on using comprehension strategies as tools to construct meaning to the text (Honig, 2013). This requires less explicit instructions since the students would be carrying out the collaboration with another students. Students would be able to produce a written opinion response to reflect how they are connecting to the text. In the beginning, the teacher would first model the strategies in a teacher-directed instruction by posing a question or statement that would eventually gear towards student-directed by collaborating with peers (Garas-York, 2013).

Decontextualized Language is understanding the written form. Its broken into three levels of low-level, intermediate, and higher level. Low-level is labeling, describing and pointing to the pictures within the story. Intermediate level is where students begin to compare and contrast information provided in the reading. Higher Level is when the student is able to evaluate what they have just read by being able to produce a summary.

Students will use strategies that are modeled by the teacher to implement during the reading. Teachers need to use explicit instruction by using the "I do, We do, You do" method. The teacher would first model expectations of a strategy; then create another scenario where the students get involved using the guidance and prompting from the teacher. The student would produce the same strategy in another reading by themselves. The teacher can assess if the student understands it or needs another approach with the strategy.

Strategies like previewing a text, allows the student to make a prediction based on what they see present on the text. Students could use a photograph to make a prediction of something that might happen once they start reading the text. They will use activate prior knowledge by seeing what they already know about a topic through conversation. Before readings it is important for teachers to set a purpose by either presenting a topic or posing a question. This helps students to identity the reading task (Honig, 2013).

Students are typically unaware they are failing in reading comprehension. They have the "illusion of comprehension (Honig, 2013)"—thinking decoding is the same as comprehending. Monitoring comprehension will determine if they student is having to clunk their words as their reading causing them focusing more on decoding rather progress what they are reading. Another strategy that can be implemented during the reading comprehension is to stop and ask questions. Again, this would have to be explained and model by the teacher. Students would learn how to stop for comprehension by asking themselves question about the reading. Sometimes this can be done with a peer, when they come across new information in the text. As they continue reading, they end up finding the answers to their questions.

ELLs' reading comprehension is tied to oral English Proficiency. They are limited to their understanding of the English language; however, this does not mean they are unable to provided social perspectives to the discussion. Teachers would first provide explicit instructions by giving directions on how conversations are constructed with their peer (Garas-York, 2013). For example, earlier on the teacher can review how they should treat each other during the conversation by giving

eye contact, taking turns, and not interrupting each other. ELLs would be able to transfer their knowledge from their native language to English by applying existing strategies.

## Reflection

The components of literacy are the essential to understanding how students need to acquire information in the literacy world. Throughout the course the professor discussed and reviewed each competency that would lead to students engaging into conversations about the topic. Each peer was able to provide examples of explicit instruction that worked in their teaching profession as well as the ones that different work. Students were encouraged to share opportunities that weaknesses and strengths that would give another perspective to solve a situation or an error that was occurring.

The components provided in insight to what reading comprehension errors might be affecting students because they all work together to build the bigger picture. Without one of the components, students would not be able to blend, spell, or read. They need the foundational skills especially in the primary grades so as they get more exposure to the curriculum. Students would be able to scaffold the information being accessed—taking what they already know and applying it to a new situation.

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To top

# Comparing: The End of Molasses Classes and Leading a Culture of Change

**By Deborrah Griffin**


## Abstract

Hamish Brewer writes about his personal education journey and how it led him to persue a career in education where he challenges all of the educational norms in order to make a difference in lives of all students, especially those that most would write off. His book challenges educators to change the status quo and to not be afraid to color outside of the lines with teaching and reaching all students.


## Comparing: The End of Molasses Classes and Leading a Culture of Change

Hamish Brewer writes, "When you acknowledge, respect, empower, motivate, inspire, and believe in people, you can move mountains." He believes that in order to change how teachers teach in schools and how students learn and view school, you first have to build a culture of confidence in the students and allow them to know that they are wanted and loved when they are in your class and school. Too many times, people tend to do what has always been done because it "works." The problem with that is that somethings need to be changed because they don't work, and people are either unaware that things are broken or are unsure of possible solutions. In education, it is imperative that teachers, administrators and others involved, are doing all they can do to change the status quo of education to prevent students from being disengaged. Hamish Brewer leads you through his personal journey and struggle with schooling as a young boy and how it led him to by the educator he is today and why he believes in challenging the status quo inside of education.

