Session 1: Setting the Stage for Successful SDI

FY23 SDI for Special Education Directors and School Administrators - Keeping Kids First

SEPTEMBER 13, 2022
About the PROGRESS Center

The PROGRESS Center provides information, resources, tools, and technical assistance services to support local educators in developing and implementing high-quality educational programs that enable children with disabilities to make progress and meet challenging goals.

HOW WILL WE HELP IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES?

- Share current research, policies, guidance, success stories, and experiences from students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders.
- Partner with selected local educators to develop and implement high-quality educational programs.
- Provide tools, resources, and training materials for ALL educators, leaders, and families.

Visit us at www.promotingPROGRESS.org to learn more!
How do we ensure that every student with a disability is on the path to PROGRESS?
# Overview of Professional Learning

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Session Outcomes

At the end of this session, administrators will be able to:

• Describe SDI and its role in the implementation of IDEA.
• Explain the role of high expectations and tiered systems of support in the design and implementation of SDI.
Putting SDI into Perspective
Participation of SWDs in General Education

- 68% Spend 80% or more in the general education classroom
- 95% Spend some portion of their day in the general education classroom

https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USED/bulletins/311f842
There is no way a single system has all the time, all the knowledge, and all the skills to meet all the needs of every child in every school or district.

Buffman, Mattos, & Webber 2009
We need a **sustainable ecosystem** with capacity to develop and implement high-quality educational programming for all, including students with disabilities.

*We NEED collective efficacy.*
Collective Teacher Efficacy is the collective belief of educators in their ability to positively affect students, including students with disabilities.

It is built on evidence of impact.

Collective belief that you can make a difference. \( \times \) Evidence you are making a difference. = ES = 1.57*

(Eells, 2011; Hattie, 2017)
Collective efficacy starts with the right questions!

• What do we want for our children, educators, and schools?

• What is our current reality and who are the players?

• What do our children, educators, and schools need to be successful?

• How can we maximize our resources to support students, teachers, and schools?
Remember

All students are general education students first.

Some students require special education and aids and services to access and benefit from general education similarly to their peers.
Currently, SWDs continue to have significantly lower academic performance levels than their peers without disabilities.

11.7% Demonstrate proficiency on 8th grade ELA state assessments.

8.1% Demonstrate proficiency on 8th grade math state assessments.

https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/43rd-arc-for-idea.pdf
Did you know?

Research shows that teachers and parents hold significantly lower educational expectations for adolescents labeled with disabilities than they do for similarly achieving and behaving adolescents not labeled with disability, and these lower expectations contribute to labeled adolescents’ lower educational expectations for themselves.

Shifer, 2013
Most students with disabilities, when given appropriate special education aids and services, can achieve similar academic and functional outcomes as their non-disabled peers.

Their success often boils down to opportunity and expectations.
High expectations must precede conversations about designing instruction for SWDs.
Ensuring FAPE: Moving from Compliance to PROGRESS
Ensuring Appropriate Progress


• “To meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.” (emphasis added)
Development of high-quality educational programming

Implementation of high-quality educational programming

Improved access and outcomes - FAPE
IDEA FAPE Requirements for High-Quality Programming

**Procedural**
In the development of an IEP, has the IEP team complied with the procedures set forth in IDEA? *(Rowley)*

**Substantive**
Is the IEP reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress that is appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances? *(Endrew F.)*

**Implementation**
In implementing the IEP, were the instructional services and supports outlined in the IEP provided as agreed on during the IEP process?
Program Development: Procedural

Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Monitoring Plan

Date, Frequency, Duration and Location of Services

Measurable Goals

Participation Outside Regular Education and in State and Districtwide Assessments

Statement of Special Education and Aids and Services
Program Development: Substantive

PLAAFP: Provide an assessment and data-driven baseline

Specially designed instruction (SDI): Addresses unique needs and ensures access to and progress in the general curriculum

Monitoring Plan: Informs us if services are leading to progress or if changes are needed

Measurable Goals: Connects to our PLAAFP, SDI, and progress
IEPs: Same Essential Ingredients but Individualized Based on Student Need
FAPE and Implementation: Breaking Down Findings from Case Law

- Fidelity of Implementation
- Capacity to Implement
Implementing High-Quality Educational Programming Requires a Sustainable Ecosystem
MTSS can support the sustainable ecosystem necessary for the PROGRESS of students with disabilities.

SWDs, GT, EIs receive services at all levels, depending on need.

Tier 1: Universal Level of Prevention

Tier 2: Targeted Level of Prevention

Tier 3: Intensive Level of Prevention
Special education, like Tiers 2 and Tier 3 intensive intervention, builds on the collective effects of core programming and general school supports.
Tiered systems allows us to address the needs of the whole child by aligning systems and supports.

There is no such thing as a ‘Tier 3’ or a ‘special education’ student!
National Perspectives of SDI
Survey Question: On a scale of 1-4 rate your agreement with the following statements

1. I can explain what SDI is to my peers and colleagues.

2. SDI plays an important role in the work that I do on a daily basis.

3. SDI plays an important role in the development of the IEP.

4. I feel like it is easy to implement SDI in my current context.

1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree, *represents combined strongly disagree and disagree, *represents combined agree and strongly agree
Challenges developing and implementing SDI

Seven themes emerged out of the open-ended question responses (n = 424 individual responses, n = 642 statements within themes):

− Lack of training and/or knowledge about SDI (45%)
− Misunderstanding the role of the general educator and confusion about inclusion (11%)
− Struggles with infrastructure barriers (e.g., scheduling, time, and creative ways to implement individualized instruction; 17%)

Method: 25% of responses were coded to determine themes, an additional 25% were double coded to ensure accuracy across themes, responses could fit into multiple themes
Challenges developing and implementing SDI, Con’t.

