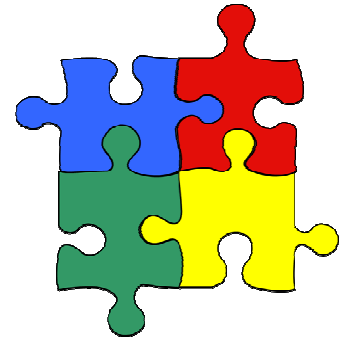# AYP Handbook

Instructional Strategies that Support the Success of Students with Disabilities

For additional information on this section please contact **jeremiah.holiday@dpi.wi.gov**.

Overview

Wisconsin's State Superintendent is clearly committed to the vision of providing a quality education to every student resulting in all students meeting high common core standards, including students with disabilities. In fact, one element of Every Child a Graduate is "to create multiple pathways to connect rigorous academic standards to real-world learning experiences, including on-line learning opportunities for all students."

> *For a complete perspective on AYP, along with additional contacts and the entire AYP Handbook, visit:* http://dpi.wi.gov/ssos/ayp_handbook.html.

There are students with disabilities in virtually every school and every classroom. Most students identified as needing special education participate in the general education curriculum and are expected to meet the same standards that apply to all students. In Wisconsin, the majority of students with disabilities participate in the general curriculum as well as receive the bulk of their instruction in general education classrooms. During the 2010-2011 school year, just over 56% of the students with disabilities spent 80% or more of their school day in regular education classrooms. When the decision is made to remove a student with a disability from general education classes or activities, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams clearly document the reasons why the student cannot participate with non-disabled peers and the extent of removal.

Federal laws that govern education, include IDEA and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA clearly emphasize the expectation that students with disabilities meet general education standards. In fact, ESEA provisions allow for only a small number of students to be tested using alternate achievement standards. Students scoring in the proficient or advanced categories of the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disability (WAA-SwD) are included as Proficient when calculating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

A quality education is one that addresses the social, cognitive, emotional, and physical needs of diverse learners. Meeting the goal of providing quality education to every student is not easy. Children come to our schools with diverse backgrounds and needs. As student diversity increases, so do the challenges schools face to be responsive to all students. Supporting the success of students with disabilities is dependent on educators who are committed to providing high quality instruction along with needed accommodations and supports.

Students with disabilities are **students** first; their disability is only one aspect of their individuality. Like all students, students with disabilities need to participate in a high quality, rigorous curriculum that is standards-based, culturally-relevant, and appropriately differentiated. General and special educators have important roles in the success of students with disabilities and must work together. There are many ways general and special educators can collaborate to ensure success for students with disabilities. Most obvious is collaboration around instructional planning, implementation, and evaluation. Also important is the role both general and special educators play in the development of IEPs that serve as a guide for both general and special education services provided to students with disabilities. Finally, both general and special educators play an important role in enlisting parent involvement and support, a role that research

has identified as an important catalyst to student achievement.

The Action Options described in the remainder of this section apply to all educators who work together on behalf of students with disabilities: general and special education teachers, support staff who work with them and administrators who provide leadership and resources.

Action Options: District and School Capacity

Systems and structures that support the success of students with disabilities

Support of student learning starts with a district-wide vision and strong district and building leadership directed at achieving high standards for **ALL** students. School districts that accomplish the following have the capacity to provide high quality instruction to students with disabilities:

- Establish and advance a common district wide vision for expected student outcomes that includes students with disabilities—all students achieve high standards.

- Establish a professional learning community that promotes collaborative learning and reflection on instruction by providing scheduled time and resources for on-going professional development.

- Expect staff to participate in professional development activities directed at enhancing the outcomes of struggling students, including students with disabilities.

- Provide opportunities for special and general educators to participate together in school improvement activities: include special education staff in data retreats, professional development, development of common classroom assessments, and other school-improvement activities.

- Examine and refine the scope and sequence of instruction to ensure general and special education teachers work toward common standards and benchmarks. All staff, including teachers of students with disabilities, must be familiar with and use the Common Core State Standards and the Wisconsin Educator Development and Licensure Standards. These documents can be found at: http://dpi.wi.gov/standards/, and http://www.dpi.wi.gov/tepdl/standards.html.

- Examine curriculum and instructional approaches used with all students, including students with disabilities, to determine if they are scientifically researched or evidence-based.

- Establish system-wide policies and procedures for universal screening for academic and behavioral risk indicators and make interventions available to all students who are not meeting expectations, not just students with disabilities.

- Provide a **multi-level system of support** and **structures** to increase success for *all* students using the three essential elements of high quality instruction, balanced assessment, and collaboration which forms the vision for Response To Intervention (RTI) http://www.dpi.wi.gov/rti/index.html.

