Instruction at the Top of the Triangle

Providing high quality instruction and assessment for students with significant disabilities

Multnomah Education Service District
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Session overview

- How do we develop meaningful IEPs that build upon the assessment and instruction we are providing?

- Why do we need good instruction?

- What is high quality instruction (for students with significant disabilities)?

- How do we deliver instruction to accommodate all learners?

- How do we use formative assessment to inform instruction?

- How do we use summative assessment to measure growth?

Students We Serve

- Intellectual Disabilities
- Cognitive impairments
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Significant Medical, Behavioral and Academic Challenges
- Multiple Eligibilities

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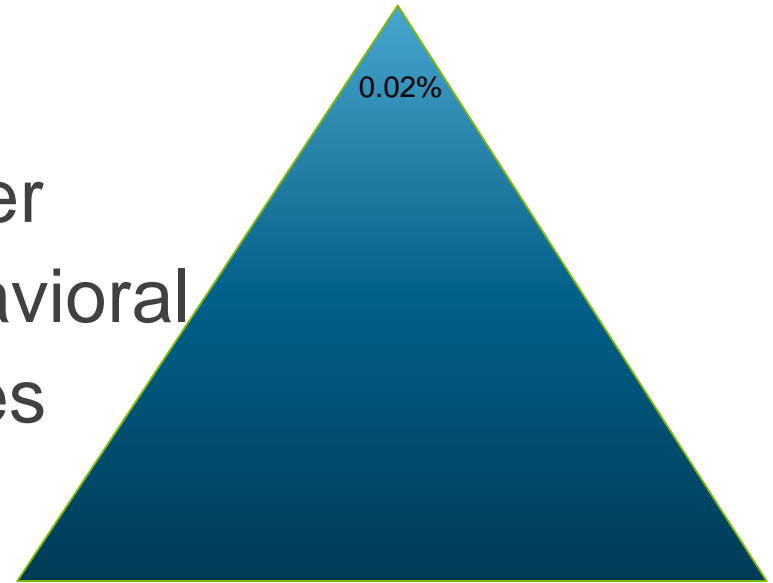
Fundamental Beliefs

"What should be noted is that there is no research indicating that students cannot learn academic content until functional skills are mastered. There is nothing about learning how to tie one's shoes or use a vending machine or eat with a spoon that must be mastered before learning to read or solve math problems. While all may be important life skills, they are not *prerequisites* to academic learning as has sometimes been assumed in the past."

-Courtade et al. (2012), p. 7

"Students with and without disabilities constantly surprise educators by exceeding expectations."

-Ayres et al. (date), p. 19

"We do not know the potential students have to learn more complex academic content or how they may use it in their lives."

-Courtade et al. (2012), p. 6

Raising the bar

- The expectation is not that students with disabilities will make the same gains as their typically developing peers, but it is important that they be given the _opportunity_ to learn skills that are connected to grade level skills

- Students at _All levels_ need to be challenged

- _All students_ can learn—teachers of students with significant disabilities need to focus on teaching _access skills_ as a way to work towards grade level standards

Background

Before…
- Everything was individualized, no standardized measurement
- No common language or ability to determine whether students were making gains
- Kids went into self-contained placements and were not exposed to academics (primarily focused on functional skills and routines).

Now…
- Standards-based IEPs and Common Core State Standards
- Evaluated our practices - realized the need to provide strong academic program for students

Standards-based IEPs

- Provide our students the opportunity to be exposed to the same curriculum content as their typical peers

- Provide a framework for the IEP

- Encourage collaboration and teaming between General Ed and Special Ed teachers and give us a common language

- Require that we challenge students with disabilities and maintain high expectations

Individualized Education Plan

- Quality instruction begins with a well written IEP

- Content and Compliance

IEP Content - Through Lines

- Student Strengths
- Review of previous year goals
- Assessment tools defined
- Baselines of present levels provided (based on assessment)
- Proposed goals connected to the PLAAFP content
- Goal criterias connected to the baseline and trackable
- Goals connected to CCSS and/or documentation of consideration of the standards
- Progress report language connects to goal/criteria

Special Education Instruction

What we know that works:
- Clear expectations
- Collaboration
- Routines
- Consistency
- Differentiation
- Evidence-based strategies
  - Discrete trial
  - Direct instruction
  - Visuals (schedules, PECS, communication icons)
  - Positive behavior intervention strategies (ABA, PBIS, CPS)
 - Social Stories
  - Sensory diets, etc.

