

Title of Session: Special Education Forum

Moderator: Paul Bohac

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Room: Special Education Forum Group

BJB2: Adam is here for this discussion...

BJB2: but he's been very quiet

PaulDB: So what has been happening with you?

BJB2 pokes Adam

BJB2: starting on a newish project...Arts in Corrections

PaulDB: Hello Adam

BJB2: so many wonderful programs but no collaboration

BJB2: lots of favorable responses so far, but not much action yet

PaulDB: Maybe you might want to work with some outside organizations such as Responsible Fatherhood.

BJB2: do they have an arts program?

PaulDB: As a group, they are always looking for ways to work with inmate fathers in prison to establish or re-establish contact with their children.

BJB2: that would be more with the parenting groups, I think. When you get a chance, visit the arts in corrections group and see the groups listed

PaulDB: They have worked with literacy programs, with letter-writing programs, don't know if they have an arts program but suspect they would be interested in discussing it.

BJB2: They are more than welcome in joining the group

PaulDB: I think with their help, you might be able to expand the program if you are seeking to do that.

BJB2 smiles...it's got no where to go but up, Paul! It's a real seedling right now

BarbSa joined the room.

BJB2: hi, Barb. Welcome

PaulDB: Hello Barb

BJB2: here for the SPED discussion, Barb?

PaulDB: Adam, are you here for the SPED session as well?

BarbSa: I am always interested in special ed so I thought I would "lurk"

PaulDB: We can handle that!

AdamBi: Yes. I am doing this as a requirement for a TEP class.

PaulDB: And what is a TEP class?

BJB2: Paul, shall we start with introductions?

PaulDB: Okay.

AdamBi: Teacher Ed (credential, single subject)

BJB2: Please share where you are located and what you teach, hope to teach, or what brings you to this session

PaulDB: I am a retired Correctional Education Teacher and Administrator with a background in Special Education.

BJB2: I'm in Pennsylvania and teach remedial communication

AdamBi: I am a Freshman Integrated Science Teacher in California

PaulDB: Thanks for the clarification, Adam

BarbSa: I work with adults and we have very little access to sped ed assessment because of funding so what ever I can find I do. I am from the Chicago suburban area

PaulDB: What age adults Barb?

BarbSa: anywhere from 17 to 60

PaulDB: The group between 17 and 21 are eligible for Special Ed services if they meet the eligibility criterion

BJB2: who would provide the services, Paul?

BarbSa: I can usually send those under 21 to a service, but others have just fallen through

PaulDB: Is your program funded through Adult Ed dollars, or through the local school district?

BarbSa: Adult Ed funding

PaulDB: Then you would also be able to secure funding to support services through Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

BarbSa: many students come without any assessment and testing is at least 200; they cannot afford that

BarbSa: I have worked with Dept of human services and the paper work is horrendous and they lose heart and just drop it

PaulDB: Adult Ed monies can pay for the testing and if there is evidence that the student may be eligible for either 504 services (that would include all of your students regardless of age) or Spec Ed, local school districts may want to become involved.

BarbSa: We now have an advocate who is trying to secure testing, but so far this semester no luck

PaulDB: Barb, I would suggest that you review with your immediate supervisor the situation.

PaulDB: According to federal law, any student who is eligible for Spec Ed services must be provided with such services.

BarbSa: they must prove that they are eligible first

PaulDB: More importantly, there is a mechanism in place that is to be implemented when a youth may be suspected of being eligible.

BarbSa: some have never attended school

PaulDB: In that case, they should be referred for evaluation by the local school district.

PaulDB: If the youth is under the age of 21, the school district is obligated to initiate services, including evaluations as appropriate.

PaulDB: Federal law is very specific on these matters.

BarbSa: there is not problem with those 21 or under; it is those who have never been

diagnosed

BarbSa: I have people before pl174

PaulDB: Then I would suggest you contact the local Vocational Rehabilitation counselor in your area.

