



Coordinating Support Services for English Language Learners with Special Needs

Why go this route?

Because the numbers of English Language Learners (ELLs) have increased by 105% since 1990, there are likely to be greater numbers of these students referred and/or in need of special education programs and services. Coordinating services will:

- Ensure that ELLs are appropriately referred and assessed in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner
- Comply with IDEA, OCR and NCLB
- Design and implement culturally and linguistically appropriate educational plans
- Evaluate need for program and service modifications to provide for appropriate student/family support

You'll know you've arrived when...

- Districts and their individual schools have a specific plan for pre-referral, identification, assessment, educational planning and implementation tailored to the needs of ELLs.
- All documents and test results are communicated to the student, parents and/or family in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner.
- Individualized education programs, when needed, include coordination of all support programs and services designed to meet the student's unique needs.
- Appropriate progress indicators include measures of special education goals, English language proficiency and attainment of grade level content expectations.
- ELLs with special needs are serviced in a least restrictive environment.

Construction Zone

- Evaluate current special education procedures.
- Identify highly qualified staff.
- Identify bilingual/ESL trained personnel relating to the district's linguistic and cultural diversity.

It's about TIME

- Planning and implementing program evaluation and professional development takes time.
- The pre-referral and Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) may take longer when two languages are involved.
- Planning the coordination of staff may require additional time and effort.

Potential COSTS


- Additional staff and new assessment instruments may be needed.
- Translation/interpreter services may be needed.
- Cost for professional development for special education and ESL/bilingual staff.




The Process

*A step-by-step guide
to coordinating support
services for English
Language Learners with
special needs.*

*For detailed explanation
of the process, see
the process detail.*

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

Coordinate support services for English Language Learners with special needs (See Inserts)

- 1** The pre-referral process must include those persons and procedures necessary to rule out second language acquisition, cultural differences, lack of or interrupted schooling and ineffective instructional environment as the cause for the specific educational problem(s) being faced by the student. (INSERTS A and B for Step 1)
 - 2** If the educational issues facing the student are not resolved with pre-referral interventions, insure that all necessary communication with the family is culturally sensitive and linguistically comprehensible.
 - 3** The multidisciplinary evaluation team (MET) process must be adjusted to insure that:
 - a.** The assessment tools are educationally, culturally and linguistically appropriate.
 - b.** The student is evaluated in both English (when feasible) and in his/her native language.
 - c.** If using a translator, insure that the person is adequately trained and that the assessment results are valid, reliable and interpreted properly.
 - d.** The socio-cultural factors impacting the student's current educational performance are clearly understood.
 - e.** The MET results are accurate and are presented to the family, student and team in an understandable manner.(INSERT for Step 3)
 - 4** The Individualized Education Program (IEP), if necessary, is designed with goals and support services that reflect the language of instruction. Coordination of services with ESL/bilingual staff must be appropriately planned. (INSERT for Step 4)
 - 5** Insure that the student's plan for learning meets his/her needs and is not determined by the current availability of programs and services.
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Getting more mileage from coordinating support services for English Language Learners with special needs

How coordinating support services for English Language Learners with special needs benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

- Districts are held accountable for student progress in meeting English language proficiency standards as well as state academic standards.
- Parental choice and involvement in a meaningful and understandable fashion are required.
- Flexibility of funding under various grant programs is provided so that all needed support for student learning can be accessed. ESL, bilingual, Title I, special education programs and services, if appropriate can be part of the student's plan for learning.
- Continuous improvement towards meeting state academic and English language proficiency standards must be demonstrated.

Education YES!

- Educational programs must meet the needs of the students.
- Curriculum must be communicated to parents.
- Instructional planning, delivery, and assessment must be aligned to standards.



Resources

Books

The Bilingual Special Education Interface 3rd ed

L. Baca & H. Cervantes Merrill Publishing

Assessment and Instruction of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with or At-risk of Learning Problems

V. Gonzalez, R. Brusca-Vega, T. Yawkey (1997). Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Articles

“Differentiating Curriculum and Instruction for ELLs with Special Needs”

John J. Hoover, Special Education Leadership and Quality Teacher Initiative, BUENO Center, School of Education, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309; e-mail: john.hoover@colorado.edu

“Assessment of Language”

Dr. Yvonne S. Freeman & Dr. David E. Freeman (1998). *Teaching: Principles for Success*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

“Schools and Culturally Diverse Exceptional Learners”

Alba Ortiz; Bruce Ramirez, *ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children*. (1988).

“Assessing Bilingual Students for Placement and Instruction”

Carol Ascher, *ERIC/CUE Digest No.65*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education.

“To Reform or Not to Reform: Untangling the Web of Diversity, Deficit and Disability”

Barrera (1995, Summer). *New York State Association for Bilingual Education Journal*, 10, 54-56.

People

Specialists

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Teaching Diverse Learners www.lab.brown.edu/tdl/

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Associations

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
www.cec.sped.org

National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
www.nabe.org

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
www.tesol.org

Teaching Diverse Learners
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