



Special Education Task Force

Richland School District

Thursday, October 17

Please

**SILENCE YOUR
CELL PHONE**



Thank You



Mike Hansen

RSD Deputy Superintendent of K-12 Academics

Who am I? Why am I here?

- My qualifications:
 - BA in Elementary Education with Special Education Endorsement
 - JD with focus in Alternative Dispute Resolution
 - Mediation training in Washington and Oregon
 - Special Education Teacher (K-2 self-contained and K-6 Resource Room)
 - Law Clerk for Special Education attorney
 - Clinical Assistant Professor of Special Education at WSUTC
 - Task Force Facilitator
 - Control the proceedings
 - Facilitate discussions
 - Promote collaboration
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- 



Essential Questions

1. What is our vision for special education in the Richland School District?
2. What do we need to do to get there?



AGENDA

1. Special Education Task Force (SETF) Charge
2. Introduce SETF Members
3. SETF Process
4. Issues Being Addressed by SETF
 - Citizen Complaints
 - Urban Collaborative Report
 - Parent Survey Data
 - OSPI Priorities
5. Table Time

SETF Charge

- Examine the RSD's current K-12 special education model and the findings from various sources.
- Develop district priorities for special education
- Make recommendations regarding steps to implement changes over a multi-year period including professional development for both general and special education teachers



SETF Introductions



Basic Assumptions



- The system needs improvement. No one is to blame.
- Everyone is doing the best that they know how to do.
- Some things are out of our control. We will focus on what we can control.
- We may not agree with everyone and everything all of the time.
- Conversation and collaboration are key to understanding multiple perspectives.
- The more informed we are, the better our decisions and recommendations will be.
- We are not there YET - but we WILL get there!

Review Our Group Norms



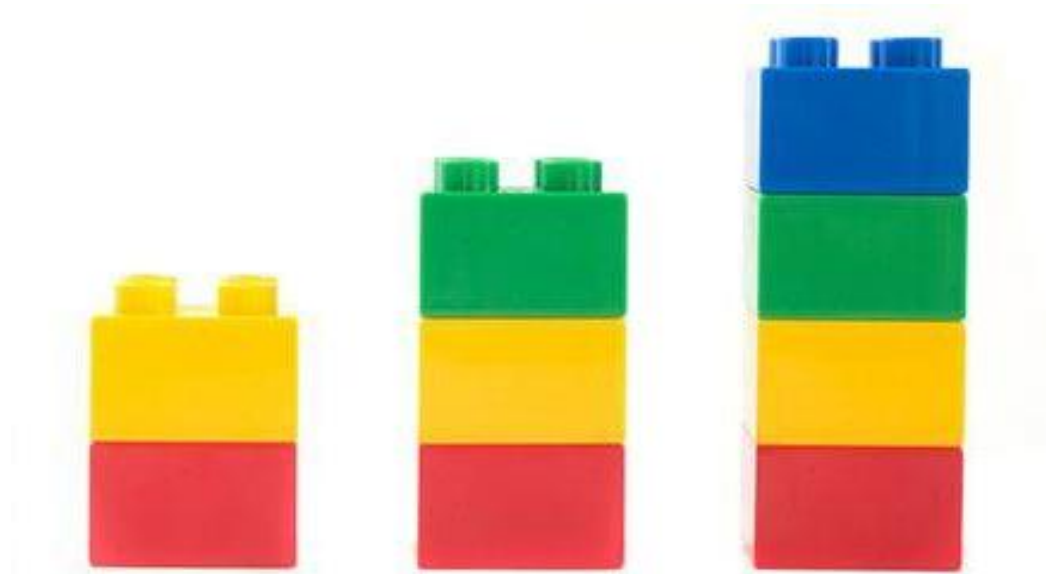
- Assume positive and noble intent
- Be openminded
- Meeting space is a safe zone
- Give constructive feedback
- Use active listening
- Be prepared to participate
- Stay on topic
- Be solution-oriented

