

Curriculum Mapping for Special Education Teachers By Susan Udelhofen

Most special education teachers find it beneficial and time efficient to take the general education teachers maps where their students spend part of their school day and use them as a basis for their maps making modifications where appropriate. For example if a special education teacher has a fourth grade student in his/her special education classroom for language arts he/she would take the completed general education fourth grade language arts map and make the modification he/she makes in the curriculum to accommodate the special education student right on the general education map and use it as his/her own. They can highlight, color code, underline, the specific modifications that are made. This way they will have a map for each student but will not have to create a map for each student from scratch. Some teachers attach these modified maps the I.E.P. The modifications are usually in the skills and assessments. The same is true for speech and language teachers. They can use the general education maps to show the modifications they make to accommodate their students - if appropriate. For those teachers it often depends on what the specific needs of the student is and how closely connected it is with the general education curriculum.

Also, some may find it beneficial to look at the general education maps that match the learning level of the student. By that I mean if the fourth grade student is functioning at a second grade level they may want to look at the second grade general education language arts completed maps. They must always keep in mind (I'm sure they do this), that the special students will be assessed on the state exams the age/grade they are so it is important to look at the general education maps of the specific age/grade.

There are areas that the special education and speech & language arts teachers can create maps from the beginning. Those usually are units of study that are unique to special ed. and speech and language. For example, units of organizational skills, study skills, etc.

When the special education, speech & language and general education teachers share their maps the communication system is greatly enhanced and learning across all of these areas is improved which helps the students.