Students are able to spot the teachers who are there day in and day out because it is a way for them to pay their bills, they are also able to see the teachers who truly care about them and their success, not just in the classroom, but in life as well. Hamish Brewer wrote, "Being relentless in my relationships is all about being authentic and caring enough to say and acknowledge the things that are hard to hear. It's about being there for people and believe in them when they have a hard time believing in themselves." He pushes his staff to create authentic and genuine relationships because he knows that everything within education revolves around having authentic connections. Students tend to perform better for teachers It is important for teachers to realize that some students have experienced so much life in a short period that traditional ways of teaching are not going to reach them. As teachers, it is important to fight for your students and to do whatever is necessary to reach them where they are, not where you want them or where you think they should be.

Teachers also have to stop the blame game and take accountability for the lessons that are going on inside their rooms and what they students are taking away from the lessons. When something goes wrong instead of blaming the teachers the students had before you, or blaming the students for not caring enough, teachers need to look in the mirror and figure out where they went wrong and how

they can improve to prevent it from happening again. Teachers also have to get away from the mindset of doing things a specific way because that's how it's always been done. The students they are teaching now are in a different world than the students that sat in their classrooms 5 to 10 years ago. The things that worked then are not going to work or have the same effect on the students they have today.

Relentless is full of simplistic ways for teachers and administrators to change education for the students they see and interact with daily. Most the items Hamish talks about revolve around teachers and administrators changing their attitudes towards their profession and the students, especially by changing their opinions with positive ones even when no one would blame them for having a negative outlook. One weakness within Relentless deals with gaining community support and changing their perspective of school. He suggests inviting parents to more activities instead of seeing them as financial supporters for the school. Teaching in an area where there are various levels of socio-economic status, it is hard to have parental involvement from those who are working and have no choice but to work. In my school, parents are welcomed to come during any school-based activity (Field Day, Day of Awesomeness, 8th grade Picnics, etc.) but there are very few who come or are involved with those items even though the invitations are always extended to the parents. Hamish makes it seem so simple that once the initiation is made parents will come around and begin to change their minds and opinions.

Hamish Brewer's Relentless has some similarities with Michael Fullan's Leading in a Culture of Change. One of those similarities deals with relationships. Both books place an emphasis on building and maintaining relationships that are authentic. People who feel valued or that feel they are of importance are going to be more engaged and willing to put forth more effort. Without relationships, no one will reach their full potential. These two books also have several differences. Fullan's book revolves around knowing and understanding your moral purpose. Once you know and understand that, everything else flows from it. With Brewer's book, everything deals with building and maintaining relationships. Both of these books bring great ideas for changing school culture and allowing everyone to reach their full potential.

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To top

# Recruiting and Retaining Special Education Teachers in the Public Schools

**By Charles Robinson**


## Abstract

In recent years the United States has experienced a decrease in special education teachers in its' public-school system. This shortage has been felt across the country especially in states where annual teaching salaries are low, instructional resources are minimal, technology is nonexistent, and the educational facility is less than stellar. These disenfranchised schools are often attended by children from low-income families, are located in urban high crime poverty-stricken communities which leads to high turnover rates of highly qualified teachers leaving these schools to solicit uncertified and novice teachers. This article will focus on the detrimental factors that influence special education teachers' turnover rates and investigate ways to recruit and retain qualified teachers in the public-school system.


Administrators have struggled to find qualified special education teachers to fill vacancies. Therefore, thousands of positions have been filled by teachers with no certification or minimal qualifications. While it could be agreed upon that some teacher turnover may be favorable from time other studies report that these turnover rates do interfere with school constancy for the students as well as the community stakeholders. For example, when a school loses teachers who have invested themselves in the lives of their students and have built positive community relationships they have a relationship level of meaning that the new teachers coming to replace them does not have. These new teachers are at an immediate disadvantage because the trust factor has to be restored in both the student and the community. Over time these constant new arrivals efforts of building relationships are thwarted due to constant mental and emotional readjustments (Boe & Southerland, 2008).

