Denver Public Schools  
Department of Student Services  

QUICK CHECK FOR BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS  

Evaluating a Quality Special Education Program  

What the Quick Check Measures:  

The Quick Check was developed by the Department of Student Services with input from principals as a tool to be used by building administrators. It is intended to address basic program standards that should be in place in a program striving to provide an excellent education for students with disabilities. Items on the Quick Check are meant to help administrators look at what constitutes best practice in programs for students with disabilities.

The Quick Check will enable the building administrator to pinpoint areas of program strengths and specific areas needing improvement, providing a basis of formulating school, program or teacher goals in the following areas:

- Philosophy  
- Registration  
- Assessment  
- IEPs  
- Instruction and Professional Relationships  
- Books and Materials  
- Transition  
- Special Education Law  
- Graduation Requirements  
- Discipline

How the Quick Check is Used:  

The Quick Check requires that the building administrator spend time observing in the classroom, talking to the special educator(s), regular educators, and the staffing team. It is important to observe or inquire about ALL items. This will establish a baseline and allow for progress to be monitored throughout the school year.

Once the baseline has been established, the building administrator may want to contact their Special Education Program Managers and/or Special Education Staff Developers as a resource to help increase the expertise of professionals in their building.

QUICK CHECK

Scoring Guide:  
0 = Item is not yet present  
1 = Item is partially in place  
2 = Item is in place

I. Philosophy

☐ We understand and adhere to the philosophy of least restrictive environment (see DPS policy: IHBA and IHBA-R Children or Youth with Disabilities).
☐ In our building, the school district’s philosophy regarding special education is understood and valued.
☐ A clear building vision exists for how special education collaborates with regular education.
☐ In our building, a language of “our students” and not “your students and my students” exists.
II. Registration

- The building secretary verifies special education status of a student (through Infinite Campus, parent information, or sending school/district) at registration.
- A procedure is in place to insure that the designated special educator is immediately notified.
- We’ve identified the special education students who are English Language Learners (ELL).
- Special education records are immediately available to special educators and related service providers (as appropriate).
- Records are requested if the student with a disability is coming from out of district.
- We know that no matter what the disability, we CANNOT turn a student away (if we need assistance, we will call the school’s Area Program Manager).

III. Assessment

- We check with our building Site Assessment Leader (SAL) for any approved student accommodations for CSAP or any district assessments.
- Assessments are administered under DPS and state guidelines for ELL students.

IV. IEPs

- A master IEP calendar is developed during the planning days before school starts in August. It is shared and updated regularly.
- Parents are always invited to all IEP meetings and provided with written notification prior to the meeting.
- The school team is always will to reschedule the IEP meeting if the date and time is not convenient for the parent.
- IEP meetings are interactive in which parent and student input are valued and not meetings in which reports are read round-robin.
- We understand the process to determine the language of assessments for English Language Learners.
- Initial IEP meetings are held within 60 calendar days of the initial referral or request for evaluation by the parent in the preferred language.
- Annual Reviews and Triennials are completed on or before the designated anniversary date.
- An IEP accountability person(s) has been designated and insures that all building IEPs are done properly and turned in within two weeks of the staffing.
- It is clearly understood who must be in attendance at specific IEP meetings and the school adheres to these requirements.
- Interpreters/translators are provided as needed at IEP meetings.
- The special education team serves all students with an IEP.

V. Curriculum and Instruction

- Special educators have equal access to and collaborate with general educators regarding curriculum.
- Instruction for ALL students is standards-based.
- An array of services is available for all special education students based on student needs.

VI. Professional Relationships

- All in-building, district, and other professional development for regular educators (i.e. CSAP practices, literacy, math/science, technology, CCIRA, CCTM) should include special educators.
- Opportunities for collaborative professional development occur between regular and special educators.
- Opportunities for joint planning time between regular educators and special educators are built into our master schedule.
- Collaboration between regular educators and special educators in classrooms is occurring.
Collaboration between special educators and the Instruction Services Advisory (ISA) team is occurring as needed.

Regular educators are encouraged to attend special education conferences (i.e. the Inclusion Conference).

We receive a monthly newsletter from the IRC and know professional classes are offered.

We know how to access the Student Services Procedures Manual on the web.

We know the appropriate people to contact for in-building and out-of-building support.

VII. Books and Materials

Our school provides monies equitably for special as well as regular educators.

Books and materials for students with disabilities are high interest and age-appropriate.

Books and materials are adequate for English Language Learners.

Special educators are given equal access to computers and software through the building technology budget.

Our school library has appropriate books and software to meet the needs of students with IEPs.

VIII. Transition

A transition plan for all students including special education students moving to the next grade level (i.e. elementary to middle, middle to high school) exists and is followed.

IX. Special Education Law

We understand the following terms and their requirements:

- LEA (Local Education Agency)
- LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)
- FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education)
- IDEA ’04 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act)
- We understand the implications for not complying with district, state, and federal mandates.

X. Discipline for Special Education Students

We know what a Manifestation Determination Review is.

We understand that if the student’s behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the student WILL NOT go to an expulsion hearing.

We are tracking the number of days each special education student is suspended.

XI. Graduation Requirements

For Secondary Schools:

We understand clearly the different courses of study for high school graduation available to students with special education needs.

Adherence to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a mandate for regular education. The Department of Student Services will provide assistance through staff development to facilitate implementation.

Note: Each building should have a designated 504 Coordinator; Cheryl Karstaedt is the district’s ADA/504 Compliance Officer.