New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge › Skill › Opportunity



BLUEPRINT FOR IMPROVED RESULTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Office of Special Education

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- *Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.*
- *Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.*
- *Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.*
- *Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.*
- *Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.*
- *Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.*

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New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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BLUEPRINT FOR IMPROVED RESULTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The mission of the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Office of Special Education, – supported by all offices within NYSED – is to ensure that students with disabilities have opportunities to benefit from high-quality instruction, to reach the same standards as all students, and to leave school prepared to successfully transition to post-school learning, living and working. Through this process, there are essential and fundamental procedural rights and protections afforded by federal and State law both to parents and students with disabilities.

The following principles were selected, in consultation with stakeholders, as a statewide framework of expectations to lay the foundation for improved instruction and results for students with disabilities. References to students with disabilities within this document includes preschool students with disabilities and school-age students with any of the 13 disability categories of autism, blindness, deafness, deaf-blindness, emotional disabilities, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, orthopedic impairments, multiple disabilities, health impairments, speech and language impairment, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment.

While there are many other components or key principles that are important in the education of students with disabilities, this Blueprint focuses on seven research and evidence-based core principles and practices for all students with disabilities. Improving results for students with disabilities requires a renewed focus on these core principles. Underlying these principles are the following essential understandings.

- Communities, boards of education, district and school leaders must provide systemic supports and professional development for teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, including appropriate identification and ensuring classrooms have necessary supports, rigorous and relevant learning environments and classroom and school-wide approaches are created to maintain a positive climate.
- School principals and special education administrators are fundamental in their roles as instructional leaders for students with disabilities.
- All teachers are teachers of students with disabilities and every teacher needs to be skilled in how to support and provide differentiated and specially-designed instruction to students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities must be held to high expectations and given the appropriate supports and services to meet those high expectations.
- Students and parents of students with disabilities need information and support to be meaningfully involved in the special education process.
- Students with disabilities should participate, to the maximum extent possible, in making recommendations for supports and services needed for their academic success and to meet their post-secondary transition goals.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will be used by the State to review policy, technical assistance and other improvement activities. School districts and schools are encouraged to use these principles to review practice and to identify and act on areas where improvement is needed.

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN SELF-ADVOCACY AND ARE INVOLVED IN DETERMINING THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND PLANS.

This is evident when:

- *Students participate in individualized education program (IEP) meetings.*
- *Students create and monitor their progress towards academic and social goals.*
- *Students engage in career planning and selection of courses of study to prepare them for post-secondary living, working and learning.*

PARENTS, AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS, ARE ENGAGED AS MEANINGFUL PARTNERS IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS AND THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILD.

This is evident when:

- *Parents report that they understand the special education process and their due process rights and actively participate in the development of their child's IEP.*
- *Parents understand what their child is expected to know and be able to do to progress toward the State learning standards.*
- *Parents and educators engage in frequent, respectful and open discussion of the educational needs of the student.*
- *Families are invited into and feel welcome in all school environments.*
- *Parents have the information they need about effective strategies to support their child's learning and support transition from school to post-school activities.*

TEACHERS DESIGN, PROVIDE AND ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIALLY-DESIGNED INSTRUCTION TO PROVIDE ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO PARTICIPATE AND PROGRESS IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM.

This is evident when:

- *All teachers are responsive to the pedagogical needs of students with disabilities.*
- *All students receive instruction in curriculum aligned with the State's Learning Standards.*
- *IEPs are developed in consideration of grade level standards.*
- *IEPs are implemented and reviewed by educators, families and students to ensure that students are meeting their annual goals.*
- *Special and general education teachers of students with disabilities engage in intentional collaborative lesson planning to meet the needs of each individual student with a disability.*
- *Individual student data are used to inform and design instruction for students with disabilities to progress toward grade level standards.*
- *Students with disabilities receive instructional materials in alternative formats at the same time as other students in the class receive their instructional materials.*

TEACHERS PROVIDE RESEARCH-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

This is evident when:

- *All teachers develop lessons that allow multiple entry points and multiple modes of engagement for students with diverse needs.*
- *All teachers are knowledgeable and skilled in providing explicit instruction in academics and social-emotional learning.*
- *Students with disabilities are taught strategies for self-regulated learning across the content areas.*
- *All teachers continually assess students' understanding of lessons to improve and target instruction to student needs.*
- *Students' individualized needs for assistive technology devices and services are considered and accommodated.*

SCHOOLS PROVIDE MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF BEHAVIORAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT.