SETF Process: Three Stages

Stage 1: Laying the Foundation

Stage 2: Develop District Priorities for Special Education

Stage 3: Develop Action Plans and Timelines



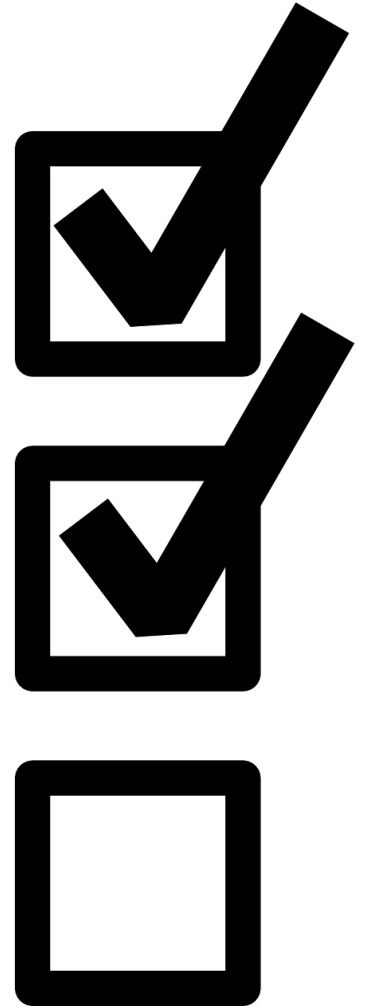
Stage 1: Laying the Foundation

- Team/trust building activities
- Develop group norms
- Best practices (utilizing High Leverage Practices)
- Needs analysis (Strengths – Needs – Opportunities – Barriers)
 - Citizen Complaint recommendations
 - Urban Collaborative Review recommendations
 - Survey data
- Develop RSD Special Education vision/mission statement



Stage 2: Develop District Priorities for Special Education

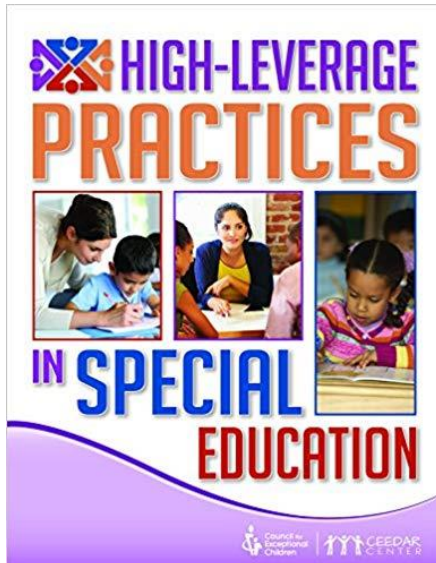
- Develop district priorities for special education
- Use variety of resources to inform our work
 - High Leverage Practices
 - Best Practices (based on HLPs)
 - Citizen Complaint recommendations
 - Urban Collaborative Review recommendations
 - OSPI Priorities
- What does each priority look like? Sound like?



Best Practices in Special Education

High Leverage Practices

- Purpose
 - Provide research-based, high quality practices to guide special education teachers
 - Organized around four aspects of practice—collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/behavioral practices, and instruction