- Provide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) which applies evidence-based programs, practices and strategies for all students to increase academic performance, improve safety, decrease problem behavior, and establish a positive school culture.

- Provide supplemental professional development on topics relevant to students with specific disabilities, such as strategies for working with students in the autism spectrum, low vision, using sign-language, specific assistive technology devices, etc.

- Provide time for general and special educators to work together to develop, implement, and monitor student IEPs.

- Provide training and on-going mentoring in effective co-teaching strategies. Administrators and teachers must recognize that co-teaching is hard work. Staff must continuously work on co-teaching relationships for them to be effective.

- Establish an array of parent involvement options and actively seek the involvement of parents of students with disabilities in activities that are not exclusively about students with disabilities.

Action Options: Access to Instruction

Appropriate instruction, accommodations, and supports that enhance the ability of students with disabilities

Decades of research have resulted in a better understanding of what is needed to effectively teach students with disabilities and other students who struggle in school. Most often what works for all students, also works for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities, in particular, depend on consistent access to high quality instruction and supports in order to meet standards.

In general, access to instruction means students with disabilities are provided with:
- High quality instruction.
- Instruction needed to meet the same benchmarks and standards expected of all students.
- Instruction needed to effectively use general education text.
- Support needed to acquire and demonstrate acquisition of content standards expected of all students.
- Meaningful and, to the greatest reasonable extent, independent participation in the general education environment.
- Appropriate instructional and testing accommodations. Supporting documents can be found at: http://www.dpi.wi.gov/oea/accommtrx.html.

By definition, students with disabilities have difficulty acquiring skills and behaviors, independently using learned skills and behaviors when needed, or have trouble with both acquisition and application of knowledge, skills, and behavior. While the terms used to describe effective instructional practices differ across studies, a review of the research yields a surprisingly consistent and short list of essential teaching routines that enhance both acquisition and use of "learning behaviors" and thus lead to improved student outcomes. These can be summarized within the following categories:

Skill instruction—explicit instruction and guided practice in basic academic and behavioral capabilities needed to accomplish a given task.

Strategy instruction—explicit instruction and guided practice in the cognitive processes, procedures, and steps needed to accomplish a skill, including self-monitoring of success.

Generalization training —sequence moves from guided practice, independent practice, and eventually independent selection and use of academic, social/emotional, and behavior skills and strategies under a variety of conditions and environments.

Most students with disabilities respond well to explicit teaching strategies paired with minor modifications to curriculum materials, reasonable accommodations, supplementary aids, and services. Both specialized instruction and reasonable accommodations are often needed to allow for meaningful participation in general education. Within the context of high quality instruction for students with disabilities, curricular and instructional adaptations are seen as a bridge to skill development, not a substitute for intensive instruction in the skills and strategies that students need to become independent learners. For a small number of students who have significant cognitive disabilities, it may be necessary to significantly modify, adapt, or expand the curriculum and instruction in order to provide students with access to general education standards. (Wisconsin's Extended Grade-Band Standards http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/assmt-extstd.html)

Decisions about the amount and type of special education services including specialized instruction, supplementary aids and services, and supports for personnel must be made on an individual basis, and be

based upon individualized educational evaluations.

One thing is certain; all students need to be able to use many instructional strategies to learn within the general education curriculum. This is no different for students with disabilities. Consistent with instructional planning for any group of students or individual student, educators must address curriculum, instruction, environment, and individual student (learner) factors when planning, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction for students with disabilities. These considerations, when combined with the essential teaching routines of skill instruction, strategy instruction, and generalization training, are likely to result in meaningful access to instruction for students with disabilities.

The following recommendations are provided as specific examples of strategies that enhance student achievement. They are meant to guide general practices for students whose disability has a mild to moderate impact on their ability to participate effectively in the general classroom. This list of action options is not intended to be a complete list of strategies for working with students with disabilities. Most of the strategies offered promoted success with **all** students and are especially valuable in supporting the learning of students with identified learning and behavioral challenges.

Curriculum: The content of instruction. What a student needs to learn.
- Identify key learning behaviors (academic skills, social skills, study skills, etc.) that are expected of students, including students with disabilities, within the curriculum in use.
- Analyze the scope and sequence of the general curriculum with respect to where students with disabilities, or other special needs, may need additional supports or supplemental instruction.
- Develop IEPs that reflect state and local standards and benchmarks; clearly describe how the student's disabilities affect progress in the general curriculum, and identify special education services and supports needed to allow the student to work toward meeting general education standards.
- Provide specially designed programming aligned with the general curriculum to the greatest degree possible.
- Use supplemental curriculum materials specifically designed to help students acquire general education content, and meet the standards and benchmarks that apply to all students.
- Use alternate curriculum when an IEP team determines the student can't meaningfully participate in the general education curriculum. Alternate academic curriculum should be aligned with DPI extended Grade Band Standards (http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/assmt-extstd.html).
- Provide multiple options for formative assessment of curricular acquisition; provide students with different ways to demonstrate their knowledge, and various means of scoring/grading.
- Use grade level benchmarks as well as IEP goals for students with disabilities.
- Provide materials that reflect and respect student diversity.

