

High School Scenario

Mr. H is the principal of a high school in the Bronx. He currently serves students with disabilities (SWDs) primarily through full-time self-contained classes and has a few students who each receive a single period of SETSS per day. IEP teams reviewed the IEPs of all the incoming 9th graders and found that 11 would be more appropriately served in a less restrictive environment than their current recommendation of full-time self-contained. 13 of the incoming 9th graders were determined to be appropriate for full-time self-contained as their IEP currently states. The current special education services provided are:

- 15:1 in 9th, 10th 11th and 12th grade in ELA, math and science
- Four special education teachers providing SETSS

The 9th grade GE science teachers at the high school are resistant to having SWDs in their classes for the first time. The science teachers state that with the demands of the citywide instructional expectations, the Regents exams, and, in their belief, the safety of the students, they do not want to teach SWDs. Mr. H knows though that by making a choice to only offer non-lab science to SWDs, he is making a larger choice to not let the students graduate with a Regents diploma. The IEP team has demonstrated the students’ ability and suggested the accommodations necessary to ensure everyone’s safety. Although the science teachers are expressing great resistance, Mr. H knows that his 9th grade English department has two teachers who have co-taught ICT at previous schools and that he can likely leverage their knowledge about educating SWDs during cross-departmental, bi-weekly grade-level team meetings. One of those teachers, although teaching under her GE license, is dually-certified in special education.

Mr. H begins to think about how he can 1) Address the fear/assumption that SWDs who received services in self-contained classes pose a threat to safety, pointing to a need to build the capacity of staff to understand the individual needs of students with disabilities; 2) Build the capacity of staff to support SWDs in an expanded continuum for identified SwDs who are ready to transition to a less restrictive environment.

Total Enrollment	1,798
SwDs	20.8% (374 students)
2011-12 Continuum of Services	Self-contained (60% of SWDs, 225 students) SETSS (40% of SWDs, 149 students)
# GE Teachers	90
# SE Teachers	19 (4 SETSS, 15 Self-contained)

Before reading about the actions Mr. H took, please take 5 minutes to record, on page 3, and then discuss at your table, how you would respond if this was your school.

Scenario Solution Notes

INSTRUCTION	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FAMILY & STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	PROGRAMMING
HR/BUDGET	OTHER (Ex: CULTURE SHIFT)

High School Scenario Solution

Summary of actual actions taken by Mr. H:

Mr. H will focus only on articulating grade 9 and, within that grade, on a finite set of students, identified by special education self-contained teachers, who can appropriately transition to ICT or to some combination of part-time programming. Following a conversation with his network special education achievement coach, Mr. H felt that wide, sweeping changes would not realize change and rather decided that change needs to be incremental and strategic so that all will buy in.

- 1) Professional Development (Whole-staff):** The principal addressed the whole staff and outlined what each teacher can expect from him as a leader and what he expects from the school community:
 - a. High expectations for every student in the school, which includes the expectation that as a school we are preparing all of our students to graduate college and career ready. It was clear that Mr. H needed to work on changing the thinking of the science teachers, and then the entire staff, and that this would be a process that involved giving the science teachers the support they required in order to feel confident teaching a more diverse group of students than they were accustomed to. This culture shift takes time but begins with the understanding that all students can learn, and all students have the right to access core curriculum.
 - b. The IEP teams will develop IEPs that include all of the supports each student will need to be set up for success. This can take place in various program and service delivery models, including SETSS and full- or part-time ICT.

Especially for the teachers who have not historically served SWDs, the principal explained the supports on the IEP that they were not as familiar with.

1. Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)
 2. SETSS direct in class (credit-bearing, whereas SETSS in a separate location is not)
 3. SETSS indirect: collaboration between the GE and SE teachers that will support the student with the mandate, build the capacity of both educators and support all the other students in the class.
 4. Accommodations and/or modifications
- c. **Instruction/Professional Development:** Mr. H. provided PD for staff on assessment and monitoring progress toward mastery of learning objectives for all students; this will be incorporated into decision-making for the service needs of SWDs over time.