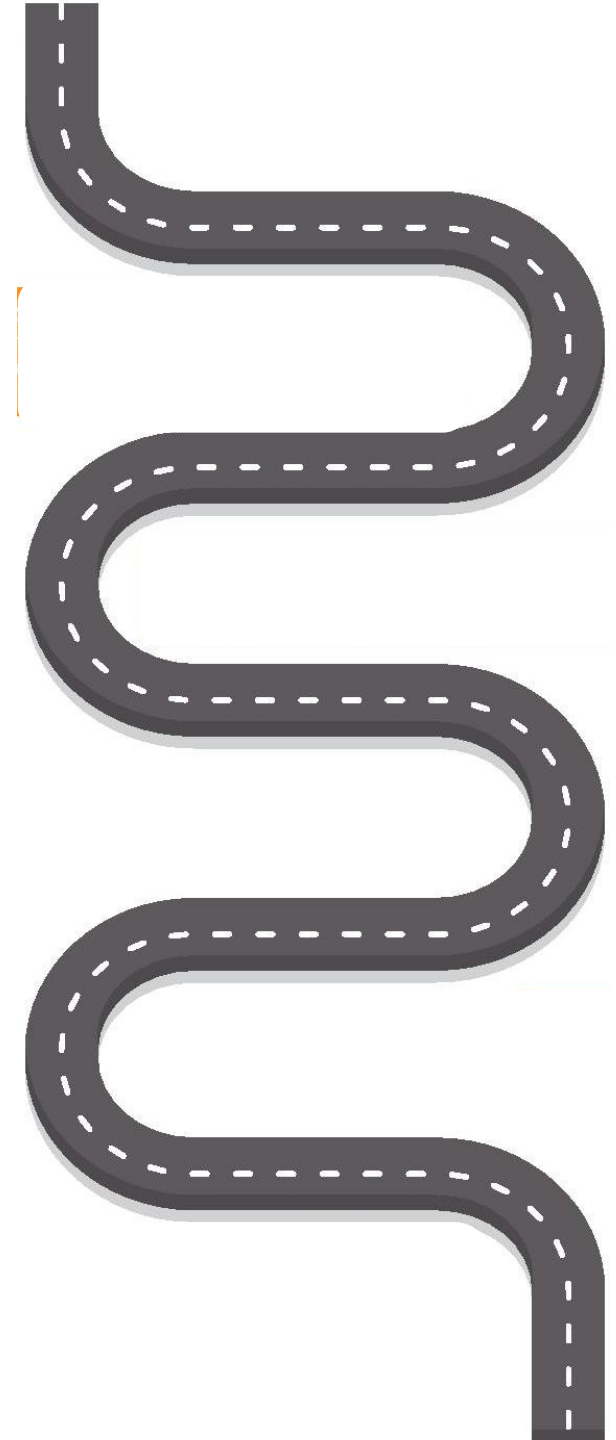


- Developed by
 - Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
 - CEC's Professional Standards and Practices Committee (PSPC)
 - CEC's Teacher Education Division (TED)
 - CEEDAR Center at University of Florida
 - Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

(McLeskey, 2017)

Stage 3: Develop Action Plans and Timelines

- Create a timeline for each priority
- Communication plan and timeline
- Professional development plan and timeline
- Create a Master Timeline



OSPI Civil Complaint Decisions

Overarching Themes



Implementation of IEP Services

- Services being provided in a setting other than that listed on the IEP
- Services not being implemented at the start of the school year or on the date listed in the IEP (e.g., waiting 6 weeks after the start of the school year to begin services)
- Services listed on IEP were not being provided
- Services delayed until transfer IEP was received and accepted (e.g., student was without services from time district realized student had IEP until it was received from previous district)
- Services not being provided due to building schedule issues (e.g., services being provided based on the school's schedule and not the students' individual needs)
- Services not being provided because there was no specific course available (e.g., no specific class for working on social or behavioral skills)
- Services not being provided for the correct amount of minutes per week

IEP Procedures

- Staff absent from IEP meeting, or arriving late or leaving early, despite **not** having been excused by the parent



Evaluation and Assessment Procedures

- Evaluations (comprehensive review of student data including but not limited to standardized and classroom-based assessments, observations, interviews, class work, etc.)
 - Student placements changed without conducting an evaluation for need
 - Evaluations not completed for transfer students
 - Evaluations delayed due to need to complete Response to Intervention (RTI) process
 - Evaluations not completed despite staff concerns/suspensions
- Assessments (tools used to gather student data)
 - Procedures for determining if student is eligible to take alternate state assessment not followed
 - Procedures not followed for determining appropriate graduation assessments
 - No discussion for determining testing accommodations

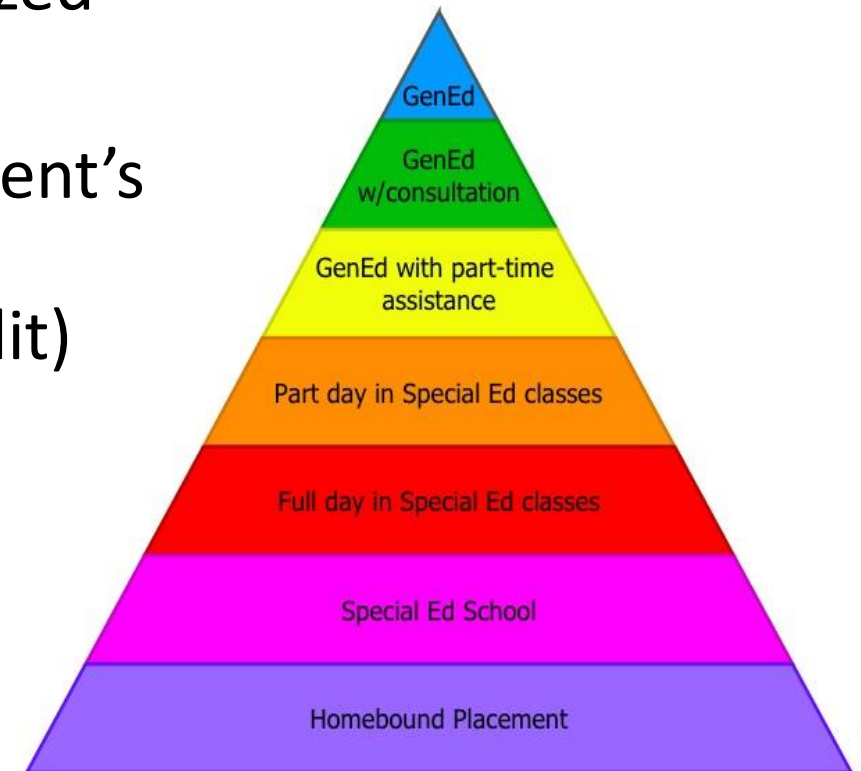
Provision of Specially Designed Instruction

- Specially designed instruction (SDI) not being designed or supervised by special education teacher (e.g., SDI being provided by general education teacher or paraeducator without supervision by special education teacher)
- Case Manager model, as implemented, does not allow special education teacher enough time to design and supervise SDI all students on case load



