

Special Education Leadership Issues

Est. Time: Pre-Class/In-Class 4–5 Hours

Objective

Develop an awareness of the current issues and concerns of school administrators regarding the provision of educational services to students with disabilities.

Overview

Federal laws passed over the last four-and-a-half decades have revolutionized the way that public institutions treat individuals with disabilities, with far-reaching effects for public schools. New requirements and increased accountability for students with disabilities have added to the demands placed on educational leaders and other staff members. It is essential that the concerns of administrators responsible for ensuring appropriate educational services be identified and addressed.

Activity (Complete Prior to Class)

1. Identify your top three concerns related to serving students with disabilities.
2. Select three general education administrators (not enrolled in this class) who have building-level responsibility for special education services (generally assistant principals). These can be all at one level (i.e., elementary, middle, or high school) or you might select one from each level. Ask each professional to identify his or her top three concerns related to serving students with disabilities. Record their responses on the attached table.
3. Locate one journal article (published within the last five to ten years) that discusses one of the issues or themes identified in your interviews.
 - Identify the concern.
 - Provide the APA citation for the selected article.
 - Briefly summarize the article and include a discussion of how this article might assist school administrators in better understanding or responding to the concern.

Discussion Topics

In class, form small groups of three to four students. Discuss concerns from the field reviews and the journal article summaries. Select a spokesperson for the group and be prepared to share responses with the entire class about:

- Prevalent themes that emerged during your discussion
- How the concerns from the field reviews compared with the groups “top three” concerns
- Implications for the work of educational administrators in responding to the identified concerns.