Curriculum

- Given the strategies we know work, what is the content we are actually teaching?

- Often we do just teach to the IEP...is the foundation, but we need to take cues from gen. ed and look to the CCSS to identify content areas that are age and grade appropriate

- Teachers can create their own curriculum using best practices and established strategies; however, there are an increasing number of curriculum being developed for our students

Curriculum

Curricula appropriate for our student population:
- o FLS Scope and Sequence
- o Edmark
- o Touchmath
- o STAR
- o Menu Math
- o Skills for Autism
- o Unique Learning System
- o Early Literacy Skills Builder (ELSB)

Building our curriculum triangle

FLS Scope & Sequence, Teacher-made materials

Menu Math, STAR, Edmark, Touchmath, ELSB

Unique Learning System
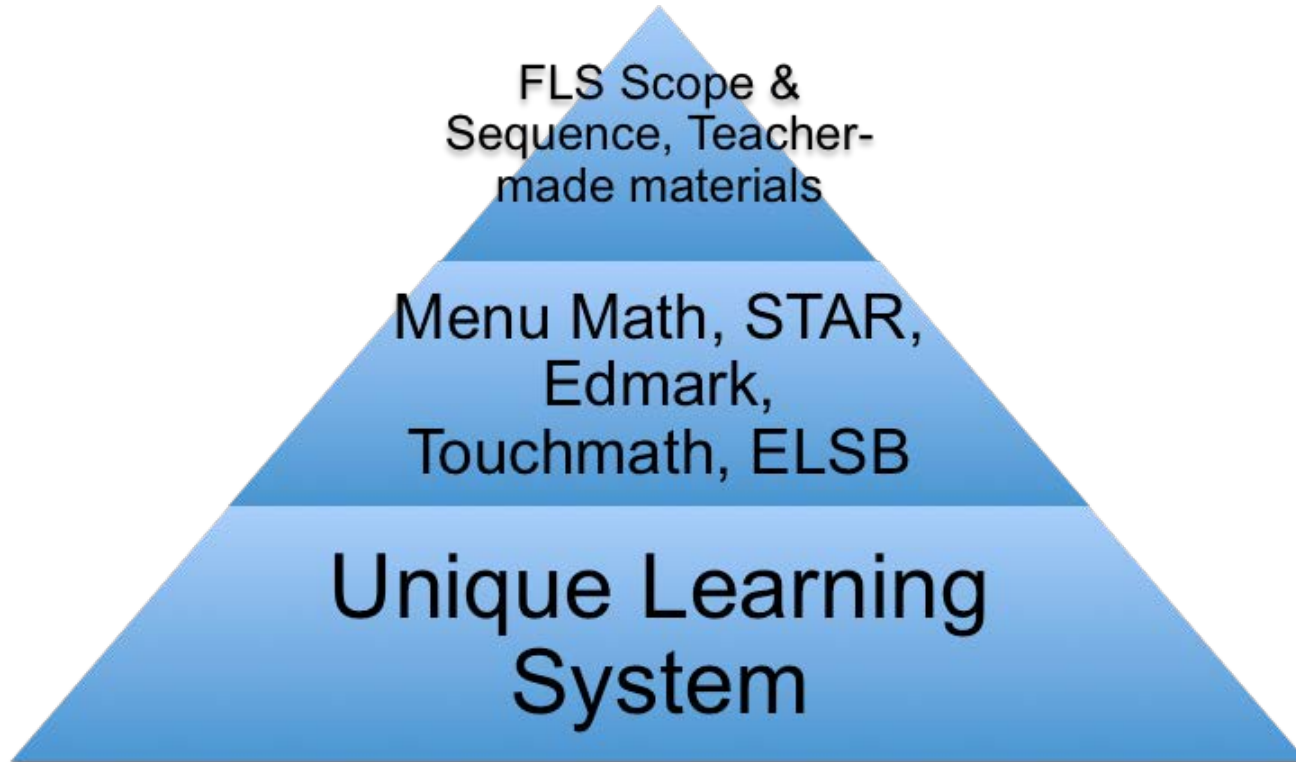
Unique Learning System

"All students should be exposed to the same information, although presentation of the information may vary somewhat according to the student's needs."