In order to solicit qualified special education teachers and most importantly retain them administrators should investigate the reasons why these teachers do not remain in high turnover schools. According to a major national survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) the reasons site the following:

A. Experience: 50% of teachers leave the school system within the first five years in the classroom.

B. Working Conditions: According to the survey teachers place significant importance on their working conditions and consider it an important factor in their decision to leave or continue in the teaching profession. Good working conditions include administrative support, professional development, and teacher education. Research studies show that teachers who work in affluent and high socioeconomical communities experience better working conditions than those who work in low-income schools. Special education teachers who work with those disadvantaged students experience less appealing working conditions, with limited support and larger caseloads to handle. It

is evident that working conditions play an important part in a teacher's decision to continue or leave the profession. Those that leave contribute to the high teacher attrition rate.
Current research has shown us that a major factor in the recruitment and retaining of special education teachers is school climate. Building level administrators (principals) can influence teacher retention by developing a positive school climate. School climate includes promoting commitment, teacher collaboration, shared values and the implementation of policies and practice that support special education teachers' work and students learning. In an effort to retain qualified special educations teachers principals can and should lead system-wide efforts to promote positive student outcomes, involve teachers in leadership and decision-making, provide mentorship, provide continued training, support collaboration and facilitate the work of special education teachers (Leko & Smith, 2010).

A very important factor that school personnel tend to forge is what can be done to reduce the number of special education teachers who leave each year. School leaders must focus on how to recruit and hire special education teachers. Though some states may provide a great deal of support as it relates to recruiting and hiring. Others offer not as many supports are in place. Putting some thought into recruitment and hiring will assist in school personnel hiring and retaining certified and effective special education teachers. (Connelly & Graham, 2009).

Teachers who have extensive experience and training in special education are more likely to remain at a high risk school is because they have developed relationships, they have knowledge of creating curriculum for special need students and they possess the tools to write and develop individual plans for their students. In contrast those teachers who are hired on a lateral entry level to satisfy a vacant position does not possess the credentials necessary to be successful with special education students. Unfortunately, these teachers are ill prepared to handle the case load of students and they find themselves without adequate support to be successful in their new role. These teachers are easily overwhelmed and soon leave the school in search of other job opportunities. It is important that school personnel become proactive by doing the following:

I. Provide teachers with adequate opportunities for professional development and continuous growth.

II. Recruit diverse candidates and create inclusive, supportive environments to help retain the teachers.

III. Provide new teachers with opportunities to build their skills and gradually assume increased responsibility.

IV. Recruit and hire early.

V. Offer incentives and partner with colleges and universities.

Research shows that teachers who receive a range of induction supports are more likely to stay in the teaching profession. (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Induction is a term used for supports that are put in place to assist teachers in adapting to a new workplace and culture. Induction programs are more than learning about classes, curriculum and understanding students. Induction provides

information about processes and procedures that help move the workplace forward. With induction you learn school norms and as time goes on a sense of confidence. Induction is vital phase of teacher development because I. Teachers need support as they begin to apply what they have learned in pre-service programs in the everyday classroom. II. New special education teachers are more likely to experience teachers to the leave their jobs. III. Special education teachers who do not have a lot of experience and lack of preparation are also likely to leave their prepared peers and may need intensive support. Below are some ways that school administration can increase the overall effectiveness of a teacher induction program are as follows: state the goals of the induction program, provide professional development, provide opportunities for new teachers to connect with others, monitor the effectiveness of the mentoring piece, consider the mentor-mentee match and lastly monitor the effectiveness of the overall induction program within your school district.

Lastly, the most important factor when trying to retain special education teachers is principal support. Special education teachers who have principals and assistant principals who are encouraging and supportive are likely to stay in that role. Teachers who feel confident that they have principal support express greater job satisfaction, feelings of commitment to their schools, and typically report less stress due to their jobs.

Principals who are aware of the issues new teachers face and take a proactive approach to supporting these teachers may be able to retain them. Principals who make sure that they check in on them are more likely to understand the supports that the teachers require.

Principals who engage in behaviors such as listening, considering ideas, sharing respect and being encouraging are viewed by teachers as supportive. Taking the time to show appreciation for the things that special educators do is an important aspect of support.

There is research that supports the fact that principals need to create an environment that is welcoming for all teachers, staff, students and parents. Some special education teachers and students with special needs sometimes experience alienation, so principals need to ensure that they are included in the school community.

