

Possible Guiding Questions: Conversations Between Principals and Teachers

ROLE: Occupational Therapist/Physical Therapist

This document utilizes the components within the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide possible guiding questions for conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. Note that a few of the guiding questions also provide linkages to the Framework for Leadership in order to establish a level of connectedness among the two frameworks.

Please note: The questions identified here are provided to spur some thoughts as to the individual conversations that occur between a principal and teacher. The actual conversations that occur should be determined locally. It is not mandatory to use these questions, nor should they be viewed as a “checklist” to be followed. They are provided solely as a resource.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of OT/PT Content, Skills, and Strategies

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What things do you do routinely to develop/enhance your treatment skills/knowledge in the context of inter-disciplinary collaboration and/or problem solving?
 - Attend continuing education in a variety of areas, collaborate with other professionals/peers including members of educational team, Journal reviews, Research publications, and solicit family input.
- Provide an example of the process you use to individualize a plan for a treatment session, individual student and/or group.
 - Identify a particular student and their challenges. Determine best suited area, equipment, activities based on previous knowledge and/or input from team to meet or work towards goal areas. Determine order of activities and if assistance will be needed. Gather equipment and set up. Prepare for alternative activities if student needs re-direction during the session.
- How do you adapt your session for those that need extra time, sensory breaks, and/or Assistive Technologies?
 - Use of strategies such as increased adult assistance, peer modeling, , scheduled breaks, picture/activity schedules, use of visual reinforcement (clock, stopwatch)collaboration with others regarding behavior strategies and or activities.

1b: Demonstrating Knowledge Child Development and Individual Needs

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How have you individually tailored the session to reflect the specific needs of this child in relation to their education? Is there anything I should know about this session/child before I come in?
 - This child uses a picture schedule and food reinforcement. This child uses assistive technology. This child has a behavior plan. This child has a fear of movement/noises/strangers.
 - I am working on prerequisite skills (balance, coordination, pre-writing, clothing management) in order to enable the child to generalize skills across learning environments.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

Ic: Setting Service Delivery Outcomes

- Describe to me a specific example of a challenge you are having with treatments/children and what you are doing about meeting those challenges.
 - Collaboration with staff regarding behavior/sensory/physical needs. Contact with family to determine supports needed and provide resources, research into challenge areas via informal feedback, continuing education, publications.
- What resources have you investigated to support your efforts?
 - Contacted peers/professionals in similar settings, continuing education hands-on, e-learning, journal etc.

Possible Guiding Questions:

- After looking at best practices, provide an example of how do you determine the goals you will set for the student?
 - Assess baseline functional status then set benchmarks that take into consideration what skills the child needs to maximize function in his learning environment.
 - Use input from child/family and team to determine necessary skills to achieve desired results.
- How do you plan your interventions and what are the most important considerations in planning?
 - Collaboration between team including student and family and use of best practices to develop individualized plan.
 - Incorporating functional strengths and needs into plan to maximize participation with the learning environment.
 - Best practices in the specific discipline.
- What alternative options do you have for students who need extra time to master skills and/or have mastered skills?
 - IEP is a fluid document allowing for changes in service delivery/frequency and goals based on data collected/progress monitoring and changing needs of the child (medical diagnosis resulting in regression such as DMD, surgical procedures, chronic illnesses).

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

- Use of collaborative practices and consultation with team to implement strategies to enhance goal attainment. (Ex; Using sensory strategies and AT across all disciplines.)
- Staff and team training, building in-services, home-school-community agency communication

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Give me an example of how you communicate and work cooperatively with the team, community and beyond to address the student's needs?
 - Regular consultation with teachers, paraprofessionals, student/family and school staff to address needs. Establish communication via phone, email or face to face. Provide all team members with updates as needed to ensure educational success
 - Engagement in activities/organizations and special interest groups that address disabilities.
- What resources do you most often consult/use when planning?
 - Peers/professionals within the workplace and community, Professional organizations, professional literature, local support groups/organizations, Elk's Home Service Nurse.
- How do you share resource knowledge to enhance service delivery?
 - Written communication with team and families about resources available including continuing education, support services, and publications.
 - Staff/team education, in-services, fact sheets, progress monitoring data sheets

1e: Designing Coherent Service Delivery

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Give me an example of how you design treatment activities to meet the needs of students and keep them engaged and motivated?
 - Consideration is given for student interests, cultural interests, team needs and pre-requisite skills needed to accomplish goals. Students/team members are probed about areas of interest and need.
 - Students may be seen individually with skills then transferred into the small group and peer interactions.

