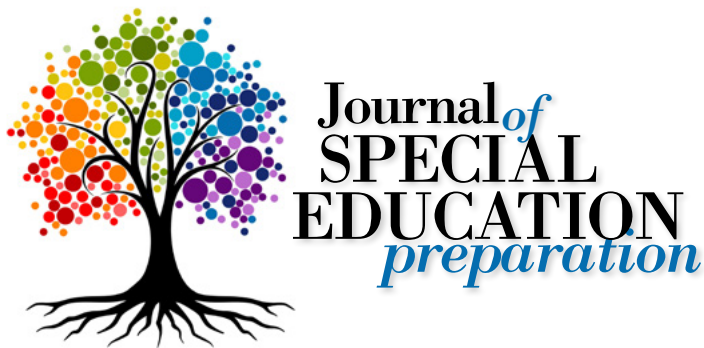




Journal *of*
SPECIAL
EDUCATION
preparation

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY & TEACHER EDUCATION DIVISION
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3 | WINTER 2022 | ISSN: 2768-1432



Volume 2, Issue 3 | WINTER 2022

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3

ISSN: 2768-1432

PUBLICATION

JOSEP is published and supported by Ball State University Libraries in Muncie, Indiana in partnership with the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children

Elizabeth Meyer,
The McKinley Avenue Agency,
Ball State University
Creative Director, Publication Design

Link to publication:

OpenJournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

SUBMISSIONS

Visit the website to submit a manuscript or to contact the editors. Authors retain copyright to their contributions but agree to license published content under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivates 4.0 License.



EDITORIAL BOARD

Andrew M. Markelz, PhD,
Ball State University, Founder & Editor

Argnue Chitiyo, PhD, BCBA,
Ball State University,
Associate Editor of International Spotlight

Benjamin S. Riden, PhD, BCBA, LBA,
James Madison University, Associate Editor

Margaret (Peggy) Weiss, PhD
George Mason University, Associate Editor

Kristin Wikel, M. Ed., Ball State University
Editorial Assistant

REVIEW BOARD

- *Kate Alves - Longwood University*
- *David Bateman - Shippensburg University*
- *Naima Bhana - Niagra University*
- *Shannon Budin - Buffalo State University*
- *Alice Cahill - University of Nebraska Kearney*
- *Lindsey Carlisle - University of Virginia*
- *Megan Cartier - Syracuse University*
- *Mina Chun - Governors State University*
- *Kyena Cornelius - Minnesota State University, Mankato*
- *Lauren Cozad - The Pennsylvania State University*
- *Caitlin Criss - Georgia Southern University*
- *Scott Dueker - Ball State University*
- *Danielle Frith - Monmouth University*
- *Margaret Floress - Eastern Illinois University*
- *Vivian Gonsalves - University of Florida*
- *Jordan Lukins - NC State University*
- *Sara Hooks - Towson University*
- *Elizabeth Hughes - The Pennsylvania State University*
- *Muhammed A. Karal - Sinop University, Turkey*
- *Skip Kumm - Elmhurst District, Chicago*
- *Lawrence Maheady - Buffalo State University*
- *Allen Mathende - Tennessee Tech University*
- *Stephanie Morano - University of Virginia*
- *Sarah Nagro - George Mason University*
- *Michael Ndemanu - Ball State University*
- *Ruby Owiny - Minnesota State University, Mankato*
- *Chelsea Panse-Barone - Mississippi State*
- *Joshua Pulos - James Madison University*
- *Kathleen Randolph - University of Colorado, Colorado Springs*
- *Kelley Regan - George Mason University*
- *Paul Riccomini - The Pennsylvania State University*
- *Salvador Ruiz - Queens College, CUNY*
- *Jonte Taylor - The Pennsylvania State University*
- *Katie Taylor - Ball State University*
- *Sarah Wilkinson - University of Wisconsin, Parkside*
- *Kary Zarate - University of Illinois*
- *Kimberly Zoder-Martell - Ball State University*
- *Jaime Zurheide - Elmhurst University*

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

- 4 | From the Editor, *Markelz***
- 6 | Designing EPPs Aligned with CEC's 2020 Initial Practice-Based K-12 Standards, *McLaughlin and Berlinghoff***
- 20 | Racial and Dis/Ability Equity-Oriented Educational Leadership Preparation *Voulgarides, Etscheidt, and Hernández-Saca***
- 32 | Expanding Preservice Special Educators' Conceptions about Disability Through Young Adult Literature, *Zepp, Mueller, and Leko***
- 40 | Four Components for a Professional Development Package for Special Education Teachers in Behavior Management Skills, *Marelle and Donehower Paul***
- 48 | Using Asynchronous Discussions to Teach Classroom Management Skills in Online Teacher Preparation Courses, *Lohmann and Boothe***
- 60 | Socially-Just Disability Resources: An Approach to Enhancing Equity for Teacher Candidates with Disabilities, *Strimel***

FROM *the*
EDITOR

Andrew M. Markelz
 Founder & Editor of *JOSEP*
 Ball State University

References

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of (2004), 20 U.S.C. § 1400
- Lohmann, M. J., & Boothe, K. A. (2022). Using asynchronous discussions to teach classroom management skills in online teacher preparation courses. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 48-58. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.48-58>
- Marelle, C. & Donehower Paul, C. (2022). Four components for a professional development package for special education teachers in behavior management skills. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 40-47. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.40-47>
- Markelz, A. M., & Riden, B. S. (2022). How and why to write for the Journal of Special Education Preparation. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(1), 6-13. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.1.6-13>
- McLaughlin, V., & Berlinghoff, D. (2022). Designing EPPs aligned with CEC's 2020 initial practice-based K-12 standards. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 6-18. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.6-18>
- Strimel, M. (2022). Socially-just disability resources: An approach to enhancing equity for teacher candidates with disabilities. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 60-67. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.60-67>
- Voulgarides, C. K., Etscheidt, S. L., & Hernández-Saca, D. I. (2022). Racial and dis/ability equity-oriented educational leadership preparation. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 20-30. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.20-30>
- Zepp, L. B., Muellerr, C. O., & Leko, M. M. (2022). Expanding preservice special educators' conceptions about disability through young adult literature. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 2(3), 32-38. <https://doi.org/10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.32-38>

The editorial team is pleased to bring you the first open-call issue of the *Journal of Special Education Preparation*! Since January 2022, *JOSEP* has been receiving manuscripts from public submissions. With the service of our fabulous editorial board, manuscripts have gone through an anonymous peer-review process. We are happy to present to our readers six articles on a variety of important topics for special education faculty. Previous issues of *JOSEP* have focused on particular themes, such as technology in teacher preparation; high-leverage practices; small programs issues; and diversity, equity, and inclusion. For those special issues of *JOSEP*, experts in the field were invited to contribute articles. In this issue, special education faculty and doctoral students from a variety of universities submitted manuscripts on their topics of expertise. Each article in this issue fulfills the mission of *JOSEP* by:

1. Presenting content that is relevant and novel
2. Pertinent to those who prepare special education teachers and administrators
3. Grounded in current research, and
4. Provides actionable guidance for readers (Markelz & Riden, 2022)

Unfortunately, an *International Spotlight* manuscript was not submitted. We encourage special education faculty across the globe to consider contributing to our *International Spotlight* so that readers can learn about country specific special education preparation policies and practices.

In this Issue

The first article by McLaughlin and Berlinghoff (2022) provides a six-step approach to assist Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in the design and assessment of programs aligned to the new 2020 Council for Exceptional Children's Practice-Based Standards for Preparation of Special Educators (K-12). The six-step approach presented in this article is highly valuable for preparation programs as they realign accreditation assessments to meet these new standards.

The next article by Voulgarides and colleagues (2022) discusses racial inequities in special education from the perspective of a lack of special education specific preparation for administrative leaders. After providing comprehensive contextual factors contributing to disparities, the authors propose three key components that should be added to special education leadership preparation programs to better prepare future administrators to achieve the goals of IDEA (2004) and reduce racial and dis/Ability disparities.

Zepp and colleagues (2022) present information and resources to help special education teacher educators improve preservice teachers' competence for working with disabled students and addressing ableism in their classrooms by incorporating young adult literature into special education teacher preparation experiences. The authors model how special education teacher educators can critically examine young adult texts by providing criteria for evaluating representations of disability and a unit plan with three lessons for use in an introductory special education

course. The lesson plans and a bibliography of young adult books featuring characters with disabilities is provided in the online supplemental materials.

In the fourth article, Marelle and Donehower Paul (2022) provide four components that should be considered when planning a professional development package for teachers regarding behavior management. Those four evidence-based components are didactic presentation, performance feedback, technology, and programming for maintenance and generalization. The authors then provide examples and supportive details of each component and how to create an effective professional development package.

Lohmann and Boothe (2022) continue the discussion on classroom management in their article which examines asynchronous online formats and how to use discussion boards to teach classroom management skills. The authors present four discussion board formats to support teacher candidate learning and engagement. Within this article, detailed figures and tables are provided to support readers in implementing these high-quality activities.

In the last article, Strimel (2022) proposes a socially-just disability resources approach to enhancing access and equity for disabled students in special education teacher preparation programs. The author uses fictional vignettes to demonstrate how preparation programs can apply a socially-just disability resources framework to critically examine all aspects of disability resources and align them more closely with equity-focused work. In doing so, teacher preparation programs can reduce disability-related barriers and

enhance the experiences of disabled teacher candidates.


COMING SOON

JOSEP will continue to accept public manuscripts for publication consideration. We encourage potential contributors to read “How and why to write for the Journal of Special Education Preparation” by Markelz and Riden (2022) for guidance on the aims and scope of *JOSEP* prior to submission. We are pleased at the growing readership of *JOSEP*. To date, articles have been downloaded over 7,000 times! We will continue to bring our readers valuable information that strengthens the preparation of teachers domestically and internationally.

In collaboration with the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the next special issue of *JOSEP* will explore the special education teacher shortage crisis from the perspective of preparation programs. Dr. Sarah A. Nagro will guest edit this special issue with the intention of bringing *JOSEP* readers applicable examples of how preparation programs are attracting and preparing qualified and diverse teacher candidates to be profession ready upon graduation and meet the needs of the field. We anticipate this special issue to be published in May 2023.

Thank you to our editorial board of reviewers and article contributors for another successful issue! And thank you to our readers! As an open-access journal, we encourage everyone to download the articles and share widely.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *JOSEP*!



In collaboration with the Teacher Education Division (TED) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the next special issue of *JOSEP* will explore the special education teacher shortage crisis from the perspective of preparation programs.

Designing EPPs Aligned with CEC's 2020 Initial Practice-Based K-12 Standards

AUTHORS

Virginia McLaughlin
Dee Berlinghoff

Journal of Special
Education Preparation
2(3), 6-18
© 2022 McLaughlin and Berlinghoff
Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0
License
DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.6-18
openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

CEC's 2020 Practice-Based Standards for Preparation of Special Educators (K-12) identify proficiencies considered essential for successful entry into the profession. To assist Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) in the design and assessment of programs aligned with these new Standards, the authors introduce a six-step approach that is systematic, deliberative, and applicable in diverse contexts. The approach includes: (a) understanding the Standards and available resources, (b) aligning CEC Standards with CEC's High Leverage Practices (HLPs), InTASC and other applicable standards; (c) mapping the program to standards to identify gaps and redundancies; (d) developing course syllabi; (e) identifying key program assessments; and (f) implementing and monitoring the program. Each step of the process is described, and examples are provided.

KEYWORDS

CEC Standards, EPP program assessment, EPP program design, high leverage practices

The 2020 Practice-Based Standards for Initial Preparation of Special Educators (K-12) represent more than a periodic updating by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Over a seven-year period, three different national workgroups formulated the 2020 Standards; two workgroups framed the overall approach and one, the Standards Development Workgroup, produced the final set of Standards (Berlinghoff & McLaughlin, 2022). Throughout the process, CEC provided multiple opportunities for input and feedback from the professional community. A primary intentional emphasis for 2020 was the focus on *practice* through incorporation of CEC's High Leverage Practices (HLPs). Additionally, the 2020 Standards fulfill guidelines of the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and align with Standards of the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Whether or not Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) are pursuing CAEP Accreditation or CEC Program Recognition, they will want to align with the CEC 2020 Standards, since these reflect the current best thinking of the profession.

Faced with myriad challenges of recruitment, preparation, and support of special educators, EPPs need effective and efficient approaches for revising their existing programs and developing new ones. The purpose of this article is to introduce a six-step process that is applicable in diverse contexts for design and assessment of EPPs aligned with CEC Initial K-12 Standards. This approach to program design and assessment is systematic, deliberative, and best accomplished collaboratively by EPP faculty. It has evolved over decades of experience, as the authors have led program developments and reviews within their own institutions, served as reviewers and visiting team members for many other institutions, and consulted with other EPPs preparing for reviews. The process can be used for any program models (e.g., baccalaureate, masters, alternative, certificate) and enables EPPs to

innovate their offerings while ensuring their program completers are career ready. Although this article focuses specifically on implementation of the 2020 CEC Initial K-12 Standards, the overall process for program design and assessment could facilitate alignment with other professional preparation standards relevant to EPPs.

The steps described below should be helpful to EPPs as they create action plans to guide their program development work. Backwards mapping from the intended date for launching a new or revised program is a good way to begin. EPPs that are pursuing national accreditation or CEC Program Recognition will need several years of data on program completers, and this must be built into the process. When developing action plans and timelines, EPPs also must allow for whatever internal and external reviews and approvals are required prior to offering a new or significantly revised program. These reviews often take longer than anticipated and can require multiple submissions before approval is granted. Given the work involved in program design, the approvals needed in order to launch, and data on program completers that may be required for state approval or national accreditation, EPPs are advised to start early and plan for multi-year efforts.

STEP 1. BECOME FAMILIAR WITH PRACTICE-BASED STANDARDS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE

The best resource for understanding and using the new standards for program development is the CEC publication, *Practice-Based Standards for the Preparation of Special Educators* (Berlinghoff & McLaughlin, 2022). Colloquially referred to as *The Purple Book*, it presents the Standards and Components, with their Supporting Explanations, and Knowledge Bases, along with potential performance indicators and potential sources of evidence for EPPs. Each Standard and its accompanying Components describe *what* candidates are expected to do; then the Supporting Explanations describe *how* we might see candidates performing; and the Knowledge Bases describe *why* each of the Standards and Components are important. The Standards can be used in a variety of program designs, because they do not dictate any specific program model. The seven Standards and 23 Components, along with a Field Experience and Clinical Practice Standard (Berlinghoff & McLaughlin, 2022), are presented in Figure 1.

The most significant change in the 2020 Standards from earlier releases is that the current Standards are practice-based.

The most significant change in the 2020 Standards from earlier releases is that the current Standards are *practice-based*. The concept “practice-based” has a two-fold meaning: (a) a strong focus on application or performance of identified proficiencies, and (b) assurance of mastery through multiple opportunities for candidates to practice those proficiencies throughout their EPPs. From other professions (e.g., doctors, pilots, electricians), we know that practicing what has been learned in real world situations is crucial to mastery. For first year teachers, the link between coursework and practice is critical (Boyd et al., 2009). If teacher candidates are to apply what

they have learned in their coursework to their classrooms, they need multiple opportunities, with feedback, to do so during their preparation programs (McLeskey et al., 2017).

Benedict et al. (2016) suggest that when EPPs are planning practice-based opportunities for teacher candidates, three guiding principles should be considered:

1. Focus: What do all candidates need to know and be able to do? How are candidates given opportunities to practice critical content and pedagogy?
2. Duration: What is the length of time given for candidates to practice and master content and pedagogy, so they are ready on their first day in the classroom?
3. Coherence: How are expectations made conspicuous across courses and fieldwork? What consideration has been given to course alignment, sequencing, and scaffolding?

Depending on the setting (e.g., urban vs rural) or program type (e.g., traditional vs accelerated), it might not be possible for all candidates to practice every targeted skill in a classroom setting; however, other options are available. These include, but are not limited to, microteaching, case studies or videos (e.g., CEEDAR Resource Library (n.d.); Kennedy HLP Video Showcase (n.d.)), pre-student teaching fieldwork, mixed reality simulated classroom experiences, or student teaching/practicum (Benedict et al., 2016). Likewise, there are a variety of ways candidates can meet the Standards, as relevant to individual programs, and may include using I Do, We Do, You Do during instruction; modifying curricula for individual students and groups; developing and implementing behavior plans; or meeting with co-teachers, parents, or paraprofessionals. Products such as IEPs, lesson plans, assessment reports,

FIGURE 1: CEC 2020 Practice-Based Standards and Components (K-12)

STANDARDS	COMPONENTS
<p>STANDARD 1: ENGAGING IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PRACTICE WITHIN ETHICAL GUIDELINES</p> <p>Candidates practice within ethical and legal guidelines; engage in ongoing self-reflection to design and implement professional learning activities; and advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while considering their social, cultural, and linguistic diversity.</p>	<p>Component 1.1 Candidates practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies and procedures.</p> <p>Component 1.2 Candidates advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.</p> <p>Component 1.3 Candidates design and implement professional learning activities based on ongoing analysis of student learning; self-reflection; professional standards, research, and contemporary practices.</p>
<p>STANDARD 2: UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING EACH INDIVIDUAL'S DEVELOPMENTAL AND LEARNING NEEDS</p> <p>Candidates use their understanding of human growth and development; multiple influences on development; individual differences; diversity, including exceptionalities; and families and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high-quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.</p>	<p>Component 2.1 Candidates apply understanding of human growth and development to create developmentally appropriate and meaningful learning experiences that address individualized strengths and needs of students with exceptionalities.</p> <p>Component 2.2 Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of diverse factors that influence development and learning including differences related to families, languages, cultures, and communities, and to individual differences, including exceptionalities, to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.</p>
<p>STANDARD 3: DEMONSTRATING SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT AND SPECIALIZED CURRICULAR KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Candidates apply their understanding of the academic subject matter content of the general curriculum and specialized curricula to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for learners with exceptionalities.</p>	<p>Component 3.1 Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.</p> <p>Component 3.2 Candidates augment the general education curriculum to address skills and strategies that students with disabilities need to access the core curriculum and function successfully within a variety of contexts and the continuum of placement options to assure specially designed instruction is developed and implemented to achieve mastery of curricular standards and individualized goals and objectives.</p>
<p>STANDARD 4: USING ASSESSMENT TO UNDERSTAND THE LEARNER AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Candidates assess students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment in order to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction. Candidates evaluate students to determine their strengths and needs, contribute to students' eligibility determination, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction using technology as appropriate.</p>	<p>Component 4.1 Candidates collaboratively develop, select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based systems of intervention for students with and without exceptionalities.</p> <p>Component 4.2 Candidates develop, select, and administer multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable, to contribute to eligibility determination for special education services.</p> <p>Component 4.3 Candidates assess, collaboratively analyze, interpret, and communicate students' progress toward measurable outcomes using technology as appropriate, to inform both short- and long-term planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction.</p>

<p>STANDARD 5: USING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION TO SUPPORT LEARNING</p> <p>Candidates use knowledge of individuals' development, learning needs and assessment data to inform decisions about effective instruction. Candidates use explicit instructional strategies; employ strategies to promote active engagement and increased motivation to individualize instruction to support each individual. Candidates use whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individual instruction. Candidates teach individuals to use meta-/cognitive strategies to support and self-regulate learning.</p>	<p>Component 5.1 Candidates use findings from multiple assessments, including student self-assessment, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, to identify what students know and are able to do. They then interpret the assessment data to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet rigorous academic and non-academic content and goals for each individual.</p> <p>Component 5.2 Candidates use effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation, increase opportunities to respond, and enhance self regulation of student learning.</p> <p>Component 5.3 Candidates use explicit, systematic instruction to teach content, strategies, and skills to make clear what a learner needs to do or think about while learning.</p> <p>Component 5.4 Candidates use flexible grouping to support the use of instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of each individual and group.</p> <p>Component 5.5 Candidates organize and manage focused, intensive small group instruction to meet the learning needs of each individual.</p> <p>Component 5.6 Candidates plan and deliver specialized, individualized instruction that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.</p>
<p>STANDARD 6: SUPPORTING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL GROWTH</p> <p>Candidates create and contribute to safe, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities through the use of effective routines and procedures and use a range of preventive and responsive practices to support social, emotional and educational wellbeing. They follow ethical and legal guidelines and work collaboratively with families and other professionals to conduct behavioral assessments for intervention and program development.</p>	<p>Component 6.1 Candidates use effective routines and procedures to create safe, caring, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities.</p> <p>Component 6.2 Candidates use a range of preventive and responsive practices documented as effective to support individuals' social, emotional, and educational well-being.</p> <p>Component 6.3 Candidates systematically use data from a variety of sources to identify the purpose or function served by problem behavior to plan, implement, and evaluate behavioral interventions and social skills programs, including generalization to other environments.</p>

or behavior intervention plans might be the means by which candidates are given multiple opportunities to apply what they have learned and receive feedback.

STEP 2. COMPLETE CROSSWALKS TO ALIGN RELEVANT STANDARDS

The explicit alignment of the 2020 CEC Standards for Practice-Based Preparation of Special Educators K-12

with CEC's HLPs and InTASC Standards greatly facilitates program design and assessment efforts. Figure 2 details these alignments to provide a useful tool for program development.

In addition to benchmarking against InTASC Standards, HLPs, and CEC Standards, EPPs typically must meet standards, comply with regulations, and submit to program reviews at multiple levels. These may include, for exam-

ple, requirements for programs within an academic department, college, and university. Beyond these internal expectations, EPPs must also comply with regulations from state governing boards, including those responsible for approval of teacher education programs and licensure of professional educators. National accreditation and recognition by national specialty associations (SPAs) are required in many states; in

FIGURE 1: CEC 2020 Practice-Based Standards and Components (K-12)

<p>STANDARD 7: COLLABORATING WITH TEAM MEMBERS</p> <p>Candidates apply team processes and communication strategies to collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the school, other educational settings, and the community to lead meetings, plan programs, and access services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.</p>	<p>Component 7.1 Candidates utilize communication, group facilitation, and problem-solving strategies in a culturally responsive manner to lead effective meetings and share expertise and knowledge to build team capacity and jointly address students’ instructional and behavioral needs.</p> <p>Component 7.2 Candidates communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with families and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.</p> <p>Component 7.3 Candidates communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with professionals and agencies within the community to identify and access services, resources, and supports to meet the identified needs of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.</p> <p>Component 7.4 Candidates understand their role of working with paraprofessionals to implement efficiently and effectively necessary components of the IEP.</p>
<p>FIELD EXPERIENCE AND CLINICAL PRACTICE STANDARD FOR K-12</p> <p>Special education candidates progress through a series of developmentally sequenced field and clinical experiences for the full range of ages, types, and levels of abilities, and collaborative opportunities that are appropriate to the license or roles for which they are preparing. These field and clinical experiences are supervised by qualified professionals.</p>	

(Berlinghoff & McLaughlin, 2022, pp 7-9)

others it is optional. In some instances, the standards and program performance expectations of these various groups have been intentionally aligned, making it far easier for teacher educators to design and assess their EPPs in ways that position them for successful reviews. Unfortunately, this is not often the case. EPPs are then left on their own to analyze multiple sets of standards, whenever possible aligning them, in order to ensure that their program completers demonstrate mastery of all required competencies.

The matrix presented in Figure 3 serves as a tool to help EPPs visualize alignment of specific course objectives and assessments across multiple sets

of standards. The first two columns of the matrix can be populated from Figure 2 above. Because the 2020 CEC Standards intentionally incorporated the CEC HLPs, it is not necessary for programs to show separate alignment with the HLPs. Appropriate state standards for program approval and/or teacher licensure should be added and, to the extent possible, aligned with the national standards. Additional columns may be added for any other standards that apply (e.g., college/school/ departmental performance expectations). In the next step, EPP faculty proceed to map their specific course objectives and assessments to the applicable standards.

STEP 3. MAP THE PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY GAPS AND REDUNDANCIES

The matrix introduced in Figure 3 is useful as a graphic organizer to help EPPs focus on the many relevant standards that must be addressed. Once these standards have been analyzed and aligned, EPPs must then ensure adequate coverage through coursework and clinical experiences and also identify specific ways that candidate performance is assessed.

