

EAD 530 Supervising and Coaching Special Education Teachers

Tanner C. Purintun

Department of Education, Grand Canyon University

EAD 530: Improving Teacher Performance and Self-efficacy

Dr. John Utne

April 18, 2023

Supervising and Coaching Special Education Teachers

Lessons and Student Needs

It's important to be prepared when entering a pre-conference with a general education teacher. Preparing for the pre-conference with a special education teacher should be equally as important, especially because "questions have arisen regarding whether school administrators, who typically are not licensed or trained in teaching students with disabilities, can reliably and meaningfully observe and evaluate the special education teachers at their school sites." (Rodl et al., 2018) The first question I would ask my special ed teacher in the pre-conference is, "What are the objectives of your lesson and what state standards are you achieving with those objectives?" I would expect my special education to be able to share 2-3 objectives for the lesson and be able to clearly state what standards they are hitting. I would also expect my teacher to share with me that the lesson objectives have a correlation to the goals on the student's IEP. I believe aligning objectives to state standards is pretty standard for a proficient teacher in any area of education. Another question I would ask would be, "How are you planning to assess your students to determine if they are achieving your objectives?" I would expect my teacher to share with me a few assessment tools or strategies that they plan on using. Most special ed teachers that I have observed and been around have very unique ways to assessing students. Depending on the student, the age, and the disability, it may be a visual assessment, a physical or oral assessment, or some type of assessment using technology. I would expect my teacher to share with me that her form of assessment also relates to the student's IEP and inform me of some of the accommodations for the student. Lastly, I would ask what I should expect to see when I am observing. I would expect my teacher to give me some history and background of the student/students that they are working with and I would expect my teacher would describe how

he/she thinks the lesson will go and how the students may behave. I would also expect my teacher to disarm me and tell me not to be surprised if I see specific things.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiating instruction is extremely important. “Differentiated instruction has the potential to increase the scores on highest assessments for students with disabilities, students at-risk for school failure, typical students, and students labelled as gifted and talented in comparison to students in schools that promote ‘one size fits all’ instruction.” (Strogilos, 2018) One question I would ask to identify the teacher’s plan to differentiate instruction would be, “How do you plan to meet the needs of all students in your classroom?” Another question would be, “What modifications and accommodations are going to be needed for this lesson?” By asking these two questions, I believe my teacher would tell me about the different students in her class and what she will need to do to effectively teach all students. I would also expect my teacher to relate her differentiated instructional strategies to the IEPs of her students.

Struggling Students

Although the teacher is planning to reach all students, there may be students that struggle. One question I would ask would be, “How do you feel this lesson will be received by your students?” Another question I would ask would be, “Do you have a plan to reach the students that are still struggling?” By asking these two questions, I would expect my teacher to tell me that they expect the lesson to go well. However, there are a few students that could potentially struggle. I would expect her to give me some background information on some of those students and connect it back to the IEP. I would also expect her to provide a plan for how she will reach these students.

Prior Knowledge

In order to determine the teacher's understanding of students' prior knowledge I would ask "How does this lesson relates to what you have been teaching recently?" I would expect my teacher to share with me what she has been teaching and how she has been assessing the students and how that has led to this current lesson. I would also expect the teacher to tell

Classroom Management

Adequate preparation and strong classroom organization and behavior management skills are essential for special education teachers (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). One questions I would ask to determine my teacher's classroom management plan would be "Do you anticipate dealing with any negative or difficult behaviors during your lesson?" By asking this question, it opens up the door for my teacher to share her plan to manage her classroom, and it also allows my teacher to share with me any behavior intervention plans that are needed.

References

- Oliver, R. M., & Reschly, D. J. (2010). Special Education Teacher Preparation in Classroom Management: Implications for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. *Behavioral Disorders, 35*(3), 188–199. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019874291003500301>
- Rodl, J. E., Bonifay, W., Cruz, R. A., & Manchanda, S. (2018). A survey of school administrators' training and support related to evaluating special education teachers. *Journal of School Administration Research and Development, 3*(1), 19–31. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jsard.v3i1.1929>
- Strogilos, V. (2018). The value of differentiated instruction in the inclusion of students with special needs/ disabilities in mainstream schools. *SHS Web of Conferences, 42*, 00003. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20184200003>