

# From Compliance Keeper to Instructional Leader:

NAVIGATING THE EVER-CHANGING ROLE  
OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR

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# What can we do?

- Advocate for equitable instruction
- Guide principals and teachers
- Ensure compliance AND instructional quality



# Strategy 1: Participate in Data Meetings



Highlight gaps and trends for SWD

- How are identified skill gaps impacting performance?
- What skill gaps can be easily remediated?

Advocate for interventions and supports

- Are students with disabilities benefitting from access to academic interventions?
- Are accommodations being implemented with fidelity?



# Strategy 1: Participate in Data Meetings



Ask guiding questions about trends

- Are there similar skill deficits among non-disabled students?
- How are general and special education teachers working together?

Ensure accountability for outcomes

- Always use inclusive language
- Who is responsible for primary content instruction?
- Who is responsible for addressing skill gaps?



## Strategy 2: Assist Principals with Informal Evaluations

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### Understand the Evaluation Instrument

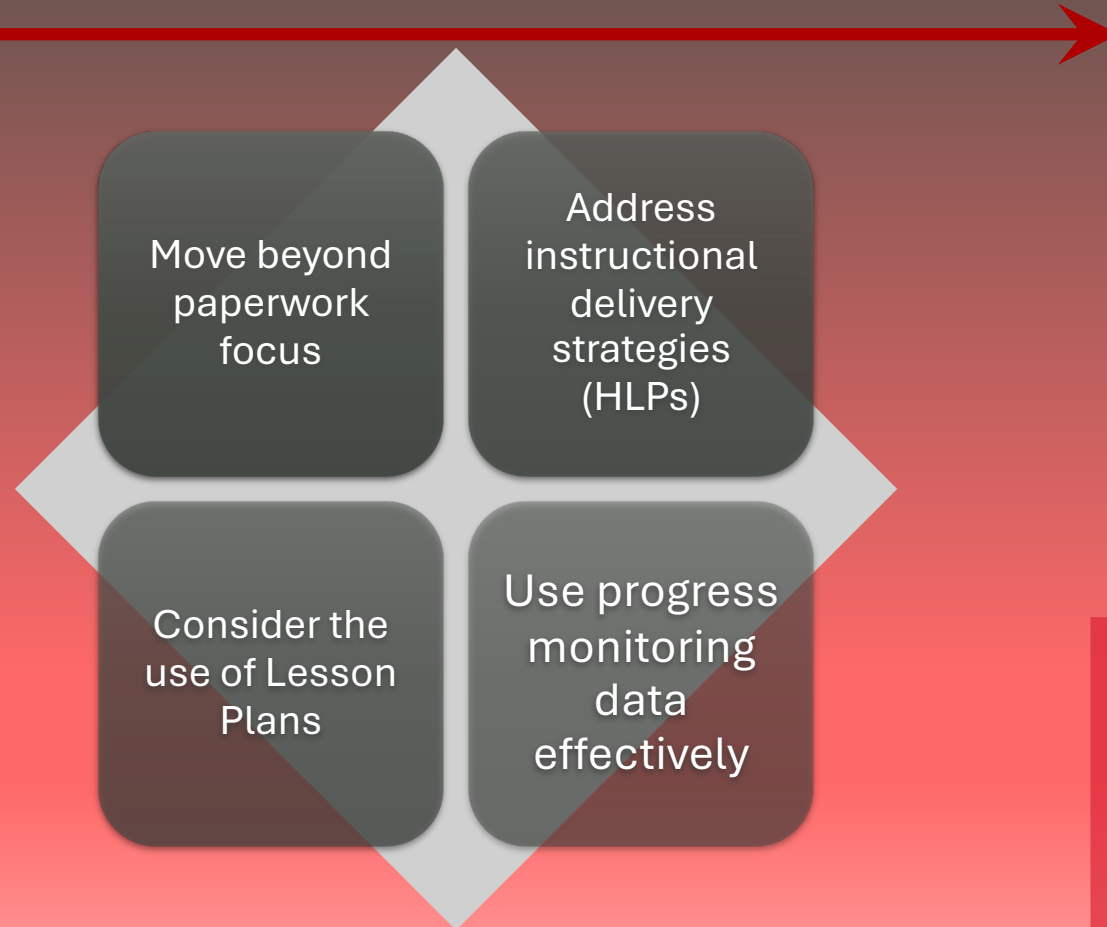
- ✓ Sped Professional Growth Rubric
- ✓ Alignment to High Leverage Practices
- ✓ Support principals in recognizing effective practices

### Observe special education teachers

- ✓ Improves teaching practice
- ✓ Builds consistent expectations
- ✓ Promotes instructional alignment



## Strategy 3: Professional Development Beyond Compliance



# Challenges in Instructional Leadership



Limited time



Balancing compliance with instruction



Gaining teacher buy-in



# Solutions to Overcome Challenges



## Key Takeaways



Directors must be visible leaders



Balance compliance with instruction



Support teachers and principals



Ensure equity for SWD



## Next Steps: Where are you now?

As an instructional leader:

### STRENGTHS

- What am I already doing well?

### WEAKNESSES

- What am I NOT doing well?

### OPPORTUNITIES

- What opportunities exist to engage as an instructional leader in my district?

### THREATS

- What obstacles prevent me from being able to engage as an instructional leader in my district?

# S.W.O.T. Activity



ANY  
QUESTIONS?