This step often begins by having individuals or groups responsible for specific courses or clinical experiences contribute to relevant sections of a shared document. For existing

FIGURE 2: InTASC, HLP, CEC Standards Alignment

<p>InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards</p>	<p>High Leverage Practices</p>	<p>Initial K-12 Special Education Preparation Standards (primary alignment)</p>
<p>THE LEARNER AND LEARNING</p> <p>#1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.</p> <p>#2: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.</p> <p>#3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.</p>	<p>SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL PRACTICES</p> <p>Effective special education teachers establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment to support student success. To do this, they employ several practices that are critical in promoting student social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>HLP 7: Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.</p> <p>HLP 8: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.</p> <p>HLP 9: Teach social behaviors.</p>	<p>STANDARD 2: UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING EACH INDIVIDUAL'S DEVELOPMENTAL AND LEARNING NEEDS</p> <p>Candidates use their understanding of human growth and development; multiple influences on development; individual differences; diversity, including exceptionalities; and families and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high-quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.</p> <p>STANDARD 6: SUPPORTING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL GROWTH</p> <p>Candidates create and contribute to safe, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities through the use of effective routines and procedures and use a range of preventive and responsive practices to support social, emotional and educational wellbeing. They follow ethical and legal guidelines and work collaboratively with families and other professionals to conduct behavioral assessments for intervention and program development.</p>
<p>CONTENT</p> <p>#4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.</p> <p>#5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.</p>	<p>INSTRUCTION</p> <p>Effective special education teachers are well versed in general education curricula and other contextually relevant curricula, and use appropriate standards, learning progressions, and evidence-based practices in conjunction with specific IEP goals and benchmarks to prioritize long- and short-term learning goals and to plan instruction.</p> <p>HLP 11: Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals.</p> <p>HLP 12: Systematically design instruction toward a specific learning goal.</p> <p>HLP 13: Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.</p> <p>HLP 16: Use explicit instruction.</p>	<p>STANDARD 3: DEMONSTRATING SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT AND SPECIALIZED CURRICULAR KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Candidates apply their understanding of the academic subject matter content of the general curriculum and specialized curricula to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for learners with exceptionalities.</p>

FIGURE 2: InTASC, HLP, CEC Standards Alignment

<p>INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE</p> <p>#6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.</p> <p>#7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.</p> <p>#8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Assessment plays a foundational role in special education. Students with disabilities are complex learners who have unique needs that exist alongside their strengths. Effective special education teachers have to fully understand those strengths and needs. Thus, these teachers are knowledgeable regarding assessment and are skilled in using and interpreting data.</p> <p>HLP 4: Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs.</p> <p>HLP 5: Interpret and communicate assessment information with stakeholders to collaboratively design and implement educational programs.</p> <p>HLP 6: Use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes.</p> <p>HLP 19: Use assistive and instructional technologies.</p> <p>INSTRUCTION</p> <p>Teaching students with disabilities is a strategic, flexible, and recursive process as effective special education teachers use content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge (including evidence-based practice), and data on student learning to design, deliver, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. This process begins with well-designed instruction</p> <p>HLP 11: Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals.</p> <p>HLP 12: Systematically design instruction toward a specific learning goal.</p> <p>HLP 13: Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.</p> <p>HLP 14: Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence.</p> <p>HLP 15: Provide scaffolded supports.</p> <p>HLP 16: Use explicit instruction.</p>	<p>STANDARD 4: USING ASSESSMENT TO UNDERSTAND THE LEARNER AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Candidates assess students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment in order to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction. Candidates evaluate students to determine their strengths and needs, contribute to students' eligibility determination, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction using technology as appropriate.</p> <p>STANDARD 5: USING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION TO SUPPORT LEARNING</p> <p>Candidates use knowledge of individuals' development, learning needs and assessment data to inform decisions about effective instruction. Candidates use explicit instructional strategies; employ strategies to promote active engagement and increased motivation to individualize instruction to support each individual. Candidates use whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individual instruction. Candidates teach individuals to use meta-/cognitive strategies to support and self-regulate learning.</p>
---	--	--

<p>PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>#9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.</p> <p>#10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.</p>	<p>COLLABORATION</p> <p>Effective special education teachers collaborate with a wide range of professionals, families and caregivers to assure that educational programs and related services are effectively designed and implemented to meet the needs of each student with a disability.</p> <p>HLP 1: Collaborate with professionals to increase student success.</p> <p>HLP 2: Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.</p> <p>HLP 3: Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.</p> <p>HLP 4: Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs.</p>	<p>STANDARD 1: ENGAGING IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PRACTICE WITHIN ETHICAL GUIDELINES</p> <p>Candidates practice within ethical and legal guidelines; advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while considering their social, cultural, and linguistic diversity; and engage in ongoing self-reflection to design and implement professional learning activities.</p> <p>Standard 7: Collaborating with Team Members</p> <p>Candidates apply team processes and communication strategies to collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the school, other educational settings, and the community to lead meetings, plan programs, and access services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.</p>
---	---	---

programs, faculty should note what is currently being done and allow the process to inform program improvements. When faculty are designing brand new programs or intending *major* redesign of existing ones, they may start from scratch laying out where content should be covered and how student performance should be assessed. Documents can be created online using collaborative writing software, such as Google Docs, Drop Box, or Microsoft Teams. If faculty prefer to work face-to-face, it helps to have plenty of whiteboard space or large sticky notes.

Although collecting this initial input is essential, it is seldom sufficient. Meaningful program development requires a great deal of analysis, dialog, and collaborative decision making. Detailed mapping enables teacher educators to identify important gaps in the program, i.e., competencies that are not yet adequately addressed. It also is likely to reveal redundancies across courses and assessments. Some degree of redundancy may be intentional to build competencies sequentially. For

example, the topic, IEP development, might be included in several different courses. An introductory course in special education may require knowledge of the IEP process and components; an assessment course may have candidates gather and synthesize data on present levels of performance; and methods courses may have them develop goals, objectives, and accommodations for the student's educational program. A course on collaboration may focus on interactions with the student, family, and other professionals before, during, and after the IEP meeting. Understanding how each course addresses a specific facet of a complex competency like IEP development enables faculty to build upon prior knowledge and skills in an efficient and effective manner. Given the number of competencies to be mastered, EPPs must be structured with great attention to detail to avoid unnecessary redundancy, such as repetition of course topics, assignments, or assessments at the same level of complexity.

Figure 4 provides an example of

a completed map related to a single Component for Standard 7: Collaborating with Families, Paraprofessionals, and Other Professionals. In this case example, the EPP is William & Mary master's degree program for initial licensure in Special Education, K-12 General Curriculum, in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

With this amount of information, a portrait layout with vertical text is more practical than the horizontal matrix or landscape format introduced above.

STEP 4. DEVELOP COURSE SYLLABI

Once EPP faculty have determined where essential topics will be addressed and how candidate proficiencies will be assessed, it is time to develop or update syllabi for all of the courses in the program. A course syllabus serves a number of purposes. The Center for Teaching Innovation at Cornell University (n.d.) explains four main functions of a good syllabus: (a) a communication tool to convey important information about the course to students; (b) a

FIGURE 3: Sample Matrix

INTASC STANDARDS	CEC STANDARDS	STATE S TANDARDS	SCHOOL/COLLEGE/ DEPARTMENTAL COMPETENCIES	PROGRAM COMPETENCIES	ADDITIONAL AS NEEDED

cognitive map placing the course in the broader academic context while specifying its intended learning outcomes; (c) a guide to expectations between the instructor and students with references to relevant policies; (d) a plan of action with a timeline for class sessions and assignments. Syllabi also have served as important documentation for accreditation and program approval reviews, since they provide the most detailed descriptions of the curriculum offered to candidates. Many states still require submission of course syllabi for program approval; however, the focus for national accreditation and program recognition has shifted in recent decades from reviewing inputs like syllabi to assessing candidate performance as an outcome. None-the-less, syllabi remain a critical component of program design, unpacking broad EPP goals into manageable units for instruction and assessment.

Initial development of course syllabi may be done by individual faculty or small teams of faculty responsible for design and delivery of specific courses. Whether updating existing syllabi or creating them for new courses, faculty must be mindful of the current emphasis on *practice-based* learning and assessment described above that may require reconceptualizing assignments, use of class time, and expectations for clinical experiences. In acknowledging both the challenges and opportunities involved, Benedict and her colleagues (2016) note the following lesson:

EPPs and their faculty work with local districts to fully incorporate effective, deliberate, practice-based op-

portunities within both campus-based coursework and field experiences that encompass the features of deliberate practice; practice that is sequenced, coherent, and scaffolded over time and coupled with feedback and reflection (p. 1).

Although syllabi cannot capture all the rich dimensions of practice-based preparation, the emphasis should be evident throughout the documents.

Institutions, departments, and programs often prescribe their own syllabi formats, but basic course information, such as instructors, course description, and pre/co-requisites, is typically included. Most syllabi list course objectives, major topics to be covered, required and supplemental resources, and major assignments/assessments. Some institutions also include relevant university-based or course-based policies, as well as available resources for support.

Two syllabi components—learning objectives and assessments—warrant particular attention when EPPs are purposefully aligning with CEC’s 2020 Practice-Based Standards. As statements of intended learning outcomes (i.e., what candidates are expected to *do* upon completion of the course), the objectives should align very closely with the relevant CEC Standards and Components. It is often helpful to use actual language from the Standards and to identify the specific Standard or Component addressed by a course objective. Certainly, there may be additional objectives unique to the course, but the syllabus should explicitly designate objectives aligned with

CEC Standards. Similarly, the focus on *practice-based standards* heightens the importance of assessments, particularly any candidate performance assessments that serve as key or program assessments. The syllabus itself may provide only a brief description of the assessments with more detailed specifications and rubrics provided with the actual assignment/assessment.

Prior to approval through appropriate institutional channels, the collective EPP faculty should review, discuss, and refine draft syllabi to create a deeper, shared understanding of the program curriculum and to ensure its alignment with appropriate standards. Although individual instructors have academic freedom to personalize their courses, they also have responsibility to both candidates and their EPPs to ensure that the designated proficiencies are developed and assessed as planned. Well-developed syllabi define essential elements of courses that should be consistently implemented. When multiple instructors, including part-time/adjunct faculty, are involved, syllabi are especially vital tools for ensuring program quality and coherence.

STEP 5. IDENTIFY A MANAGEABLE NUMBER OF KEY ASSESSMENTS FOR THE PROGRAM

During the curriculum mapping and syllabi development steps described above, EPP faculty have identified candidate assessments within courses and clinical experiences. Deciding which assessments will then be used as key or program assessments can sometimes

FIGURE 4: Sample Mapping for EPP Alignment with CEC Standards and State Competencies

<p>CEC Standard Component 7.2: Candidates communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with families, paraprofessionals and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.</p>
<p>VA State Competency 4.a. Collaboration: Skills in consultation, case management, and collaboration, including coordination of service delivery with related service providers, general educators, and other professions in collaborative work environments to include: (1) Understanding the Standards of Learning, the structure of the curriculum, and accountability systems across K-12; (2) Understanding and assessing the organization and environment of general education classrooms across the K-12 setting; (3) Implementation of collaborative models, including collaborative consultation, co-teaching with co-planning, and student intervention teams; (4) Procedures to collaboratively develop, provide, and evaluate instructional and behavioral plans consistent with students' individual needs.</p>
<p>WHERE ADDRESSED IN THE EPP:</p> <p>X87 – Collaboration for Teaching and Learning X16 – Supervised Teaching in Special Education: Elementary X17 – Supervised Teaching in Special Education: Secondary</p>
<p>HOW ASSESSED IN THE EPP:</p> <p>X87 – Evaluations of candidates' co-planned and co-taught units including five lesson plans implemented in their field placement with one lesson observed by their university supervisor, and candidate reflection on the collaborative experience</p> <p>X16 and X17 – Student teaching evaluations, including four items specifically on professional collaboration, completed by candidate, clinical faculty/cooperating teacher, and university supervisor</p>

be difficult for EPPs to determine. The national accreditation process typically limits the number of program assessments to six to eight, as do many state departments of education. EPPs need sufficient amounts of appropriate data to inform program decision making, but not so much data that faculty cannot adequately analyze and reflect on what has been collected. EPPs should be mindful that a single key assessment might address multiple Standards and Components, so it is not necessary to have a separate assessment for each Standard or Component. For example, a student teaching/practicum/internship rubric evaluating instructional delivery could address CEC Standard 3, Standard 5, and Standard 6.

Noting the distinctions between key assessments and course assessments may simplify the process of choosing key assessments for a program. Some key assessments are course assess-

ments, but not all course assessments are key assessments. For example, in a methods course, candidates might write three lesson plans during the semester. The first two submissions are written based on students in a case study, but the final lesson plan is for their assigned students in a field setting. All three lesson plans would be assessed and count toward the final course grade, but only the final lesson plan rubric score would be used as a key assessment for program data collection purposes. The focus of the first two lesson plans is on the product as the candidate develops the skill of writing lesson plans, whereas the final lesson plan includes the application or practice of instructional delivery. Similarly, an assignment based on an IRIS Module could serve as a course assessment factored into individual grades but not entered into the overall program evaluation.

When developing any assessment,

EPPs are reminded that Standards and Components are *practice-based*, meaning assessments should be examining candidate performance, not simply a product. Thinking back to the earlier discussion of the principles of focus, duration, and coherence as they apply to practice-based development, EPPs need to ensure candidates will be given multiple and varied opportunities to apply what they have learned. No one expects concert pianists to become expert performers without extensive practice, so we should not expect candidates to be prepared for teaching without many opportunities to practice what they will be doing in classrooms. IEPs, classroom management plans, and lesson plans are acceptable key assessments, but *how* will candidates *use* them? Products might be necessary to document candidate skill progression but are not sufficient to show candidates can implement

FIGURE 5: Sample Rubric Element

Designs and manages a learning-focused classroom community and productive learning environment for students with disabilities.				
ALIGNMENT	INEFFECTIVE (1)	LIMITED (2)	ADEQUATE (3)	EFFECTIVE (4)
Standard 5 Component 5.2 Component 5.3 Standard 6 Component 6.1 Component 6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not develop clear classroom routines and procedures; those that are used are not well-executed and do not appear to be developed based upon students' needs Does not plan to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports or punishes behavior. Does not communicate intention and purpose for most rules, routines, and procedures. Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in few students' engagement Rarely plans for and teaches social skills explicitly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops some classroom routines, but routine procedures are not well-executed and do not appear to be developed based upon students' needs Inconsistently plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Does not communicate intention and purpose for some rules, routines, or procedures Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in some students' engagement Rarely plans for and teaches social skills explicitly but sometimes attempts to teach social skills relevant to a particular situation or "teachable moment". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops routines for the classroom, individual, or support services with expectations and opportunities for students to practice. Consistently plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Defines methods for ensuring individual behavioral or academic success in one-to-one, small group, and large-group settings Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in most students' engagement in individual and group activities Teaches social skills intentionally, including using explicit instruction strategies to support student learning of skills required for students to work with others in the classroom while working toward student independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops effective routines specific to the nature of the classroom, individual need, and support services with specific expectations and opportunities for students to practice Consistently and intentionally plans to prevent misbehavior through positive behavioral interventions and supports Defines methods for ensuring individual behavioral and academic success in one-to-one, small group, and large-group settings Designs learning environments (e.g., physical, climate, time allowance) that result in student ownership of individual and group activities Teaches social skills intentionally, including using explicit instruction strategies and specific replacement behaviors, to support student learning of skills required for students to work with others in the classroom while working toward student independence.

Adapted from: Mississippi Department of Education. Retrieved :

https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OA/OTL/Teacher%20Center/special_education_growth_rubric_guidebook_2021_002.pdf

practices. As emphasized in the Field Experience and Clinical Practice Standard for K-12, candidate proficiency develops through multiple, scaffolded clinical experiences woven throughout the program with opportunities to apply what has been learned, receive feedback, and then try again.

When a manageable number of assessments have been identified, rubric development begins. Some EPPs will consider revising and aligning existing

rubrics, while others will start fresh. The fundamentals of rubric development must be considered with either approach. Bargainnier (2003) identified attributes of a quality rubric: (a) clear criteria; (b) rich, descriptive language; (c) focus on positive attainment; (d) differentiation of performance, product, and effort; and (e) universal validity and reliability. Considering more practical applications, Leise and El Sayed (2009) reminded faculty to

consider ease of creation, ease of use, and program assessment value. Rubrics that are difficult to create and use or are of little value to the program are not worth the time and effort they take to develop.

For implementation of the 2020 CEC Initial Practice-Based Standards, EPPs should develop rubrics that evaluate what they want to *see* in action, not merely documents candidates have *produced*. Faculty have seen many times

the candidate who was able to produce a written lesson plan with excellent goals, objectives, I Do, We Do, etc., but not able to implement a lesson plan effectively with students. EPPs should develop rubrics that are written in language that is easy for candidates to understand and can be used across instructors. Each rubric element, aligned with Standards/Components, should represent a developmental sequence from level to level. Proficiency level descriptors should be defined in actionable, performance-based, or observable terms. Without meaningful descriptors, the simple use of rating scales (e.g., 1-4) for proficiency levels does not provide the basis for consistent evaluation across instructors, nor does it provide constructive feedback to candidates.

In several states, EPPs are required to use the edTPA or specific Teacher Work Samples (TWS). These assessments include their own rubrics, which may not be aligned with the 2020 CEC K-12 Initial Practice-Based Standards. If the EPP is applying for national accreditation, they might consider creating an additional rubric specifically aligned to the CEC Standards and Components to reflect the required practice-based approach. Figure 5 illustrates a rubric element focused on creating a safe and productive learning environment for students with disabilities. While the primary focus of this element is Standard 6, Components 6.1 and 6.2, requiring candidates to implement explicit instruction aligns with Standard 5, Components 5.2 and 5.3. As described in Step 5, it is possible for one assessment to measure multiple Standards and Components.

One concern with the implementation of key assessments is their consistent application across evaluators, particularly when non-program faculty are supervising candidates in their clinical placements. EPPs need to provide their adjunct and clinical faculty with specific training and mentoring


in use of their required assessments. To monitor inter-rater reliability, EPPs may have faculty and/or experienced supervisors also score candidate performance in key areas.

STEP 6. IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR THE PROGRAM

The process of EPP design and assessment culminates with full implementation along with continuous monitoring of the carefully developed plans. Active participation of faculty throughout the process described above helps to ensure that the curriculum and assessments are implemented with fidelity. Achievement of intended program outcomes depends upon consistent and coherent execution.

Effective monitoring of both candidate and program performance requires EPP access to a high-quality data management system. The system should enable faculty, and typically candidates themselves, to enter, store, and retrieve necessary data. Desirable data systems also facilitate aggregation and disaggregation of data for analyses. Some EPPs use data systems that have been developed in-house for these purposes, but many choose one of the commercially available web-based assessment and eFolio systems, such as LiveText, Chalk & Wire, or Taskstream. Depending on the size and complexity of EPP offerings, designated Assessment Coordinators may be responsible for oversight of the system, training and support for users, and production of reports.

At regular intervals, EPP faculty should review the available data to monitor both candidate and program performance. Cumulative data on individual candidates allow faculty to see how they are progressing through their coursework and clinical experiences. By reviewing candidate performance each semester, faculty can intervene early to provide appropriate support to candidates who may be struggling.



EPPs need to provide their adjunct and clinical faculty with specific training and mentoring in use of their required assessments. To monitor inter-rater reliability, EPPs may have faculty and/or experienced supervisors also score candidate performance in key areas.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Virginia McLaughlin, Ed.D.

Virginia McLaughlin, Ed.D., is Chancellor Professor Emerita of the School of Education at William & Mary (W&M). From 1995-2013, she served as Dean of the School of Education. Dr. McLaughlin was a gubernatorially appointed member of the Virginia Board of Education from 2009-2013. She served on numerous boards for professional organizations including AACTE and NCATE, and she was President of the Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions (CADREI). Dr. McLaughlin co-chaired the CEC Standards Framing Paper Workgroup and Standards Development Workgroup.

Dee Berlinghoff, Ph.D.

Dee Berlinghoff, Ph.D., is Professor Emerita in the Division of Education at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY. She has been working in public education and higher education for over 30 years, serving as a classroom teacher, professor, and embedded coach for teachers. She spent the 2014-2015 school year on sabbatical working in a high-needs school identified by the New York State Education Department as "in need of improvement." Her responsibilities included modeling effective instructional strategies in classrooms, providing professional development, and embedded coaching. She is editor of the *Evidence-Based Instruction in Special Education* series, published by Slack, Inc. Dr. Berlinghoff served as President of the New York State Council for Exceptional Children, New York State Division for Learning Disabilities, and the Small Special Education Programs Caucus of the Teacher Education Division of CEC. She served on the presidential line of the Teacher Education Division of CEC and co-chaired the CEC Standards Development Workgroup. She is currently serving on the CEC Professional Standards and Practices Committee.

By reviewing data aggregated at the program level on at least an annual basis, faculty can discern patterns of EPP strengths, as well as areas of concern that may need to be addressed. When patterns of candidate performance on program assessments fall short of expectations, EPP faculty can recycle through relevant steps of the process to refine their curricular mapping, course syllabi, and assessments. Such continuous program improvement is the ultimate purpose of program evaluation. Additionally, systematic data collection, management, and analyses are essential for successful external program and accreditation reviews. Although specific requirements will vary, agencies expect EPPs to have rigorous assessment systems and to document use of data for student and program decision making.

CONCLUSION

The six-step process for program and assessment development presented above facilitates alignment of EPPs in special education with relevant standards, particularly CEC's 2020 Initial K-12 Standards. The approach includes: (a) understanding the Practice-Based Standards and available resources; (b) aligning CEC Standards with CEC's HLPs, InTASC and other applicable standards; (c) mapping the program to standards to identify gaps and redundancies; (d) developing course syllabi; (e) identifying key program assessments; and (f) implementing and monitoring the program. The approach is applicable for EPPs of any type and allows for innovation in program design while producing program completers who meet current expectations of the profession to be career-ready special educators. As

other Standards such as the CEC Advanced Preparation Standards become available, this six-step approach might be applied across licensure areas.

REFERENCES

- Bargainnier, S. (2003). Fundamentals of rubrics. *Pacific Crest*, 1-4. https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/ele/scholars/practices/Evaluating_Projects/Resources/Using_Rubrics.pdf
- Benedict, A., Holdheide, L., Brownell, M., & Foley, A. M. (2016). Learning to Teach: Practice-Based Preparation in Teacher Education. Special Issues Brief. *Center on Great Teachers and Leaders*. https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Learning_To_Teach.pdf
- Berlinghoff, D., & McLaughlin, V.L. (Eds.) (2022). *Practice-Based Standards for the Preparation of Special Educators*. Council for Exceptional Children.
- Boyd, D.J., Grossman, P.L., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2009). Teacher preparation and student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 31(4), 416-440.
- Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR). (n.d.) *PLO resource library*. <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/plo-resource-library/>
- Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation. (n.d.). *Syllabus functions*. <https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/syllabus-functions>
- Kennedy HLP Video Showcase (n.d). *High leverage practice videos*. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/9336362>
- Leise, C., & El-Sayed, M. (2009). Using rubrics for course assignments. *International Journal of Process Education*, 1(1). http://www.ijpe.online/2009/rubrics_assignmentsh.pdf
- McLeskey, J., Council for Exceptional Children, & Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform. (2017). *High-leverage practices in special education*. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children. <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CEC-HLP-Web.pdf>
- Mississippi Department of Education. (2021). *Special education growth rubric: Observation and feedback guidebook*. https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Of-fices/MDE/OA/OTL/Teacher%20Center/special_education_growth_rubric_guidebook_2021_002.pdf

Racial and Dis/Ability Equity-Oriented Educational Leadership Preparation

AUTHORS

Catherine K. Voulgarides
Susan L. Etscheidt
David I. Hernández-Saca

Journal of Special
 Education Preparation
 2(3), 20-30

© 2022 Voulgarides, Etscheidt and

Hernández-Saca
 Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0
 License

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.20-30

openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

In this paper we discuss the connection between the lack of special education specific preparation for leaders and decades of evidence of racial inequities in special education. In doing so, we have a four-fold purpose. First, we outline the basic Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) legal requirements that educational leadership preparation programs should provide prospective leaders. Second, we argue that educational leaders must develop a nuanced lens when engaging with the IDEA, informed by critical special and dis/Ability studies. Third, we provide a situated critique rooted in current IDEA racial equity monitoring to show how technical mandates are insufficient for assuring justice and equity on the ground level. And fourth, we propose three key components that should be added to special education leadership preparation programs in order to better prepare future administrators to achieve the goals of IDEA and reduce racial and dis/Ability disparities. We conclude it is imperative for future leaders to be equipped with the necessary IDEA legal literacy and critical dispositions so that educational equity and justice are possible for Black, Indigenous, Youth of Color (BIYOC) with and without dis/Abilities in schools.

KEYWORDS

Administrators, dis/Ability, leadership preparation, special education

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) significantly shapes how educators provide special education services to the nearly 7 million students served under the legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). IDEA also shapes how special education leaders, at both district and school levels, understand their work, develop their workflow, interact with families and caregivers, and provide services to students with dis/Abilities¹, among other factors (DeMatthews et al., 2020). Due to the significant impact of IDEA on practice, educational leadership preparation programs must assure that prospective administrators have the skills,

knowledge, and critical dispositions to meet the requirements of IDEA and effectively support special education programs in their schools and districts.

However, educational leaders often enter the field unprepared to assume their responsibilities regarding effective implementation of the IDEA. Educational leadership preparation programs do not provide prospective administrators with sufficient knowledge and field experiences in special education (Sun & Xin, 2019). Current administrators report a lack of preparedness to meet their duties for administering special education programs (NASSP, 2021), reporting “no special education training in their prin-

¹ We purposely write, dis-slash (/)-Ability or Abilities, to denote our interdisciplinary and intersectional Disability Studies in Education (DSE) paradigm, that focuses on the social, emotional, cultural, material and political constructions of both disability and ability in educational contexts. The capitalization of A is a reclaiming (Linton, 1998) of historically multiply marginalized youths such as Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color's (BIYOC) mis-labeling and treatment in special education. It also signifies a reclaiming of our Abilities outside the paradigm of special education identification, labeling and treatment systems that have caused psychological and social trauma and oppression for BIYOC students in education (Iqtadar et al., 2020; Katrell & Hernández-Saca, in press).

cial preparation programs” (Christensen et al., 2013, p. 104), and others exiting their preparation programs “unprepared or only somewhat prepared” (Schaaf et al., 2015, p. 178) to provide oversight to special education programs. The knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for the administration of special education programs have been a long-neglected area within university-based administrator preparation programs. In addition, failure to adequately prepare educational leaders during preservice contributes to non-compliance with the IDEA and costly litigation consequences for school districts (e.g., Pazey & Cole, 2013; Zirkel & Machin, 2012).

Moreover, the administrator’s lack of preparation in supporting special education programs in their schools and districts contributes to educational inequities (Voulgarides, 2018), especially those related to the intersection of race and dis/Ability which have plagued the educational system since the 1960s (see Dunn, 1968). While the IDEA includes provisions to address racial disproportionality in special education, inequities persist and remain a significant civil rights concern (Artiles, 2019; Skiba et al., 2008). Racial and dis/Ability inequity in special education outcomes includes the misdiagnosis and over-representation of Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color (BIYOC) in special education and the overuse of suspensions for BIYOC with dis/Abilities in schools (e.g., Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Inequities are more likely to occur around high-incidence and more subjective categories of special education classifications such as specific learning dis/Abilities, emotional behavioral disorders, intellectual dis/Abilities, speech and language impairments, and autism (Blanchett, 2006).

The inequities are the result of a confluence of factors related to, but not limited to: (a) punitive discipline policies and practices; (b) inadequate interventions and referrals; (c) inadequate

instruction and assessment; (d) differential access to educational opportunities; (e) weak family and community partnerships with schools; (f) misguided teacher expectations and misconceptions; (g) cultural dissonance, biases and institutional racism and ableism due to white and ability supremacy and; (h) changing district sociodemographic contexts (Iqtadar et al., 2020; Marsico, 2022; Skiba, et al., 2008; Voulgarides et al., 2013). The sources, causes, and magnitude of the disparities are extremely complex (Ahram et al, 2021; Artiles, 2019; Shifrer & Fish, 2020), and future educational leaders must be prepared to address these systemic racist and ableist challenges through a justice and equity-oriented educational policy lens.

PURPOSE AND PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Given the lack of special education specific preparation for leaders and decades of evidence of racial and dis/Abilities inequities, we have a four-fold purpose. One, we outline the basic IDEA legal requirements that educational leadership preparation programs should provide prospective leaders in order to ground our argument. Two, we argue that educational leaders must develop a nuanced lens when engaging with the IDEA, informed by critical special and dis/Ability studies. Three, we provide a situated critique rooted in current IDEA racial equity monitoring to show how technical mandates are insufficient for assuring justice and equity on the ground level. Four, we propose three key components to be “explicated [and] integrated into the curricular design of leadership preparation programs” (Zaretsky et al., 2008, p. 173) to better prepare future administrators to achieve the goals of IDEA and reduce racial and dis/Ability disparities. The key components consist of racial and dis/Ability equity-oriented educational leadership strategies, focused critical special education content, and expanded professional

advocacy and policy development.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND IDEA LITERACY

In this section we provide a brief overview of the IDEA related duties that leaders must attend to while in the field. We do this in order to ground our argument within current expectations for educational leaders and to show how current expectations do not sufficiently allow for racial and dis/Ability equity-oriented leadership to grow when interfacing with IDEA. We argue that although the core principles of IDEA are expansive, they are also fundamentally flawed and thus limit the capacity of leaders to truly strive for dis/Ability and racial equity and justice.