- Schumm, Vaughn, & Harris (1997)

- ULS provides grade-level content at three differentiated levels

- Has reading, writing, math, science, history, functional skills and transition planning components

- Utilizes common assessments and provides monthly probes to measure student growth

- Provides instruction guides to help teachers improve instructional delivery and increase student engagement

- Leveled reading library available that corresponds to other leveled materials such as DRA, Reading A-Z, Reading Recovery & Guided Reading

- Provides student profiles, learning characteristics, and information to help with IEP development

ULS Classroom Instruction

Professional Learning Community

- Monthly PLC meeting for teachers to assist with learning and implementing new curriculum and reviewing assessment data

- ULS Implementation Timeline

- ULS Instruction Observation Rubric

Assessment

- How do we know the instruction is working?

- How do we know students are making progress?

- How do we know when to change our practices?

- How do we know when to celebrate success?

Individual student data collection- Formative assessment

- Special education is based on meeting individualized needs of students.

- **Daily data collection supports all phases of the special education process:**
  1. Determining the present levels of educational performance.
  2. Providing a baseline from which all future progress can be measured.
  3. Monitoring progress as different interventions are implemented.
  4. Guiding where instruction needs to go next.

- Individual student data needs to be taken **regularly**, **consistently**, and **reliably**. It should be collected during instruction rather than at the end of a course of study or end of the Quarter.

- **Examples** :Checklist and observation (data sheet), anecdotal (note taking) during instruction.

Informal / teacher made assessments- Formative assessment

- Informal assessments help determine the "holes" in a student's skill set---summative assessments don't provide that detailed information.

- Using a variety of types of assessments gives students many opportunities to demonstrate their abilities, and provides teachers with enough information to make a complete balanced assessment of student need and growth.

- Teacher made assessments provide information to support decisions about classroom instruction and differentiation.

- Examples: observations, interviews, work samples, portfolios, teacher created tests

Standardized Tests (Summative Assessment)

In addition to informal assessment, summative assessment provides a look at student performance under standard conditions and with standardized procedures, providing a look at the students abilities compared across ages and grades.

- SBAC Extended Assessment

- MESD Skills Inventory with Scope & Sequence Rubric

- MESD CCSS Pre/Post-assessment Checklist

- Eligibility (Individualized achievement tests): WJIII; GARS; Peabody; Brigance, etc.

- Functional Tests (Life skills focused): Vineland; Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills

Written Progress Reports

"If PLAAFPs (present level of academic achievement…) **are well written, with measurable baseline data for each annual goal, and if progress reports continue to measure student's ongoing progress in this same "language," then the PLAAFP for the next annual IEP will practically write itself by inserting the most recent progress report data into the PLAAFP."**

Hungerford Law Firm, L.L.P. 2011

Progress Reporting Guidelines

Use data from the final PPR prior to the IEP annual review to help develop baselines for the next year's present levels

Develop goals based on assessment data/results.

Develop the goal criteria using the baseline of students current performance/ability.

Use the same method of measurement stated in the goal criteria to report progress information.

There should be a link between the wording used in PLAAFP, the goals/objectives, and the language used to describe progress

PLAAFP: Weekly data collection over the past Trimester shows that student is able to **work independently for an average of 5 minutes** to complete classroom assignments with familiar content before stopping or leaving the area.