- 2) Professional Development (9th grade):** After clearly setting expectations with the whole staff, Mr. H used the existing bi-weekly, cross-departmental grade-level meetings as a structure to have a greater focus on SWDs for the 9th grade teachers this year. The bi-weekly PD sessions to develop the skills and strategies to support all learners instructionally and behaviorally were given by the lead special education teacher on each team/grade level, the assistant principal in charge of special education, and the related service providers. Consistent professional development is paramount in supporting the teachers, as per above. When content specialists come together with special educators on a regular basis and figure out how to plan for all students to access the curriculum, all students benefit. This time was built into the school schedule through common planning and SETSS indirect.

- a. Mr. H reflected on the initial reaction of the 9th grade science teachers to include some students served in self-contained settings in their GE classes: staff feared that these students posed a threat to safety. Mr. H decided to pursue why this was the case and saw a pattern of difficulty supporting the positive behavior of all students—whether SWDs or not—in his school data. Mr. H decided that it would be important to develop the capacity of teachers to meet the social-emotional needs of students in general, and in turn examining the academic and behavior support needs of the school's SWDs. He realized that perhaps the number of students in self-contained classes was indicative of the staff's difficulty in effectively supporting students with their social-emotional development.
- b. Mr. H met with special educators to explain that their roles would become more diverse—for example, a teacher might retain part-time self-contained responsibilities while also becoming a part-time ICT and/or SETSS teacher. Mr. H elicited individual teachers' strengths so they would be able to design and facilitate PD with their general education peers and made the expectation clear that they would be playing a peer leadership role as the school built capacity. He identified a small per session budget to support PD.
- c. In teacher teams, teachers looked at student work and teaching units through the lens of UDL and the citywide instructional expectations to 1) tie both together and 2) engage in conversation around student work.

3) Family and Student Involvement: Mr. H engaged families in the following ways:

- a. PTA meetings addressing the special education reform and its implications for expanding the continuum of services in the school
- b. Providing ongoing communication about the supports and PD that GE and SE teachers will have (e.g., ICT training) to ensure that they have the capacity to meet the needs of all learners
- c. Meeting individually with the parents of students who will require less restrictive services to best meet their needs, gaining buy-in and input about the specific academic and management supports that best meet their child's needs

4) Programming: With the current 19 special educators on his T.O., Mr. H maintained 15:1 classes on each grade level and added ICT at the 9th grade in English, math, global, and life science. Mr. H programmed sections of the same subject at the same time, and thus students could receive support in a 15:1 class but could also go into a more integrated setting for a certain subject when appropriate. All labs were fully integrated, and lab partners were assigned in an intentional way. Teachers who had previously taught self-contained full-time now taught sections of their subject that were provided in a self-contained model and others in an ICT model.

5) HR/Budget: Mr. H wanted to maximize the talents of his current staff, so he used the 9th grade English teacher, who had taught ICT at a previous school and is dually-licensed to provide special education support in addition to GE 9th grade English. Mr. H worked out the teacher assignments and school schedule so that the dually-certified teacher provided indirect SETSS to support the GE science teacher in developing curriculum that all students could access.

Other solutions that Mr. H considered but did not implement: He can still meet SETSS mandates by using the special education teachers providing ICT and SC to provide direct

SETSS during a teaching period and/or indirect SETSS during a common planning professional activity assignment.

- a. Mr. H did not choose to use special education teachers in this way since the current number of SWDs with SETSS can be met by one special education teacher. However, he may have taken this action had the SETSS teacher had a maximized case load (HS SETSS = 38 students) but more students needed SETSS, or if the need for ICT classes meant that there would no longer be one special education teacher who solely provided SETSS. Mr. H also considered having each of his special education teachers stay on one grade level. In that case, a 9th grade special education teacher can provide support in multiple programs, varying period by period.
- b. For some of the students who need SETSS for skill development in literacy, they can get their learning needs met through a multi-sensory approach to reading instruction that is provided in addition to regular access to the core ELA content. Mr. H is not implementing right away but is considering sending some of his teachers for training in this type of approach to reading instruction.