– Confusion about IEP development, including how to include SDI when developing goals and in determining what constitutes SDI (6%)
– Challenges with delivery of SDI in conjunction with standards-based instruction, specifically in the face of limited resources and curriculum (5%)
– Lack of support and/or understanding of SDI from school and district leaders (3%)
– Misunderstanding of how SDI differs from UDL and/or IEP accommodations and modifications (3%)

Method: 25% of responses were coded to determine themes, an additional 25% were double coded to ensure accuracy across themes, responses could fit into multiple themes
Sample Responses

Lack of training or knowledge of SDI:

• “I do not know what SDI is.”
• “Most do not truly understand what SDI is or the characteristics of SDI.”
• “There is a lack of consistency among special education staff in respect to the definition of SDI.”
• “Teachers and administrators frequently do not understand what SDI is and, unfortunately, the IEP meeting is NOT the time to educate them.”

Role of the general educator:

• “It is especially difficult to get special ed and general ed teachers to implement SDI without thinking that all it is a second person in the room.”
• “SDI can create an opt out to inclusive practices with GenEd teachers. How do you "prove" adapting content or methodology? Is this based as an outcome (IEP Goals)? Evidence is created naturally with delivery of service and related services but necessarily with academics.”
Sample Responses

Infrastructure barriers:

• “My sites are located all over the district, and it's hard to make sure that real SDI is being implemented, and not just random things that would be helpful for students.”

• “It is challenging at times to plan for SDI that revolves around difficult behaviors. Making a plan for SDI and implementing it with academics is easier to plan for and to visualize.”

• “The conflicts I hear from teachers who want to individualize and create SDI for students is that they are constrained by their groups and administrative mandates.”

Standards-based instruction:

• “Our biggest challenge is supporting others in developing and implementing SDI aligned to grade level standards within an inclusive setting.”

• “I think the dilemma is providing specially designed instruction and /or addressing current curriculum of the grade level that student is in.”

• “We just don’t have research-based curriculum that meets the needs of our students and addresses their grade level standards.”
SDI Basics – What you need to know!
What does IDEA say about the statement of services and aids?

According to IDEA, Section 300.320 (a), each child’s IEP must contain the following:

“(4) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the child—...” [emphasis added]

IDEA, Sec. 300.320(a)(4)
What does IDEA say about the statement of services and aids?

“(i) To **advance appropriately** toward attaining the annual goals;

(ii) To be **involved in and make progress in** the general education curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section, and to **participate in** extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and

(iii) To be **educated and participate with** other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described in this section.” [emphasis added]
Specially designed instruction (SDI) is part of what is “special” about special education 😊.
But where is specially designed instruction in IEP under IDEA?

- Special education
- Related services
- Supplementary aids and services
- Program modifications and supports

Statement of special education and aids & services
Special Education = SDI

(1) Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including—

(i) Instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and

(ii) Instruction in physical education.

SDI is delivered in conjunction with other IEP supports.

Related Services (T1-3)  Supplementary Aids and Services (T1)  Program Modifications (T1-3)
SDI can occur across the tiers of support.

Specially designed instruction and related services

Tier 1: Universal Level of Prevention

Tier 2: Targeted Level of Prevention

Tier 3: Intensive Level of Prevention

Does the student need greater adaptation of the delivery of instruction?

SDI could be delivered in the child’s home, a hospital, an institution, or other unique setting.

They still need access to general curriculum as appropriate for their needs.
Effective special education delivery leverages the data, instruction, infrastructure, and collective effect of MTSS.

However, MTSS is not required for the delivery of SDI.
SDI might look like the same levels of support within MTSS.

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<th>Tier 3 – Intensive Intervention</th>
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<td>Instruction/Intervention Approach</td>
<td>Follow <strong>standardized evidence-based programs</strong> as designed</td>
<td>Use <strong>standardized evidence-based program as a platform, but adapt instruction</strong> based on student data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration and timeframe</td>
<td>Use duration and timeframe defined by developer</td>
<td>Increase frequency and/or duration to meet student needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>3–7 students (as defined by developer)</td>
<td>Decrease group size to meet student needs (no more than 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>At least monthly</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population served</td>
<td>At-risk (typically 15–20% of student population)</td>
<td>Significant and persistent learning and/or behavior needs (typically 3–5% of student population)</td>
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SDI is not determined by...

- the source of funding (i.e., “intervention purchased with IDEA funds”),
- the disability category,
- level of support (Tier 2 or 3), or
- programs the student is participating in (i.e., “behavior class” or “autism program”).

It is determined by individual needs identified through student data.
SDI is not a program and cannot be purchased.

However, some students’ SDI may be delivered using existing standardized, purchased programs depending on their individual needs.
High leverage practices are not specific to general instruction or SDI. However, their use is essential for the design and delivery all instruction, including SDI.
So, what is SDI?

(3) Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction—

(i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and

(ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children

Sec. 300.39(b)(3)(i-ii)
## Adapting instruction

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<th>Elements of SDI</th>
<th>What it Means</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td><em>What</em> is taught to allow the student to access general education programming</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td><em>How</em> the instruction is delivered or the practices and approach the teacher uses to teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery of Instruction</strong></td>
<td><em>Who, where, and when</em> the instruction is delivered</td>
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Intensive intervention at Tier 3 depends on an evidence-based, iterative process that uses individual progress monitoring data to make decisions about instructional adaptations.

This process can also be used to design and delivery specially designed instruction.
So, where do we start? Start by knowing the student.
What is on your mind?
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