Instruction: Academic, social/emotional and physical strategies, supports, and accommodations that allow students to meaningfully participate in the general education curriculum, including nonacademic and extra-curricular activities such as:
- Review the IEP of each student. Know the specific needs of individual students and the resource personnel and technology needed to meet them.
- Provide students with disabilities the opportunity to learn to use text to gain meaning; do not replace explicit reading instruction with modifications or accommodations.
- Explicitly teach pro-social skills (e.g., cooperating with others, listening, asking for help).
- Pre-teach or re-teach curricular content and provide additional guided practice before, after, or as appropriate, during class time.
- Provide extended learning opportunities to increase a student's rate of learning. Provide

supplemental (additional) instruction in general education content using enhanced content or teaching strategies. This is an appropriate activity for general education extra help time and special education resource time. Traditional remediation is usually insufficient in helping students increase their rate of learning.

- Provide instructions and expectations for all assignments in multiple formats, including written and oral. Verbalize what is written on the board or text provided to the student.

- Teach alternate strategies needed to meet standards such as different approaches to teaching math algorithms, special text editing strategies, behavior management tools such as self-talk, anger management, etc.

- Provide students with disabilities access to differentiated instruction within the general education environment including scaffolding, flexible grouping, learning/interest centers, manipulatives, varying the length of time for a student to master content, and encouraging advanced learners to pursue topics in greater depth.

- Identify difficulties early and intervene; regularly assess students to determine if they are meeting learning goals; adjust instruction or support services if students are not meeting the goals. Consider reviewing and revising the IEP if significant changes to the student's program are needed.

- Involve students in monitoring their own progress using clearly defined performance standards and charting.

- Provide strategy cards or rubrics that remind students of the processes or steps needed to complete a task or desired behavior.

- Appropriately provide encouragement, gentle/polite reminders, and verbal prompts.

- Demonstrate patience and provide appropriate "wait-time." Give students time to express themselves; do not interrupt or try to fill in gaps.

- Provide access to assistive technology and other accommodations such as a text reader to facilitate reading comprehension and efficient assignment completion and large print or Braille text. Remember that assistive technology and accommodation are used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual with disabilities. Often, assistive technology and other appropriate accommodations allow a student with a disability to function more independently.

- Directly teach test preparation and test-taking skills.

- Provide instructional and testing accommodations including appropriate accommodations for participation in statewide and district assessments. Such testing accommodations may not invalidate the assessment. (Assessment Guidelines and Accommodations Matrix http://www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/assessmt.html).

Environment: Academic, social/emotional, and physical strategies, supports, and accommodations that allow students to effectively participate in the general education environment.

- Ensure students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum by providing instruction in the general education classroom to the greatest degree possible.

- Education in special education environments should occur only when an IEP team determines the student requires an alternate environment in which to learn. For the most part, instruction or support provided in special education classrooms should supplement instruction in general education, not replace it.

- Provide access to accommodations within the environment in which it is needed; do not limit access to adapted materials and assistive technology to special education resource rooms or other

sites outside the regular classroom unless non-disabled students are expected to access materials needed to complete work or the student's IEP team specifies access should occur only in a specific environment.

- Provide areas in which students can work quietly as well as collaborate with others.

- Provide specialized seating, equipment, or tools needed so the student can complete assigned work.

- Examine the impact of seating assignments on students. Consider peer models, visual stimulation, ability to move easily about the classroom, classroom distracters such as excessive noise, and so forth.

- Provide preferential seating for students who have difficulty attending, or who need frequent monitoring.

- Provide clear academic and behavioral expectations including specific routines that allow students to get help when the teacher is not available.

- Create "engagement"—connect students to the learning situation so that time on task and opportunities to respond are increased.

- When it appears that a student needs assistance, ask if you can help. Accept a "no thank you" graciously. Then follow up in private.

Learner

- Educational programming in general and special education environments should be designed with individuals as well as groups in mind.

- Develop IEPs that are individualized and address the needs of the student for whom they are developed.

- Academic and behavioral interventions should be proactive and designed to enhance positive student outcomes for the individual student; evaluate and adjust strategies if they are not effective in realizing academic or behavioral change.

- Data used to make educational decision about a student's curriculum, instruction, or learning environment should be student-specific, timely, reliable, and valid.

- All factors should be considered including cognitive, social/emotional and behavioral, medical, and other relevant information.

- Be aware of any impulse to speak slower or louder, or to avoid communicating with a particularly challenging student.