Leaders are expected to assure that their schools and districts have the proper supports in place to identify those students who have a disability and need special education (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)[3]) services within their school and as determined by an eligibility process aligned with IDEA evaluation requirements (20 U.S.C. § 1414 (a-c)). Yet the IDEA eligibility process is influenced by stereotypic and individualized views of disability (Perlin, 2009, p. 621), “individual and systematic bias” in child find which results in socioeconomic and racial disparities (Gumas, 2018, p. 415), and explicit biases and implicit associations which contribute to disproportionate representation in special education. Educational leaders must understand these influences and assure “non-discriminatory and equitable child find policies” occur (Grant, 2020, p. 127) in their schools.

Once identified, school and district level leaders are responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)[1]). The student’s education program must be developed in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d) (1)[A]) which must be created by a

properly constituted IEP team, which include the parent and the student (20 U.S.C. § 14(d)(1)[B]) and implemented by highly qualified teachers (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(14)[C]). However, FAPE is not a well-defined term and it must be interpreted on a student by student basis leaving room for individual discretion. In addition, there is an exceedingly low bar for FAPE, which fails to promote true individualization and student potential, and fails to articulate a reasonable progress standard (Cowin, 2018; Davison, 2016; Zimmer, 2018). Educational leaders must be aware of the dominant deficit-oriented and normalizing ideologies of the nature of disability (Annamma et al., 2013) which implicate the provision of FAPE.

The IDEA also requires that educational services be delivered in the least restrictive environment (LRE) (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)[5]). While well intended, Ryndak et al., (2014) note that the LRE principle legitimizes segregated placements. Sauer and Jorgenson (2016) proposed that the LRE continuum contributed to limited school experiences for students with more significant disabilities and linked the social practice of segregating students with more intensive needs to society's devaluation of disability and ableism. Reiner (2018) warned that the LRE continuum results in the "forced separation" of students with disabilities from non-disabled peers and "improper educational segregation" (p. 792). Educational leaders must provide a vision of inclusive placements for students with disabilities and professional development for educators to achieve that goal.

Educational leaders must also be (a) qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction, (b) knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and (c) knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local educational agency (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(B) [iv].) The educational leader must

guarantee that parents and children are afforded numerous procedural safeguards (20 U.S.C. § 1415(b)) and that building policies, procedures, and programs are consistent with state policies addressing funding, service provision, and personnel (20 U.S.C. § 1413(a)). These varied tasks require a significant amount of systemic, organizational, and legal knowledge on the part of leaders.

The IDEA compliance tools and accountability mechanisms available to educational leaders around the described tasks are often reported through State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR). The reports are designed to ensure compliance with various provisions of the IDEA statute, which local education agency (LEA) special education leaders must gather data and report upon to their respective SEAs. The reports rely upon technical measures of student outcomes (e.g., graduation rates) and evidence of compliance with IDEA provisions, but they do not account for underlying equity and justice concerns that may arise at the local level (e.g., Voulgarides et al., 2021).

Specifically, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides states and LEAs with an Indicator Data Table for Measurement of State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators and local educational leaders are responsible for collecting, reporting, and monitoring data for the indicators and priority targets. Each state must then publicly report local school district performance for the fourteen indicators. Three of these Indicators—SPP Indicators 4, 9, and 10, relate to racial inequity in special education classifications, placements, and suspensions of students with disabilities by race. Disproportionality scholarship focused on IDEA policy dimensions have revealed that OSEP's quantitative monitoring and interpretations constrained consideration of qualitative information pertinent to ascertaining whether patterns indicate a racial disparity or inequity (Sullivan

& Osher, 2019, p. 400) and that the technical remedies are inappropriate for addressing such a complex equity issue (Cavendish et al., 2014).

Indicator 4. This target requires that the rates of suspension and expulsion for LEAs and SEAs be monitored to assure these punitive practices are not disproportionately applied to students with IEPs, are not applied disproportionately by the race or ethnicity of those students, and that failure to comply with IDEA requirements for IEP development/implementation or for development of positive behavioral supports did not contribute to discrepancies or disproportionality.

Indicators 9. The SPP target for Indicator 9 requires LEAs and SEAs to report the percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Indicator 10. This target requires the reporting of the percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.

Any school district across the United States can be cited via IDEA SPP Indicators 4, 9, or 10 if there is numerical evidence of disparities in either classifications, placements or suspensions by race and disability. The SPP indicators have not abated the issue (Albrecht et al., 2012) and there is considerable state variability around SPP Indicator 4, 9, and 10 implementation (U.S. GAO, 2013). To this point Strassfeld (2016) states,

Current policy fails to adequately address disproportionality as a civil rights issue with accompanying remedies for traditionally under-represented racial and ethnic minority groups who are at-risk for discrimination within special education placements ... (and) signals to parents of students with disabilities that IDEA's monitoring and enforcement provisions for disproportionate representation lack substantive sanctions at the state- and district-level when LEAs fail to comply (p. 1140).

The IDEA monitoring approach involves “shaming, blaming, and punishing the ‘underperforming’” (Boeren, 2019, p. 280), which serves to rationalize public policy and gauge if the statute is meeting its legislative aims (Mahu, 2017). Policy analysts argue that the ambiguities and dysfunctions of such an accountability approach limit the opportunity for quality improvement in policy and practice (Hickman, 2022; Vakkuri & Johanson, 2020). Despite these issues, the SPP Indicator approach has become the primary means by which federal and state governments monitor and address racial inequity (e.g., Albrecht et al., 2012).

Thus, while the IDEA contains robust provisions and accountability mechanisms to assure the rights of students with disabilities are protected in schools and districts, the current and historical technicalities of IDEA, from a social justice lens, are insufficient. In turn, policies such as IDEA are inherently limited in their potential for engendering liberation, hope and equity for all. The preparation of educational leaders must be anchored in a justice and equity-oriented educational policy lens.

Moving Beyond Legal Requirements and Towards Justice and Equity

Given what leaders must know, the tools and resources they are provided via IDEA, and the need for more purposeful educational leadership and practice focused on equity and justice, we argue that future critical leaders must not only know what is required of them by IDEA, but they must also have the capacity to contextualize IDEA technical mandates in ways that account for longstanding racial and dis/Ability inequities as they collaborate and work with Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) families and youth with and without dis/Abilities. Therefore, we provide a critical framework that must be introduced alongside IDEA legal literacy in educational leadership preparation programs.

We root our call to criticality within the principles of disability justice which requires that white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism are challenged in policy and practice to dismantle ableism and racism (Berne et al., 2018). With this perspective we account for the underlying assumptions within the IDEA that need to be made explicit about the political, social, cultural, and economic implications regarding who benefits and who does not from the policy. In turn, we propose that education leaders be prepared to account for the *technical* (e.g., the principles of IDEA), *contextual* (e.g., student, teacher and parent voices and backgrounds and goals and dreams, etc.), and *critical* (e.g., issues of power and privilege and the role of intersectionality, etc.) aspects of policies and practices in the lives of BIPOC and their families inside and outside school systems. The lens must be presented *in tandem* with the need

to understand the statutes and principles of IDEA. For instance, assuring IDEA legal literacy does not and cannot account for the spirit of interdependence found in disability justice principles (Berne et al., 2018). IDEA legal literacy promotes decontextualized, numerical, and technical policy solutions that do not recognize how the construction of ability and dis/Ability are connected to economic and political constructions of personhood that devalue any deviation from “typical,” “normal,” and “able-bodiedness,” deeming dis/Ability as something to be fixed, remediated, and found via policy (e.g., Annamma et al., 2013). Given this, we define this operationalization and analysis of IDEA and special education as *critical special and dis/Ability studies in education*. Below, we begin to explicate how the lens can be used to promote critical use of IDEA through a case study.

A Case in Point: The Perils of Mandating Racial and Dis/Ability Equity

In this section we provide a vignette² that illustrates how IDEA legal literacy and technical compliance with IDEA are insufficient mechanisms for addressing the realities and needs of BIPOC students in schools. We provide the vignette so that the technical complexity of IDEA and the associated administrative burdens are illustrated to readers. The vignette may appear to present a simple problem of practice that can be easily remedied, yet its simplicity highlights how the critical, technical, and contextual elements of our framework are hidden when the law is taken at face value. Small compliance tweaks, which are easy to do, successfully mask underlying inequities through the guise of IDEA compliance. It is this ease, the ease of

2 The example is adapted from Voulgarides (2018) work on the intersection between IDEA compliance and racial and dis/Ability inequity in special education outcomes. The vignette takes place in a suburban locale because research has documented that a school district's location (e.g., suburban, urban, rural, and town) relates to the time frame within which a school district is able to address disproportionality (Voulgarides & Aylward, 2022).

unquestioned compliance with IDEA provisions, which must be named in order to foster a more just and equitable approach to special education leadership and IDEA administration.

Sunderville School District (SSD) was a socio-demographically diverse large suburban school district cited under IDEA SPP Indicator 4 for the high number of suspensions for students with dis/Abilities by race. Dylan [a BIPOC man and the assistant special education district administrator] was Lilla's (a BIPOC woman and the special education district administrator) self-described "foot soldier" and "hit man" for finding and addressing IDEA compliance issues in practice. Dylan said that in his first year in the district, he was able to "fix all of the noncompliance issues" associated with the citation and identified by the State "in a few months." He said the State compliance official who monitored the district's actions "appreciated" how swiftly the district had become compliant and that "he [the State official] had never seen a district become compliant so fast." Dylan was proud of his ability to facilitate compliance, but he was also aware of the limits of using compliance to address disproportionality. When Dylan found out the district would be cited again Under IDEA SPP Indicator 4, he was ready to "finesse the files" and "triage" which ones he thought the state would target in order to assure the district remained in full regulatory compliance. He admitted that he thought the IDEA compliance process was "all a horse-and-pony show," yet he felt obligated to make the changes because it was expected of him. "[Maintaining compliance] is great for me as a supervisor because I can fix little things, but it doesn't get to the root of the problem," which he attributed to racial and socio-economic tensions in the district.

As the vignette illustrates, the dis-

trict responses were perfunctory, quick fixes that resulted in minor adjustments to IDEA related paperwork and educational practices that symbolically "proved" compliance to state auditors, but did not actually engage with the critical, technical, and contextual elements that allowed for these perfunctory changes to occur unquestioned—all while discriminatory practices persisted in the district. Essentially, the leaders were able to take the corrective action required by a citation and indicated a level of IDEA legal literacy, but the related IDEA policies, procedures, and/or practices did not result in meaningful and substantive changes to practice that promoted racial and dis/Ability equity. The vignette also makes clear that educational leaders must move beyond IDEA compliance and towards critical understandings of how their IDEA administrative duties impact and sustain educational inequity through both reason and action (Burbules & Berk, 1999), as well as emotionality (De Sousa Santos, 2015; Zembylas, 2006; 2012).

In addition, when state education agency (SEA) auditors monitored the district's actions, they took paperwork evidence of IDEA compliance as an indication the district was addressing the locally occurring racial and dis/Ability inequity. The process obscured and evaded the individual and local practices which might provide insight into the "root" of racial, dis/Ability, and social-economic problems and inform reform efforts that are race, dis/Ability and other markers of difference conscious—a cornerstone for equity-oriented leadership.

The IDEA accountability mechanisms promote quick fixes to complex issues. These actions are harmful. They decontextualize the cultural-historical contexts of not only race-relations, but dis/Ability-relations inside and around schools (Hernández-Saca & Cannon, 2019; Thorius, 2019) and the power of IDEA to further act as a tool of exclusion (Ferri & Connor, 2005). In other

words, policy is not a neutral vehicle, but rather is ideologically and value driven (Linton, 1998; Purpel & McLaurin, 2004). Thus, uncritically complying with IDEA allows for unexamined power relations to persist and for inequities to continue under the guise of compliance.

Given this, educational leaders must not only know how special education systems work and what IDEA requires of them, but they must also know how to lead special education systems for racial and dis/Ability equity and justice by accounting for the technical, contextual and critical components of the practice of special education. A critical disability studies theoretical framework can be used to unpack how racist and ableist ideologies undergird the legislation, influence educational practice, and stifle the creativity and agency of educational leaders to imagine and create more just futures for students with dis/Abilities in schools, especially students who are multiply situated along race, gender, class, and language differences as they work to comply with the IDEA. In this sense, educational leaders will not only understand what is technically required via IDEA, but also how policy narratives influence local schooling practices that erase the sociocultural and intersectional lives of students within both special and general education (Hernández-Saca, 2017).

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PREPARATION

We propose that future critical leaders must be prepared to understand IDEA and also have the capacity to structure local district and school responses to the educational reality of racial and dis/Ability inequities which are sustained despite the accountability measures of the IDEA. Prospective leaders should be introduced to *policy as praxis* whereby critical consciousness is brought about not through intellectual effort alone but through praxis — through the authentic union of action and reflection and feeling (Burbules &

Berk, 1999). We suggest educational leadership preparation programs should focus on three key components related to IDEA administration and racial and dis/Ability inequity to assure prospective administrators have the knowledge and skills necessary to eradicate racial and dis/Ability disproportionality: 1) *Critical and Dis/Ability Educational Leadership Strategies*, 2) *Focused Critical Special and Dis/Ability Studies in Education Content*, and 3) *The Role of Professional Advocacy and Policy Development*. The content areas are further explicated below.

1. Critical and Dis/Ability Educational Leadership Strategies

The first content area will prepare future educational leaders to adopt a critical disability studies framework and an equity-oriented approach when implementing school policies and practices and reimagining the potential for policy to be used as a tool of liberation rather than oppression. For example, leaders will be provided with the meanings of four different models of dis/Ability—the medical, social, psycho-emotional, and intersectional models (Iqtadar et al., 2020)—so that the master narrative of the medical model of disability (Connor, 2013) is disrupted and issues of power, history, and identity are foregrounded in the daily practices of leaders to enable meso-level systemic change efforts for Disability Justice (Berne et al., 2018). Leaders will also be oriented to principles and tenets of Disability Justice and the framework of critical disability studies (Meekosha, & Shuttleworth, 2009), which includes centering disability within social, political, economic, cultural, emotional, and psychological contexts as opposed to the medical model. The approach leads to more emancipatory frameworks for liberation, freedom, and human dignity grounded in an interdisciplinary and intersectional model of dis/Ability.

We recognize that leaders must not only personally and profession-

ally develop, as outlined above, but they must also focus on achieving equity-at-large. For example, Fergus (2016) provides district and school-based staff the tools needed to examine locally occurring disparate patterns in gifted and talented placements, attendance, special education placements, suspensions rates and so forth—disaggregated by race, dis/Ability, gender and more, to inform district- and school-level responses to educational inequities. These nuanced analyses are impactful for systems change and can be coupled with mindset shifts that foster justice-oriented approaches to leadership.

Educational leadership preparation programs must also work to foster intersectional competence (e.g., Boveda & Weinberg, 2022). Doing so would assure that technical policy remedies will not and cannot be administered devoid of context, identity, and dynamics of power and privilege within local contexts. Boveda and Weinberg (2022) developed an intersectionally conscious collaboration protocol for teacher educators, which is based upon intersectional competence sub-constructs. We see value in applying and slightly adjusting these insights for educational leadership development. For example, the protocol requires educators, and we also submit leaders, to engage in instruction that includes student-oriented and collaboration-oriented considerations. For leaders, this could include collaborative and student oriented instructional programming, mission development, and fostering school learning climates that engage with a DisCrit Classroom Ecology model (Annamma & Morrison, 2018) designed to dismantle white and ability supremacy (also see DeMatthews, 2020). Another element of the protocol includes reflection and cogenerated dialogues to assist teachers, but also leaders, to challenge their assumptions about students and community members. The dialogues could strengthen collaboration inside

and outside of the classroom and school, which is critical for building anti-racist and anti-ableist relationships and communities of learning that are team oriented (Daniëls et al., 2019). We suggest the protocol be considered as a tool that provides leaders with opportunities to engage in *policy as praxis* on the ground with their students, teachers, staff, and community members.

In addition to these tools, substantive educational reform will be required at the policy level so that leaders have more intersectional and robust policy tools to address racial and dis/Ability inequities—further described in *The Role of Professional Advocacy and Policy Development* content area.

2. Focused Critical Special and Dis/Ability Studies in Education Content

The second area assures future educational leaders will study special education law, policies, and practices through critical case studies and problem-based learning approaches, with rich opportunities for personal and professional reflection focused on educational racial and dis/Ability equity and justice. Administrator preparation programs must provide the key elements of effective, innovative educational leadership programs (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012), including standards-based curriculum, field-based internships, and active instructional approaches to link theory to practice. The purposeful integration of conceptual frameworks addressing dis/Ability into these preparation strategies will be essential, as discussions of critical dis/Ability issues remain outside of current leadership discourse (e.g., Pazey & Cole, 2013).

Given this, administrator preparation programs must include instructional content related to divergent and interdisciplinary conceptualizations of dis/Ability and Disability Justice as it pertains to the work of leaders in schools and districts (see Bateman



Administrator
preparation

programs must include instructional content related to divergent and interdisciplinary conceptualizations of dis/Ability and Disability Justice as it pertains to the work of leaders in schools and districts.

& Bateman, 2014; Berne et al., 2018; Crockett, 2019; Hernandez-Saca et al., 2022). The critical lens must be aligned and integrated with the National Board Standards for Educational Leaders, which require administrators to (1) confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and dis/Ability or special status (Standard 3 Equity and Cultural Responsiveness); and (2) know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success (Standard 9 Operations and Management) (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). Such alignment will establish an integrated framework of inclusive social justice leadership (Pazey et al., 2012), which is interdisciplinary and intersectional in nature.

The work can also be supported through critical case studies and problem-based learning approaches that provide rich opportunities for personal and professional reflection. By marrying a critical lens with the technical work of leadership, preservice programs will better address the “dissonance between what educational leadership preparation programs are providing future school administrators and their on-the-job demands” (McHatton et al., 2010, p. 13). Thus, this content module should include the study of the IDEA compliance monitoring requirements within a socio-historical and cultural context—including the compliance indicators and with a focus on the disproportionality indicators. In doing so, future leaders will acquire the necessary IDEA legal knowledge while simultaneously recognizing the 60-year history of racial and dis/Ability inequities. Leaders can identify how they can become a mechanism for change when addressing the long-standing inequity, rather than an accomplice which highlights the policy to praxis imperative. This includes

orienting future leaders to frameworks that engage with the field of Disability Studies in Education and Critical Race Theory (e.g., DisCrit; see Annamma et al., 2013).

Selected chapters and quotes from the following three books can serve as content to engage in self and group study whereby leaders develop the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to grapple with the intersections of race and dis/Ability as it applies to policy and practice:

- Harry, B., & Ocasio-Stoutenburg, L. (2020). *Meeting families where they are: Building equity through advocacy with diverse schools and communities*. Teachers College Press.
- Fenning, P. A., & Johnson, M. B. (Eds.). (2022). *Discipline disparities among students with disabilities: Creating equitable environments*. Teachers College Press.
- Voulgarides, C.K. (2018). *Does Compliance matter in special education? IDEA and the hidden inequities of practice*. Teachers College Press.

This content based work requires educational leaders to engage with interdisciplinary tools of reflection, such as self-study in teacher education (Kosnik et al., 2006) which will invite leaders to self-reflect on not only their **professional** (e.g., professional roles, legal responsibilities, etc.) and **programmatic** (e.g., curriculum, assessment, school-wide policies and practices, local and state and national education policies) selves and responsibilities, but also their **personal** (e.g., positionality, identities, biography, and life experiences across time, etc.) selves as agents in an educational system. This is imperative because, in doing so, leaders will begin to engage in critical emotion praxis that accounts for the **technical** (e.g., the principles of IDEA), **contex-**

tual (e.g., student, teacher, and parent voices and backgrounds and goals and dreams, etc.), and *critical* (e.g., issues of power and privilege and the role of intersectionality, etc.) components of human interaction in education that relate to IDEA provisions (e.g., Zero-Reject/Child Find, Free-Appropriate-Public-Education, the Least Restrictive Environment, the Individualized Education Program (IEP), etc.).

3. The Role of Professional Advocacy and Policy Development

The third area will prepare future administrators to promote change at both the individual-, student-, and systems- level by serving as active social agents tackling racial and dis/Ability inequities at a broad scale. Through this strand, educational leaders can expand their role beyond the school and district context to influence educational policy development (Derrington & Anderson, 2020).

Advocacy and activism are critical components of an educational leader's work. Advocacy and activism have long been characterized as the process of "giving voice to those without voice or whose voices are not heard" by conceptualizing social needs, empowering those involved with mental health service provision, and identifying systemic complexities and barriers (Gray et al., 2020, p. 2) along social markers of differences such as race and dis/Ability. Leaders are uniquely situated to not only speak, but act with students and families to community stakeholders and state and local policy makers. Thus, professional advocacy and activism can be used to inform the public about current issues in schools and the education profession: "they [leaders] have insider knowledge about which new services to establish and which existing ones to expand or improve" (Bond, 2019, p. 77) due to the nature of their work. Relatedly, administrative advocates and activists can provide pragmatic solutions for system changes because

of their daily intersection with current educational policy, students, and families (Bradley-Levin, 2018; Weber et al. 2020). Therefore, this content area can prepare future administrators to understand both the role and the effects of professional advocacy and activism.

We want to be clear, however, that in promoting activism and advocacy we do not give voice to parents or students, since they already have voice. Rather, leadership preparation programs should promote activism and advocacy that leverages the tools and strategies of effective leaders to elevate caregiver, student, and community needs. Prospective educational leaders must study advocacy and activism as an ethically, morally bound, and legally protected activity, which includes promoting intervention at both the individual student level and the broader systems level (Oyen et al, 2020). In this way, future leaders will serve as active social change agents who identify and tackle inequities at their systemic roots, disrupting the long-standing norms and practices that can contribute to educational racial and dis/Ability equity. The approach implies future leaders must be active social change agents who serve as critical advocates and activists involved in advancing legal and sociopolitical movements inside and outside educational institutions (e.g., Scott & DeBray-Pelot, 2009).

For example, advocacy work could focus on expanding the policy tools leaders have to address racial and dis/Ability inequity in special education outcomes via IDEA. Advocacy efforts could be directed toward pushing legislators to consider how IDEA technical remedies and accountability mechanisms are limited in scope. The indicators, as currently structured, do not require an intersectional analysis, which is misaligned with our proposed framework. If this type of analysis and work were to occur, it is currently an undue burden on leaders, even though SEAs and LEAs must build the capacity to understand the indicators in

relationship to each other and to broader structural inequities. These efforts should be formalized through policy.

For example, no such analysis is required for graduation rates or successful post-secondary outcomes (Indicators 1 and 14) despite research confirming discrepancies for BIYOC students. Elbaum et al. (2014) found that district level reporting requirements of the State Performance Plan do not account for racial and ethnic discrepancies when evaluating district graduation rates against state performance targets. Similarly, racial and ethnic analysis of transition goals and services (Indicator 13) might reveal some reasons for the concerning post-school data. Dropout rates (Indicator 2) are not disaggregated by race or ethnicity, despite empirical evidence of an increased risk for Black students (Bradshaw et al., 2008). The proficiency rates for academic achievement standards (Indicator 3) or improved preschool skills (Indicator 7) do not require an examination for racial or ethnic subgroups, although research confirms that the provision of a beneficial, appropriate education is not achieved equally when comparing white students with dis/Abilities to their BIYOC counterparts (Artiles, 2019). Pak and Parsons (2020) propose that an analysis of instructional practices for students with dis/Abilities, particularly BIYOC, should "explicitly examine equity gaps when analyzing the effectiveness of inclusion or differentiation practices, rather than centering identity-neutral implementation factors that complicate the work of educators" (p. 3). The failure to report placement data in general education (Indicators 5 and 6) for racially and ethnically diverse students and to develop plans to remedy exclusion is not responsive to empirical calls for more inclusive settings for those students. Advocacy work for educational leaders could include efforts to expand these policy tools, as indicated here. And in line with the two other content areas described, this type of advocacy work would allow for a

critical special and dis/Ability studies in education lens to drive advocacy efforts in powerful ways.

In summary, these three content areas have the potential to provide prospective administrators the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that are necessary to confront racial and dis/Ability disproportionality, confront and alter marginalization and discriminatory practices, and improve educational outcomes for (BIYOC) – an approach congruent with systems-focused leadership approaches that center justice and equity (Honig & Honsa, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Educational leadership preparation programs must assure that prospective administrators have the critical skills, knowledge, and dispositions to meet the requirements of IDEA and effectively support social change and justice. These competencies, both legal literacy and a *critical special and dis/Ability studies in education lens*, have been a long-neglected area within university-based administrator preparation programs. By explicitly integrating our three proposed content areas, prospective administrators will be better prepared to achieve compliance with the IDEA, advanced critical racial and dis/Ability educational equity, and improve educational outcomes for all children, but in particular for Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color.