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To top

# Self-Monitoring for Students with Different Abilities: A Review of the Literature

By Luz Arevalo


## Abstract

This is a review of the literature of several articles and studies that include information about the importance of executive functioning. The research articles discussed include students with disabilities, self-monitoring their behavior. The researcher initially discusses why self-monitoring is vital and then introduces digital self-monitoring tools. Additionally, two studies with the implementation of ClassDojo are discussed. Then, the use of token economies for self-monitoring is also addressed. The researcher concluded that, as a result to explicitly teaching students with disabilities to self-monitor their behaviors, their quality of life is improved.


Every person has a different way of dealing with their thoughts, emotions, temptations, and how to control their cognitive and motivation during learning conditions (Roebers, Cimeli, Rothlisberger, & Neuenschwander, 2012). Due to this, in some inclusive setting various abilities are apparent. All the skills to monitor oneself all fall under the same umbrella, Executive Functioning. A student that lacks Executive Functioning skills may struggle to cope with emotions, regulate their thoughts, monitor themselves or lack intrinsic motivation. Typical students and students with various exceptionalities may struggle with executive functioning, however it is more apparent with students with disabilities. In the intermediate grades, executive functioning skills become of greater importance, due to increase in rigor and independence. Therefore, negative behaviors may be common due to the lack of these skills. Fundamentally, self-monitoring, an executive functioning skill, is a vital skill that all students should have.

Self-monitoring of own behaviors is essential because it holds the students accountable for their actions. Self-advocacy and self-help skills are then developed, which leads to excellence in academics. To promote teaching in the general education classroom, it is critical to teach self-regulation and learning strategies leaded by the student, to advocate for self-determination and to meet the demands of such setting (Cho, Wehmeyer, & Kingston, 2012).

## Self-Monitoring

According to Parker and Kamps (2010), there is a higher level of task completion across many activities when the use of self-monitoring on the task analysis is used. The participants of this study were two students with ASD who were high functioning, nine years old and attended public schools. The study focused on task analysis with self -monitoring to encourage learning functional skills and verbal interaction with two students with ASD. The research design was a single-subject, multiple baseline probe design that focused on social activities in which the students were either playing a game, cooking or doing restaurant activities. The task analysis materials used for the activities included steps on how to complete all the activities. Additionally, there were social scripts materials

to encourage students with Autism to talk during the activities and provide them examples of appropriate communication. Each intervention sessions lasted about 30 minutes. As the intervention continued, the students were successfully self-monitoring and using the task analysis of the activity and then the written steps were slowly taken away. Fading was done for the social scripts and task analysis components. The data that the researchers collected were the number of completed steps in each task analysis. Furthermore, the experimenter measured the percent of intervals of peer-directed verbalizations, and activity engagement. Since the experimenter used a video camera to observe the data, an interobserver agreement was also used to check the reliability of data.

Therefore, the results were that engagement and peer-directed verbalizations increased, along with self-monitoring and completion of all activities with the use of task analysis. For the male subject in the study, he went from a zero baseline, to 17 completed steps in the task analysis area. The task analysis had 22 possible task analysis steps. The other participant, the female, had a baseline of 0 and increased to 14 completed steps in the task analysis area. The results of the study turned out this way because promoting self-monitoring is essential for students to understand how to be independent and complete activities. Self-monitoring with task analysis allows the student to comprehend what is expected of them and they learn what they must do in order to complete what is desired. Along with that, socializing and working with peers allows collaboration to be included, which helps students model for one another and increase their independence. The strategies found in this research support the idea that explicitly teaching self-monitoring can have a great impact of what is expected of students and to increase their independence.

In the study by Xu, Lee and Luke (2017), the use of self-monitoring was paired to guided goal setting with a student with autism in an inclusive setting in China, to promote academic engagement. The participant was a 9-year-old boy, who frequently displayed disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The participant was in third grade and he was diagnosed with mild autism. The student frequently displayed manipulation of stationary items, shaking of his chair, tapping of table. The study took place in the autism research center and at a public elementary school in a city in China. The intervention used was to self-monitor for 20-minutes in language art class from Monday through Thursday in the general education classroom (Xu, Lee, & Luke, 2017). The method focused on using a self-monitoring tool that promoted setting goals that would influence self-management, which could allow for growth within academic engagement. The self-monitoring tool consisted of a form that involved a segment in which a goal could be formulated with the guidance of the teacher. This sheet allowed for self-monitoring during specific intervals. After every 15 minutes, the student would put a plus sign or minus sign, based on his behaviors. The data that the researcher collected were the outcome of using a self-monitoring sheet, along with a goal setting with guidance to improve student's engagement in their academics (Xu, Lee, & Luke, 2017). According to baseline, the participant showed low levels of academic engagement, however with the intervention, it increased from 20% to 43% in Phase 1, then 33%to 53% in Phase 2, 30% to 63% in Phase 3, 57% to 80% in Phase 4, and 67% to 87% in Phase 5. In total, there were 27 intervention sessions across 5 phases (Xu, Lee, Luke, 2017). The participant steadily kept increasing his academic engagement and throughout the process he was self-monitoring on his sheet with a plus or minus sign. In conclusion, the student showed increase in academic engagement in an inclusive classroom due to goal setting

