

Elementary Scenario

Mrs. B is the principal of a K-5 school in Brooklyn. She just completed her “Turning 5s” and is coming up short-staffed with the current structures in place to meet the needs of her students with disabilities.

Mrs. B is very transparent with her staff and families about the school’s mission to support all students. As part of this, each year Mrs. B meets with each teacher individually to discuss their professional goals and again in the spring to consider their progress toward their goals. This spring, during these meetings, two of her early childhood teachers expressed that they are not secure in their ability to teach math to students with disabilities or to manage the difficult behaviors they have historically seen in kindergarteners with disabilities. There is also a group of parents who have heard that next year the school will be serving students who, according to them, “should be in District 75.”

Of the 40 students with disabilities entering kindergarten, 12 require full-time 12:1:1 services, per their IEPs. Upon review of the IEPs, the school’s IEP team determines that six of the students have academic and management needs that are best met with services in a 12:1:1 setting, full-time. The six others have academic and management needs that are best met with some services in a 12:1:1 setting; the team decides they may consider a transition to ICT for part of the day over the course of the year. All 12 students will receive full-time services in the special class to start.

21 students require full-time ICT services, per their IEPs. Upon review of the IEPs, the team determines that all 21 students have academic and management needs that are best met with ICT for most, if not all, of the school day. All 21 students will receive full-time ICT services to start, across three ICT classes.

Seven students require direct SETSS services, per their IEPs. Upon review of the IEPs, the team determines that all seven students have a range of needs that warrant individual and/or small-group instruction for individualized compensatory skill development and remediation.

Mrs. B has enough teachers to provide the ICT and 12:1:1 services. She currently does not have a teacher who can provide SETSS services for the seven relevant students, and there are not enough students to fund another full-time teacher.

Total Enrollment	929
SWDs	17.4% (162 students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 SETSS • 71 ICT • 55 Self-contained
2011-12 Continuum of Services	Current services provided in kindergarten include ICT and 12:1:1
# GE Teachers	52
# SE Teachers	15 (3 SETSS, 7 ICT, 5 Self-contained)

Before reading about the actions Mrs. B took, please take five 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)

Elementary School Scenario Solution

Summary of actual actions taken by Mrs. B:

1) Instruction:

- a. Mrs. B focused in on the kindergarten and 1st grade teams in relation to mathematics and making mathematics accessible to all learners. Mrs. B worked with her network special education achievement coach to look at how to tie the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into the school's math structures.
- b. The kindergarten 12:1:1 and ICT teams will provide services and progress monitor, and they will reconvene the IEP teams to review whether any of the students demonstrate the need for less restrictive services, including part-time services.
- c. The school has a full-time speech therapist on staff. The speech therapist provides RTI support for part of the day in addition to mandated speech therapy services.

2) Professional Development:

- a. Mrs. B communicates a vision that all can achieve with the right level of challenge and support, and this applies both to students and to her staff. She supports teachers to build knowledge and skills to do this work with confidence via PD and being considerate of skills match to student need, collaborative relationships (she counsels teacher teams to work through challenges, makes adjustments if it's not working). She also explicitly tells her staff, **"If you don't believe all children are capable of achieving, you should find a job elsewhere."**
- b. From the information gained in the meetings with each teacher, Mrs. B determined the grade-wide and school-wide focus for the year.
 - i. Literacy PD was supported in-house through the literacy coach, as well as the school's Teachers College staff developers.
 - ii. Mrs. B saw a need to help teachers understand the benefits of co-teaching and the different models of co-teaching. In the beginning, most of the teachers used the lead and support model. Mrs. B had to introduce other co-teaching models and research the benefits of co-teaching. She did this work through in-house PD as well as with consultants through the Teachers College Inclusive Classrooms Project (TCICP).
- c. Mrs. B also continued teacher inquiry groups. These groups meet once per week and focus on inquiry topics that relate to the individual teacher goal. She decided to first focus on the goal of the teachers who wanted to build their capacity to understand and support challenging behaviors, so the inquiry teams worked on that in addition to receiving training on FBAs and BIPs.

3) Family and Student Involvement:

- a. Starting in the spring, Mrs. B held meetings with all families—both of students in GE and students with IEPs.
- b. Mrs. B held additional "coffee hours" to address the concern that families expressed that their students would be in class with students who, according to the parents, "should be in D75." Mrs. B explained that District 75 is still serving students, and therefore any child joining their school community is doing so because a team of professionals determined that is what is appropriate for the child. Mrs. B also outlined the supports she is putting in place to develop teachers' skills for understanding and supporting the challenging behaviors of ALL students.

4) Programming:

- a. For kindergarten students who need SETSS, the following decisions were made after reviewing each IEP and meeting with each family:
 - i. Of the 7 kindergarten students who were recommended for SETSS for skill development in literacy, Mrs. B, with the IEP teams, determined that one student did not meet the eligibility criteria for a disability and could instead get her learning needs met in a Tier 2 and Tier 3 RTI reading program.
 - ii. The other six students would continue to have IEPs with recommendations for SETSS; however, it was determined that SETSS would be provided through a combination of SETSS direct in-class and SETSS indirect, so that a special educator could collaboratively consult with the general education teacher focusing on instructional techniques and methods to meet the individual needs of the student in the general education setting.
- b. The school has created a parallel schedule to accommodate the potential need to flexibly schedule staff and services.

5) HR/Budget:

- a. Mrs. B has two dually-certified teachers on staff, one general educator with a special education license and one ELL teacher with a special education license. Mrs. B used both of them to teach a combination of their services under their primary licenses in addition to periods of special education support. For teachers who have dual state certifications in both common branches and special education, there is no maximum amount of time that a dually-certified teacher can spend teaching in the license not appointed under. Mrs. B used these teachers to provide SETSS to the six students in need of SETSS that she previously didn't think she had the resources for.
- b. She has not yet arrived at a solution, but she is working with her network HR Director and her dually-certified staff to find a solution... looking at schedules, match of skill set to student need and any concerns or contractual issues that might come up.

Another solution that Mrs. B considered but did not implement: The speech therapist, who provides RTI and mandated speech therapy services, is dually-certified and has a special education teaching license. Mrs. B considered having the speech therapist provide SETSS; however, since there was an overlap in caseload between the students recommended for SETSS and those recommended for speech, Mrs. B opted to not provide services that might be redundant but rather emphasized the importance of every member of the IEP team considering all the services recommended for each child when determining the appropriate mandate to maximize each student's time in class.