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

If: Assessing Goal Achievement

- Team members are provided with strategies, modifications, and support to implement acquired skills.
- How is time allocated to work with other team members to make sure that student skills/activities are implemented to maximize participation?
 - Consultation may occur face to face, via email or phone on regular intervals and/or as requested.
 - Fact sheets, group discussions/team meeting.

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Explain how you determine what you want the student to accomplish (goal) and what methods you will use to monitor student progress.
 - General goal is broken down into pre-requisite skill areas with benchmarks for each area determined based on baseline data.
 - Use progress monitoring, input from team members, student feedback
- What assessments do you most often use to monitor goal achievement?
 - Progress monitoring based on trials.
 - Team member/family feedback on functional performance in goal areas.
- Please share how you provide timely feedback to students about progress and ways to improve. Provide an example of how you modified program based on feedback?
 - Positive reinforcement for attempts at requested activities. Feedback about strategies to increase participation including use of AT. Modifications and accommodations. Feedback in verbal and/or written form.
 - Implemented a picture schedule/sensory breaks for non-verbal child, equipment modification such as slant board for writing.
- Please share how you collaborate with other team members to insure that your expectations are shared.
 - Consultation to determine as a team the priorities for each student and the pre-requisite skills and person responsible for implementing each portion of the plan.
 - Include the child and family in expectations and outcomes.

Domain 2: The Environment

2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you model respectful behavior for your students?
 - Student is called by first name. Employ active listening and turn taking. Child is involved in decision making.
- What barriers to behavior have you encounter when dealing with students and what steps did you take to minimize them?
 - Refusal behaviors, negative attention behaviors, i.e. escape, biting. Use of positive reinforcement, team collaboration, behavior plans, involve child in decision making.

2b: Establishing a Culture for Goal Achievement

Possible Guiding Questions:

- In what ways have you reflected on how your goals for the child maximize their learning opportunities?
 - Goals are designed to decrease activity limitations and participation restrictions. Goals are designed to enable staff across learning environment to assist child in learning activities.
- Student engagement is about the nature of the work and who does it. In what ways do you promote ongoing active engagement?
 - Involving child and family in planning activities; frequent checks on areas of interest and cultural activities.
 - Providing opportunities to explore alternative areas of interest.
 - Providing information about community resources.
 - Ensuring participation across learning environments (field trips, athletics, extracurricular).

2c: Managing Logistics for Service Delivery

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you ensure that your routines for service delivery provide the necessary level of support while respecting and minimizing disruptions to the child's educational program?

Domain 2: The Environment

2d: Managing Student Behavior

- Maintain a regular schedule and communicate with team members regarding schedule changes, provide service in least restrictive environment with respect to classroom routines and student/teacher/family preferences.
- Provide services during normal routines rather than artificial settings; push-in with minimal disruption.

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What will I see during a treatment session to show that the student knows what behavior is expected of him or her?
 - Treat child with respect, clear simple communication reflective of the child's ability (quiet hands, walking feet, no biting), allow time for responding, wait time, positive reinforcement, maintain calm demeanor.
 - Some children with a behavior plan and it is consistently implemented.

2e: Organizing Physical Space

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe ways in which you make sure that physical environment is safe for all children and staff?
 - Staff/team training, equipment safety, body mechanics, classroom layout, desk organization, barrier-free buildings.
 - Safety into and out of building, field trips.
 - Accommodations for a child in need of support do not interfere with learning of peers.
 - Strategies/modifications in place to ensure that services are accessible.
 - Emergency evacuation drills/plans.

Domain 3: Service Delivery

3a: Communicating Clearly and Accurately

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Provide an example of how tailor communication to ensure that the student understands what you want him or her to do?
 - Read ER, RR, IEP or 504 plan and discuss with team to understand comprehension level of child and most effective ways to communicate with child and provide instruction at expressive and receptive level of child.
 - Engage child through use of developmentally appropriate language and activities, technologies as appropriate.
 - Encourage problem solving and self-advocacy.
- Describe ways you use technology or available resources to ensure comprehension.
 - Picture schedule, switch activation, use of sign language, modeling, physical prompts, guided practice, hand over hand, verbal cues.

3b: Using Gathering Information

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you ensure that your treatment plan reflects the current and projected needs of the child?
 - Question team, look at child's current levels of performance, goals and expectations, review relevant medical information (prognosis), review ER, RR, IEP, 504 plans.
 - Plan individually tailored treatments with expectations to ensure their participation in their education.