and self-monitoring. These results occurred because the student was able to learn how to set a goal, along with self-monitoring which made him accountable for his behaviors. This also made the participant independent. This study contributed to the research proposal because it truly demonstrated that self-monitoring is essential, and it can start at a young age, such as intermediate elementary school.

## Digital Self-Monitoring Tools

Another great method for self-monitoring is with the use of technology. In Blood, Johnson, Ridenour, Simmons, and Crouch (2011) study, technology, an iPod, was used for a student to self-monitor their behavior. The participant was a 10-year-old male, in 5th grade with emotional and behavioral disorders. He displayed frequent off-task and disruptive behavior during small group math instruction and the intervention to alleviate this was to use an iPod touch for video modeling and self-monitoring purposes. On the iPod, the student used it to see video modeling videos on how he should behave during a small group activity. He would watch this 5 minutes prior to small group. Andy would then use the timer on the iPod and would continue self-monitoring on a sheet of paper, every time the timer went off. All data collection took place during the regularly scheduled math group time in the special education classroom (Blood, Johnson, Ridenour, Simmons, & Crouch, 2011). The experimental design included the use of A-B-BC design, which is a single-subject changing conditions design to see how video modeling and a combination of video modeling and self-monitoring helps the participants on task and disruptive behavior. The participant was explicitly taught how to self-monitor and how to use the iPod touch to see the video modeling and as a timer. In the self-monitoring form, the participant had to use happy faces and sad faces within 10 intervals. For each interval he had to circle which face represented his behavior during the most part of math instruction. The results indicated that the student responded positively to both the video modeling intervention and the self-monitoring. The iPod was convenient because it is portable and accessible to the student. The participants mean percentage of intervals on-task was a 44% in baseline, 81% with video modeling alone, ad 99% with video modeling and self-monitoring combined (Blood, Johnson, Ridenour, Simmons, and Crouch, 2011). The OTA also observed the same trend in the participants' behavior during the intervention, which means the data is reliable. The results are an evidence that self-monitoring makes a difference for some students. The student needed the self-monitoring portion to completely stay on task and avoid disruptive behaviors. The participant was able to regulate his feelings and work hard to keep getting a smile face on his self-monitoring sheet for 10 intervals. He was aware that he was accountable for his behaviors and if he tried his best, that he would have a sheet filled with a smile face. This was important to the researcher's study because it showed that self-monitoring allowed students to take ownership in their behavior and it motivated them to work harder. Along with that, technology is a great way to constantly have video modeling and a timer anywhere the student may be.

The following study from Finn, Ramasamy, Dukes and Scott (2015), focused on using another technological tool to increase self-monitoring and positive behavior. The WatchMinder is a vibrating prompt watch and was used during this study. Additionally, a self-graphing tool was used by the participants. The participants included were four students with Autism, in the elementary, special education setting. These students were selected because it was expressed that the students with