BarbSa: I will do that again, thanks

PaulDB: Voc Rehab is authorized to evaluate and identify those who are eligible for services under both Section 504 of the 1973 Act and for services under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

BJB2: Barb, I may have missed this - what kind of a facility do you teach in?

PaulDB: Additionally, every eligible adult identified for services by Voc Rehab provides an incentive to the local office who makes such an identification.

BarbSa: I teach in an adult ed program that teaches literacy to both native speakers and esl learners

BJB2: thanks

PaulDB: Who supervises the program Barb?

PaulDB: I ask the question because then I can help sort through the possible array of resources to help you in your efforts.

BarbSa: I am one of the coordinators and we have a manager. Our program is about 3000 students

BJB2: wow

BarbSa: I have worked directly with DHS and each year it becomes more difficult

PaulDB: For example, if the program comes through the local community college (or its equivalent), then college personnel may be very helpful to you.

PaulDB: If the program comes through a grant, then it might be possible to make contact with the granting agency for assistance.

BarbSa: We are a CBO in a school District and their spec ed can only help our under 21

BarbSa: the granting agency is the state of Illinois

PaulDB: CBO? DHS?

BarbSa: Community based organization and Department of Human Services (formerly depart of rehabilitation)

PaulDB: If the funding comes from the state, it is likely through the State Department of Education. It is only the Dept of Education that can receive the federal Adult Ed funds.

BarbSa: It is from Illinois Community College board which distributes the state funds to program

BarbSa: through grants

PaulDB: The Dept of Ed may route the dollars to a local agency for disbursement to recipients in the state, but the original grant was filed by the Dept of Ed.

BarbSa: I am sure as we use National Reporting System rules

PaulDB: Okay, then, the use of those rules require that students who meet any of the requirements for participation in those other federal grants must be identified.

PaulDB: So, if you have some student you think might be eligible for 504 services, for example, then notify the community college and ask for their assistance to arrange for evaluations as needed.

BarbSa: thanks, I will use that as a starting point

PaulDB: Most likely, the college will refer to Voc Rehab.

PaulDB: Voc Rehab does not charge for their services.

PaulDB: Now, to get back to your original issue, testing of Spec Ed students, there are several alternatives to consider.

PaulDB: What kind of testing were you interested in?

BarbSa: what tests are there for reading and math problems?

PaulDB: For example, are you seeking assessments to identify potential Spec Ed students, or were you looking for material to help test the performance of such students, or information as to how to accommodate the needs of such students in the testing environment?

PaulDB: I am a proponent of assessment prior to testing.

BarbSa: You do not consider assessment testing?

PaulDB: By its nature, assessment helps the teacher identify what the student knows, helps the teacher develop lesson plans, and helps the teacher better prepare the student for testing.

PaulDB: Tests generally demonstrate the students understanding of the material covered during instruction.

BarbSa: I love that definition as that it what I think of it as

BarbSa: I always do informal assessment, in order to establish lesson plans for individuals

PaulDB: Then you must be using a variety of instruments.

PaulDB: What do you use for informal assessment in math?

BarbSa: I have been using the Bader for reading assessment which is not informal

BarbSa: For math, I used the old SORT Math

BarbSa: but I wrote some assessments for math that has problems in the each area

PaulDB: I am not really familiar with the Bader. Can someone else in the session speak to that instrument?

BJB2 thinks Barb is going to have to do the speaking

PaulDB: For example, is it timed? Is it based on age, grade level, or some other criteria to determine level of instrument?

BarbSa: It is an assessment that determines the learner's reading level in all four sections of reading

BarbSa: it an oral assessment that shows phonics, fluency, vocab and comprehension levels

BarbSa: through graded readings

BJB2: <http://www.indyreads.org/BaderAssessment.pdf>

PaulDB: I would suspect there is some kind of instructional program that accompanies the instrument?

BarbSa: I have been working on a project through the NIFL

PaulDB: Thanks BJ, I will follow up when I receive a copy of this transcript.

