

Effective Teaching Strategies for Special Needs Students in the General Education Setting

Rationale

Throughout the years the need for teachers to know and implement strategies that work best for students with learning disabilities also work best with their non-disable peers. As a DC public school teacher, we have learned that there is an overwhelming request by teachers to become better equipped with a variety of teaching strategies to better serve all students. Such strategies are often deemed "best practices". Many research projects, have identified key ideas which support that good teaching is good teaching, and when implemented properly, and it works for all students. When colleagues and/or teachers clearly understand how working with students with learning disabilities is no different from working with students without learning disabilities, it is a solid testament to this concern. A teacher, who recognizes when they are having trouble-reaching students with learning disabilities, will also recognize that chances are they probably are not connecting with other students in the class as well. The purpose of this study is to inform all teachers that every child must be included and involved in learning, not just the eager ones who will be interested no matter what you do, nor just the college bound star that is intrinsically motivated, and that this success for all is done through many different ways.

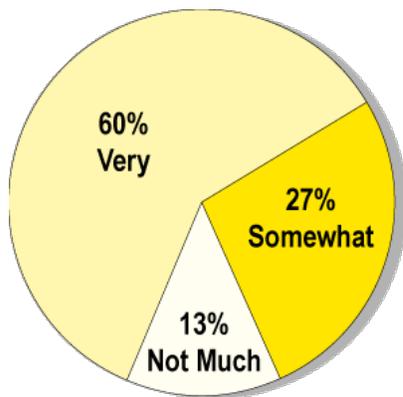
Literature Review

After looking extensively at the research on placement of students with disabilities, Hocutt (1996) concludes that instruction, not setting, is the key to achievement of success as measured by student outcomes. Further, she reports that case-by-case approaches are the best way to make decisions about student instruction and placement. Intensive and reasonably individualized instruction, close cooperation between general and special education teachers, and careful, frequent monitoring of student progress are very important (p. 97).

Special education is not a place. It is specialized instruction and supplementary aids and services provided to students with disabilities who need specialized instruction. Some students (labeled as receiving special education or not) may need, or want, to spend some of their time learning in a quieter place with fewer people or with additional help from others.

Data/Tools/Process

To conduct my research, 10 general educators and 5 special needs teachers completed a questionnaire/survey with more than 15 questions. The questions addressed the need for more training to help them implement “best practices” teaching strategies that would enable them to effectively teach all students. Results were recorded and responses ranged from very necessary somewhat necessary and not necessary.



Data Analysis

The majority of the teachers sixty percent (60%) to include both special needs and general educators felt a need to receive training and use new strategies that would better prepare them to educate all students in their class including students with special needs. Twenty-seven (27%) percent was not that enthusiastic about receiving training or imploring new strategies to be more inclusive. Lastly, thirteen percent (13%) did not respond favorably to the survey.

Recommendation:

Always provide a variety of options to all Special-needs children who will pose a vast range of challenges to educators. Use research based effective teaching strategies for the special education classroom, however collaborate these choices with the general education teacher to allow student success in both environments.

Realize that the science behind teaching special education students is not cut-and-dried. The strategies that teachers develop for their classrooms are not permanent, and must be scalable and flexible so that they can evolve.

Being an effective teacher requires many tools, most of which are chosen through trial and error. Use resources that are available to help teachers plan

lessons, manage classroom environments, and develop high-quality instruction for students with special needs.

Bibliography:

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