varying exceptionalities, such as Autism, benefit from interventions that require self-monitoring, which increases their executive functioning skills. (Finn, Ramasamy, Dukes, and Scott, 2015). Three of the participants were 8 years old and one was 9 years old, all in the third grade. The students were all explicitly taught self-monitoring skills. The dependent variable of the study was the on-task behavior. A participant was considered being on-task if he was demonstrating any of the behaviors listed on his checklist as "working" when the WatchMinder vibrated (Finn, Ramasamy, Dukes, & Scott, 2015). The WatchMinder was worn by these students and they were set to a 2-minute interval, in which it vibrated. If the students were on task during those times, they would get a check mark. By the end of the 30-minute session, if the students had 13 checks out of 15 for on task they would get a reward. After the student were comfortable with the WatchMinder, the self-graphing was added to the intervention. The students would graph their data points on the Data Manager Pro application, which was on an iPad. Fading was also implemented in the study and instead of 2-minute intervals for the watch to vibrate, it was changed to 5-minute fixed interval. The students were able to demonstrate 5 consecutive sessions of on-task behavior for 80% or more intervals. As a result, all students showed increase in positive, on task behavior and grew independence by self-monitoring. These results were made possible because the use of technology and the explicit teaching of self-monitoring skills allows for the students to be independent and have control of their behavior. The WatchMinder was shown to work for students with Autism, due to its prompting, which allowed for growth in on-task behaviors across all participants. This allowed for increase in time being used wisely in class and independent working at their desks (Finn, Ramasamy, Dukes, & Scott, 2015). This was extremely important results for the researcher because it definitely demonstrated that students in third grade are capable of using technology to prompt themselves and to self-monitor their own behaviors. Students engage more when they are able to do things for themselves and technology allows them to feel independent and in control.

Another technological tool that was studied by Schuck, Emmerson, Ziv, Collins, Arastoo, Warschauer, and Lakes (2016) is an iPad app called iSelfControl. This iPad app was used to monitor and improve classroom behavior for children with ADHD. The participants included all students in a fifth-grade classroom, whom were the ages of 9-11 years and males. All the students had ADHD and have related deficits in attention and self-control. The iSelf Control was piloted in this single classroom. The collection of data started on the first day of school that involved observing and the teacher would record the amount of points collected for each center, which was every 30 minutes and then the students would how many points he thought he earned, based on his behavior (Schuck, Emmerson, Ziv, Collins, Arastoo, Warschauer, & Lakes,2016). The method was the use of iSelfControl in the classroom. Students would earn points for following key behaviors for school success. Each 30-minute period the teacher would provide points or reduce points based on behaviors. As a result, having to stop every 30 minutes to award or reduce points for all students was not feasible for the teacher. This would not be easily reproduced in a typical educational setting. It would be better to have longer intervals in a typical setting. As a result, after the project being piloted for 6 weeks, it was not enough time to clearly see the impact of iSelfControl. Students were often out of the classroom for further instruction outside of class and/or the student would be absent. In addition, the students were already accustomed to a universal token economy system. Along with the generalizability of the tool to more typical settings must be taken to consideration. Although there

were some setbacks, the findings of the study supports that iSelfControl can improve self-awareness and self-regulation for those who lack executive functioning skills (Schuck, Emmerson, Ziv, Collins, Arastoo, Warschauer, & Lakes, 2016). This study was vital for the research because the limitations of this study had to be taken to consideration with the participants. Often in the setting of the study, students are being pulled out to the resource room and to RTI intervention, therefore the researcher had to collaborate with the teachers outside the classroom and come up with a way to remove or add Class Dojo points of the student, based on their behavior outside the researcher's classroom. This increased generalization among the school setting because the good behaviors demonstrated anywhere outside of the researcher's classroom indicated a reward. Additionally, the research on iSelfControl, allowed for the researcher to know that explicit teaching of all software and the meaning of the items on it is essential to increase student's engagement. The research project also took into consideration the fixed interval time to add or remove points from ClassDojo, based on the information of this research too.

Moreover, this study was conducted by Vogelgesang, Bruhn, Coghill-Behrends, Kern and Troughton (2016), with participants that have difficulty with self-regulation skills and have ADHD. The use of technology for self-monitoring is becoming popular. For example, in this single-subject study an application called SCOREIT is being tested to with three, fifth graders to see if their behavior can improve. The students used the SCOREIT app to monitor their behavior, some had ADHD or were at risk of it. The study took place in an elementary school in a Midwestern school district. These three students were chosen by the teacher because they would often show defiant behavior or low academic engagement, and students who were given a questionnaire and got an at risk for ADHD, were chosen for the study as well. (Vogelgesang, Coghill-Behrends, Kern, & Troughton, 2016). The dependent variable was the academic engagement, recording system and reliability. The independent variable was the iPad app called SCOREIT, which used for self-monitoring. According to Vogelgesang, Coghill-Behrends,Kern, and Troughton ( 2016), the application allowed for the students and the teachers to rate behaviors every 10 minutes. The class duration was usually about 45 to 60 minutes. However, the class did not always start on time, so the students would on average have three to four opportunities to rate their behaviors during the sessions.