This is evident when:

- *Educators collect and analyze student outcome data to plan, organize, deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide programs and instruction for all students.*
- *Educators disaggregate and analyze outcomes for students with disabilities to improve school-wide programs and interventions.*
- *Educators collect and analyze data to identify individual students in need of additional support.*
- *Evidence-based interventions are provided in a timely manner to students needing more support.*
- *Progress monitoring data are collected and inform decisions about the effectiveness and/or need for modification to those interventions.*

SCHOOLS PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

This is evident when:

- *Educators use the full continuum of services to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment.*
- *The needs of the students are the primary consideration in the configuration of special education programs and services to be provided to students with disabilities.*
- *District/school leaders allocate human and financial resources to support scheduling and planning time to ensure all students receive rigorous and appropriate instruction throughout the continuum of special education programs and services.*
- *Students with disabilities in inclusive settings are provided the accommodations and explicit and specially-designed instruction needed to progress in the curriculum.*

SCHOOLS PROVIDE APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN WORK-BASED LEARNING.

This is evident when:

- *Students are provided age-appropriate transition assessments, guidance, courses of study and work-based learning opportunities to meaningfully engage in early and ongoing career planning and exploration.*
- *Students with disabilities and their families are provided early and clear information on graduation requirements.*
- *Students with disabilities receive instruction toward the Career Development and Occupational Studies Learning Standards beginning in the early grades.*
- *Students are provided instruction to develop lifelong learning skills such as self-advocacy, social-emotional skills, higher order thinking, employability skills and consumer and life skills.*
- *Students and their families actively participate in the transition planning process.*
- *Schools facilitate timely student and family connections to post-secondary supports and services through ACCES-VR and other State agency programs and services.*

New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership
Technical Assistance Partnership
for Transition

Connecting the Dots Between the New York State Blueprint and Preschool Special Education

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) released the Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities in 2015. This Blueprint was developed in consultation with stakeholders and is consistent with the mission of NYSED, Office of Special Education—supported by all offices within NYSED—to ensure that students with disabilities can benefit from high quality instruction, reach the same standards as all students, and leave school prepared to successfully transition to post-school learning, living, and employment.

The principles in the Blueprint were carefully selected as those essential to achieve the goal of improved results. This statewide framework is intended to clarify expectations for administrators, policy makers, and practitioners to improve instruction to prepare students with disabilities for success beginning in the preschool years to lay the foundation for postsecondary readiness and success.

While there are many components or key principles that are important for students with disabilities and their families, this Blueprint focuses on seven core principles and practices supported by research for all students with disabilities. Improving results for students with disabilities requires a renewed focus on these core principles:

- Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.
- Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.
- Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.
- Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.
- Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.
- Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.
- Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

Below are ways the seven principles of the Blueprint directly connect to Preschool Special Education.

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.

- In preschool, self-advocacy is about making choices, expressing and beginning to meet one's own wants and needs, and understanding one's own identity.
- Educators can help preschool students understand this by providing choices, choice boards, emotion recognition (emotion boards and posters), and expression through art and dramatic play.
- Overall quality preschool programs use developmentally appropriate practices that lead to development of self and self-advocacy skills.

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.

- In preschool, educators may provide parents or other family members with information and training on the Early Intervention (EI) and Preschool Special Education process as well as information about overall childhood development. This information will help students develop and gain skills and is part of the foundation for forming meaningful partnerships with parents and family members.
- Listening, answering questions, providing information and referral-specific information about disabilities (e.g., autism) are all methods to building meaningful partnerships.
- Regular and ongoing communication (e.g., phone calls, emails, texts, letters home) occurs between the preschool staff and families.
- Families are made to feel welcome in the preschool environment (e.g., invited to classroom activities and special events).
- Families understand what they can do at home to help facilitate their child's growth and development.

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.

- Preschool teachers understand the typical development of students 3-5 years of age.
- Preschool teachers understand the general education curriculum and best practices for the development and growth of students in all developmental domains.
- Preschool teachers use the Individualized Education Program (IEP) as a guideline to develop teaching methods and strategies based on individual needs and strengths to help preschool students with a disability access the general education curriculum.
- Students' development and growth is monitored by progress monitoring on specific goals and objectives for each student with an IEP.
- Adjustments to instruction are made based on individual student data collected.