REFERENCES

- Ahram, R., Voulgarides, C. K., & Cruz, R. A. (2021). Understanding disability: High-quality evidence in research on special education disproportionality. *Review of Research in Education*, 45(1), 311-345. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X20985069>
- Albrecht, S.F., Skiba, R.J., Losen, D.J., Chung, C.G., & Middelberg, L. (2012). Federal policy on disproportionality in special education: Is it moving us forward? *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 23(1), 14-25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1044207311407917>
- Annamma, S. A., Boelè, A. L., Moore, B. A., & Klingner, J. (2013). Challenging the ideology of normal in schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17(12), 1278-1294. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360316.2013.802379>
- Annamma, S. A., Connor, D., & Ferri, B. (2013). Dis/ability critical race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the intersections of race and dis/ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 16(1), 1-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2012.730511>
- Annamma, S., & Morrison, D. (2018). Dis-Crit classroom ecology: Using praxis to dismantle dysfunctional education ecologies. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 73, 70-80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.03.008>
- Artiles, A. J. (2019). Fourteenth annual Brown lecture in education research: Reenvisioning equity research: Disability identification disparities as a case in point. *Educational Researcher*, 48(6), 325-335. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X19871949>
- Bateman, D. F., & Bateman, C. F. (2014). *A principal's guide to special education* (3rd ed.). Council for Exceptional Children.
- Berne, P., Morales, A. L., Langstaff, D., & Invalid, S. (2018). Ten principles of disability justice. *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, 46(1), 227-230.
- Blanchett, W. J. (2006). Disproportionate representation of African American students in special education: Acknowledging the role of white privilege and racism. *Educational Researcher*, 35(6), 24-28. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X035006024>
- Boeren, E. (2019). Understanding Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on "quality education" from micro, meso and macro perspectives. *International Review of Education*, 65(2), 277-294. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-019-09772-7>
- Bond, N. (2019). Effective legislative advocacy: Policy experts' advice for educators. *The Educational Forum*, 83(1), 75-89. <https://doi.org.proxy.lib.uni.edu/10.1080/00131725.2018.1505992>
- Boveda, M., & Weinberg, A. E. (2022). Centering racialized educators in collaborative teacher education: The development of the intersectionally conscious collaboration protocol. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 45(1), 8-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08884064211062874>
- Bradley-Levine, J. (2018). Advocacy as a practice of critical teacher leadership. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, 9(1), 47-62.
- Bradshaw, C. P., O'Brennan, L. M., & McNeely, C. A. (2008). Core competencies and the prevention of school failure and early school leaving. *New directions for child and adolescent development*, 2008(122), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.226>
- Burbules, N. C., & Berk, R. (1999). Critical thinking and critical pedagogy: Relations, differences, and limits. In T.S. Popkewitz, & L. Fendler (Eds.), *Critical theories in education: Changing terrains of knowledge and politics* (pp. 45-65). Routledge.
- Cavendish, W., Artiles, A. J., & Harry, B. (2014). Tracking inequality 60 years after Brown: Does policy legitimize the racialization of disability? *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, 14(2), 30-40. <https://doi.org/10.5555/2158-396X.14.2.30>
- Christensen, J., Siegel Robertson, J., Williamson, R., & Hunter, W.C. (2013). Preparing educational leaders for special education success: Principals' perspective. *The Researcher*, 25(1), 94-107.
- Connor, D. J. (2013). Who "owns" dis/ability? The cultural work of critical special educators as insider-outsiders. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 41(4), 494-513. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2013.838741>
- Cowin, J. (2018). Is that appropriate? Clarifying the IDEA's free appropriate public education standard post-Andrew F. *Northwestern University Law Review*, 113(3), 587-628.
- Crockett, J. B. (2019). The preparation of leaders for special education in the twenty-first century. In J. B. Crockett, B. S. Billingsley, & M. L. Boscardin (Eds.) *Handbook of leadership and administration for special education* (2nd ed). Routledge.
- Davison, L. (2016). Andrew F. Ex Rel. Joseph F. v. Douglas County School Dist. Re-1: A Missed Opportunity. In *Denver Law Review Forum*. Vol. 94, No. 1, p. 7.
- Davis, S. H., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). Innovative principal preparation programs: What works and how we know. *Planning and Changing*, 43, 25-45.
- Daniëls, E., Hondeghem, A., & Dochy, F. (2019). A review on leadership and leadership development in educational settings. *Educational Research Review*, 27, 110-125. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2019.02.003>
- Derrington, M. L., & Anderson, L. S. (2020). Expanding the role of teacher leaders: Professional learning for policy advocacy. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 28(68), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.28.4850>
- DeMatthews, D. (2020). Addressing racism and ableism in schools: A DisCrit leadership framework for principals. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 93(1), 27-34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2019.169041>
- DeMatthews, D. E., & Knight, D. S. (2019). The Texas special education cap: Exploration into the statewide delay and denial of support to students with disabilities. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(2), 1-34. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14507/epaa.27.3380>
- DeMatthews, D. E., Kotok, S., & Serafini, A. (2020). Leadership preparation for special education and inclusive schools: Beliefs and recommendations from successful principals. *Journal of Research on leader-*

- ship *Education*, 15(4), 303-329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775119838308>
- De Sousa Santos, B. (2015). Manifesto for Good Living/Buen Vivir. In *Epistemologies of the South* (pp. 14-14). Routledge.
- Dunn, L. M. (1968). Special education for the mildly retarded—Is much of it justifiable? *Exceptional Children*, 35(1), 5-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440296803500101>
- Elbaum, B., Myers, N. D., Rodriguez, R. J., & Sharpe, S. T. (2014). Graduation rates of students with disabilities: Issues and implications for district accountability. *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, 27(1), 3-12.
- Fergus, E. (2016). *Solving disproportionality and achieving equity: A leader's guide to using data to change hearts and minds*. Corwin Press.
- Fenning, P. A., & Johnson, M. B. (Eds.). (2022). *Discipline disparities among students with disabilities: Creating equitable environments*. Teachers College Press.
- Ferri, B. A., & Connor, D. J. (2005). Tools of exclusion: Race, disability, and (re) segregated education. *Teachers College Record*, 107(3), 453-474. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2005.00483.x>
- Grant, C. (2020). Special education by zip code: Creating equitable child find policies. *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal*, 52, 127 – 177.
- Gray, J. S., Kaslow, N. J., & Allbaugh, L. J. (2020). Introduction to the special issue: Advocacy in public service settings. *Psychological Services*, 17(S1). <https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000497>
- Gumas, N. (2018). Socioeconomic and racial disparities in public special education: Alleviating decades of unequal enforcement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in New York City. *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* 8, 398 – 453.
- Harry, B., & Ocasio-Stoutenburg, L. (2020). *Meeting families where they are: Building equity through advocacy with diverse schools and communities*. Teachers College Press.
- Hernández-Saca, D. I. (2017). Reframing the master narratives of dis/ability at my intersections: An outline of an educational equity research agenda. *Critical Disability Discourses/Discours critiques dans le champ du handicap*, 8, 1-30. <https://cdd.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cdd/article/view/39723>.
- Hernández-Saca, D., & Cannon, M. A. (2019). Interrogating disability epistemologies: Towards collective dis/ability intersectional emotional, affective and spiritual autoethnographies for healing. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 32(3), 243-262. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1576944>
- Hernández-Saca, D., Pearson H., & Voulgarides, C.K. (Eds.). (2022). *Understanding the boundary between disability studies and special education through consilience, self-study, and radical love*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hickman, B. J. (2022). The implementation of results-driven accountability: A systemic approach to large-scale initiatives. *Journal of Education*, 202(1), 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022057420943175>
- Honig, M. I., & Honsa, A. (2020). Systems-focused equity leadership learning: Shifting practice through practice. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 15(3), 192-209. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1942775120936303>
- Iqtadar, S., Hernández-Saca, D. I., & Ellison, S. (2020). “If it wasn’t my race, it was other things like being a woman, or my disability”: A qualitative research synthesis of disability research. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 40(2). <https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v40i2.6881>
- Katrell, S. & Hernández-Saca, D.I. (In Press). Ableism/Ableist Supremacy: The impact of Intersectional Disablism. In Gonzalez, T., & Tefera, A. (Guest Eds). Winn, M. & Winn, T. (Eds). *Encyclopedia of Social Justice (ESJ)*. Bloomsbury Publishers.
- Kosnik, C., Beck, C., Freese, A. R., & Samaras, A. P. (Eds.). (2006). *Making a difference in teacher education through self-study: Studies of personal, professional and program renewal* (Vol. 2). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Linton, S. (1998). *Claiming disability: Knowledge and identity*. NYU Press.
- Losen, D. J., & Gillespie, J. (2012). Opportunities suspended: The disparate impact of disciplinary exclusion from school. *Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles*.
- Mahu, R. J. (2017). Rationalization and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Exploring the characteristics of multi-level performance monitoring and improvement. https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2841&context=oa_dissertations.
- Marsico, R. D. (2022). The Intersection of race, wealth, and special education: The role of structural inequities in the IDEA. *NYLS Law Review*, 66(2), 207-244.
- Meekosha, H., & Shuttleworth, R. (2009). What’s so ‘critical’ about critical disability studies? *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 15(1), 47-75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1323238X.2009.11910861>
- McHatton, P. A., Boyer, N. R., Shaunessy, E., Terry, P. M., & Farmer, J. L. (2010). Principals’ perceptions of preparation and practice in gifted and special education content: Are we doing enough? *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 5(1), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/194277511000500101>
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, 2021). *Supporting Principals as Leaders of Special Education*. <https://www.nassp.org/top-issues-in-education/position-statements/supporting-principals-as-leaders-of-special-education/>
- National Council on Disability (2018.). *IDEA Series: Federal Monitoring and Enforcement of IDEA*. https://ncd.gov/sites/default/files/NCDSegregation-SWD_508.pdf.
- National Policy Board for Educational Administration [NPBEA] (2015). *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*. https://www.npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Professional-Standards-for-Educational-Leaders_2015.pdf.
- Oyen, K. A., Eklund, K., & von der Embse, N. (2020). The landscape of advocacy in public schools: The role of school psychologists. *Psychological Services*, 17(S1), 81–85. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000373>
- Pak, K., & Parsons, A. (2020). Equity Gaps for Students with Disabilities. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*. <https://urbanejournal.gse.upenn.edu/volume-17-spring-2020/equity-gaps-students-disabilities>
- Pazey, B. L., Cole, H. A., & Garcia, S. B. (2012). Chapter 11: Toward a framework for an inclusive model of social justice leadership preparation: Equity-oriented leadership for students with disabilities. *Advances in Educational Administration*, 193–216. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3660\(2012\)0000014015](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3660(2012)0000014015)
- Pazey, B. L., & Cole, H. A. (2013). The role of special education training in the development of socially just leaders: Building an equity consciousness in educational leadership programs. *Educational administration quarterly*, 49(2), 243-271. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X12463934>
- Perlin, M. L. (2009). “Simplify you, classify you”: Stigma, stereotypes and civil rights in disability classification systems. *Georgia State University Law Review*, 25, 607-640.
- Purpel, D. E., & McLaurin, W. M. (2004). The moral and spiritual crisis in American education. *Counterpoints*, 262, 42-74.
- Reiner, K. (2018). Least restrictive environments: Where segregated, self-contained special education classrooms fall on the continuum of placements and why mainstreaming should occur with same-age peers. *Michigan State Law Review*, 743-792.
- Ryndak, D. L., Taub, S., Jorgensen, C. M., Gonsier-Gerdin, J., Arndt, K., Sauer, J., Ruppard, A. L., Morningstar, M. E., & Allcock, H. (2014). Policy and the impact on placement, involvement, and progress in general education: Critical issues that require rectification. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 39(1), 65-74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796914533942>
- Sauer, J. S. & Jorgensen, C. M. (2016). Still caught in the continuum: A critical analysis of least restrictive environ-

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Catherine K. Voulgarides

Catherine K. Voulgarides is an assistant professor in the Department of Special Education at the City University of New York (CUNY)—Hunter College. Her scholarship is primarily focused on understanding how equity, access, and opportunity are constructed in educational policy and law, how educational policies and laws impact long standing educational inequities; and how the social, historical, and cultural contexts of schools and the teaching and learning process relate to racial inequity.

Susan L. Etscheidt

Susan Larson Etscheidt is a professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Northern Iowa. As a special education law and policy scholar, her work involves a critical analysis of legislation, litigation, educational policy, and school practices which impact the lived experiences of students with disabilities and their families. Her scholarship seeks to illuminate the inequalities of educational opportunity for students with disabilities and to promote systemic educational reform.

David I. Hernández-Saca

David I. Hernández-Saca is an associate professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Northern Iowa. My research agenda is problematizing the common sense assumptions of what learning disabilities (LD) are. I have three lines of inquiry: 1) The emotional impact of LD labeling on conceptions of self, 2) The role of emotion and affect in teacher learning about social justice issues, and 3) Examining violence within the academy against historically multiply marginalized and non-hegemonic scholars at their intersections of power and identities for their well-being and healing.

- ment and its effect on placement of students with intellectual disability. *Inclusion* (4)2, 56–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200511>
- Schaaf, M., Williamson, R., & Novak, J. (2015). Are midwestern school administrators prepared to provide leadership in special education? *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 27(2), 172-182.
- Scott, J., Lubienski, C., & DeBray-Pelot, E. (2009). The politics of advocacy in education. *Education Policy*, 23, 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904808328530>
- Shiffrer, D. & Fish, R. (2020). A multi-level investigation into contextual reliability in the designation of cognitive health conditions among U.S. children. *Society and Mental Health*, 10 (2), 180-197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156869319847243>
- Skiba, R. J., Simmons, A. B., Ritter, S., Gibb, A. C., Rausch, M. K., Cuadrado, J., & Chung, C. G. (2008). Achieving equity in special education: History, status, and current challenges. *Exceptional Children*, 74(3), 264-288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290807400301>
- Strassfeld, N. M. (2016). The future of IDEA: Monitoring disproportionate representation of minority students in special education and intentional discrimination claims. *Case Western Reserve Law Review*, 67(4), 1122-1151.
- Sullivan, A. L., & Osher, D. (2019). IDEA's double bind: A synthesis of disproportionality policy interpretations. *Exceptional Children*, 85(4), 395-412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402918818047>
- Sun, A. Q., & Xin, J. F. (2019). School principals' opinions about special education services. *Preventing School Failure*, 64(2), 106-115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2019.1681354>
- Thorius, K. A. (2019). Facilitating en/counters with special education's cloak of benevolence in professional learning to eliminate racial disproportionality in special education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 32(3), 323-340. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1576945>
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Office of Special Education Programs. (2020). *41st Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2019*. Washington D.C. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2019/parts-b-c/41st-arc-for-idea.pdf>
- U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). (2013). *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Standards Needed to Improve Identification of Racial and Ethnic Overrepresentation in Special Education*. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-13-137.pdf>
- Vakkuri, J., & Johanson, J. E. (2020). Failed promises – performance measurement ambiguities in hybrid universities. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 17(1), 33-50.
- Voulgarides, C. K., (2018). *Does compliance matter in special education? IDEA and the hidden inequities of practice*. Teachers College Press.
- Voulgarides, C. K., & Aylward, A. (2022). Enduring equity questions: A sequence analysis of citations in response to racial inequity via the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10442073221114102>
- Voulgarides, C. K., Aylward, A., Tefera, A., Artiles, A. J., Alvarado, S. L., & Noguera, P. (2021). Unpacking the logic of compliance in special education: Contextual influences on discipline racial disparities in suburban schools. *Sociology of Education*, 94(3), 208-226.
- Voulgarides, C. K., Zwerger, N., & Noguera, P. (2013). Identifying the root causes of disproportionality. New York, NY: Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools. https://education.hunter.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Voulgarides-Zwerger-and-Noguera-Identifying_the_Root_Causes_of_Disproportionality.pdf
- Weber, S., Smith, J., Ayers, K., & Gerhardt, J. (2020). Fostering disability advocates: A framework for training future leaders through interprofessional education. *Psychological Services*, 17(S1), 120-127. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/ser0000386>
- Zaretsky, L., Moreau, L., & Faircloth, S. (2008). Voices from the field: School leadership in special education. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 54(2). <https://doi.org/10.11575/ajer.v54i2.55220>
- Zembylas, M. (2006). *Teaching with emotion: A postmodern enactment*. Information Age Publishing.
- Zembylas, M. (2012). The affective (re) production of refugee representations through educational policies and practices: Reconceptualising the role of emotion for peace education in a divided country. *International Review of Education*, 58(4), 465-480. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-012-9296-2>
- Zimmer, A. (2018). Solving the IDEA Puzzle: Building a better special education development process through Andrew F. *New York University Law Review*, 93(4), 1014-1052.
- Zirkel, P. A., & Machin, A. C. (2012). The special education case law iceberg: An initial exploration of the underside. *Journal of Law and Education*, 41, 483-512.

Expanding Preservice Special Educators' Conceptions about Disability Through Young Adult Literature

AUTHORS

Lauren B. Zepp
Carlyn O. Mueller
Melinda M. Leko

Journal of Special
Education Preparation
2(3), 32-38

© 2022 Zepp, Mueller and Leko
Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0
License

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.32-38
openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

This article provides information and resources to help special education teacher educators improve preservice teachers' competence for working with disabled¹ students and addressing ableism in their classrooms, by incorporating young adult (YA) literature into special education teacher preparation experiences. Embedding YA literature with representations of disability can address ableism in education by helping preservice special education teachers to conceptualize disabled adolescents differently. Current approaches to teacher education may reinforce dysconscious ableism (Broderick & Lalvani, 2017) and undergird educational segregation on the basis of disability. After reviewing current literature on addressing ableism during teacher preparation and using YA literature in teacher education, this article models how special education teacher educators can critically examine YA texts by providing criteria for evaluating representations of disability and a unit plan with three lessons for use in an introductory special education course. A bibliography of young adult books featuring characters with disabilities is also provided.

KEYWORDS

Ableism, disability studies, teacher preparation, young adult literature

Ableism remains an active system of oppression in American education, resulting in the stigmatization of disability and exclusionary educational practices (Broderick & Lalvani, 2017; Lalvani & Broderick, 2013; Storey, 2007). One consequence of this is the way many PK-12 schools have not recognized disability as an aspect of diversity (Connor & Gabel, 2010) or included it in curriculum (Nusbaum & Steinborn, 2019). To correct this, recommendations for combating ableism in schools include: (a) explicitly including ableism in diversity initiatives; (b) including disability content in literature, curriculum, and school activities; (c) hiring teachers with disabilities; (d) expanding teachers' conceptions about disability; and (e) focusing teacher learning

on multi-modal communication and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Hehir, 2002; Storey, 2007).

General and special education teachers' beliefs and attitudes about disability may contribute to the perpetuation of ableism, and as Hehir (2002) and Storey (2007) highlight, teacher education can address this by expanding preservice teachers' conceptions about disability (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2019). Special education teacher preparation plays a critical role in influencing educators' attitudes about inclusion and disabled students, in addition to equipping teachers with the requisite pedagogical content knowledge (Bialka et al., 2018). Thus, special education teacher preparation can use social justice and equity frameworks to disrupt ableism and other systems of oppression (King, 1991). One way

¹ This article uses identity-first language (e.g., disabled students) rather than person-first language (e.g., students with disabilities). Identity-first language is preferred by disability rights activists and used in disability studies literature toward the goal of recognizing disability as a valued identity (Back et al., 2016; Gernsbacher, 2017).

special education teacher educators can engage in this work is through preparing teachers to critically evaluate and include representations of disability in their instruction.

Anti-ableist curricula and disability studies have not been emphasized in PK-12 schools and special education teacher preparation programs along with other social justice efforts, namely anti-racism and anti-sexism (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013; Muellerr, 2021; Nusbaum & Steinborn, 2019). The limited preparation of special education teachers on student disability identity development and stigma around disability labeling contributes to what Broderick & Lalvani (2017) term “dysconscious ableism,” or limited, distorted understandings of disability (Muellerr, 2021). Dysconsciousness (King, 1991), includes perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs that construct and reinforce inequity, particularly around race and other marginalized identity categories. Dysconsciousness, then, creates particular kinds of attitudes and knowledge that often distorts work towards equitable education. Among other experiences, this is evident through the continued use of disability awareness days in special education teacher preparation, which often feature problematic simulations of disability (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013). Challenging ableism as a system requires deconstructing notions of ability and normative bodyminds² in the classroom, both through teachers’ own conceptions, as well as curricular and pedagogical choices.

Special education teacher preparation can engage in this deconstructive work as part of critical, transformative pedagogy aimed at expanding preservice teachers’ conceptions using literature. Young adult (YA) literature offers a unique opportunity to model

evidence-based, inclusive pedagogy and simultaneously expand preservice special education teachers’ knowledge about disability when integrated into introductory coursework (Curwood, 2013; Kurtts & Gavigan, 2017). This is especially important for prospective special education teachers, who need an understanding of the realities of inequity in schools, alongside the capacity to reflect on their own role and growth inside that reality (King, 1991). Reading and reflecting on representations of disability, especially those that meet quality indicators, offers preservice teachers the opportunity to engage in such a reflective growth experience (Kurtts & Gavigan, 2017).

Several studies have demonstrated the positive impacts of incorporating literature on disability within teacher preparation (Donne, 2016; Marable et al., 2010; Marlowe & Maycock, 2001). Donne (2016) employed an action research design to address the limited emphasis on augmentative and assistive communication (AAC) devices in teacher preparation programs. Participants ($n=10$) were graduate-level preservice teachers enrolled in a course on special education, which included an assigned YA novel focused on the use of AAC. The primary themes identified from written artifacts and discussions were understandings of disability, communication as a universal human need, AAC devices, collaborating with families, friendship, and inclusive education. Similarly, Marable and colleagues (2010) utilized book talks to investigate the impact of literature on preservice teachers’ knowledge of and attitudes toward disability. Undergraduate students ($n=40$) read a nonfiction book on disability as part of their introductory special education course. From written reflec-

tions, the researchers identified themes of increased insight into the complexity of disability, enhanced empathy, and more expressed respect for disabled people. Kurtts and Gavigan (2017) examined the impact of bibliotherapy on preservice teachers’ understandings of disability. Their qualitative analysis highlighted the ways in which preservice teachers “began to see disabilities as a very human condition that goes beyond their factual textbook knowledge about disabilities” (Kurtts & Gavigan, 2017, p. 26). Results of these studies indicate that book study using YA literature can be a useful way to both shift preservice teacher attitudes about disability and increase the likelihood they will apply these attitudes to their future instructional practice.

Building upon the work of Blaska (2004) and Hazlett et al. (2011) and addressing the limited resources for special education teacher educators to integrate representation of disability into their instruction, we offer updated criteria for evaluating YA literature, model the application of the criteria with selected YA texts, and provide accompanying lesson plans use in special education teacher preparation. The criteria can be applied by both special education teacher educators and PK-12 special education teachers to evaluate texts with representations of disability through a feminist disability studies lens. For the purposes of this article, we applied the criteria to selected texts for use by special education teacher educators and recommend integrating this work into introductory coursework on disabilities, which often address each category of disability identified by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). YA literature can supplement the overview of disability categories under IDEA and help preservice special educators

² Bodyminds is a term used in critical disability studies. Margaret Price defines the bodymind as “the imbrication (not just the combination) of the entities usually called ‘body’ and ‘mind’” (2015, p. 270). We use the term here to intentionally acknowledge multiple categories of disability (e.g., emotional/behavioral disability, physical disability) and to connect special education to critical disability studies (Schalk, 2017).

FIGURE 1: Criteria for Evaluating Young Adult Literature

QUESTION	YES	NO
Is the author disabled? If not, consider what their knowledge and background is in relation to disability.		
Does the text portray disabled adolescents as needing peer relationships (platonic or romantic)?		
Does the text portray disabled adolescents as interested in sex and dating (or identify the character as asexual)?		
Does the text use identity-first language or discuss the choice of language in referring to disabled characters?		
Do the disabled characters have intersectional identities and represent diverse races, socioeconomic status, religions, languages, sexualities, and gender identities?		
Does the text emphasize competence, self-determination, and bodily autonomy?		
Do the disabled characters have relationships with others without having to prove themselves or be exceptional?		
Are the disabled characters shown as complex, three-dimensional humans with dynamic personalities, emotions, and interests described with realistic details?		
Are disabled characters presented as more than inspirational, victims, or heroes?		
Are events in the plot related to issues other than disability?		

develop more robust and nuanced understandings of disabled peoples' experiences. The corresponding lesson plans were designed for use in such an introductory special education course and include layered texts, key vocabulary, and reflection questions to support preservice teachers in developing new attitudes about disability, as well as understandings of the disability labels used in special education.

Updated Criteria for Evaluating Young Adult Literature

The first step for special education teacher educators to take in this process is selecting texts with representations of disability to include in introductory special education courses. Many representations of disability perpetuate harmful stereotypes and

assumptions about disability, and these stereotypes contribute to low academic and social expectations for disabled students, as well as exclusionary educational practices (Blaska, 2004; Broderick & Lalvani, 2017). Thus, clear criteria are necessary for teacher educators to evaluate the quality of young adult literature featuring disabled characters (Prater et al., 2006).

There are several existing criteria for evaluating disability representation in children's and YA literature (e.g., Blaska, 2004; Hazelett et al., 2011). From an edition of *Disability Studies Quarterly* on disability culture in children's literature, Blaska (2004) addressed the limited inclusion of disability in children's literature. After reviewing 500 bestselling and award-winning children's books yielded only 10

books featuring a disabled character, Blaska (2004) established criteria for reviewing literature featuring disabled characters, which included promoting empathy, acceptance, and respect, as well as portraying disability in a realistic manner.

Hazelett and colleagues (2011) explored intersections of sexuality, gender, and disability in YA literature. The authors provide a brief review of titles that portray characters with intersectional identities, as well as recommendations for evaluating YA novels to avoid relying on problematic representations of queer and disabled youth. The authors recommend YA texts feature disabled, LGBTQ characters and include other identity categories, including racial, socioeconomic, age, family, and religious diversity.

FIGURE 2: Selected Young Adult Literature

TITLE	AUTHOR	BRIEF SUMMARY
<i>Say What You Will</i>	Cammie McGovern (2015)	Amy has cerebral palsy and uses both a mobility aid and an AAC device. Tired of being isolated from her peers because of having an adult aide with her at school, she convinces her parents to hire peer assistants for her senior year of high school. One of her peer assistants, Matthew, has undiagnosed obsessive-compulsive disorder. Amy and Matthew develop a friendship over the school year that grows into romantic feelings for each other. Their relationship is challenged by the transition from high school to adult life. This text addresses issues of gender, sexuality, disability, and bodily autonomy.
<i>Good Kings Bad Kings</i>	Susan Nussbaum (2013)	This novel portrays disabled teenagers who are institutionalized. They fall in love, make friendships, and engage in the difficult process of constructing their identities on the verge of adulthood. Their story examines the emotional and physical consequences of exclusion based on disability status, as well as the importance of self-determination in adolescents' lives.
<i>Queens of Geek</i>	Jen Wilde (2017)	In this feminist, queer take on geek culture, two friends discover love and friendship in the context of their favorite fandoms. Charlie is an outgoing vlogger and actress while Taylor, who is Autistic, prefers to be out of the spotlight and experiences social anxiety. Charlie is straight-sized, Asian, and bisexual. Taylor describes herself as chubby, and harbors a secret crush on their friend, Jaime. With humor and dignity, this book tackles ableism, body shaming, and sexuality.

The authors also suggest representing varied examples of the lives of queer and disabled youth, including characters who care and nurture others, possess unique talents, have productive lives with deep and complex emotions and personalities, and who wrestle with other issues unrelated to their disability or sexuality. (Hazelett et al., 2011).