Due to this intervention, all the students showed increase of positive behavior. They were all engaged and self-monitoring. They were also about to maintain the positive behavior with the fading of the SCOREIT application. However, limitations include no generalization probes and limited number of data points per phase. These results occurred because the students had a visual and constant technology to self-monitor. It allowed the student to be accountable for their own actions and the app was user friendly. The results from this research guided the researcher personal research with ClassDojo because the student had to self-monitor their behavior, which had the students engaged and intrinsically motivated to gain as many points as they can. Additionally, the students had to generalize those positive behaviors everywhere they went, and fading was done once the students gained independence and generalization.

### ClassDojo

The following study by Luma da Rocha Seixas, Gomes, and de Melo Filho (2016), focused on ClassDojo and ClassBadges. This study was developed to demonstrate the effectiveness of

gamification in the engagement of students. Using of gamification is an essential component of getting students engaged and for the progression of their knowledge (Luma da Rocha Seixas, Gomes, & de Melo Filho, 2016). The participants included two groups at a public elementary school, total of 61 students in Brazil. The students were between 13 and 14 years old, both male and female in the 8th grade of elementary school in Geometry class. The use of ClassDojo and ClassBadges platforms were selected as interventions for this study. The Game mechanics are included in ClassDojo and ClassBadges. Game Mechanics have the capability of motivating players because it includes a variety of techniques, widgets, and instruments that allow for a website or application to be gamified (Luma da Rocha Seixas, Gomes, & de Melo Filho, 2016). Typcail game mechanics used in games include: a test, ranking, rewards, points, achievement, and any positive reinforcement for the player (Luma da Rocha Seixas, Gomes, & de Melo Filho, 2016). Games motivate students or any player because game mechanics allow them to meet their needs and desires through these rewards and/or accomplishments they receive once they accomplish something. ClassDojo was used to reward the objectives. It allows the creation of positive behaviors and the teacher can give rewards in real time and a report is used to evaluate students individually. The data collection included a mixture of observation, semi-structured interview and survey. As a result, the data from the research showed the effectiveness of using gamification as a strategy to engage students from elementary school. The students had higher motivation to perform positive behavior because they were able to get immediately rewarded with a point of a badge on both of these online platforms. The students with the most points and badges demonstrated increased levels of engagement. Along with that, the students were able to collaborate with one another and communicate in a positive way to get points and badges. The results of this study demonstrated that the use of a gamification promoted extrinsic and intrinsic motivation among students. This method was beneficial to these particular students because they are able to self-monitor their behaviors and work hard to gain points and badges, in order to gain rewards. The students loved the visuals and the excitement they had when they met their needs or desires from ClassDojo and ClassBadges. Although, the study was done with a typical population, the results correlated similarly to the researchers' third grade, inclusive class. The participants in the third grade, loved games. The researcher used ClassDojo to promote positive behaviors, increase growth mindset, promote generalization across different setting, collaboration with other teachers and parents, and to show that ClassDojo can work for any population, typical and various exceptionalities.

In the next research conducted by Homer, Khe Foon and Cheng Yong (2018), gamification was discussed due to the use of ClassDojo as an intervention. In ClassDojo, the use of badges and points are used. Self-efficacy is activated by the badges and points because it allows the participants to see their progression, compare it with others, and get feedback on their performance (Homer, Khe Foon, & Cheng Yong, 2018). ClassDojo works like a token economy, however it also promotes engagement. Digital badges and points may foster better student engagement because it makes the coursework look more like a game-like challenge rather than a chore (Homer, Khe Foon, & Cheng Yong, 2018). This study was conducted to compare digital token economy with classroom paper and pencil token system. The participants are students in the English class at an Elementary school in Hong Kong. Two classes from Grades 1, 2, 3, and 4 participated in this study for 16 weeks. The participants' ages ranged from 6 years old to 11 years old. These classrooms were selected because the same teacher