PaulDB: Please describe the project.

BJB2: <http://www.nifl.gov/>

PaulDB: Thank you again BJ!

BJB2: . o O (NIFL = National Institute for Literacy)

BarbSa: It is under the STAR reading project and we are doing a pilot with adults

BarbSa: Yes National Institute for Literacy

PaulDB: Do you have access to computers and the Internet in your classrooms?

BarbSa: Yes

BarbSa: the work we are doing is based on k-12 research and we applying it to adults to see if it works

BarbSa: that is why I am trying to find Spec Ed info and how it will fit into this

BarbSa: What assessment are best for reading

PaulDB: I would suggest that you build on the Bader.

PaulDB: If you can identify vocabulary and comprehension skills, then you can also identify the level of the Test of Adult Basic Education that could be administered.

BJB2: we have about 3 minutes left, Paul

PaulDB: The TABE is designed for adults. While it has some weaknesses, it also has a rather expansive description of the test contents.

BJB2: The next SPED discussion is scheduled for February 18

BarbSa: I want to thank you all for this help. i use the TABE all the time; I am trainer for the TABE

BarbSa: The TABE is good, but not very diagnostic

SusanR: Thanks Paul!

BarbSa: thank you all

PaulDB: Exactly.

PaulDB: But you have a good diagnostic test, it would seem, in the Bader.

BJB2: Barb, thanks for bringing a very interesting topic to the discussion tonight

SusanR: Thanks Barb

BJB2: I hope you will be able to join this group again next month

BarbSa: thank you it was great

BJB2: Adam, any comments? questions?

BJB2: Thanks, Paul...impressive as always ;-)

PaulDB: BJ, I am having a difficult time remembering the term used to describe the information about a test that shows the skill being assessed, the particular item numbers on the test that measured those skills and the description of the parallel items on the test.

PaulDB: Do you remember what that term is?

PaulDB: If it were a psychological test, it would be referred to as the "interpretation" manual component.

BJB2: I don't recall...I'll try to find out and email you.

PaulDB: Thanks!! I was trying to remember while Barb was with us. The TABE has an excellent example of what I am talking about that provides pretty good diagnostic information if someone was willing to work at it.

BJB2: competency?

PaulDB: No, the term refers to or describes the contents of the material. It's not protocol as that refers to testing procedures.

BJB2: email me if you find the word you're looking for and I'll add it to the transcript

PaulDB: Guess I will leave also, Sorry about monopolizing the conversation this evening.

JeffC: never apologize!

PaulDB: When I find the word I will certainly send it to you because it is an important consideration when one is considering purchasing a new test.

PaulDB: In fact, it is one of the most important variables for comparison between

different tests.

BJB2: you didn't monopolize the conversation! You were the only one with the answers!

JeffC: exactly!

BJB2: criterion referenced?

PaulDB: I just hope she (Barb) is able to make use of my comments to improve her instructional and programmatic activities for those with whom she works and serves.

BJB2 . o O (criterion referenced validity?)

BJB2 nods...that's one of the reasons I invited her to come next month

PaulDB: Getting closer, maybe it is criterion referenced definitions?

BJB2: this glossary is better: <http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/deaner/glossary.htm>

PaulDB: A McGraw-Hill representative lives in the area, maybe I will just give him a phone call and ask.

BJB2: Criterion-referenced validity Criterion-referenced validity is validity based on the correlation of test scores with some type of criterion measure

BJB2 lets Paul make the phone call and heads for bed.

BJB2 waves goodnight

PaulDB: When he presented the TABE testing program to us in adult corrections, that component was a real benefit since we could use it for diagnostic purposes and the information could be computer-generated through the use of the Scantron.

PaulDB: Works for me!!

BJB2: Correlation: Correlation is a statistic used to measure the strength and direction of the association between two sets of scores.

PaulDB: Y'all have a good night. See you next month.