Education Best Practice Guidelines (Autism IEP Supplement)

1: Extended Educational Programming
Extended Day and Extended School Year (NOTE – these are distinct and need to be clearly defined.)
1. Duration and programming to be based on individual needs
2. Extended day needs to be different from In-Home Training
3. Determine eligibility criteria based not solely on likely regression, but also on a needs assessment of the following areas: behavior, social skills, communication, academics, and self help skills
4. Needs to be available to all eligible students; not to be determined by district availability funds / staff
5. To include variety of structural programs / settings
6. Services should be linked to IEP objectives and goals

2: Daily schedules reflecting minimal unstructured time
Individualized daily schedule reflecting minimal unstructured time and active engagement in learning activities to the maximum extent possible
1. Flexibility within routines to adapt to individual skill level
2. Learning activities are to be based on IEP goals and objectives and related educational activities
3. Engagement time may include lunch, snack, and recess
4. Consideration needs to be given to aiding students with changes in routine schedules such as, field trips, substitute teachers, and pep rallies

3: In-Home and Community-Based training
Include training and IEP goals and objectives to assist in acquisition and generalization to the home and community setting (appropriate social interaction skills including social and behavioral skills) based on needs assessment

Strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization (home to school, home to community, school to home, school to community)

Consideration needs to be given to guidelines for the qualifications of the In-Home trainer

(NOTE-Define In-Home and Community-Based training)

4: Positive Behavior Support Strategies
Positive Behavior Supports include Functional Behavior Assessment, antecedent manipulation, teaching replacement behaviors, reinforcement strategies, data based decisions.
Behavior Intervention Plan developed and maintained based on a Functional Behavioral Assessment using current data collection of target behaviors.
1. Considerations and guidelines needs to be written for the person who is performing the functional behavior assessment (FBA). (Please see Yell and Drasgow 2000)
2. Behavioral programming across school, home and community-based settings

5: Futures Planning for Integrated Living, Work, Community and Educational Environments

*Considered for all students with ASD, at any age
1. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments post graduation
2. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments 3 years hence
3. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments for current year

6: Parent/family education, training, and support

Parent/family education, training, and support is designed to provide the parent/family with skills/techniques needed in order to help their child become successful in the home/community setting. Parent training is provided by qualified personnel with experience in autism and may include but is not limited to information regarding parent support groups, workshops, videos, conferences, direct consultation, materials, all of which are separate and distinct from in-home training. The focus of the service is to increase the parent's knowledge of specific teaching and management techniques, curriculum information, provide information related to the child's disability and available resources, and facilitate parental carryover of in-home training. Strategies for behavior management, setting a structured home environment, or communication training may be considered. The intent is that parents are active participants in promoting the continuity of intervention across all settings based on IEP.

7: Staff-to-Student ratio

Staff-to-student ratio appropriate to identified activities and as needed to achieve progress on social, behavioral, and/or academic IEP goals and objectives.
The IEP team may determine ratios based on the following considerations:
- Level of learning (acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization)
- Priority given to work towards individual independence by fading dependence on 1:1 ratios
- Developmental level of the student (in the case of young children [developmental level 0-8 years] no more than 2 children with autism spectrum disorder per adult as determined by results of adaptive behavior evaluations) *(NOTE-Add in Best Practice Manual)*
- Behavior needs
- Accommodations across all settings
- Transitions within the school day
- Teaching activities

8:Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies shall be based on peer reviewed and empirically validated evidence-based practices/methodologies for students with autism. At this time the science heavily favors, but is not limited to those based on the science of applied behavior analysis, defined as the application of behavioral principles for the benefit of the learner and includes simultaneous evaluation of the effect of these applications.
The following instructional strategies should be considered:
- Pivotal Response Training (Naturalistic Approach)
- DiscreteTrial Training (Structured Approach)
- Visual supports
- Structured learning
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- Social skills training

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Implementation of the instructional strategies should be reflected in the IEP. The following will be considered:
- How will this strategy be implemented?
- When?
- By Whom?

9: Communication

Communication intervention, which considers language forms and functions that enhance effective performance across settings. Strategies may include, but are not limited to:
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- Milieu, incidental, or naturalistic teaching
- Verbal Behavior
- Pragmatics
- Conversation skills

10: Social Skills Support

Consideration will be given to the following areas:

a. Appropriate social skills assessment and curriculum

b. Instruction provided by highly qualified service providers

c. Use of trained peer facilitators such as, but not limited to, circle of friends

d. Strategies may include but are not limited to video modeling, Scripts training, social stories, and role playing

e. Support to be provided across all settings

11: Professional Educator/Staff Support

Professional development will be provided for all personnel who work with the student to assure the correct implementation of the techniques and strategies as determined by the IEP.