Many of the criteria created by Blaska (2004) and Hazelett et al. remain relevant today; however, some need to be updated to reflect identity-first language and an explicit focus on anti-ableist classroom representation. Additionally, some existing criteria were not developed for evaluating YA literature specifically, thus the updated criteria we present here emphasize the importance of textual representations of peer relationships and authentic experiences of disabled

adolescents. We recommend that special education teacher educators model how to apply the criteria presented in Figure 1 to select YA literature with representations of disability as part of introductory special education coursework. The criteria can be applied using a yes/no response to each question. An affirmative response is not needed for every question to consider the text quality; rather a majority of the responses should be in the affirmative to judge a YA text as high-quality. After experiencing this process modeled in their coursework, future special educators will be better prepared to critically evaluate texts in their own teaching. Preservice special educators can practice applying these questions with the full list of YA books featuring disabled characters in the online *Supplemental Materials (Young Adult Books)*

SELECTED YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

As a model for special educator teacher educators, we have applied the criteria to three YA books featuring complex, disabled, teenaged characters and explicitly addressing adolescent romantic relationships. Plot summaries are provided in Figure 2. The selected texts provide examples of how novels dealing with sex and sexuality extend authentic representation of disability and challenge dominant conceptions about disabled people. In addition, the selected books can also help preservice teachers better understand disability, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, the barriers adults create for students with disabilities under the guise of helping them, and challenge presumptions of disabled people as desexualized or uninterested in romantic relationships.

Critical Evaluation of Selected YA Literature

For this paper, we selected examples of YA literature focused on romance and dating to address the recommendations from Hazelett et al., (2011) and Blaska (2004) that disabled characters should be presented as complex individuals with authentic experiences that include romantic relationships. While this is not the only dimension of diverse representations of disability in YA, there are few examples of YA literature that feature female, disabled characters as interested in sex and dating, and these examples offer special education teacher educators the opportunity to discuss these relationships with preservice teachers. Although the texts featured in Figure 2 represent significant contributions to diverse representations of disability and particularly of dating and romance, it is essential for special education teacher educators to model how to critically consider the depictions of disability and sexuality in the narrative so that preservice teachers are prepared to engage in this process. As an exemplar, we applied the criteria from Figure 1 to the three selected texts from Figure 2. Integrating this process into special education teacher preparation coursework will help preservice special educators become critical thinkers about disability representation in texts and eventually become more fluent in discerning types of disability representation, so that they can select texts for use in their own teaching. We have divided the critical evaluation into three areas to emphasize how to engage in conversation about types of disability representation.

Diverse Orientations and Identities

Across all three novels, the romantic relationships of disabled characters are portrayed as exclusively heterosexual. *Queens of Geek* (Wilde, 2017) includes a bisexual character; however, she is the friend of an Autistic person, Taylor, and does not identify

as disabled. This is particularly interesting because the author identifies as a bisexual, Autistic woman and states that she based Taylor's character on herself in the interview at the end of the novel (Wilde, 2017). As Hazelett and colleagues (2011) noted, it is important for representations of disability to include LGBTQ characters to represent the lived experiences of disabled teens more accurately.

Diverse Races and Ethnicities

Similarly, both *Queens of Geek* and *Say What You Will* (McGovern, 2015) portray disabled characters as White, even as other characters are identified as people of color. It is unclear if authors have difficulty depicting disabled characters with intersectional identities, or if such representation is not frequently published. Including disabled characters with diverse racial and ethnic identities is an important component of realistically portraying disability (Blaska, 2004) and avoids relying on problematic notions of disability as a monolith (Hazelett et al., 2011).

Author's Positionality

The authors of the texts have different relationships to disability, which ultimately impacts the way disability is represented (Wong, 2020). Two of the three texts, *Good Kings Bad Kings* (Nussbaum, 2013) and *Queens of Geek* (Wilde, 2017), are written by disabled authors. In contrast, *Say What You Will* (McGovern, 2015) is written by a parent of an Autistic child. A critical evaluation of this text reveals that this different authorial perspective impacts the representation of disability in the texts. For example, *Say What You Will* occasionally portrays disability as a flaw and something that would make platonic and romantic relationships with nondisabled people difficult or impossible. Amy, the main character in *Say What You Will*, is also presented as exceptional by excelling academically. This could be construed as an attempt

to make Amy inspirational and could convey the idea that disabled people must be extraordinary to deserve authentic relationships. As this example and analysis highlights, teachers' selection of texts must be accompanied by a critical lens on the depiction of disability and intersectional identities, including authorship of the text itself.

Lesson Plans

After selecting and critically evaluating texts, special education teacher educators can include YA literature with representations of disability in coursework. To support teacher educators in utilizing authentic representations of disability in their practice, online *Supplemental Materials (Lesson Plans)* provide a unit plan with three corresponding lesson plans for use in an introductory special education course. The lesson plans are based on a historically responsive four-layered equity framework that positions literacy a transformational tool for social justice and equity (Muhammad, 2020). Applying this framework to special education teacher preparation courses emphasizes identity development, skill development, intellectual development, and criticality for future special education teachers. The criticality component is an especially important aspect for special education teacher preparation, as future special educators need to be prepared to recognize and challenge ableism. Muhammad's framework also calls for the use of layered texts, which ensures that multiple viewpoints and the lived experiences of disabled people are included in special education teacher preparation coursework. Additionally, the layered text format allows for texts to be changed to reflect new contributions to the field or to address concerns about including controversial topics without altering the spirit of the lesson. Taken together, the evaluation criteria and unit plans provide a way for special education teacher educators to include discussion about disability

representation in their classrooms, while building skills and competencies in prospective teachers that will allow them to do this important and ongoing work on their own.

CONCLUSION

Addressing ableism as a system of oppression in schools requires a multi-pronged approach that includes more adequately preparing special education teachers to represent disability in more positive ways in the classroom, and challenge problematic notions about disability. One method of expanding preservice special educators' conceptions about disability is through integrating YA literature into special education teacher preparation coursework. This can be particularly impactful with literature that challenges stereotypes about disability, such as representations of diverse disabled people with meaningful romantic and social lives. Using YA novels can provide preservice teachers with opportunities to learn about disability and develop more favorable attitudes toward inclusion. Such an approach also allows special education teacher educators to model critically evaluating texts and applying historically responsive literacy practices by using lesson plans that specifically expand students' ideas about disability. Finally, incorporating YA literature into special education teacher preparation coursework equips future special educators with the pedagogical content knowledge necessary to design instruction using diverse texts. There is an urgent need for special education teacher education to prepare future educators to disrupt the dysconscious ableism experienced and perpetuated in general education classrooms so that disabled students can be more meaningfully included in their schools and communities.

REFERENCES

- Back, L. T., Keys, C. B., McMahon, S. D., & O'Neill, K. (2016). How we label students with disabilities: A framework for language use in an urban school district in the United States. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 36(4). Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://dsq.sds.org/article/view/4387/4481>
- Baglieri, S., & Lalvani, P. (2019). *Undoing ableism: Teaching about disability in K-12 classrooms*. Routledge.
- Bialka, C. S., Hansen, N., & Wong, S. J. (2018). Breaking the cycle: Preparing pre-service teachers for disability-related discussions. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 42(2), 147-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406418754326>
- Blaska, J. (2004). Children's literature that includes characters with disabilities or illnesses. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 24(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v24i1.854>
- Broderick, A., & Lalvani, P. (2017). Dysconscious ableism: Toward a liberatory praxis in teacher education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 21(9), 894-905. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2017.1296034>
- CAST (2018). *Universal Design for Learning guidelines version 2.2*. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- Connor, D. J., & Gabel, S. L. (2010). *Welcoming the unwelcome: Disability as diversity*. Routledge.
- Council for Exceptional Children. (2020). *Initial practice-based professional preparation standards for special educators*. <https://exceptionalchildren.org/standards/initial-practice-based-professional-preparation-standards-special-educators>
- Curwood, J. S. (2013). Redefining normal: A critical analysis of (dis)ability in young adult literature. *Children's Literature in Education*, 44(1), 15-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-012-9177-0>
- Donne, V. (2016). Young adult books: Helping to prepare teachers for Augmentative Alternative Communication. *International Journal of Special Education*, 31(2), 162-169. Retrieved March 10, 2021, from: <https://www.internationaljournalofspecialeducation.com/documents/IJSE%20ENTIRE%20ISSUE%2031%202.pdf>
- Gargiulo, R. M., & Bouck, E. C. (2018). *Special education in contemporary society: An introduction to exceptionality* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Gernsbacher, M. A. (2017). Editorial perspective: The use of person-first language in scholarly writing may accentuate stigma. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 58(7), 859-861. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12706>
- Hazlett, L. A., Sweeney, W. J., & Reins, K. J. (2011). Using young adult literature featuring LGBTQ adolescents with intellectual and/or physical disabilities to strengthen classroom inclusion. *Theory into Practice*, 50(3), 206-214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2011.584031>
- Hehir, T. (2002). Eliminating ableism in education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.72.1.03866528702g2105>
- Henley, A. (2017, October 5). Why sex education for disabled people is so important. *Teen Vogue*. <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/disabled-sex-ed>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 (2004).
- King, J. (1991). Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60(2), 133-146. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2295605>
- Kozleski, E. B., Artiles, A., McCray, E. D., & Lacy, L. (2014). Equity challenges in the accountability age: Demographic representation and distribution in the teacher workforce. In P. T. Sindelar, E. D. McCray, M. T. Brownell, & B. Lignugaris/Kraft (Eds.), *Handbook of research on special education teacher preparation* (pp. 113-126). Taylor and Francis.
- Kurts, S. A., & Gavigan, K. W. (2017). Understanding (dis)abilities through children's literature. *Education Libraries*, 31(1), 23-31. <https://doi.org/10.26443/el.v31i3.259>
- Lalvani, P., & Broderick, A. A. (2013). Institutionalized ableism and the misguided "Disability Awareness Day": Transformative pedagogies for teacher education. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 46(4), 468-483. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2013.838484>
- Lepkowska, D. (2012, November 12). Where are the disabled teachers? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/nov/12/disabled-not-encouraged-teacher-training-costs>
- Marable, M. A., Leavitt-Noble, K., & Grande, M. (2010). Book talks in special education methods courses: Using literature to influence, inspire, and prepare teacher candidates. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 33(2), 143-154. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406409360013>
- Marlowe, M., & Maycock, G. (2001). Using literary texts in teacher education to promote positive attitudes toward children with disabilities. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 24(2), 75-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088840640102400202>
- McGovern, C. (2015). *Say What You Will*. HarperTeen.
- McLeskey, J., Barringer, M.-D., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M., Jackson, D., Kennedy, M., Lewis, T., Maheady, L., Rodriguez, J., Scheeler, M.C., Winn, J., & Ziegler, D. (2017, January). *High-leverage practices in special education*. Council for Exceptional Children & CEEDAR Center. <https://highleveragepractices.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Instructionfinal.pdf>
- Muellerr, C. O. (2021). "I didn't know people with disabilities could grow up to be adults": Disability history, curriculum, and identity in special education. *Teacher Education and Special Edu-*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Lauren Zepp

[Lauren Zepp](#) is an assistant professor of special education at the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater. Her research interests include special education teacher preparation, teachers' knowledge for reading instruction, and adolescent literacy. This work was influenced by her own identity as a disabled adult.

Carlyn Mueller

[Carlyn Mueller](#) is an assistant professor of special education at UW-Madison. Her research focuses on disability identity development in school contexts; including development of disability community in special education, disability representation in curriculum, and intersectionality of race and disability identity. This work is grounded in her personal experience as a multiply disabled student in special education.

Melinda Leko

[Melinda Leko](#) is a Professor at the University of Florida. Her research interests center on educator preparation to promote an equitable, inclusive, and socially just education for students with disabilities. She also investigates issues related to educators' implementation of evidence-based and high-leverage practices.

- cation, 44(3), 189-205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406421996069>
- Muhammad, G. (2020). *Cultivating genius: An equity framework for culturally and historically responsive literacy*. Scholastic.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020, May). *The condition of education: Characteristics of public-school teachers*. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_clr.asp
- Nusbaum, E. A., & Steinborn, M. A. (2019). A “visibilizing project”: Seeing the ontological erasure of disability in teacher education and social studies curricula. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 34(1), 24–35. <https://journal.jctonline.org/index.php/jct/article/view/764/385>
- Nussbaum, S. (2013). *Good Kings Bad Kings*. Algonquin Books.
- Prater, M. A., Dyches, T. T., & Johnstun, M. (2006). Teaching students about learning disabilities through children’s literature. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 42(1), 14-24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10534512060420010301>
- Price, M. (2015). The bodymind problem and the possibilities of pain. *Hypatia*, 30(1), 268-284. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12127>
- Schalk, S. (2017). Critical disability studies as methodology. *Lateral*, 6(1), 6-1. <https://csalateral.org/issue/6-1/forum-alt-humanities-critical-disability-studies-methodology-schalk/>
- Storey, K. (2007). Combating ableism in schools. *Preventing School Failure*, 52(1), 56–58. <https://doi.org/10.3200/PSFL.52.1.56-58>
- Wilde, J. (2017). *Queens of Geek*. Swoon Reads.
- State Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.). *State educator standards*. <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/programs/educator-standards>
- Wong, A. (2020). *Disability visibility: First-person stories from the 21st century*. Vintage.
- Wong, A. (Host). (2018, December 3). Sex education (No. 39) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Disability Visibility Project Podcast*. <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2018/12/03/ep-39-sex-education/>

Four Components for a Professional Development Package for Special Education Teachers in Behavior Management Skills

AUTHORS

Chelsea Marelle

Claire Donehower Paul

Journal of Special
Education Preparation
2(3), 40-47

© 2022 Marelle and Donehower Paul
Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0
License

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.40-47
openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

Of all the tasks that special education teachers are charged with completing, managing classroom behaviors has been reported as one of the most challenging and one of the top reasons the teachers are leaving the field. The task of providing effective support in classroom management is also daunting for leadership personnel in school systems. This paper provides four components that should be considered when planning a professional development (PD) package for teachers regarding behavior management. These four components include didactic presentation, performance feedback, technology, and maintenance and generalization. These components have been proven to be effective in the current field of research. Further examples and supportive details regarding each component and how to create an effective PD package are provided in this paper.

KEYWORDS

Classroom management, professional development, teacher education

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022), special education teachers are typically responsible for assessing skills and needs, adapting materials and lessons, developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), mentoring students, and tracking progress towards goals for students with psychological, neurological, physical, and/or learning disabilities. Additionally, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that the team must address the behavioral needs and provide support through a student's IEP whose behavior impedes their learning or that of others. Often referred to as behavior management, these supports can include a variety of individualized strategies and materials. For the purpose of this paper, we define classroom management as a set of skills, practices, and strategies that teachers use to maintain productive behaviors that allow for effective instruction in the classroom (Flower et al., 2017; Gage & MacSuga-Gage, 2017; Stevenson et al., 2020). The ultimate goal of behavior management is to decrease disruptive behaviors in

order to increase learning and academic achievement. This can be done through explicitly teaching and reinforcing the expectations and procedures of the classroom.

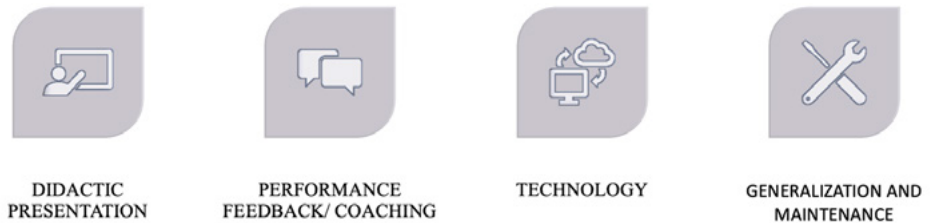
Of the many daily tasks and jobs a special education teacher is responsible for, behavior management is consistently reported among the top reasons for leaving the profession (Sciuchett, 2019). In fact, White and Mason (2006) conducted a survey of new special education teachers in the U.S. following the implementation of a mentor pilot program. The results of the survey reported that 60% of the respondents needed assistance and/or asked their mentor for help with behavior management within their first year of teaching. Furthermore, experienced teachers also reported a lack of knowledge and ability in the area of classroom management (Watson, 2006). Many teachers lack confidence in their behavior management skills and do not feel effectively equipped with strategies to manage behaviors in the classroom (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Because of the lack of specific training, special education teachers do not feel prepared to han-

dle the variety of difficult behaviors that can be present in special education classrooms (Myers et al., 2017). According to Ledford et al. (2018), in order for teachers to create the most positive learning experience for students, they must implement successful individual behavior management strategies in their classrooms.

CLASSROOM AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

As previously stated, classroom and behavior management skills are vital for preservice teachers to develop prior to entering their own classrooms. Unfortunately, novice teachers often report not feeling appropriately prepared to manage their own classrooms upon graduation (Scott, 2017). Freeman and colleagues' (2014) extensive literature review indicated many preservice teachers may not be prepared to effectively manage a classroom post-graduation due to a lack of exposure to the content. According to Garland et al. (2016) the most effective way to learn and master classroom management skills is through real-life classroom experiences. Unfortunately, the experiences of preservice teachers are typically limited to practicum and internship placements that may not provide the extensive support and development needed to master classroom management skills (Simonsen et al., 2008). These experiences are often limited in duration, accessible to direct in-classroom support for immediate feedback, and variability in student behavior which can lead to inconsistent experiences. Additionally, these experiences are considered high stakes given their link to grades and sometimes graduation. Because of the high-stakes nature of these experiences the student teachers often rely on procedures for behavior management already put in place by mentor teachers instead of creating their own or exploring novel options. Similarly, preservice teachers who are completing a practicum or

FIGURE 1: Four Components for High Quality Professional Development



student teaching experience have a short amount of time to create rapport with students and therefore rely on their mentors' procedures that have already been put in place. In summary, there is a lack of authentic learning opportunities for pre-service teachers where they can experience the challenging classroom behaviors that may be part of their teaching career.

CLASSROOM AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SUPPORT IN THE FIELD

Participation in meaningful PD for in-service teachers has proven to improve the job satisfaction of special education teachers (Grant, 2017; Washburn-Moses, 2005). Unfortunately, teachers are seldom provided comprehensive and effective training to improve their behavior management skills in the classroom (Lerman et al., 2004; Loiacono & Allen, 2008; Morrier et al., 2011). Currently, new teachers entering the field receive minimal mentoring or support in behavior management (Grossman & McDonald, 2008) and are forced to learn as they work. PD tends to be a one-day workshop with limited chances for practice or follow-up support beyond the training day (Wilkinson et al., 2021). These PD sessions, often referred to as "sit and get" sessions, may increase the teacher's knowledge (State et al., 2019) but they do not create lasting improvements in teacher skills (Nishimura, 2014). Another important missing piece to implementing behavior management in

special education classroom is that the fidelity of implementation in the school setting is often overlooked (Sanetti et al., 2014). Fidelity of implementation refers to the degree to which an intervention is delivered as intended (The IRIS Center, 2014). Lack of implementation fidelity can result in decreased efficacy of an intervention which in turn may result in a decrease in the desired student response (Grow et al., 2009; Noell et al., 2002). This need can be addressed through creating PD packages that include practice opportunities for teachers to apply their newly learned skills.

Given the previously described issues surrounding special education teachers managing behavior in the classroom, changes to our current practices in pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher development are needed. Substantive changes have the potential to positively impact teacher attrition.

SUGGESTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

In the existing literature on this topic, four components for developing special education teachers in classroom management emerge. Figure 1 shows the four components that were found to be successful in improving implementation fidelity following a classroom management PD experience for pre-service or in-service special education teachers. Research supports

FIGURE 2: Behavior Professional Development Component Checklist

Didactic presentation

- Present information in multiple formats
 - Present information visually (e.g., PowerPoint)
 - Provide a permanent product to teachers (e.g., Handout)
- Provide step by step instructions for implementation
- Provide teachers with a clear rationale



Performance Feedback/ Coaching

- Embed structured practice sessions (e.g., role play, simulation)
- Provide practice in real-time with students (e.g., iCoaching, teleconferencing)



Technology

- Utilize video modeling
- Make training computer-based to increase accessibility (e.g., pre-recorded video, webcams)
- Get creative! (e.g., content acquisition podcast, self-based computer modules, or mixed reality)



Generalization and Maintenance

- Schedule administrator check-in observations
- Schedule peer to peer follow up observations



Notes and General Observations:

using a combination of all four of these components when planning a behavior management PD to produce successful outcomes for teachers (Rispoli et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2021). The first component, didactic presentation, is an instructor-directed method in which the teacher delivers, and the student receives content (Bethune & Wood, 2013; Flynn & Lo, 2016; Kunnavatana et al., 2013a; Kunnavatana et al., 2013b; Pas et al., 2016; Randolph et al., 2019; Rispoli et al., 2016; Shillingsburg et al., 2021; Walker et al., 2020; Walker et al., 2021). The second component, technology, includes any form of interactive technology incorporated in the PD package (e.g., tele-conferencing or mixed-reality setting; Digennaro-Reed et al., 2010; Flynn and Lo, 2016; Machalicek et al., 2010; Miller & Uphold, 2021; Pas et al., 2016; Randolph et al., 2019; Rispoli et al., 2016; Shillingsburg et al., 2021; Walker et al., 2020; Walker et al., 2021). The third component, performance feedback and coaching, includes the portion of PD where the teachers, paraprofessionals, or preservice teachers are provided with feedback following an observation of implementation either in the classroom for a coaching session or in a practice session (Bethune & Wood, 2013; Kunnavatana et al., 2013a; Kunnavatana et al., 2013b; McKenney & Bristol, 2015; Mouzakitis et al., 2015). Finally, generalization and maintenance are the fourth component of change which is a portion of training that ensures the participant can continue to implement the trained intervention over time and in different settings (Bethune and Wood, 2013; Kunnavatana et al., 2013b; Mouzakitis et al., 2015; Rispoli et al., 2016; Walker et al., 2021).

DIDACTIC PRESENTATION

The first recommended component of high-quality PD on behavior management is a didactic presentation. By presenting the necessary information regarding an intervention, a didactic presentation has been found to be an effective first step in a PD (e.g., Bethune

and Wood, 2013; Flynn and Lo, 2016; Kunnavatana et al., 2013a; Kunnavatana et al., 2013b). Figure 2 shows the recommended components for an effective didactic presentation. For example, a didactic presentation should include visual presentation of the information. This information can be presented through PowerPoint (Bethune & Wood, 2013), guided notes (Randolph et al., 2019), or a brief teaching guide (Walker et al., 2021).

Additionally, an explicit explanation of step-by-step instructions for the procedures of the intervention should be included. Kunnavatana et al. (2013a), started their training on implementing a trial based functional analysis (TBFA) with a one-hour didactic presentation that included basic behavior principals, a brief introduction to functional analysis (FA) methodology, and a description of the procedures of a TBFA before moving into practice sessions. By starting with an informative didactic training, Kuavatana and colleagues were able to present the necessary information required to successfully complete a TBFA. Under the umbrella of step-by-step instruction, also falls the introduction to any support materials that may be required in order to successfully implement the intervention. For example, if the intervention requires lesson plans (Walker et al., 2020) or a training manual (Shillingsburg et al., 2021), these materials should be covered thoroughly during the didactic presentation.

Finally, it is recommended that a didactic presentation include a description of the rationale for why the intervention is effective and should be implemented by the teachers. By including this information in the PD, the trainer is helping the teacher better understand the development and efficacy of the intervention which will in turn improve their implementation fidelity. Flynn and Lo (2016), included the rationale and purpose of using a TBFA and differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA) with students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

or behavior disorders in their training of three middle school teachers. In this study, the three teachers reported that the training was very beneficial, and two out of the three teachers were able to implement a TBFA with high procedural fidelity when generalizing the skills to a new student.

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK/COACHING

When planning a behavior management related PD for special education teachers the next recommended component is performance feedback and coaching. As depicted in Figure 2, performance feedback is referred as the portion of PD that is a collaborative procedure which can include praise for correct implementation, constructive feedback for incorrect implementation, rehearsal of missed implementation, and review of progress (Coddington et al., 2008). Coaching is defined as any feedback or guidance that is provided on the rehearsal or implementation of the intervention (Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010). Previous research has demonstrated a functional relationship between performance-based feedback and increased teacher fidelity (Schles & Robertson, 2017). Related to behavior management interventions, research has shown an increase in fidelity following coaching sessions (PBIS; Filcheck et al., 2004; FBA implementation; Bethune & Wood, 2013; email coaching; Miller & Uphold, 2021; iCoaching; Rispoli et al., 2016; roleplay with coaching; Walker et al., 2021). Performance feedback and coaching can be provided immediately following an observation of implementation or can be provided later through written feedback. For example, McKenney and Bristol (2015) provided weekly performance feedback following observations as well as feedback connected to role play practice opportunities regarding the implementation of discrete trial training (DTT). This study demonstrated that most teachers require performance feedback to perform a trained skill with high fidelity. Delayed coach-

ing, which may be best for administrators who are observing teachers but cannot provide feedback right away, can be provided via different modalities. For example, Miller and Uphold (2021) provided coaching emails within 24 hours of each classroom observation regarding the implementation of behavior specific praise (BSP) in the classroom. These emails included a behavior specific praise statement regarding the teacher's appropriate implementation of BSP in the observation and as an attachment included the most recent graph of the number of BSP statements they used during the fifteen-minute observation.

Furthermore, performance feedback and coaching has been used in coordination with mixed reality settings. Mixed reality environment is the blending of real and synthetic content (Hughes et al., 2005). More specifically, mixed reality refers to a broader form of a virtual experience by blending the typical visual and auditory aspects of virtual reality with real assets (Dieker et al., 2008). This is an excellent training method for teacher preparation programs especially because a supervisor can tailor the scenario to the participant's needs. For example, Pas and colleagues (2016) used TeachLive, an immersive, mixed-reality simulator that provides practice opportunities with immediate feedback to train teachers in behavior management skills. Following the rehearsal session in the TeachLive setting, all participants demonstrated improvements in implementation fidelity. TeachLive is a flexible option for teacher preparation programs and school systems because it can be used remotely, therefore, rural school districts could access the equipment and provide opportunities to remotely practice and give feedback to teachers in training.

One of the most feasible ways to provide performance feedback to teachers is by including role play or rehearsal opportunities in training sessions (Flynn & Lo, 2016; Kunnavatana et al., 2013a; Kunnavatana et al.,

2013b; McKenney & Bristol, 2015). This is a respectable way for teachers to quickly apply their learning following a one-day or didactic PD session in a safe and controlled environment before implementing the trained intervention in the classroom with students. During the rehearsal sessions the participants could be matched with an expert who was then able to provide immediate performance feedback throughout the practice. Teacher participants can be matched with one another for rehearsal or role play sessions while an expert or the trainer has the option to observe, answer questions, and provide performance feedback (Shillingsburg et al., 2021). An example of how universities can support local school systems is through performance feedback and coaching either in person or virtually. Kunnavatana et al. (2013b), conducted a training session on implementing the TBFA. Following the didactic presentation, participants were matched with a graduate student from the university to conduct role playing sessions. The graduate student then provided immediate performance feedback and answered questions.