Availability of a Full Continuum of Services

- Student placement based on services available in the building, not the students' individualized needs determined by the IEP team
- Special education placements affecting student's ability to earn credits for graduation (e.g., placement in a class that does not earn credit)



Transition Assessment and Services

- Procedures for conducting transition assessments not being followed (e.g., assessment not completed; consent not provided; assessment timeline exceeded that allowed by law)
- Course of study does not reflect credits and requirements student needs to graduate
- IEP team not provided with information needed to develop an appropriate transition plan and course of study
- No procedures in place for determining when a student cannot participate in a high school course needed for graduation due to the student's individual needs

Special Education Program Review

June 2018



Strengths

- Wealth of knowledge, community backing, and a supportive School Board that is dedicated to making special education services the most effective they can be for their students.
- Strong emphasis placed on closing the achievement gap between students living in poverty and those in higher socioeconomic (SES) ranges by creating school improvement plans and professional development Highly qualified staff who work diligently to provide the best education to their students
- Issues raised in audits and citizen complaints are taken seriously and concerns are responded to swiftly

Recommendations

- Adopt a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) model and apply consistently across all schools to improve academic outcomes
- Develop collaborative structures across departments and buildings and provide support to instructional leaders in determination and implementation of special education supports and services
- Adopt a systemwide approach to determining needs and allocating resources, and possibly implementing a tiered funding formula
- Examine classification, evaluation, and placement practices to assure fidelity and track classification and educational placement data
- Establish a vision and strategic plan aligned to RSD's overarching focus on reducing the income-based achievement gap

Recommendations *(continued)*

- Ensure a full continuum of services with emphasis on inclusive practices that provide access to general education curriculum and specially designed instruction (SDI)
- Develop IEPs with effective and inclusive individualized supports and services and share with all relevant personnel
- Develop procedures for deciding appropriate use of paraprofessionals
- Design communication structures to increase transparency and strengthen partnerships with parents and community
- Provide professional learning for special education staff in providing SDI and access to general education curriculum

Recommendations *(continued)*

- Implement social-emotional standards and positive behavior supports district-wide
- Develop transition programs, partnerships, and process to support students until age 22
- Improve the use of assistive technology

OSPI Priorities:

Improving Outcomes for Students
with Disabilities



Source: [OSPI Priorities for Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities](#), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction



OSPI Priorities

Leadership

Support students with disabilities (including increased collaboration/ownership of school administrators & staff) and coordinated efforts with community organizations to improve results and reduce disproportionality.



Growth Mindset

Increased expectations of students with disabilities (e.g., standards, instruction, graduation, assessments, attendance, IEP-related decisions, and post-school outcomes).



OSPI Priorities

Evidence-based Practices

Instruction and interventions within an MTSS framework and inclusionary practices leading to increased access and progress in Washington grade-level learning standards.



Resource Allocation

Joint training for general educators, special educators, paraeducators, administrators, and parents/families (e.g., IEP team members).



OSPI Priorities

Recruitment and Retention

Preparation programs for administrators, general educators, special educators, related service providers, and paraeducators focused around instruction & supports for students with disabilities.



Professional Development

Braided funding, consolidated grant application, reducing costs for administrative tasks, increasing direct support to students, and data-based decision making.



Parent Survey Data

Strengths of RSD Special Education

- The educators (teachers and paras) - 37
- Communication/Attentiveness - 18
- Focus on helping my child - 16
- Programs - 13
- Child's academic and behavioral needs - 9
- Parents feeling heard - 6
- Speech therapy (SLPs) - 5
- Follow through with child's needs - 3
- Good intentions for the program - 3
- The community - 1

Ways RSD Special Education Can Improve

- Lack of Communication/Empathy - 29
- Quality, trained staff - 25
- Put the needs of special needs children first - 21
- Availability of services and resources - 22
- Improved and individualized IEPs and IEP meetings - 16
- Improve access to general education and progress monitoring - 14
- Administration (SPED and district) - 10
- Parent support - 7
- Trust/Transparency - 7
- Listen to the parents - 5
- Loss of good teachers/paras - 4
- Follow state laws - 3
- Ability to attend their home school - 2

TAKE A BREAK



SEE YOU IN 5 MINUTES



Share with your table . . .

3 things your

dream

special education program
would include

2 ways you think the RSD
could improve upon special
education





1 thing you would like to learn more about at the next community meeting

As a table, choose . . .

- **3** things your dream special ed program would include
- **2** things you think the RSD could improve about special education
- **1** thing you would like to learn more about at the next community meeting

Share out!



Next Community Meeting

Thursday, December 5th , 6:00 – 7:30pm

Marcus Whitman Elementary Gym