taught all of these courses. Out of two classes selected per grades, one served as a control group and the other class was the experimental class. Due to the study being in China, English was a second-language for most students (Homer, Khe Foon, & Cheng Yong, 2018). With this intention, four of them were part of the digital badges-and points afforded by ClassDojo, while the four others did not have a digital conventional school token point system. The experiment design started with the English teacher clearly stating the rules and explicitly expressed how to get points for the ClassDojo. During the teacher's lesson, points were awarded when the students achieved the targeted behavior or learning objectives. When points were deducted the students demonstrated negative behaviors outlined in the class. As a result, the digital token economy showed that it was engaging, positive, and increased on-task behaviors, rather than non-digital token point system group. According to Homer, Khe Foon, &Cheng Yong (2018), ClassDojo had an effect on Grades 3 and 4 students on their oral scores, compared to those that used the non-digital point system. A possible reason why this occurred is because the students were more engaged, which allowed for more participation, completion of work, and longer on-task time. Besides that, with Grades 1 and 2, there were no great difference in the Reading scores between the experimental and control groups. The researchers believe that the young age had an effect on these results.

These results were important to the researcher because they exhibited why ClassDojo promoted engagement and self-regulation of behaviors. The results indicated that ClassDojo encouraged self-monitoring and positive behavior. These results also contributed to the academic performance of the students. The students in the intermediate age showed determination and increase of positive behavior and academic work. Although the participants did not indicate any exceptionalities, these results may be reliable among all populations of students.

### Token Economy

This study was conducted by Carnett et al. (2014) and involved a single subject study of a seven-year-old boy with autism who was given a treatment design that included perseverative interest-based token economy. The method involved using a token economy with items that are constant interests and a token economy without items with a steady interest. According to the Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS; Schopler et al.1980), the participant had mild to moderate symptoms of Autism (Carnett et al., 2014). The method used was to have a token economy system that did not include items with his steady interest, which included the use of pennies with  for his token board, while the other token economy system used an item of constant interest of his, which involved jigsaw puzzles.  The data collected were based on the challenging behavior and on-task behavior. Some of the behaviors that the researchers were trying to reduce with the token economy was the screaming, falling or lying on the floor. The researchers wanted to increase his sitting time, his active listening time, and a total decrease of the screaming, falling or lying on the floor (Carnett et al., 2014). The challenging behaviors were recorded with 10 seconds partial interval recording, while on-task behaviors were recorded using 10 seconds whole-interval recording. In the token economy with perseverative interests resulted in decrease in challenging behavior and an increase of on task behaviors. The study demonstrated the good use of using student's interest to increase the desired behaviors and to generalize those behaviors in different settings, such as an inclusive classroom. The

researcher will use these results to improve the usage of student's interest to reduce challenging behavior in their classroom.

In the study of Pritchard, Penney, and Mace (2018), token economies for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities were used. The ACHIEVE! Program was used as an intervention to reduce severe problem behaviors, which involved points and a leveled system. The participants were nine male pupils attending a residential special school over a 5-year period. The ages ranged from 15 to 19 years and they are placed in the school for about 17 to 59 months. All the students that were in the school were admitted for severe problem behavior. The ACHIEVE! Program which involves five prosocial skills and skills points are earned, not lost. Along with this, backup reinforcers were used to reinforce their behavior with a preferred item or activity. The method involved having everyone get an incentive when positive behavior was demonstrated. The students had access to a 2-Star Menu system, a 5 Star Menu system, bank money, and points. The students had constant access to reinforcers, rather than reduction of them. The ACHIEVE! program was also successful due to having a solution to the functions of the problem behavior (Pritchard, Penney, & Mace, 2018). In result, all participants but one student, showed reductions in severe problem behavior as they progressed through the level system. This most likely occurred because the students had access to a reward for trying and for doing outstanding in the classroom. The results of this study were beneficial to the researcher's study because the use of incentives was essential to further motivate students. Moreover, all students are capable of self-monitoring and a token economy with constant motivation is a successful way for students to learn positive behavior.

Overall, the literature review allowed the researcher to see that self-monitoring is a skill that has to be explicitly taught and students benefit from learning how to do this independently. Furthermore, technology is vital to use with students because there are several apps and tools that can be used that are portable, free and user friendly, which results in successful skill building and intrinsic motivation. All of this allows the students to demonstrate their full capability in being successful in the learning environment. The researcher also came to the realization that there is a lack of research that demonstrates the use of ClassDojo with students with exceptionalities and how the skills learned are generalized in various settings. Not to mention, there was a lack of research about collaboration with parents and other teachers to reinforce the executive functioning skills in various settings.

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To top

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## Acknowledgements

Portions of this or previous 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 or prior editions of the Special Educator e-Journal

To top