TECHNOLOGY

The third recommended component of behavior management PD for special education teachers is technology. There are many types of technology that have been used to train teachers such as mixed-reality settings, video models, bug-in-ear communication systems, or tele-conferencing. Recently, Education Week reported that 40% of schools offered one device per child (Cavanagh, 2018). With the increase of technology to support the academic performance of students in classrooms, there should be an increase in technology to support teacher performance.

Digennaro-Reed et al. (2010), used individualized video modeling to increase the accuracy of implementation of behavioral interventions across three teachers. Not only did the teacher's performance increase, but the teachers reported that they found the video

modeling more socially acceptable by rating it positively. The individualized instructional videos demonstrated accurate implementation of the intervention with the student and included voice-over and on-screen text that detailed the relevant parts of the intervention. The teachers were then asked to implement the intervention with their students within 45 minutes of viewing the video. Individualizing the videos can look like recording the teacher implementing the skill appropriately in a practice session or another teacher implementing the same skills appropriately.

Machalick and colleagues (2010), also incorporated technology via a device/computer-based option. More specifically, a provided camera and laptop computer were set up in the classroom and they used video tele-conferencing to train teachers to assess challenging behaviors of students with ASD. Using the camera and chat feature of the computer, a supervisor provided real time performance feedback via webcam technology which helped each teacher participant improve in implementation fidelity. Using real time performance feedback via webcam technology has the potential to give teachers and administrators access to outside personnel who may have expertise in certain behavior management skills that would not be available. Another option to incorporate technology into behavior management PD for teachers includes a content acquisition podcast (CAPs; Miller & Uphold, 2021). CAPs are an enhanced type of podcast which delivers instruction through still visual images and audio recordings that explain the content (Kennedy, 2011). Self-based computer modules are another way to disseminate PD materials to teachers in a more flexible manner meaning outside of a traditional one-day sit in training (Shillingsburg et al., 2021). In Shillingsburg et al. (202), staff participants completed 22 hours of self-paced, commercially available online computer-based modules that included pre-tests, video lessons, and concept checks.

GENERALIZATION AND MAINTENANCE

The final component that is recommended for a behavior management PD is generalization and maintenance. Maintenance data refers to the extent the intervention procedures are continued after the research is completed (Kennedy, 2005). This is important to include following the PD session because if the intervention is effective on student behavior, then the intervention procedures should be used continually. A maintenance phase would happen post-training to examine if the trained teacher is still able to perform the behavior intervention with high fidelity without the support provided during the training phase. For example, Bethune and Wood (2013), collected teacher implementation data following the coaching intervention once a week until 2.5 weeks after the last participant completed the intervention phase. Taking maintenance data is a simple way to provide additional support to teachers following an intervention to ensure that the time spent in the PD was not wasted. This can be as simple as a brief in-person or virtual observation using one of the technology options described above by an administrator, outside expert in the field, or fellow teacher who has also been trained.

Generalization can be defined as the ability for the participant to perform a skill under different conditions. Rispoli and colleagues (2016) trained six teachers to implement two functional analysis models through a “training package.” Following the training package which included role play to practice, in situ generalization data were collected by the researcher to discover if the teacher participants were able to apply the training to their classrooms. It is important to include a generalization phase in teacher preparation and PD to ensure that teachers can transfer the trained intervention into the classroom with high fidelity. This could be implemented in a PD for preparing teachers to use BSP to increase on-task behaviors by conducting brief classroom

observations following the training. In order to be more feasible for school districts, teachers could observe one another in the classroom setting or have BSP be a part of the administrator’s observation checklist. In teacher preparation programs, after training preservice teachers to use BSP, generalization could occur during their practicum or student teacher observations by adding BSP to the observation tool used to assess their performance.

CONCLUSION

The previously mentioned recommendations are a call to action for administrators and teacher preparation programs to enhance the PD opportunities for preservice and in-service special education teachers especially related to behavior management interventions. There is a need to reform teacher preparation and PD methods by creating more extensive and interactive opportunities that will increase implementation fidelity. Additionally, when planning behavior and classroom management PD sessions, administrators and teacher preparation programs should include multiple components and should not rely on only one mode of training (i.e., PowerPoint or technology). The current literature surrounding special education teacher preparation indicates that PDs with multiple components are more likely to increase implementation fidelity.

Finally, classroom technology is rapidly improving, and a renewed emphasis should be placed on not only the technology to support students, but also the technology that can be used to support the growth of teachers. Through mixed reality settings, virtual communication technologies, and other innovative technology, schools across the country can have equal access to high quality PD as well as a variety of experts in the field of behavior and classroom management. Teachers who are better prepared can be more effective in improving the academic performance and behavior of their students. By supporting teachers in a much-need-

ed area like behavior management, the current teacher shortage crisis could be positively impacted.

REFERENCES

- Bethune, K. S., & Wood, C. L. (2013). Effects of coaching on teachers’ use of function-based interventions for students with severe disabilities. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 36*(2), 97–114. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406413478637>
- Cavanagh, S. M. (2018). *Snapshot of K-12 tech landscape: More districts reach 1-to-1, but equity gaps persist*. Market Brief. Retrieved April 29, 2022, from <https://marketbrief.edweek.org/marketplace-k-12/snapshot-k-12-tech-landscape-districts-reach-1-1-equity-gaps-persist/>
- Codding, R. S., Livanis, A., Pace, G. M., & Vaca, L. (2008). Using performance feedback to improve treatment integrity of classwide behavior plans: An investigation of observer reactivity. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 41*(3), 417–422. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2008.41-417>
- Dieker, L., Hynes, M., Hughes, C., & Smith, E. (2008). Implications of mixed reality and simulation technologies on Special Education and teacher preparation. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 40*(6).
- Digennaro-Reed, F. D., Codding, R., Catania, C. N., & Maguire, H. (2010). Effects of video modeling on treatment integrity of behavioral interventions. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 43*(2), 291–295.
- Filcheck, H. A., McNeil, C. B., Greco, L. A., & Bernard, R. S. (2004). Using a whole-class token economy and coaching of teacher skills in a preschool classroom to manage disruptive behavior. *Psychology in the Schools, 41*(3), 351–361. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.10168>
- Flower, A., McKenna, J. W., & Haring, C. D. (2017). Behavior and classroom management: Are teacher preparation programs really preparing our teachers? *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, 61*(2), 163–169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988x.2016.1231109>
- Flynn, S. D., & Lo, Y. (2015). Teacher implementation of trial-based functional analysis and differential reinforcement of alternative behavior for students with challenging behavior. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 25*(1), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10864-015-9231-2>
- Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., Briere, D. E., & MacSuga-Gage, A. S. (2014). Pre-service teacher training in classroom management: A review of state accreditation policy and teacher preparation programs. *Teacher Education & Special Education, 37*(2), 106–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406413507002>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Chelsea Marelle

Chelsea Marelle, M.Ed., is a Ph.D. student at Georgia State University. She has her Bachelors' degree in Early Childhood Education from Valdosta State University and her Master's degree in Special Education from Vanderbilt University. She was a special education teacher for five years where she served as an elementary resource, cross category, specific learning disability, and autism self-contained classroom teacher. Her research interests include special education teacher preparation programs and professional development, behavior and classroom management, and autism specific classroom interventions. Marelle has presented at state, national, and international conferences, and contributed to several articles.

Claire Donehower Paul

Claire Donehower Paul is an assistant professor in the Department of Learning Sciences at Georgia Southern University. She received her doctorate from the University of Central Florida in the Exceptional Education Program. Her research focuses on improving academic, social and behavioral outcomes for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) using innovative technology. Prior to her doctoral studies, Donehower worked at the Kennedy Krieger School Programs for nine years as an assistant teacher, special education teacher and assistant principal. She received a B.A degree in psychology from Boston College and an M.S. degree in special education of severe and profound disabilities from the Johns Hopkins University. Additionally, Donehower is a board-certified behavior analyst and has post-graduate certificates in the Education of Students with Autism and Other Pervasive Developmental Disorders and Special Education Leadership and Administration.

- Gage, N. A., & MacSuga-Gage, A. S. (2017). Salient classroom management skills: Finding the most effective skills to increase student engagement and decrease disruptions. *Emotional & Behavioral Disorders in Youth*, 17(1), 13–18. <https://doi.org/https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6345407/>
- Garland, K. M., Holden, K., & Garland, D. P. (2016). Individualized clinical coaching in the TLE TeachLive lab: Enhancing fidelity of implementation of system of least prompts among novice teachers of students with autism. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 39, 47–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406415600769>
- Grant, M. (2017) A case study of factors that influence the attrition or retention of special education teachers. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, 11, pp. 77–84.
- Grossman, P., & McDonald, M. (2008). Back to the future: Directions for research in teaching and teacher education. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(1), 184–205. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831207312906>
- Grow, L. L., Carr, J. E., Gunby, K. V., Charania, S. M., Gonsalves, L., Ktaech, I. A., & Kisamore, A. N. (2009). Deviations from prescribed prompting procedures: Implications for treatment integrity. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 18(2), 142–156. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10864-009-9085-6>
- Hughes, C. E., Stapleton, C. B., Hughes, D. E., & Smith, E. M. (2005). Mixed reality in education, entertainment, and training. *IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications*, 25(6), 24–30. <https://doi.org/10.1109/mcg.2005.139>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, Pub. L. No. 108-446, U.S.C § 1400 et seq. (2004).
- Kennedy, C. H. (2005). *Single-case designs for educational research*. Pearson Education.
- Kennedy, M. J. (2011). *Effects of Content Acquisition Podcasts on vocabulary performance of secondary students with and without learning disabilities* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas).
- Kunnavatana, S. S., Bloom, S. E., Samaha, A. L., & Dayton, E. (2013a). Training teachers to conduct trial-based functional analyses. *Behavior Modification*, 37(6), 707–722. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145445513490950>
- Kunnavatana, S. S., Bloom, S. E., Samaha, A. L., Lignugaris/Kraft, B., Dayton, E., & Harris, S. K. (2013b). Using a modified pyramidal training model to teach special education teachers to conduct trial-based functional analyses. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 36(4), 267–285. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406413500152>
- Kretlow, A. G., & Bartholomew, C. C. (2010). Using coaching to improve the fidelity of evidence-based practices: A Review of Studies. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 33(4), 279–299. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406410371643>
- Ledford, J. R., Lane, J. D., & Tate, R. (2018). Evaluating quality and rigor in single case research. *Single Case Research Methodology*, 365–392. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315150666-13>
- Lerman, D. C., Vorndran, C. M., Addison, L., & Kuhn, S. C. (2004). Preparing teachers in evidence-based practices for young children with autism. *School Psychology Review*, 33(4), 510–526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2004.12086265>
- Loiacono, V., & Allen, B. (2008). Are special education teachers prepared to teach the increasing number of students diagnosed with autism? *International Journal of Special Education*, 23, 120–127.
- Machalicek, W., O'Reilly, M. F., Rispoli, M., Davis, T., Lang, R., Franco, J. H., & Chan, J. M. (2010). Training teachers to assess the challenging behaviors of students with autism using video tele-conferencing. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 45(2), 203–215.
- McKenney, E. L. W., & Bristol, R. M. (2015). Supporting intensive interventions for students with autism spectrum disorder: Performance feedback and discrete trial teaching. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 30(1), 8–22. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000060>
- Miller, R. D., & Uphold, N. (2021). Using content acquisition podcasts to improve preservice teacher use of behavior-specific praise. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 44(4), 300–318. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406421101111>

- [org/10.1177/0888406421994336](https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406421994336)
- Mitchell, A., & Arnold, M. (2004). Behavior management skills as predictors of retention among south Texas special educators. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 31*(3), 214.
- Morrier, M. J., Hess, K. L., & Heflin, L. J. (2010). Teacher training for implementation of teaching strategies for students with autism spectrum disorders. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 34*(2), 119–132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406410376660>
- Mouzakitis, A., Coddling, R. S., & Tryon, G. (2015). The effects of self-monitoring and performance feedback on the treatment integrity of behavior intervention plan implementation and generalization. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 17*(4), 223–234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300715573629>
- Myers, D., Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., & Sugai, G. (2017). Classroom management with exceptional learners. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 49*(4), 223–230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059916685064>
- Nishimura, T. (2014). *Effective professional development of teachers: A guide to actualizing inclusive schooling*. (EJ1016781). ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1016781>
- Noell, G. H., Gresham, F. M., & Gansle, K. A. (2002). Does treatment integrity matter? A preliminary investigation of instructional implementation and mathematics performance. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 11*(1), 51–67. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014385321849>
- Pas, E. T., Johnson, S. R., Larson, K. E., Brandenburg, L., Church, R., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2016). Reducing behavior problems among students with autism spectrum disorder: coaching teachers in a mixed-reality setting. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 46*(12), 3640–3652. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-016-2898-y>
- Randolph, K. M., Duffy, M. L., Brady, M. P., Wilson, C. L., & Scheeler, M. C. (2019). The impact of coaching on teacher-delivered opportunities to respond. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 35*(1), 15–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162643419836414>
- Rispoli, M., Neely, L., Healy, O., & Gregori, E. (2016). Training public school special educators to implement two functional analysis models. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 25*(3), 249–274. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10864-016-9247-2>
- Sanetti, L. M., Dobey, L. M., & Gallucci, J. (2014). Treatment integrity of interventions with children in *School Psychology International* from 1995–2010. *School Psychology International, 35*(4), 370–383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034313476399>
- Scheuermann, B., Webber, J., Boutot, E. A., & Goodwin, M. (2003). Problems with personnel preparation in autism spectrum disorders. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 18*(3), 197–206. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10883576030180030801>
- Schles, R. A., & Robertson, R. E. (2017). The role of performance feedback and implementation of evidence-based practices for preservice special education teachers and student outcomes: A review of the literature. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 42*(1), 36–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406417736571>
- Sciuchett, M. (2019). The development of preservice teachers' self-efficacy for classroom and behavior management across multiple field experiences. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 44*(6), 19–34. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2018v44.6.2>
- Scott, T. M. (2017). Training classroom management with preservice special education teachers: Special education challenges in a general education world. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 40*(2), 97–101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406417699051>
- Shillingsburg, M. A., Frampton, S. E., Juban, B., Weddle, S. A., & Silva, M. R. (2021). Implementing an applied verbal behavior model in classrooms. *Behavioral Interventions. https://doi.org/10.1002/bin.1807*
- Simonsen, B., Fairbanks, S., Briesch, A., Myers, D., & Sugai, G. (2008) Evidence-based practices in classroom management: Considerations for research to practice. *Education and Treatment of Children, 31*, 351–380.
- State, T. M., Simonsen, B., Hirn, R. G., & Wills, H. (2019). Bridging the research-to-practice gap through effective professional development for teachers working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders, 44*(2), 107–116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0198742918816447>
- Stevenson, N. A., VanLone, J., & Barber, B. R. (2020). A commentary on the misalignment of teacher education and the need for classroom behavior management skills. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/js38y>
- The IRIS Center. (2014). Evidence-based practices (part 2): Implementing a practice or program with fidelity. Retrieved from https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/ebp_02/
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2022). Special education teachers: Occupational outlook handbook. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved March 14, 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/special-education-teachers.htm#tab-2>
- Walker, V. L., Carpenter, M. E., Clausen, A., Ealer, K., & Lyon, K. J. (2020). Special educators as coaches to support paraprofessional implementation of functional communication training. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 23*(3), 174–184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300720957995>
- Walker, V. L., Carpenter, M. E., Lyon, K. J., Garcia, M., & Johnson, H. (2021). Coaching paraeducators to implement functional communication training involving augmentative and alternative communication for students with autism spectrum disorder. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 37*(2), 129–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07434618.2021.1909650>
- Wasburn-Moses, L. (2005) How to keep your special education teachers? *Principal Leadership, 5*, 35–38.
- Watson, S. B. (2006). Novice science teachers: Expectations and experiences. *Journal of Science Teacher Education, 17*(3), 279–290. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10972-006-9010-y>
- Wilkinson, S., Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., Sears, S., Byun, S. G., Xu, X., & Luh, H.-J. (2020). Professional development for classroom management: A review of the literature. *Educational Research and Evaluation, 26*(3–4), 182–212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2021.1934034>
- White, M., & Mason, C. Y. (2006). Components of a successful mentoring program for beginning special education teachers: Perspectives from new teachers and mentors. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 29*(3), 191–201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088840640602900305>

Using Asynchronous Discussions to Teach Classroom Management Skills in Online Teacher Preparation Courses

AUTHORS

Marla J. Lohmann

Kathleen A. Boothe

Journal of Special
Education Preparation
2(3), 48-58

© 2022 Lohmann and Boothe
Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0
License

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.48-58
openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

Classroom management is a vital skill for all teachers. Special education teacher educators are tasked with ensuring that teacher candidates are prepared to implement evidence-based practices for the prevention and intervention of challenging behaviors. Many teacher candidates are taking their coursework in an asynchronous online format, which likely includes the use of discussion boards. In this article, we offer suggestions for using four discussion board formats to support teacher candidates in learning classroom management skills. These effective discussion board formats are (a) sharing products that students have created, (b) video-based discussions, (c) jigsaw discussions, and (d) debates. When high quality discussion boards are integrated into asynchronous online courses, student learning and engagement will increase, therefore, creating higher quality preparation programs.

KEYWORDS

Asynchronous discussions, classroom management, online learning, teacher preparation education

Dr. Ramirez has received feedback from her recent special education teacher preparation program graduates that they feel unprepared for classroom management skills and addressing challenging student behaviors in their classrooms. Many former students report wishing their coursework included more instruction and practice on these topics. Dr. Ramirez runs a fully online teacher certification program and is looking to expand the way she uses asynchronous discussions in order to better enhance student learning. She is preparing to teach a course on positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS) next semester and aims to use the course discussion boards in an intentional manner that will better prepare students for classroom

management.

Like Dr. Ramirez's students, many special education teachers are unprepared for behavior challenges in their classrooms and the lack of preparedness for managing challenging behaviors has been reported by both general and special education teacher candidates. In fact, only about 20% of all classroom teachers, including special educators, feel prepared for addressing challenging behaviors (Butler & Monda-Amaya, 2016). Research indicates that many teacher preparation programs do not adequately prepare candidates for addressing behavior challenges (Freeman et al., 2014) and that this skill deficit may contribute to high teacher turnover rates (Myers et al., 2017).

In addition to teacher turnover, behavior challenges in the class-

room have several other negative impacts. First, challenging student behaviors may disrupt the learning environment and reduce the access to education for all students in the classroom (Epstein et al., 2008). Challenging behaviors in the school setting are correlated with mental health concerns (Suldo et al., 2014) and criminality in adulthood (Bradley et al., 2008). Additionally, the academic success and future behaviors of other students in the classroom are negatively impacted by students' challenging behaviors (Chaffee et al., 2020). Finally, children who exhibit challenging behaviors may be removed from inclusive classrooms (Butler & Monda-Amaya, 2016), thus reducing the student's access to learning. Due to these outcomes, it is vital that teachers are prepared to address challenging behaviors in their classrooms.

ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE LEARNING

Almost 40% of learners opt to take at least some of their university coursework online (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Due to the COVID pandemic, this number has increased and almost two-thirds of college students are taking some (or all) classes virtually (Lederman, 2021). Some online courses are offered in a synchronous format, indicating that the professor and students are in a remote classroom at the same time, interacting with one another in real-time (Ward et al., 2010). Other courses are offered asynchronously, meaning that students complete their work on their own

time, but are still responsible for meeting assignment deadlines (Cho & Tobias, 2016). The asynchronous format meets the needs of a variety of students, including students in rural areas with limited internet access (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020; Fish & Gill, 2009) and for non-traditional students who may be balancing multiple responsibilities such as full-time jobs and families (Clinefelter & Aslanian, 2017; Lohmann & Boothe, 2020).

Many asynchronous courses utilize course discussion boards, which allow students to learn from one another (Cho & Tobias, 2016) and build community among students, which can enhance student engagement and motivation for learning (Al Jeraisy et al., 2015). Well-designed asynchronous discussion boards have a positive impact on student retention and achievement in online courses and programs (Fear & Erikson-Brown, 2014). Although faculty use a variety of discussion board formats, the evidence suggests that not all discussion formats are equally effective (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020). Based on research and our own experiences as online faculty members, we recommend interactive discussion board formats to improve student learning, such as (a) sharing products that students have created, (b) jigsaw discussions, (c) video-based discussions, and (d) debates (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020). Online faculty must ensure they are designing asynchronous discussion boards that lead students to provide feedback to one another and offer students the opportunity to practice necessary skills for

future career success (deLima et al., 2019).

Teacher preparation programs that prepare candidates for classroom management include practicing implementation of teaching practices in their coursework (Paramita et al., 2020). With this in mind, it is vital that special education teacher educators use practical assignments and assessments in their courses in order to prepare teacher candidates for implementing evidence-based practices in classroom management. For teacher preparation programs that offer online instruction, best practices in remote learning must be utilized. This includes the use of high-quality asynchronous discussion boards. When designing discussion boards for their own courses, the authors often incorporate both text-based and visual instructions.

Dr. Ramirez has identified a variety of classroom management skills that her students must master in order to be successful in their classrooms. She plans to use various methods to teach these skills and has identified five specific areas that she wants to target through asynchronous discussions in the course: (a) developing class wide expectations, (b) collecting baseline data, (c) locating behavior resources, (d) evidence-based behavior interventions, and (e) understanding controversial topics in classroom management.

Sharing Products

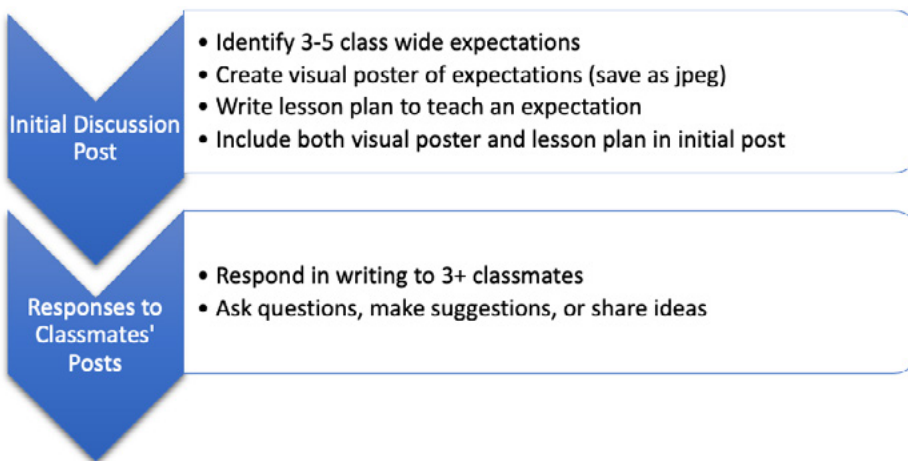
One asynchronous discussion method that can be effective in

FIGURE 1: Shared Product Discussion

INITIAL DISCUSSION POST EXPECTATIONS:

As you learned this week, Tier 1 PBIS includes having 3-5 positively stated classroom expectations that are explicitly taught to students. For this week's discussion, create the expectations for your current (or future) classroom and a visual poster that can be used to display the expectations. In addition, write a lesson plan for a lesson you will teach for instructing your students on one or more of the expectations. Attach your poster as a JPEG image in your initial discussion post and include your lesson plan as an attachment in the post. Your initial discussion post is due on Thursday at 11:59 pm.

The flowchart below outlines the steps you need to take to participate in this discussion.



RESPONSE EXPECTATIONS:

After posting your initial discussion, respond to a minimum of 3 classmates with text-based responses that demonstrate critical thinking on the topic. Potential ideas for responses include questions about their expectations or lesson plans, suggestions for improving classmates' work, or sharing your ideas for other ways to teach the expectations. Your responses are due on Sunday at 11:59 pm.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS:

- Ensure your writing is clear and concise.
- Follow APA 7th ed, when needed, and adhere to all grammar/spelling mechanics.
- Remember: Initial posts are due on Thursdays and response to classmates due on Sundays.
- Review the rubric in Blackboard for further grading criteria.

al schedules, lesson plans, and other classroom materials (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020).

Dr. Ramirez wants to ensure that her students have the opportunity to practice creating materials they can use in their future classrooms, and she believes their learning will be enhanced if they get feedback from one another on the materials they are creating. Because she knows that every classroom needs a clear set of expectations that are taught to all learners, she decides to have students practice creating their classroom rules and share them with one another through a discussion.

The use of class wide PBIS is a proactive approach to classroom management that has proven to be effective for reducing challenging behavior in K-12 classrooms (Simonsen & Myers, 2015). When using class wide PBIS, teachers must explicitly teach their classroom expectations (Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, 2022). When children know what teachers expect, they are more likely to meet those expectations (Myers et al., 2017). It is best practice for teachers to identify three to five overarching, positively stated classroom expectations (Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, 2022). Figure 1 offers an example of an asynchronous discussion for designing classroom expectations that teacher candidates may use in their future classrooms.

teacher education courses is having students create and share products that could be used in their own classrooms (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020). This discussion format increases student and faculty engage-

ment, as well as student mastery of course content (Mathew & Alidmat, 2013). In teacher preparation courses, this discussion format may be used for students to receive peer feedback on materials such as visu-

TABLE 1: Shared Products Discussion Rubric

	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	LIMITED
Initial Post Quality (15 points)	Student provided a well-developed and visually appealing poster that demonstrated an understanding of how to create appropriate classroom expectations. AND included a creatively and expertly demonstrated an appropriate lesson plan using the university lesson plan template that taught the expectations noted in the visual poster.	Student provided a visual poster that demonstrated a basic understanding of how to create appropriate classroom expectations. AND the lesson plan demonstrated a basic lesson plan on the expectations noted in the visual poster.	Student's visual poster did not demonstrate an understanding of how to create appropriate classroom expectations. AND/OR the lesson plan was not based on the expectations noted in the visual poster.
Response Posts (15 points)	Student responded to 3 or more classmates AND demonstrated in-depth analysis of other's posts that add substantively to the discussion by building on previous posts. Responses are academic and respectful. Responses are backed-up with appropriate citations/references.	Student responded to at least 2 classmates AND demonstrated little analysis of other's posts. Responses are shallow and may not enrich the discussion. Responses are backed-up with appropriate citations/references.	Response posts do not meet minimum requirements and / or responses are off-topic or inappropriate. Responses are not backed-up with appropriate citations/responses.
Mechanics & Writing Quality (10 points)	Contributes to discussion with clear, concise posts formatted in an easy-to-read style that uses accurate grammar and spelling. No more than 2 grammatical or APA errors are present in the discussion posts.	Contributes to discussion with posts that contain multiple clarity issues, and/or grammar and spelling errors.	Contributes to discussion with posts that contain major clarity and organizational issues, and/or grammar and spelling errors.
Discussion Expectations (10 points)	All requirements (e.g., visual poster, lesson plan) were completed in a clear manner and expertly demonstrated student understanding of the topic.	All requirements (e.g., visual poster, lesson plan) were completed and demonstrated a basic understanding of the topic.	Not all requirements (e.g., visual poster, lesson plan) were completed and/or the student did not demonstrate understanding of the topic.