3c: Engaging Children in Goal Achievement

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe a service delivery model in which you have engaged the student in a meaningful peer interaction.
 - Peer grouping for peer modeling and socialization, inclusion in classroom activities, necessary equipment adaptations and accommodations, developing prerequisite skills in isolation with goal of generalizing skills across learning environments.
 - Training of staff/team/teachers/family as appropriate to facilitate improved outcomes.

Domain 3: Service Delivery

3d: Using Assessment in Service Delivery

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do your assessments promote progress towards achievement of IEP goals?
 - Progress monitoring including involving team and child as appropriate, positive feedback, strategies to improve provided respectfully, child self-assesses.
 - Written and/or verbal progress monitored shared with team members and occurs regularly in compliance with IEP.
 - Progress monitor reflects IEP goals.

3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you use your assessments to plan for future outcomes/goals and/or modify program as needed?
 - Quarterly progress reports or as defined in educational document.
 - Communication with team regarding progress or lack thereof, ensure that family and child long term goals are being addressed, and modifications as needed. Changes to education plan are made as needed.
 - Previously used strategies are utilized and adapted as needed to facilitate program change.

Domain 4: Professional Development/Professional Learning

4a: Reflecting on Practice

Possible Guiding Questions:

- How do you determine the effectiveness of service delivery and the degree to which outcomes were met for a child in your care? What evidence do you have that it was right approach or that demonstrates that a different approach was needed?
 - Sample trials of benchmarks noted in IEP goals, i.e. progress monitoring, meeting/survey team members/child/family, peer review.
- How do you reflect on how to move forward in program planning for the child?
 - Look to best practice and evidence available on the child, input from team members/including family and child, team collaboration.

4b: Maintaining Accurate Records

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Describe an example of how you not only collect data but how you use that data to promote goal achievement and participation in the child's educational program?
 - Reflect on taken data collection sheets and session notes and elicit input from team members.
 - Discuss results with child, including options or strategies for improvement, eliciting ideas from the child.

4c: Communicating with Families and Stakeholders

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Provide an example of how your communication regarding service delivery, student progress and team concerns is delivered with respect to cultural diversity and sensitivity to individual needs and preferences.
 - Provide written materials in native language, make provision for an interpreter for team or one on one meetings.
 - Encourage communication and possibly visual modeling to ensure understanding of key concepts. May include asking family member for return demonstration.
 - Respectful of religious observances and beliefs in gearing treatments to avoid conflict. (may be as simple as taking shoes off when enter home or no photos if part of their faith).

Domain 4: Professional Development/Professional Learning

4d: Participating in a Professional Community

Possible Guiding Questions:

- In using the educational community as your professional community, describe your role in interdisciplinary collaboration and development of providing educational opportunities that benefit all students.
 - Providing information/strategies for barrier free access to environment and activities, in-services on classroom strategies for early writing success across a grade level (posture, fine motor, pre-writing, desk height, movement breaks).
 - In-services to School board members, administration, and community members regarding initiatives to create inclusive peer interactions across the learning environments. (peer tutors, peer helpers, extracurricular modifications, transition planning for community inclusion).

4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

Possible Guiding Questions:

- Are you a member of any professional organizations? What professional activities do you engage in to grow and develop professionally?
 - APTA, PPTA, AOTA, POTA, Special interest groups, NEA, PSEA, peer review, continuing education, research, advanced certifications/degrees, interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Do you subscribe to any professional research journals? How do you use them in your practice?
 - Implementing best practice, use of peer reviewed strategies and equipment, use as a springboard for future research and professional development.
- What do you see as urgent issues now in the field of school based Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy?
 - Caseloads, time management, professional development, budgetary cutbacks, changing climate in insurance, transition to preschool, kindergarten, and community, acknowledging the difference between educational-based and medically-based service.

Domain 4: Professional Development/Professional Learning

4f: Showing Professionalism

Possible Guiding Questions:

- What do you believe to be the characteristics of an exemplary therapist?
 - Respectful, change agent, motivator, team player, collaborator, thinking outside the box, lifelong learner, function in and outside of the learning community, taking a leadership role in the community and in their profession, active role in professional organization, participates in research activities, advocates for families, goes above and beyond.
- What are your personal goals to maintain your professionalism?
 - Responses will be personal based on where they are in their career and life.