Annual Goal: Within one year, when given assignments at his skill level and a cue to work on his own, student will demonstrate self management by **working independently an average of 20 minutes** before stopping or leaving area.
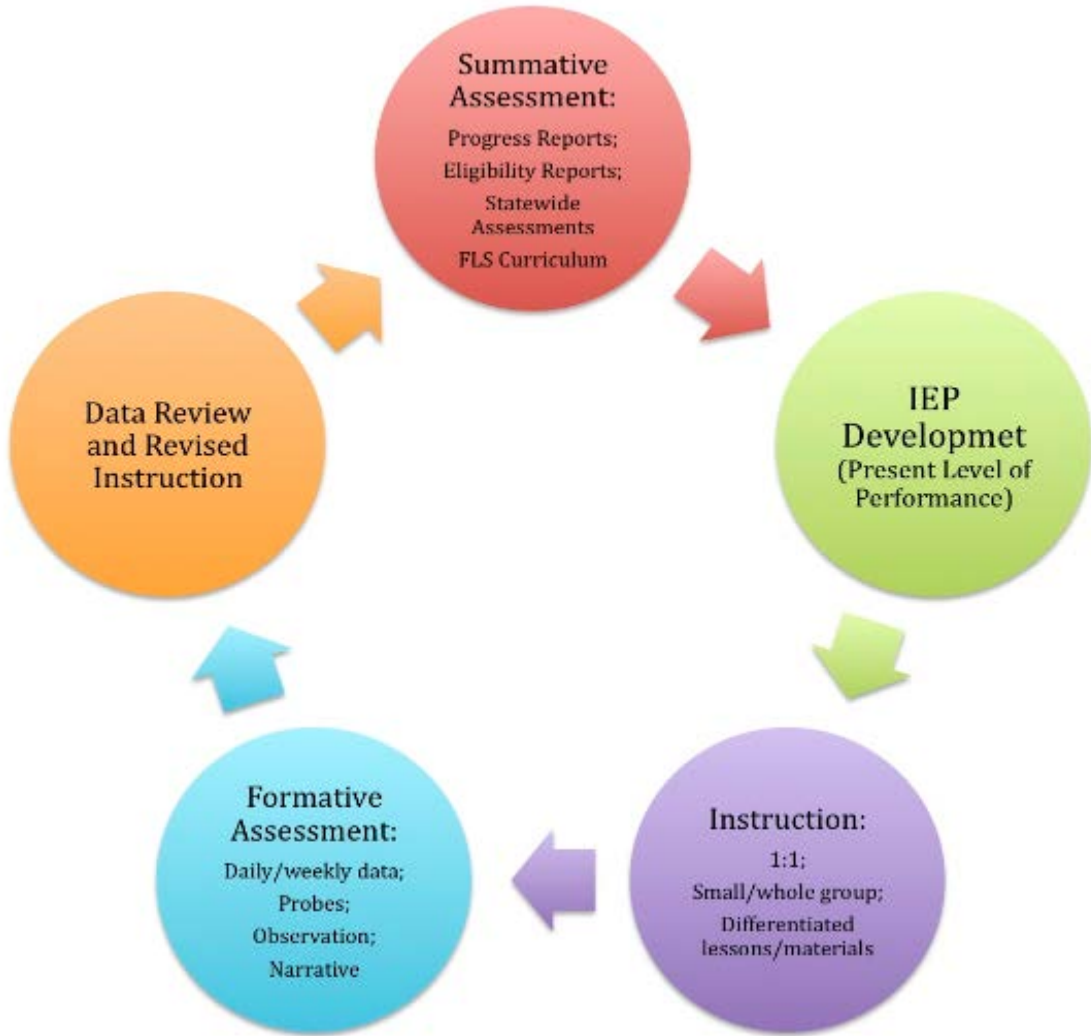
PPR: **Works independently and average of 8 minutes.**

Progress Reporting Guidelines

Supplemental comments about the student's overall progress are fine but not enough on their own.

Be specific when describing the student's progress- avoid comments such as "student is making progress towards this goal" unless you back it up with measurable terms.

"We know that equality of individual ability has never existed and never will, but we do insist that equality of opportunity still must be sought."

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

Thank you!!

Questions/feedback