When grading asynchronous discussions, regardless of the discussion format, the authors suggest a focus on following basic assignment directions while also grading discussion content. Rubrics should remain fairly consistent across discussion formats with necessary adjustments depending on specific needs. For the discussion example above, the general grading information focuses on discussion expectations, writing mechanics, and meeting deadlines. Changes in grading expectations occur between

the initial and response posts. For shared product discussions, the rubric should focus on the quality and accuracy of the information provided. Table 1 provides a sample rubric that can be used for general shared product discussions such as the discussion in Figure 1.

Jigsaw Discussions

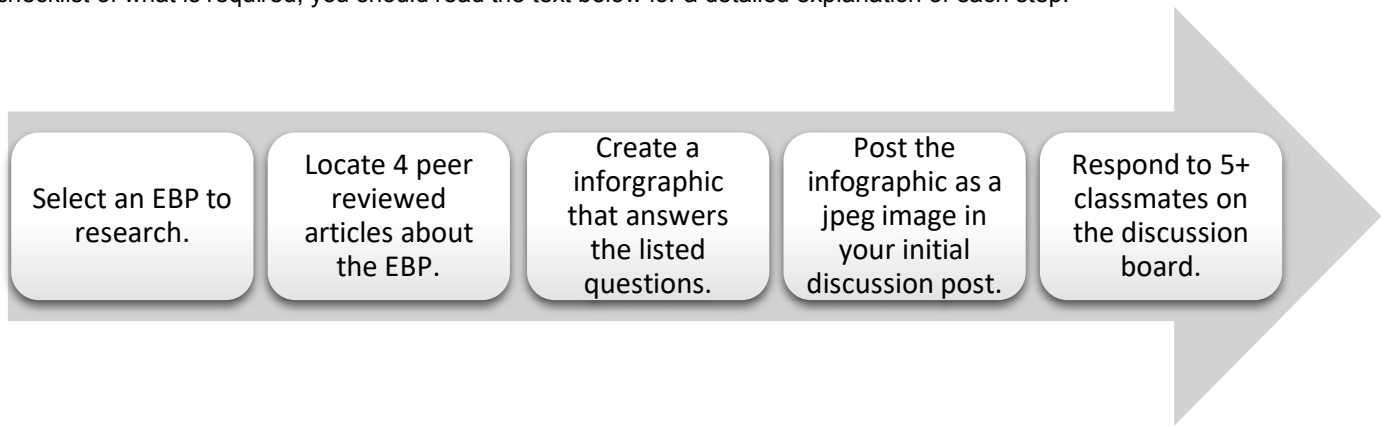
The jigsaw method, which is commonly used for in-person courses, can be adapted for use in asynchronous online discussions. In this method, students are re-

sponsible for teaching one another aspects of the course content (Amador & Mederer, 2013; Aronson & Patnoe, 2011; Lohmann & Boothe, 2020). In addition, the jigsaw method supports online teacher candidates in improving their communication and collaboration skills (Halimah & Sukmayadi, 2019). When using this method, we recommend clear guidelines for students and an expectation that students interact with each classmate's discussion to ensure they are exposed to all learning content.

FIGURE 2: Jigsaw Discussion on EBPs for Tiers 2 and 3 PBIS**Background Information**

As we have discussed in this course, it is imperative that you use evidence-based classroom management practices. As noted in the course textbook, there are a variety of interventions that are supported by research for use in Tiers 2 and 3 of PBIS. Go to the Google Doc to select an intervention to research. You will then teach your classmates in-depth information about one of the evidence-based practices that is discussed in the textbook.

The image below offers a visual representation of the expectations for this discussion. Remember that this image is just a quick checklist of what is required; you should read the text below for a detailed explanation of each step.

**Initial Response Expectations**

After selecting your EBP, locate a minimum of 4 peer reviewed articles that describe the intervention and its use for students with disabilities. In addition, look at the resources about your selected intervention from the Center on PBIS. Once you have completed your research, create an infographic for your classmates that answers the following questions:

1. How do teachers implement the intervention?
2. What is the research supporting its use?
3. For what grade levels/disability categories has the intervention proven to be effective?
4. What challenges might teachers have in implementing the intervention?
5. What must teachers consider when deciding to use the intervention?
6. What resources do you suggest for learning more about the intervention?

Your initial discussion post is due on Thursday at 11:59 pm.

Response Expectations

When this discussion is over, you are responsible for knowing about each of the interventions presented, so be sure to look at the infographics posted by all your classmates. You must respond to at least 5 classmates with posts that further the discussion by asking questions, sharing related resources, or providing examples of how you have seen that intervention used in classrooms. Your responses are due on Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Dr. Ramirez wants her students to be familiar with evidence-based practices (EBPs) for meeting the needs of students in Tiers 2 and 3 of the PBIS framework. There are a variety of EBPs that she wants

her students know about. She also wants to ensure active student engagement in learning about these interventions. With this in mind, she decides to design a jigsaw discussion and have the students teach one

another about various EBPs.

A solid Tier 1 system is vital for ensuring that all students in the classroom understand classroom expectations and for the prevention of many challenging behaviors.

FIGURE 3: Video Based Discussion

Background Information

Last week you learned about the importance of collecting baseline data and the importance of sharing this data with key stakeholders. You also watched a short video clip. Depending on the video you watched, you collected baseline data on one of the following target behaviors: hitting, yelling curse words, or getting out of seat during instruction.

The image below is a checklist to ensure you have all the required information in your post. Make sure to read all the information below for full details about the expectations.

Initial Discussion Post

- Baseline data
- Problem Statement
- 2-4 minute video with visual representation

Response to Classmates' Post

- Respond to 3 students
- Share thoughts, offer alternatives, ask questions, etc.

Initial Discussion Post Expectations

For this discussion, pretend your classmates are other education professionals in your school and present the data you collected last week. Make sure to also include your problem statement. In order to share the data and your problem statement, create a 2–4-minute video that includes visual representations of the data (ex. charts or graphs), as well as your initial hypothesis about what the baseline data is telling you.

Your initial discussion post is due on Thursday at 11:59 pm.

Response Expectations:

You are required to respond to at least 3 classmates. In your responses to your classmates, share your own thoughts on the data, offer alternative hypotheses regarding the function of the behavior, ask probing questions, or share ideas for interventions that might be appropriate to address the challenging behavior. Please remember that you will use this same process for data collection as you are implementing the intervention. Your responses are due on Sunday at 11:59 pm.

However, some students will need additional supports to be successful, so teacher candidates must also be familiar with Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Tier 2 of the PBIS system is designed to support children who currently exhibit challenging behaviors and are at-risk for escalating behavior challenges (Mitchell et al., 2011). Children who need individualized supports as determined through a functional behavioral analysis (FBA) receive

supports in Tier 3 of PBIS (Pinkelman & Horner, 2016). Figure 2 offers an example of a discussion for having students teach one another the evidence supporting various behavior interventions.

When grading this discussion format, the authors recommend putting the most focus on the initial discussion post. Because these posts are meant to be used to teach course concepts to classmates, the posts must be thorough and accu-

rately present the selected topic. In addition, we suggest that students be required to respond to more (or all) classmates in jigsaw discussions as this helps to ensure that they have viewed all of the content being taught by their peers. Finally, this discussion format requires significant professor interaction to ensure that the initial posts are accurately and completely teaching concepts. The rubric provided for shared products (Table 1) is the

TABLE 2: Video Based Discussion Rubric

	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	LIMITED
Initial Post Quality (10 points)	Student provided a well-developed video that demonstrated an understanding of how to create a quality problem statement AND how to appropriately represent data.	Student provided a video that demonstrated a basic understanding of how to create a problem statement AND how to visually represent data.	Student's video did not demonstrate an understanding of to create a problem statement AND how to appropriately represent data. OR did not complete this section.
Response Posts (10 points)	Student demonstrates in-depth analysis of other's posts that add substantively to the discussion by building on previous posts. Responses are academic and respectful. Responses demonstrate an understanding of data collection.	Student demonstrates basic analysis of other's posts. Responses are shallow and may not enrich the discussion. Responses demonstrate a basic understanding of data collection.	Student demonstrates little analysis of other's posts. Responses are off-topic or inappropriate. Responses demonstrate a little to no understanding of data collection.
Participation (10 points)	All posts were completed on time. Student responded to 3 or more classmates	All posts were completed on time. Student responded to at least 2 fellow classmates.	Posts were not made on time or were not made at all. Student responded to fewer than 2 classmates.
Video Quality (10 points)	Video includes both audio and video. Student speaks in a clear and concise manner and demonstrates an understanding of the content he/she is reviewing.	Video includes both audio and video. Student speaks in a clear and manner and demonstrates a basic understanding of the content he/she is reviewing.	Student did not complete a video OR the video did not include both audio and video nor did the student speak in a clear manner.

same rubric as the one used for jigsaw discussions. For the jigsaw rubric we would reword the section for discussion elements and initial post quality to match the directions for this specific discussion. We would also adjust the point levels for different aspects of the rubric. For example, since the main focus of the jigsaw discussion is the initial post, we would make that worth 20 points instead of 10 points. This provides flexibility when deciding on the important components of discussion.

Video Based Discussion

Another option for an asynchronous discussion to support teacher candidates in learning classroom management skills is the use of video-based discussions. With

this format, students' sense of community and engagement can be increased (Swartzwelder et al., 2019). In order to ensure that online learners are successful with video-based discussions, teacher educators must be sure to provide step-by-step instructions on how to create and upload a video, as well as specific guidelines on the expectations, including video length and format (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020).

After Dr. Ramirez teaches her students about proactive classroom management through effective Tier 1 strategies, she begins providing instruction on identifying students' individual behavior needs through the use of data-based decision making. Dr. Ramirez wants to give her

students opportunities to practice collecting and using data to make decisions to support student success.

Data collection, and the use of the collected data for making decisions to support student success, are vital practices in schools (Schildkamp et al., 2019) and teacher educators must provide students with opportunities to practice these processes. Figure 3 shows a sample discussion that can be used for sharing data and having students collaborate to practice selecting interventions based on that data.

The authors have found that grading video-based discussions can be time-consuming since you need to watch the entire video to determine

FIGURE 4: Debate on Applied Behavior Analysis**Background Information**

One commonly used intervention for addressing challenging behaviors of students with autism is the use of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy. There is much controversy around the use of ABA in schools and this week you will be engaging in a debate about this topic.

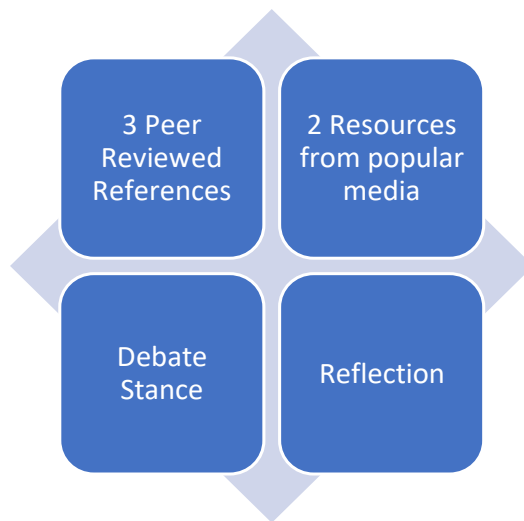
Initial Discussion Post Expectations

To better understand the ABA controversy, locate a minimum of 3 peer reviewed references on the topic, as well as at least two resources from popular media such as blogs or websites for members of the disability community. After learning about the topic, prepare an initial discussion post that firmly introduces your assigned stance on the topic.

Your initial discussion post is due on Thursday at 11:59 pm.

- Students with last names A-M will take the stance that ABA is an appropriate intervention for students with autism
- Students with last names N-Z will take the stance that ABA is NOT appropriate as an intervention for students with autism

The visual below provides you with a quick glance at what is required of this discussion. However, you must read the full directions for more specific information.

**Response Expectations**

Students must respond to at least 3 classmates. In your responses to classmates, continue the debate and keep supporting your side of the debate. At the end of the week, post a reflection on what you learned from the debate and share what you personally believe about the use of ABA therapy for students with autism.

Your responses are due on Sunday at 11:59 pm.

if students have met the grading objective(s). With this in mind, we highly recommend that you give a specific time limit on the videos. When deciding on the time limit think about the number of students in your course and an appropriate length of time needed to present the

required information. The authors have found that short clips can provide valuable information and classmates are more likely to view videos that present information succinctly.

Table 2 provides a general rubric that is used to grade video-based

discussions. Each of our video-based discussions will have some of the same elements, but the focus of the grading is likely on the content itself. However, because video-based discussions may be used in a variety of ways, this rubric should be customized

TABLE 3: Asynchronous Discussions Board Formats

Discussion Board Format	Key Information About This Format
Sharing Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increases student engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunity to practice creating materials for their own classrooms <input type="checkbox"/> Students receive feedback from both peers and professor
Video-Based Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increases student engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Provides opportunity for students to see one another <input type="checkbox"/> Requires explicit instructions from professor, including directions on how to record video and guidelines on length and format
Jigsaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Students teach one another <input type="checkbox"/> Increases communication and collaboration skills <input type="checkbox"/> Requires explicit instructions from professor
Debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ideal for controversial topics in the field of special education <input type="checkbox"/> Help students understand both sides of an issue <input type="checkbox"/> Increases communication and collaboration skills

to specific video-based discussion assignments.

Debates

A final format for asynchronous discussions is the use of debates, which can increase student engagement and motivation for learning the topic, as well as increase student understanding of both sides of a controversial topic in the field of education (Lohmann & Boothe, 2020). Debates can be designed to allow students the opportunity to collaborate in building a case for their assigned side of the debate; collaborative learning may improve student mastery of content (Wicks et al., 2015).

Some of the students in Dr. Ramirez's class want to become Board-Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) after gaining their initial special education

teacher licensure. Dr. Ramirez wants to ensure that they have a full understanding of the controversy that surrounds the use of applied behavior analysis (ABA) so that they can respond appropriately to concerns from parents and other stakeholders.

The field of special education includes a variety of controversial topics that lend themselves to debates. One such topic is the use of applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy to address challenging behaviors. ABA is a research-supported intervention that systematically teaches behavior skills to students with autism (Gorycki et al., 2020). Some disability advocates believe that the use of ABA therapy is harmful to children (Sanvodal-Norton & Shkedy, 2019). This is partly because interventions that reward desired behavior are considered more acceptable by

educators than those interventions that punish unwanted behaviors (Kelly & Barnes-Holmes, 2015). In addition, some opponents argue that ABA is unethical and focuses too much on compliance instead of learning, thus destroying children's internal motivation for learning and success (Sanvodal-Norton & Shkedy, 2019). With this in mind, it is important for teacher candidates to understand both sides of this issue so they can firmly support their stance in conversations with stakeholders in their future classrooms and schools. Figure 4 offers an example of how a debate on the use of ABA therapy can be used in an online asynchronous discussion board.

Debate-based discussions should be graded in a similar manner to other formats, such as the video-based discussion. When adapting the video-based discussion

rubric (see Table 2) you will want to ensure the initial post quality focuses on the stance being supported by research. You will also want to change the video quality component to a focus on writing mechanics and APA. In addition, the authors have noticed that students may need reminders to defend their assigned position in the debate, even if they do not agree with that position. It can be beneficial for professors to participate in the discussion as well by selecting the side that students are least likely to agree with and modeling how to defend it. As with the other rubrics, the authors recommend altering the point value to focus on the area(s) that are most important to you and your grading requirements. For example, you may choose to make the participation and writing mechanics of this rubric higher than in the past, because you know that students may struggle with taking a stance on ideas they do not agree with.

CONCLUSION

Special education teacher educators are tasked with ensuring that pre-service and in-service teachers are prepared for using evidence-based classroom management practices. As higher education faculty, we are tasked with creating quality learning opportunities and keeping our students engaged. In this article, we provided examples of four effective discussion formats and how they can be used to support instruction on effective classroom management (see Table 3). Through the use of (a) sharing products that students have created,

(b) video-based discussions, (c) jigsaw discussions, and (d) debates, teacher educators can support the learning of their students in the online classroom and prepare them for the classroom.

We know that getting and keeping college students engaged in online learning can be difficult. In addition, asynchronous course students may not feel as though they get to know their classmates and instructors. By varying discussion board formats, student response quality and engagement may improve. Instructors can build a sense of community in their asynchronous classrooms by creating discussions that allow students to provide feedback to classmates, brainstorm for their own classrooms, use critical thinking skills, research EBPs, discuss data-based decision making, and foster peer-to-peer instruction. Asynchronous discussion boards provide many opportunities for students to learn, apply knowledge, and feel part of a student community.

REFERENCES

- Al Jeraisy, M. N., Mohammad, H., Fayyoumi, A., & Alrashideh, W. (2015). Web 2.0 in education: The impact of discussion board on student performance and satisfaction. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 14(2), 247–258.
- Amador, J. A., & Mederer, H. (2013). Migrating successful student engagement strategies online: Opportunities and challenges using jigsaw groups and problem-based learning. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 9(1), 89–105.
- Aronson, E., & Patnoe, S. (2011). *Cooperation in the classroom: The jigsaw method* (3rd ed.). Pinter & Martin.
- Bradley, R., Doolittle, J., & Bartolotta, R. (2008). Building on the data and adding to the discussion: The experiences and outcomes of students with emotional disturbance. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 17(1), 4–23. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/s10864-007-9058-6>
- Butler, A., & Monda-Amaya, L. (2016). Preservice teachers' perceptions of challenging behavior. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 39(4), 276–292. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0888406416654212>
- Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. (2022). www.pbis.org
- Chaffee, R. K., Briesch, A. M., Volpe, R. J., Johnson, A. H., & Dudley, L. (2020). Effects of a class-wide positive peer reporting intervention on middle school student behavior. *Behavioral Disorders*, 45(4), 224–237. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0198742919881112>
- Cho, M.-H., & Tobias, S. (2016). Should instructors require discussion in online courses? Effects of online discussion on community of inquiry, learner time, satisfaction, and achievement. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 17(2), 123–140. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v17i2.2342>
- Clinefelter, D. L., & Aslanian, C. B. (2017). *Online college students 2017: Comprehensive data on demands and preferences*. The Learning House, Inc.
- deLima, D. P. R., Gerosa, M. A., Conte, T. U., & de M. Netto, J. F. (2019). What to expect and how to improve online discussion forums: The instructors' perspective. *Journal of Internet Services and Applications*, 10(22), Article 22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13174-019-0120-0>
- Epstein, M., Atkins, M., Cullinan, D., Kutash, K., & Weaver, R. (2008). *Reducing behavior problems in the elementary classroom: A practice guide* (NCEE #2008-012). http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/behavior_pg_092308.pdf
- Fear, W., & Erikson-Brown, A. (2014). Good quality discussion is necessary but not sufficient in asynchronous tuition: A brief narrative review of the literature. *Online Learning*, 18(2), 1–8.
- Fish, W. W., & Gill, P. B. (2009). Perceptions of online instruction. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 8(1), 53–64.
- Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., Briere, D. E., & MacSuga-Gage, A. S. (2014). Pre-service teacher training in classroom management: A review of state accreditation policy and teacher preparation programs. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 37(2), 106–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0888406413507002>
- Gorycki, K. A., Ruppel, P. R., & Zane, T. (2020). Is long-term ABA therapy abusive: A response to Sandoval-Norton and Skhedy. *Cogent Psychology*, 7(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2020.1823615>
- Halimah, L., Sukmayadi, V. (2019). The role of “jigsaw” method in enhancing Indonesian prospective teachers' pedagogical knowledge and communication skills. *International Journal of Instruction*,

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Marla J. Lohmann

Marla J. Lohmann, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Special Education at Colorado Christian University, where she teaches both special education alternative certification and master's degree students in fully online programs. Dr. Lohmann is an active member of the Council for Exceptional Children Teacher Education Division (TED) and is currently the Chair of the TED Early Childhood SIG and the Secretary for Colorado TED. Dr. Lohmann's research focuses on effective online teacher preparation, assistive technology, preschool classroom management, and supporting diverse learning needs in the private school classroom.

Kathleen A. Boothe

Kathleen A. Boothe, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Special Education at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, OK. She currently teaches fully online to pre- and in-service teachers in a small special education program of two faculty members. Her current research focuses on integrating the Universal Design for Learning framework into the online learning environment and best practices in online teaching.

- 12(2), 289-304. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12219a>
- Kelly, M. E., & Barnes-Holmes, D. (2015). Measuring implicit and explicit acceptability of reinforcement versus punishment interventions with teachers working in ABA versus mainstream schools. *Psychological Record*, 65(2), 251-265. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40732-014-0101-4>
- Lederman, D. (2021). Detailing last fall's online enrollment surge. *Inside Higher Education*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/09/16/new-data-of-fer-sense-how-covid-expanded-online-learning>
- Lohmann, M. J. & Boothe, K. A. (2020). Developing asynchronous online discussion boards to increase student engagement and learning. In R. Ceglie, A. Thornburg, & D. Abernathy (Eds.) *Handbook of Research on Developing Engaging Online Courses* (pp. 134-151). IGI Global.
- Mathew, N. G., & Alidmat, A. O. H. (2013). A study on the usefulness of audio-visual aids in EFL classroom: Implications for effective instruction. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 2(2), 86-91. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v2n2p86>
- Mitchell, B. S., Stormont, M., & Gage, N. A. (2011). Tier two interventions implemented within the context of a tiered prevention framework. *Behavioral Disorders*, 36(4), 241-261. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F019874291103600404>
- Myers, D., Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., & Sugai, G. (2017). Classroom management with exceptional learners. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 49(4), 223-230. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0040059916685064>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, Table 311.15. <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=80>
- Paramita, P. P., Anderson, A., & Sharma, U. (2020). Effective teacher professional learning on classroom behavior management: A review of literature. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 45(1), 61-81. <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol45/iss1/5>
- Pinkelman, S. E., & Horner, R. H. (2016). Improving implementation of function-based interventions: Self-monitoring, data collection, and data review. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 19(4), 228-238. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300716683634>
- Sanvodal-Norton, A. H., & Shkedy, G. (2019). How much compliance is too much compliance: Is long-term ABA therapy abuse? *Cogent Psychology*, 6(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2019.1641258>
- Schildkamp, K., Smit, M., & Blossing, U. (2019). Professional development in the use of data: From data to knowledge in data teams. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 63(3), 393-411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2017.1376350>
- Simonsen, B., & Myers, D. (2015). *Class-wide positive behavior interventions and supports: A guide to proactive classroom management*. Guilford Press.
- Suldo, S. M., Gormley, M. J., DuPaul, G. J., & Anderson-Butcher, D. (2014). The impact of school mental health on student and school-level academic outcomes: Current status of the research and future directions. *School Mental Health*, 6(1), 84-98. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-013-9116-2>
- Swartzwelder, K., Murphy, J., & Murphy, G. (2019). The impact of text-based and video discussions on student engagement and interactivity in an online course. *Journal of Educators Online*, 16(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.9743/jeo.2019.16.1.13>
- Ward, M. E., Peters, G., & Shelley, K. (2010). Student and faculty perceptions of the quality of online learning experiences. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 11(3), 57-77. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v11i3.867>
- Wicks, D., Craft, B. B., Lee, D., Lumpe, A., Henrikson, R., Baliram, N., Bian, X., Mehlberg, S., & Wicks, S. (2015). An evaluation of low versus high collaboration in online learning. *Online Learning*, 19(4), 67-87. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24059/olj.v19i4.552>

Socially-Just Disability Resources: An Approach to Enhancing Equity for Teacher Candidates with Disabilities

AUTHORS

Morgan Strimel

Journal of Special Education Preparation
2(3), 60-67

© 2022 Strimel

Licensed with CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 License

DOI: 10.33043/JOSEP.2.3.60-67
openjournals.bsu.edu/JOSEP

ABSTRACT

To effectively diversify the special education profession, the field must recognize disability as an aspect of diversity and critically examine how disabled teacher candidates experience higher education. Research has shown, for example, that during their time in teacher preparation programs, teacher candidates with disabilities encounter numerous barriers and a general sense of unpreparedness for their disability-related needs among several stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, disability resource professionals). The purpose of this article, therefore, is to describe an approach for disability resource professionals to apply socially-just disability resources—an emergent professional paradigm in the field of higher education disability resources—to enhance both access and equity in special education teacher preparation programs.

KEYWORDS

Disability resources, equity, special education, teacher preparation

Meet Klaudia. Klaudia is about to begin her third year of study at a large, public 4-year institution. She is enrolled in her university's Bachelor of Science in Education program, specializing in Special Education. At this point in her studies, Klaudia is shifting into coursework that requires hands-on clinical field experiences in special education classrooms. Specifically, by the end of her upcoming semester, she will be expected to take the lead instructional role in a classroom and work directly with students with the support of a cooperating teacher. Klaudia is excited to have reached this point in her program and is looking forward to starting her fieldwork. Because of this change in course structure and recent flares in some of her disabilities, however, Klaudia decided to initiate accommodations with her university's Disability Resource Center (DRC).

Klaudia was diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder and Generalized Anxiety Disorder in her teens and contracted Lyme disease in her early twenties, which

causes fatigue and joint pain. As of recently, she also started experiencing symptoms of long-COVID that can worsen her fatigue and cause migraines. Klaudia was previously resistant to the idea of establishing accommodations with the DRC, as her disabilities are generally unapparent, and she feared the stigma associated with disabled teachers. Moreover, she did not feel she needed accommodations until this point in her educational career. As a result, she is unsure of what to expect in the accommodations process and is anxious about disclosing such personal information about herself to a stranger. After much contemplation, though, Klaudia submitted her relevant medical documentation to the DRC, as suggested on their website, and awaited her upcoming meeting with a staff member to discuss accommodations.

Disability Resource Centers

Following the enactment of federal civil rights laws relevant to individuals with disabilities (e.g., Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990; Rehabilitation

Act, 1973), higher education institutions established disability resource centers (DRCs), employed by disability resource professionals (DRPs), to uphold compliance with provisions regarding access and inclusion (Evans et al., 2017). Specifically, DRCs exist as a place for disabled college students to work with DRPs to identify barriers in their environments (e.g., classrooms, residence halls, dining facilities, field placements) and, consequently, appropriate accommodations to mitigate them (Kroeger & Kraus, 2017). As a result, the primary roles of a DRP are to facilitate collaborative processes, determine accommodations that address disability-related barriers (Hatzes et al., 2018), and work with faculty and staff to ensure that approved accommodations are implemented effectively (Oslund, 2014).