- Parent involvement of students with disabilities should be sought, welcomed, and needs to be student specific.

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Websites Specific to Students With Disabilities

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association provides services for professionals in audiology, speech-language pathology, and speech and hearing sciences. This includes information on AYP and how it affects speech-language therapy. http://www.asha.org/default.htm

Association of College Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing developed this site as a resource for new and existing teachers involved in the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. http://www.deafed.net

Autism Society of America provides sources of information, research, and reference on autism. http://www.autism-society.org

Council for Exceptional Children provides information on professional development opportunities, research findings, and special education publications for teachers, parents, administrators, and other educational personnel. The Council Website includes links to subdivisions that address specific interest areas related to working with students with disabilities including learning disabilities, behavioral disorders, visual impairments, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and many more. http://www.cec.sped.org

Federal Resource Center for Special Education sponsored by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) offers regionally based consultation, information services, technical assistance, training, and product development relevant to the improvement of education programs, practices, and policies that affect children and youth with disabilities. http://www.rrfcnetwork.org/

LD Online is an interactive guide to learning disabilities for parents, teachers, and children. http://www.ldonline.org

National Association of Directors of Special Education provides information and resources on policies and practices related to improving educational services and outcomes for students with disabilities. http://www.nasdse.org/

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) provides information, resources, and news about learning disabilities. http://www.ncld.org

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities provides an array of resources to help educators, policymakers, and parents understand the complexity and importance of making sound decisions regarding whether a child has a specific learning disability. http://www.nrcld.org/

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs is the Department of Education office site for administration and federal information about the education of students with disabilities. http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html

Websites on High Quality Instruction

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning publishes and disseminates information on what works in social and emotional learning, and works closely with educational leaders to bridge science and practice by putting research and theory into action in real world settings. http://www.casel.org/

Florida Center for Reading Research disseminates information about research-based practices related to literacy instruction and assessment for children in pre-school through 12th grade. http://www.fcrr.org/

IDEA Partnership sponsored by the Department of Education, reflects the collaborative work of more than 55 national organizations, technical assistance providers, and state and local organizations, and agencies related to improving outcomes for students and youth with disabilities. Topics covered include

academic and nonacademic barriers to achievement, Response to Intervention (RtI), post-secondary transition, and student outcomes. The site includes numerous links to resources and opportunities to participate in a community of practice. http://www.ideapartnership.org/

Intervention Central offers free tools and resources to help school staff and parents to promote positive classroom behaviors and foster effective learning for all children and youth. http://www.interventioncentral.org

Oregon Reading Initiative Big Ideas in Beginning Reading and Oregon Reading First provides a variety of resources to help schools achieve the goal of all children being readers by the end of third grade http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu and http://reading.uoregon.edu/

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a systemic approach to proactive, school-wide behavior based on a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. http://dpi.wi.gov/rti/pbis.html

National Center on Student Progress Monitoring funded by the Department of Education provides downloadable articles, PowerPoint presentations, FAQs, and links to additional resources about student progress monitoring, curriculum-based measurement, applying decision making to IEPs, and other researched based topics designed to inform and assist audiences in implementing student progress monitoring at the classroom, building, local, or state level. http://www.studentprogress.org

Literacy Information and Communication System is a federal agency that provides leadership on literacy issues, including the improvement of reading instruction for children, youth, and adults. http://lincs.ed.gov/

National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports funded by the Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs provides information and technical support about behavioral and discipline systems needed for successful learning and social development of students. http://www.pbis.org/

Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts provides resources on scientifically based research and instruction related to improving reading and mathematics instruction for all students, especially struggling readers, English language learners, and special education students. http://www.meadowscenter.org/vgc/

US Dept. of Ed. NCLB Homepage provides links to other federally funded efforts related to implementing NCLB. The section labeled "Proven Methods" includes links to many sites with resources for educators. http://www.ed.gov/nclb/

What Works Clearinghouse sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences collects, screens, and identifies studies of effectiveness of educational interventions (programs, products, practices, and policies) in wide variety of curriculum areas. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/

Wisconsin's Standards – All Subject Areas State Superintendent Tony Evers adopted the Common Core State Standards as new Wisconsin Standards for English language arts and mathematics on June 2, 2010. Districts now should begin the process of aligning their local curriculum, instruction, and assessment with these new standards. http://www.dpi.wi.gov/standards/index.html

Wisconsin's Vision for Response to Intervention (RtI) In Wisconsin's vision for RtI, the three essential elements of high quality instruction, balanced assessment, and collaboration systematically interact within a multi-level system of support to provide the structures to increase success for all students. Culturally responsive practices are central to an effective RtI system and are evident within each of the three essential elements. http://dpi.wi.gov/rti/index.html