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.

- Preschool staff research and learn about evidenced-based practices in early childhood education to develop teaching strategies that are supported through research as effective to foster growth and development in students, especially those who demonstrate developmental delays.
- Lesson plans are developed to accommodate different levels of abilities.

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.

- Preschool programs assess their practices and research and understand multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).
- Preschool programs access outside resources for support in developing MTSS.
- Evidence-based interventions are used with students who need more support.
- Data is used to support adjustments made to individual or group tiers for support.

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.

- Preschool programs research and understand what constitutes a high-quality early childhood program using developmentally appropriate practices.
- Preschool administrators and other preschool staff connect with school districts, county officials, and other preschool programs through interagency meetings (Local Early Intervention Coordinating Council, Preschool Round Tables).
- Preschool programs encourage all their staff to keep current by providing professional development opportunities and training across all aspects of the early childhood system.
- Specially designed instruction (SDI) is used when needed to allow preschool students with disabilities access to and help them make progress in the preschool curriculum.

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

- Preschool programs provide a variety of dramatic play materials for students to begin to explore their strengths, preferences, and needs.
- Preschool programs include regular instruction on career development and expose students to community organizations throughout their early childhood curriculum.

Blueprint for English Language Learner/ Multilingual Learner Success



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

BLUEPRINT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER/MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (ELL/MLL) SUCCESS

The mission of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) is to ensure that all New York State (NYS) students, including English Language Learners/ Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs), attain the highest level of academic success and language proficiency. We strive to ensure that all students' individual educational paths and socio-emotional needs are met in multiple languages leading them to college and career readiness. NYSED believes that all teachers are teachers of ELLs/MLLs.

In response to the changing global economy, NYSED has adopted the Next Generation Learning Standards to provide students, educators, and parents with a set of clear expectations leading to college and career readiness. Over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of ELLs/MLLs enrolled in NYS public schools, resulting in a current population of 261,848 students who speak over 200 languages. In order for these students to succeed, NYSED needs to provide schools with the appropriate scaffolds, home language assessments, and materials so that teachers can provide instruction that will enable students to meet rigorous standards. Under the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Part 154, OBEWL affirms that it is not permissible to assume that unsupported immersion of ELLs/MLLs into an English-speaking environment will enable them to succeed academically.

The Next Generation Learning Standards require that every teacher be prepared to teach academic language and challenging content to all students, including ELLs/MLLs. All teachers must be skilled in how to support ELLs/MLLs as they acquire content knowledge while also progressing towards English language proficiency. It is imperative that all educators work across the content areas to ensure that all students meet the high demands of the Next Generation Learning Standards.

The following principles were carefully developed as a statewide framework aimed to clarify expectations for administrators, policymakers, and practitioners to prepare ELLs/MLLs for success, beginning in Prekindergarten, to lay the foundation for college and career readiness. These principles are intended to provide guidance, resources, and support to districts, schools, and teachers, as well as to promote a better understanding and appreciation of Bilingual Education, English as a New Language (ENL), and World Language Studies.



The principles that guide the Blueprint for ELL/MLL Success are:

1. **All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners and need to plan accordingly by:**
   - Designing and delivering instruction that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for all diverse learners, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEP).
   - Providing integrated language and content instruction to support language development through language-focused scaffolds. Bilingual, ENL, and other content-area teachers must collaborate purposefully and consistently to promote academic achievement in all content areas.
   - Utilizing materials and instructional resources that are linguistically age/grade appropriate and aligned to the Next Generation Learning Standards.
   - Collaborating with school support personnel and community-based human resources in order to address the multiple needs of ELLs/MLLs.