Generally, DRPs conduct assessments of accommodation on a case-by-case basis by synthesizing students' relevant medical documentation and self-reports of their disabilities, as well as their professional observations and judgments (AHEAD, n.d.; Akins et al., 2001). Broadly, when considering accommodation requests, DRPs are looking to determine whether they meet the threshold of *reasonableness*; the only guidance from federal law on the matter of access that indicates that accommodations must not impose a safety risk to others, create an undue burden on the institution, or fundamentally alter an academic requirement or program (Rehabilitation Act, 1973). Altogether, the role of DRPs in the outcomes of students with disabilities is critical, as approving or denying an accommodation request for a classroom or clinical setting and the level of support provided thereafter can alter the trajectory of a student's outcomes (Papalia-Berardi et al., 2002).

Accommodations and Special Education Teacher Preparation

In determining accommodations for disabled special education teacher

candidates, DRPs may instrumentally influence whether they complete their programs of study and ultimately enter into an understaffed workforce (CEED-AR Center, 2020). In addition, due to the hands-on nature of clinical experiences, DRCs and teacher preparation stakeholders are met with unique challenges in determining and implementing reasonable accommodations in these settings that may require a great deal of creativity (Parker & Draves, 2017). In particular, when considering accommodations for special education teacher candidates with disabilities, one must consider their (a) academic coursework, (b) tests and relevant examinations, (c) teacher preparation program standards, and (d) clinical field placement settings.

Concerningly, numerous researchers demonstrated that disabled teacher candidates historically emphasize difficulties working with DRCs (e.g., unclear accommodations process, lack of understanding of the structure of teacher preparation programs) and other teacher preparation program stakeholders (Csoli & Gallagher, 2012; Macleod & Cebula, 2009; Parker & Draves, 2017). In most cases, teacher candidates attributed these difficulties to an overall awareness of negative attitudes towards educators with disabilities, both covert and overt. In addition, within the context of clinical field experiences, researchers found that some stakeholders perceive accommodating fieldwork as a direct fundamental alteration to the requirements of the teaching profession (Griffiths, 2012; Bargerhuff et al., 2012). When this occurs, disabled teacher candidates are left to report any issues back to their designated DRP. Otherwise, they will go unknown and unresolved, and teacher candidates often feel that they or their accommodations are burdensome to their respective teacher preparation programs (Bargerhuff et al., 2012; Griffiths, 2012).

Purpose

Although special education teacher preparation programs may be acces-

sible to teacher candidates with disabilities per compliance with federal legislation (i.e., the provision of reasonable accommodations), they may not be *equitable* in ways that are conducive to inclusion, degree completion, and ultimate entrance to a classroom. As a result, there is much work to be done in higher education to improve the experiences of disabled teacher candidates in special education teacher preparation programs. The purpose of this article, therefore, is to describe a proposed approach for disability resource professionals to apply *socially-just disability resources* – an emergent professional paradigm in the field of higher education disability resources – to enhance both access and equity in special education teacher preparation programs.

SOCIALLY-JUST DISABILITY RESOURCES

As a framework, socially-just disability resources (SJDR) is not a guide or step-by-step model for DRPs to use in carrying out the functions of their role. It is, however, a lens through which to critically examine all aspects of the disability resources field and consider how to align them more closely with equity-focused work (Evans et al., 2017; Kraus, 2021; Loewen & Pollard, 2010). More specifically, *equity-focused work* seeks to address barriers faced by students with disabilities in higher education, understand *why* they exist, and explore how DRPs can eliminate them. Overall, as defined by Kraus (2021), implementing an SJDR framework involves going “beyond mere compliance and accessibility to promote social justice and impact larger campus dynamics of inclusion, belonging, and climate” (p. 47).

Importantly, foundational to implementing SJDR is the belief that higher education has a long, complex history concerning systemic oppression of students with disabilities influenced by *ableism*, or attitudes, actions, and circumstances which devalue people because they are disabled, both inten-

tionally and unintentionally (Kraus, 2021; Ladau, 2021). Further, Loewen and Pollard (2010) noted that for DRPs, implementation of SJDR must also include (a) a recognition of privilege and power in higher education, (b) an understanding of diversity as it relates to disability, (c) careful attention to intersectionality concerning disability (e.g., access to disability documentation in relation to poverty), and (d) an orientation towards interdependence rather than independence. Similarly, but more concisely, Evans and colleagues (2017) defined SJDR by four core concepts – liberation, respect, interdependence, and justice – noting that they all summarize what *equity* would look like for students with disabilities when DRPs enact SJDR.

In addition to the foundational conceptualizations of SJDR, leading scholars provided operationalizations of SJDR for DRPs to inform their practice. For example, through SJDR, DRPs should take care in identifying and avoiding microaggressions towards disabled students and, regularly reflect on their biases and the presence of power dynamics in their interactions. Additionally, through SJDR, DRPs are encouraged to view students holistically as individuals with multiple, interrelated identities (i.e., not only as students with disabilities) and consider how the language used in interactions with disabled students and the campus community represents disability (Kraus, 2021; Loewen & Pollard, 2010). Further, SJDR involves facilitating an equitable accommodations process through trust in the student as the expert in their disability, support of student agency, a focus on environmental barriers rather than student deficits, and transparency in available resources (Evans et al., 2017; Kraus, 2021).

Moreover, within SJDR, there are several implications for DRPs regarding proactive efforts to advance equity across their campuses. For example, DRPs are encouraged to provide continuing education to campus partners on universal design, work closely with

FIGURE 1: Applying Socially-Just Disability Resources to Special Education Teacher Preparation



faculty to identify disability-related barriers in courses, and collaborate with campus partners to develop cultural centers/programming to represent disability identity on campus (Evans et al., 2017; Kraus, 2021; Loewen & Pollard, 2010). In special education teacher preparation, specifically, the scope of SJDR is far-reaching. DRPs would need to reach not only partners on campuses in these efforts (e.g., faculty and staff) but also those in cooperating schools (e.g., teachers, administrators), where tensions between accommodations, professional standards, and personal beliefs may be at their highest (Sokal & Sharma, 2017). Altogether, SJDR shows promise for guiding DRPs to enact change that creates more equitable experiences for all college students with disabilities (Kraus, 2021) that, over time, may attract more disabled special education teacher candidates and advance efforts to diversify the profession overall.

APPLYING SJDR TO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION

Let us now meet Eric. Eric is a seasoned disability resource professional with over seven years of experience in his role, which primarily involves determining accommodations in collaboration with college students with disabilities. Throughout his career in disability resources, Eric has worked with hundreds of students from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and degree programs. For this reason, Eric is generally comfortable with his professional skills and expertise. Notably, although Eric does not identify as disabled, he does have disabilities that some might consider disabling. Specifically, he was diagnosed with Generalized Anxiety Disorder as a child, and since 2020, he has expe-

rienced brain fog from time to time as an effect of long-COVID.

Ahead of a new fall semester, Eric is preparing to meet with a new student, Klaudia. Before their meeting, Eric reviews the documentation Klaudia submitted to get a general idea of the direction their meeting might take (e.g., her accommodation requests, degree program, disabilities). Within Klaudia's documentation, Eric sees that she submitted paperwork to support diagnoses of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, and Lyme Disease. In addition, Klaudia included a note about long-COVID but does not yet have documentation to support this diagnosis. However, after reading through her documentation, what catches Eric's eye is Klaudia's program of study; his gut reaction to her studying special education surprises him – "*how am I going to accommodate her?*"

The following section describes the application of SJDR to higher education disability resources. As depicted in Figure 1, the four steps to applying SJDR to special education teacher preparation include continually (1) engaging in critical self-reflection, (2) ensuring baseline access, (3) equitably implementing accommodations, and (4) proactively creating socially-just experiences. Each step will be explored in depth with practical applications for professionals to adopt to engage with disabled teacher candidates more equitably throughout their programs of study.

Step One: Engaging in Critical Self-Reflection

Eric's internal response to the information he learned about Klaudia before meeting with her and subsequent uncertainty in how he would facilitate access for someone with her disabilities in a special education teacher preparation program is likely the result of

implicit bias. Implicit bias, or "a form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally," unconsciously shapes individuals' choices, interactions, actions, and judgments (National Institutes of Health, n.d., para. 1). In higher education disability resources, implicit biases can impact DRPs' accommodation-related decisions and assumptions, interactions with disabled teacher candidates, and choices while facilitating access (Kraus, 2021). For this reason, as depicted in Figure 1, an essential starting place for DRPs in adopting the SJDR framework is to engage in critical self-reflection. Critical self-reflection has been used in teacher education to describe a practice that "requires one to seek deeper levels of self-knowledge and to acknowledge how one's worldview can shape student's conceptions of self" (Howard, 2003, p. 198). If translated to disability resources, this practice can provide a means for DRPs to enhance their self-knowledge by navigating personal biases, disrupting them when they emerge, deeply exploring why they may have formed, and unlearning them over time (Stewart & Payne, 2008).

Critical self-reflection may take many forms, and how this practice is adopted will vary depending upon individual DRPs. *Reflexivity*, for example, is an approach to reflection that requires deep contemplation of the interrelated components of oneself (e.g., identities, experiences, beliefs, values) to monitor, understand, and mitigate the extent to which they influence external action and choices. In Eric's situation, reflexivity could involve taking a step back after he wondered, "*how am I going to accommodate her?*" to explore this reaction, where it may have come from (e.g., personal experiences), and why it occurred. It may be the case, for example, that Eric reflects on experiences he had with educators with disabilities in the past, experiences with disabled teacher candidates in his professional role, personal experiences with Generalized Anxiety Disorder and long-

COVID, and how these may differ from Klaudia's experiences. Based on the answers to these questions, Eric may uncover where his experiences or beliefs may be shaping his gut reactions, judgments, and biases to pay attention and to redirect them if they emerge during his interactions with Klaudia.

Similarly, engaging in critical self-reflection may inherently be accompanied by *humility*. Humility, in the context of disability resources, involves openness and willingness to learn and change opinions, beliefs, and ideas through interactions with others (Haynes-Mendez & Engelsmeier, 2020). It may be beneficial, for example, for DRPs to channel humility as a framework through which they prepare for accommodation meetings and approach interactions with disabled teacher candidates. Moreover, from a place of humility, DRPs can initiate engagements in peer debriefing or consultation with colleagues. Within the SJDR framework, consulting with peers can create more equitable accommodation decision-making procedures by sharing initial judgments, such as Eric's judgments, to monitor the extent to which they were influenced by implicit bias. In any form, critical self-reflection is an essential component of adopting SJDR that can ensure DRPs recognize and minimize the influence of their biases throughout all components of working with disabled teacher candidates, before, during, and after the accommodations process (Kraus, 2021).

Step Two: Ensuring Baseline Access

Central to the SJDR framework is the idea that "access is the starting point, not the end goal" for DRPs' work on college and university campuses (Kraus, 2021, p. 63). It is essential, however, through an SJDR approach, that DRPs examine how they facilitate access and whether it is done equitably to then be able to move the needle of equity and social justice in other higher education contexts. Further, by

engaging in equitable practices, DRPs may model a lens of social justice for their campus partners that translate to changes in additional campus policies, practices, and procedures. As such, the SJDR framework provides numerous suggestions for shifting DRPs' practices to create an equitable experience for disabled teacher candidates in the accommodations process.

First, SJDR calls on DRPs to facilitate an accommodations process that is non-burdensome (Evans et al., 2017). In other words, accommodations processes should not present barriers for disabled teacher candidates, preventing them from accessing their educational experiences. Influential to this charge for DRPs is the idea that social justice for disabled students would entail similar, if not identical, experiences between them and their non-disabled peers (Kraus, 2021); non-disabled teacher candidates are not required to complete accommodations processes, submit disability-related documentation, or disclose personal details to engage in their special education teacher preparation programs. Eric, for example, could be mindful not to create barriers to access by not requiring Klaudia to obtain documentation of her long-COVID diagnosis before establishing related accommodations. Instead, he can lean into her self-report and narratives of the impact of environmental barriers when making accommodation-related decisions. Notably, this practice is also cognizant of disabled teacher candidates' intersectional identities (e.g., culture, socioeconomic status) that may impact their ability to access disability-related documentation (Yull, 2015).

Second, throughout the accommodations process, SJDR calls on DRPs to emphasize designs and environments as inaccessible rather than situating the problem within students and their disability/ies (Evans et al., 2017; Kraus, 2021; Loewen & Pollard, 2010). To accomplish this, DRPs can be attentive to their language when interacting

with disabled teacher candidates and the questions they ask to elicit their self-reports. Eric, for example, may ask Klaudia, "what barriers are present within your teacher preparation program?" instead of "what are your functional limitations?" This practice also reflects the third component of an equitable accommodations process: removing emphasis from assumptions of specific disabilities. Although Eric is a seasoned DRP, he does not know how Klaudia's disabilities interact with her environment until she discloses that information, nor can he base his decisions on his experiences with Generalized Anxiety Disorder and long-COVID. As a result, focusing on Klaudia's self-report is the most reliable and equitable source of information, per SJDR, to identify environmental barriers and determine accommodations for disabled teacher candidates.

Fourth, with a broad focus on environmental barriers while determining accommodations, implementing SJDR also involves DRPs deeply exploring all environments in which disabled teacher candidates are studying to create holistically equitable and accessible educational experiences. When meeting with Klaudia, for example, Eric must ensure that he fully understands the nature of special education teacher preparation and clinical field experiences to identify where barriers are present across all contexts. Further, Eric will also need to consider the professional standards of the special education profession to balance them with his ultimate accommodation decisions. To accomplish this, he may need to engage in additional work beyond his meeting with Klaudia to talk with special education teacher preparation stakeholders to understand the components of her program of study that he needs to be mindful of when making accommodation-related decisions and facilitating access.

Eric consulted with his coworkers before meeting with Klaudia to

discuss the reactions he had to her information and program of study, which led to a productive conversation about how other staff members of the DRC collaborated with teacher preparation programs in the past to ensure access. However, Eric's coworkers also reminded him that Anxiety and long-COVID impact everyone differently and he would need to reserve his assessments of accommodations and environmental barriers until he met with Klaudia and learned more about her experiences. The next day, Eric and Klaudia had a productive initial meeting to discuss her accommodations. First, she shared that she anticipated experiencing barriers in her lecture-style classes and clinical field experiences. The two then discussed the potential barriers at length (see Table 1). Next, Eric learned a great deal about the structure of the special education teacher preparation program from Klaudia, even though he had researched the department's website the day before. After their meeting, Eric and Klaudia agreed upon the following accommodations: extended time on exams, breaks during class, advanced access to course materials (e.g., PowerPoints), access to a chair, and extended time on assignments (2 days).

Step 3: Equitably Implementing Accommodations

Once DRPs establish accommodations, they can use several strategies through the SJDR framework to enhance equity for special education teacher candidates with disabilities in implementing them. For example, disabled teacher candidates cite power dynamics between them and faculty as a persistent barrier to access, due to either not feeling comfortable accessing their accommodations or being denied their usage (Baldwin, 2007; Leyser & Greenberger, 2008). For this reason,

TABLE 1: Connections between Potential Barriers and Corresponding Accommodations

POTENTIAL BARRIER	CORRESPONDING ACCOMMODATION
Fixed exam periods	Extended time on exams
Long lecture or instructional periods (up to three hours)	Breaks during class
Unexpected requirements, activities, or content in lectures or clinical field experiences	Advanced access to course materials
Requirements to stand during clinical field experiences (e.g., instructional settings)	Access to a chair
Rigid due dates for assignments	Extended time on assignments (e.g., 2 days)

DRPs may draw on the SJDR framework and remove these power dynamics by communicating any information about accommodations to appropriate stakeholders rather than requiring disabled teacher candidates to engage in this process. This practice again reiterates that disabled teacher candidates should have similar if not identical experiences as their non-disabled peers. In other words, non-disabled teacher candidates are not required to ask for access each time they need it. Therefore, if candidates are comfortable with this approach, DRPs may remove this burden and collaborate with faculty, clinical field supervisors, and other special education stakeholders to communicate approved accommodations and discuss their implementation. Overall, this practice ensures that disabled teacher candidates are not carrying the burden of inaccessibility in higher education settings.

Disabled teacher candidates may prefer, however, to either communicate their accommodations on their own or to do so in collaboration with DRPs. If candidates are interested in discussing accommodation implementation collaboratively, it is recommended that a meeting with relevant stakeholders be held in advance of their upcoming semester to remain proactive and ahead of any environmental barriers. Specifically, this group should – if possible

– include the teacher candidate, DRP, clinical field supervisor, faculty, and other relevant stakeholders. In this meeting, the group may discuss potential barriers across all environments that they will mitigate via accommodations and modifications to ensure that access is consistent and equitably implemented. Notably, throughout this conversation, DRPs should make efforts to keep the focus on inaccessible structures as opposed to the teacher candidates' disabilities. It is important, through the lens of SJDR, that DRPs follow the students' lead in conversations such as these and center their perspectives, as they are the experts in their own experiences. Moreover, centering the teacher candidate will also help to ensure that the DRP or other stakeholders do not unintentionally patronize the teacher candidate; instead, it is suggested that DRPs adopt a stance of an ally and advocate.

After their initial meeting, Klaudia reached out to Eric to schedule a meeting with the two of them, her clinical field supervisor, and faculty members for the upcoming semester. The group met in the first week of classes before her field experiences commenced. With each bringing an important perspective to the table, they developed a plan to ensure that each of her accom-

modations would be implemented appropriately. Specifically, the clinical field supervisor would speak with Klaudia's cooperating teacher and school principal to communicate the necessary accommodations and decide for each to take place as needed. The clinical field supervisor also planned to check in with Klaudia weekly to ensure that accommodations effectively removed environmental barriers.

Further, if any accommodations needed to be adjusted, Klaudia planned to notify Eric and schedule a meeting to adjust accordingly. The group then prepared to check in with one another at the midpoint of the semester and, once the semester concluded, to monitor the accessibility of Klaudia's experiences to ensure they were also equitable and inclusive. For her other courses (non-fieldwork), Eric communicated Klaudia's accommodations to her faculty members. Then, starting the following week, Klaudia's professors shared their course materials with her, ensured access to a chair, and worked with her to adjust due dates and test times as needed.

Step 4: Proactively Creating Socially-Just Experiences

In the final component of the SJDR

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Morgan Strimel

Morgan Strimel, M.Ed. is a doctoral candidate in the OSEP-funded Policy and Research-Intensive Special Educators (PRISE) program at George Mason University, where she previously worked as an Access Consultant for Disability Services. Based on her time in higher education, Morgan's current research is focused on enhancing postsecondary education experiences for college students with disabilities – including preservice teachers – through the disability resources profession. Specifically, Morgan is studying socially-just disability resources as an approach to access, equity, and inclusion for students with disabilities in higher education settings.

framework, DRPs are charged with going beyond matters of compliance to proactively advance equity and inclusion across their campuses (Kraus, 2021). Over time, these efforts would minimize the need for individual accommodations, as colleges and universities would be designed to be accessible and inclusive for disabled students. To reach this point, however, DRPs may use the SJDR approach to incrementally shift policies, practices, and procedures within all dimensions of higher education to reach a point in which disabled students have similar, if not identical, experiences as their non-disabled peers (Kraus, 2021).

To accomplish this, DRPs will need to develop strong relationships with their campus partners to serve as a foundation for advocating for inclusive, proactive design. In special education teacher preparation, in particular, it will be necessary for DRPs to consider practical approaches to these conversations, given the similarities in professional expertise across departmental faculty and staff. Further, these conversations will need to extend to *all* campus partners in special education teacher preparation, such as cooperating school staff. Through this outreach, DRPs may encourage special education stakeholders to carefully reflect on barriers in their programs, courses, and experiences for disabled teacher candidates and subsequently assess how they may be removed. Given the nature of this suggestion and the corresponding workload to accompany any department-wide initiatives, it is recommended that DRPs offer their expertise in access to higher education as a means of support for creatively thinking through how to design special education teacher preparation environments to be universally designed to the greatest extent possible.

In the same vein, SJDR also involves DRPs engaging in outreach and education around how disability is framed, discussed, and represented

across campus. As such, DRPs may consider encouraging special education teacher preparation stakeholders to reflect on how they represent disability in their programs of study and how it may subsequently impact their disabled teacher candidates. Specifically, because special education law broadly focuses on “fixing the child through a series of interventions to make the child more similar to peers without disabilities,” the content of special education teacher preparation programs can inherently and unintentionally focus on students’ deficits and means of ‘fixing’ disability (Cornett & Knackstedt, 2020, p. 512). Consequently, this framing of disability can harm disabled teacher candidates’ disability identity and self-efficacy concerning becoming a special education teacher. As a result, it may be beneficial for DRPs to draw on fields such as disability studies in education to facilitate conversations across special education teacher preparation programs around how to reframe disability in special education through a lens of social justice and equity rather than individual deficit and a need for intervention.

Later that semester, after forming a relationship with Klaudia’s faculty, Eric had the opportunity to facilitate a workshop among other special education preparation stakeholders about disability equity, identity, and inclusion in their department. In this workshop, Eric discussed disability identity and the impact inequitable and inaccessible experiences have on special education teacher candidates with disabilities, citing previous research. In addition, he thoughtfully facilitated dialogue with special education teacher preparation stakeholders on why this exclusion occurs in degree programs meant to prepare individuals to be inclusive of individuals with disabilities. Through

thoughtful conversations, Eric and the special education stakeholders developed a plan to conduct an equity audit of their department to uncover how ableism and traces of the medical model of disability may be intertwined with how they prepare special education teachers. Through this process, the department hopes to enhance equity and inclusion for disabled teacher candidates in their department and plans to engage in focus groups with disabled teacher candidates currently enrolled in their program to understand how it can be changed to be socially-just.

CONCLUSION

Overall, it is evident that there is a great deal of work to be done in higher education and within special education teacher preparation programs to create equitable educational experiences for disabled teacher candidates, where they feel free from discrimination and disability-related barriers, all of which begins with disability resource professionals. By implementing socially-just disability resources, it may be possible for DRPs to take incremental steps to shift access and equity in special education teacher preparation. Although enacting the SJDR framework inherently requires additional efforts from DRPs and DRCs alike, these efforts may increase the number of teachers candidates with disabilities who enroll in preparation programs and ultimately enter a classroom. With this potential, DRPs are encouraged to adopt SJDR to the greatest extent possible to enhance equity not only for disabled teacher candidates, but for all college students with disabilities.

REFERENCES

- AHEAD. (n.d.). The professional's guide to exploring and facilitating access. *Association on Higher Education and Disability*. Retrieved March 29, 2021, from <https://www.ahead.org/professionalresources/accommodations/documentation/professional-resources-accommodations-professional-guide-access>
- Akins, W., Chance, C., & Page, F. (2001). *Accommodating student teachers with special needs* (ED4595575). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED4595575.pdf>
- Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC § 12101 et seq. (1990).
- Baldwin, J. L. (2007). Teacher candidates with learning disabilities: Effective and ethical accommodations. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 30(3), 128–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088840640703000302>
- Bargerhuff, M. E., Cole, D. J., & Teeters, L. (2012). Using a transdisciplinary model to address inequities in field placements for teacher candidates with disabilities. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(2), 185–206.
- CEEDAR Center. (2020). *Preparing and retaining effective special education teachers: Short-term strategies for long-term solutions (A policy brief)*. <https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CEEDAR-GTL-Shortages-Brief.pdf>
- Cornett, J. & Knackstedt, K. M. (2020). Original sin(s): Lessons from the US model of special education and an opportunity for leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 58(5), 507–520. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-10-2019-0175>
- Csoli, K., & Gallagher, T. L. (2012). Accommodations in teacher education: Perspectives of teacher candidates with learning disabilities and their faculty advisors. *Exceptionality Education International*, 22(2). <https://doi.org/10.5206/eei.v22i2.7698>
- Evans, N., Broido, E., Brown, K., & Wilke, A., (2017). *Disability in higher education: A social justice foundation*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Griffiths, S. (2012). 'Being dyslexic doesn't make me less of a teacher.' School placement experiences of student teachers with dyslexia: Strengths, challenges, and a model for support. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 12(2), 54–65. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2011.01201.x>
- Hatzes, N. M., Reiff, H. B., & Bramel, M. H. (2002). The documentation dilemma: Access and accommodations for postsecondary students with learning disabilities. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 27(3), 37–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/073724770202700304>
- Haynes-Mendez, K., & Engelsmeier, J. (2020). Cultivating cultural humility in education. *Childhood Education*, 22–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2020.1766656>
- Howard, T. C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory Into Practice*, 42, 195–202. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4203_5
- Kraus, A. (2021). *Operationalizing our commitment to social justice: A guide for disability resource professionals in higher education* [Monograph]. Association on Higher Education and Disability.
- Kroeger, S. & Kraus, A. (2017). Thinking and practicing differently: Changing the narrative around disability on college campuses. In E. Kim & K. C. Aquino (Eds.), *Disability as diversity in higher education: Policies and practices to enhance student success* (pp. 216–229). Routledge.
- Ladau, E. (2021). *Demystifying disability: What to know, what to say, and how to be an ally*. Ten Speed Press.
- Leysner, Y., & Greenberger, L. (2008). College students with disabilities in teacher education: Faculty attitudes and practices. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 23(3), 237–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856250802130442>
- Loewen, G. & Pollard, W. (2010). The social justice perspective. *Journal of Postsecondary Education & Disability*, 23(1), 5–18.
- Macleod, G., & Cebula, K. R. (2009). Experiences of disabled students in initial teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39(4), 457–472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640903352465>
- National Institutes on Health. (n.d.). *Implicit Bias*. <https://diversity.nih.gov/sociocultural-factors/implicit-bias>
- Oslund, C. (2014). *Disability services and disability studies in higher education: History, contexts, and social impacts*. Palgrave Pivot.
- Papalia-Berardi, A., Hughes, C. A., & Papalia, A. S. (2002). Teacher education students with disabilities: Participation and achievement factors. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 25(1), 23–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/088840640202500104>
- Parker, E. C., & Draves, T. J. (2017). A narrative of two preservice music teachers with visual impairment. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 64(4), 385–404. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429416674704>
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 USC § 701 et seq.
- Sokal, L., & Sharma, U. (2017). "Do I really need a course to learn to teach students with disabilities? I've been doing it for years." *Canadian Journal of Education*, 40(4), 739–760. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/90018386>
- Stewart, B. D., & Payne, B. K. (2008). Bringing automatic stereotyping under control: implementation intentions as efficient means of thought control. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(10), 1332–1345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167208321269>
- Yull, A. (2015). The impact of race and socioeconomic status on access to accommodations in postsecondary education. *Social Policy*, 23(2), 353–392.



Journal of
**SPECIAL
EDUCATION**
preparation

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY & TEACHER EDUCATION DIVISION
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3 | WINTER 2022 | ISSN: 2768-1432