


What Teachers Say they Need

To Teach Students with Learning Disabilities

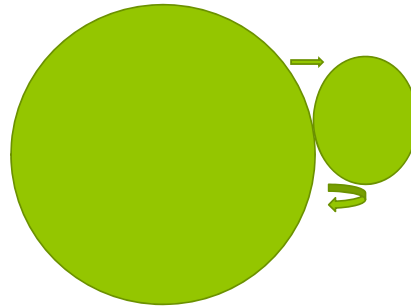
Karlene Chorney

Setting the Scene



Systems Thinking

Senge called this system- Shifting the Burden



What did I find?

- Teachers were interested in the study
- Teachers wanted a voice
- Teachers wanted to learn
- Teachers were concerned about the services they were giving special needs students within their classrooms
- Teachers were passionate about their students

Create and Recognize an Inclusive Culture

- With a strong Advanced Placement program- special needs students exist outside our academic culture
- Awards that are meant to recognize high student performance demoralize students with special needs because they are unattainable
- Teachers did not know how to make student recognition meaningful for students with special needs

Foster Stronger Relationships with Special Needs Students

- Teachers felt that strong relationships led to meaningful teaching
- Teachers felt vulnerable because they were not a "trained professional"
- Teachers felt there needed to be a way administrators to have relationships with students as well to promote a sense of connectedness
- Teachers indicated classroom sizes impacted their ability to connect with special needs students

Generate a Climate of Collaboration

- In order to help teachers build their capacity to work with special needs students we need to offer support which comes down to time and money
- Often there is difficulty finding the time, energy and flexibility for collaboration among teachers
- Timely collaboration between student services was paramount to success

Build Intentional Teaching Practice

- Many teachers feel they are not adequately trained to properly teach special needs students
- It is a powerful notion that teachers **have** to differentiate instruction and assessment not that it would be nice to do that
- Participants indicated they wanted help understanding specialist assessments to inform their teaching practice

Teacher's Wish List

- Smaller classes
- Method of Mentorship
- Collaborative model for Professional Development
- A shift in Student recognition practices

Motivation

- Autonomy
- Purpose
- Mastery

Drive Daniel Pink

Recommendations

- Educate and Align Teacher Practice to *Action on Inclusion*
- Create a collaborative culture through professional Development
- Review student and staff recognition strategies