2. **All school boards and district/school leaders are responsible for ensuring that the academic, linguistic, social, and emotional needs of ELLs/MLLs are addressed by:**
   - Providing a clear vision for student success that includes high expectations for ELL/MLL student achievement and socio-emotional development, supported by a purposeful plan of action that provides multiple pathways to college, career, and civic readiness through high-quality programs that meet the needs of ELLs/MLLs.
   - Providing high-quality instruction for ELLs/MLLs
   - Aligning and coordinating fiscal and human resources to ensure that the instructional plan is being effectively implemented.
   - Providing high-quality supports, feedback, and direction to educators to improve their instructional practice.
   - Providing a safe and inclusive learning environment that recognizes and respects the languages and cultures of all students.
   - Ensuring that districts and school leaders are trained in meeting the needs of ELLs/MLLs in order to cultivate a school culture of high expectations.
   - Providing high-quality instructional and support services to differently-abled ELLs/MLLs in alignment with their IEPs and current policies.

3. **Districts and schools engage all English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners in instruction that is grade-appropriate, academically rigorous, and aligned with the *New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core* and P-12 Common Core Learning Standards by:**

- Articulating specific content and language objectives.
- Integrating explicit and implicit research-based vocabulary instruction.
- Providing opportunities for students to discuss content and problem-solve with peers.
- Anchoring instruction by strategically using research-based practices (e.g., multimedia, visuals, graphic organizers, etc.).
- Providing special education supports, services, accommodations, and specially-designed instruction to meet the specific instructional needs of ELLs/MLLs with disabilities.
- Designing, selecting, and implementing a high-quality curriculum that meets the needs of Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLLs) and supports the *New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core*, http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/nyslsprek.pdf.
- Using academic language and content-area supports to strategically move ELLs/MLLs along the language development continuum utilizing *New York State Bilingual Common Core Progressions*, http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-bilingual-common-core-initiative.

4. **Districts and schools recognize that bilingualism and biliteracy are assets and provide opportunities for all students to earn a Seal of Biliteracy upon obtaining a high school diploma by providing all students with:**

- Opportunities to participate in language learning or language support programs that lead to proficiency in English and other languages.
- Opportunities to use and develop academic language and content knowledge both in English and Languages Other Than English, including the student's home language.
- Rigorous Bilingual Education programs for ELLs/MLLs aimed at maintaining and developing the home language and attaining English proficiency as well as biliteracy.
- Alternate pathways for those whose home language is low incidence and, consequently, the district does not have enough students who speak the same language to form a bilingual education program.

5. **Districts and schools value all parents and families of ELLs/MLLs as partners in education and effectively involve them in the education of their children by:**

- Providing parents with resources that enable them to make informed decisions about their children's education.
- Providing parents with all pertinent information about their rights and program choices in a language and format that parents can easily understand and access.
- Providing training to parents in English and in their home language on effective strategies to support their children's learning in and out of school.
- Engaging parents as active participants, contributors, and cultural liaisons to the school community.
- Sharing with parents and family members the high expectations that schools have established for the education of all ELLs/MLLs and engaging them in the pursuit and achievement of those expectations.
- Collaborating with the school support personnel and immigrant community-based organizations in order to address the multiple needs of families of ELLs/MLLs.

6. **District and school communities leverage the expertise of Bilingual, ENL, and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) teachers and support personnel while increasing their professional capacities by:**

- Creating intentional learning opportunities for all teachers to collaborate and design instruction, analyze student work, and develop rigorous lessons.
- Providing substantial and sustained opportunities for all teachers to participate in meaningful professional development that addresses the needs of ELLs/MLLs, including home and new language development.

7. **Districts and school communities leverage ELL/MLL home languages, cultural assets, and prior knowledge by:**

- Regarding home languages as instructional assets and using them in bridging prior knowledge to new knowledge while ensuring that content is meaningful and comprehensible.
- Using home languages and cultures of ELLs/MLLs to promote diversity pursuant to the Dignity for All Students Act (NYS initiative, effective July 2013), http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/.

8. **Districts and schools use diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices in order to measure ELLs/MLLs' content knowledge as well as new and home language development to inform instruction by:**

- Using NYS assessments in conjunction with formative assessments.
- Using language proficiency data from the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) to understand where ELLs/MLLs are along the continuum of language development and how to provide appropriate scaffolds for them according to their proficiency level.
- Employing authentic assessments that require sophisticated uses of language embedded in authentic and rich content.
- Utilizing appropriate tools to assess the needs and progress of differently-abled ELLs/MLLs.
- Utilizing analytical rubrics that provide feedback on content knowledge and language development.
- Using home language assessments to inform instruction and demonstrate growth in bilingual education programs in which the home language is being used.

