The Differentiated Classroom Increases Inclusive Opportunities

A collaborative project of the TN Department of Education
State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) and STEP, Inc.

Robert Taylor | Regional Special Education Interventionist | SPDG
Deborah McBride | Director of Rural Services/Professional Development Specialist | STEP, Inc.
SPDG: Overview

• **Purpose:** To provide ALL students with access to high-quality core instruction in the least restrictive environment.

• **Partners:**
  • Centers for Literacy, Education and Employment – UT, Knoxville
  • University of Kentucky Human Development Institute
  • Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP)

• **Process:**
  • SPDG funded Professional Development Activities:
    • Strand One / Strand Two Trainings
      • Three part workshop series (Fall, Winter, Spring)
      • Conducted by district-selected facilitator
      • Audience: School teams from district-selected schools
        • General educator, special educator, administrator
  • Ongoing support:
    • Training: All participants, Three times / year
    • Communities of Practice: Monthly check-ins
    • Coaching and Modeling: Individual support, based on need
    • Interventionist Support: Individual support, based on need
STEP, Inc. (Support and Training for Exception Parents, Inc.) is a not for profit organization serving families who have children and youth with disabilities, ages birth through 26.

- **Tennessee Parent Training & Information Center**
- **Family and Youth Information and Involvement**
- **State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)**
- **Projects funded through donations and other funds**

**IDEAs that Work**

**TN**

**Ed**

**$**

*Department of Education*

*a brighter future for children with disabilities*
STEP’s vision is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee, with an emphasis on those with disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health needs.
STEP: Our Services

- Trainings across TN
- Webinars and electronic information
- One-on-one assistance
- IEP/504 preparation
  - Record review and strategy planning
- Some attendance at IEP/504 meetings
- Letter writing help
- Referral to other agencies
- Information and awareness events/conferences
- Conflict resolution: Communication strategies, building relationships

Statewide training, information and referral services to parents of children with disabilities and professional development for school districts to improve family/youth involvement and outcomes.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• What differentiation is and how it fits under the umbrella of Universal Design for Learning
• An overview of the Six Elements of the Differentiation Inventory and how each are implemented in a classroom setting
• Understand how to use the information as tools to support instructional practices and effectively communicate with teachers and administrators about a child’s education.
Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences and proactively plan a variety of ways to “get at” and express learning.

Carol Ann Tomlinson
SIX ELEMENTS OF THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

1. ENVIRONMENT

2. CURRICULUM

3. ASSESSMENT

4. INSTRUCTION

5. CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

6. CULTURE AND COLLABORATION
ENVIRONMENT

• The “weather” of the classroom.
• Both the physical and social climate of the classroom.
• The environment affects everything that occurs in the classroom.
Sharing Voice
Use your sharing voice to speak clearly when sharing something with the class.

Group Voice
Use your group voice to speak to your group only. The whole class should not be able to hear you.

Partner Voice
Use your partner voice to speak to your partner only. The rest of the table and class should not be able to hear you.

No Voice
You should not be using your voice. It is time to concentrate on your work or listen to others.
Curriculum is what teachers teach, and what they want their students to learn.

- Lesson Planning For Engagement
- Time and Support for Thinking
- Time and Support for Meaning
- Teaching Up
Assessment is the key factor for informing teachers where each student presently is in their academic progress and allowing them to adjust instruction based on individual student needs.
Instruction refers to **HOW content is delivered** and **HOW students experience the learning process.**
Handout #4: Differentiation of Instruction
Example Universal Design for Learning Template

Grade: 3  Subject: Science  Standard: 6.23-Plants lifecycle
Goal: Research and present information on a flower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials &amp; Methods</th>
<th>Potential Barriers/ Missed Opportunities</th>
<th>UDL Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printed textbook</td>
<td>Kevin-Difficulty seeing small text</td>
<td>Electronic text with text-to-speech to read aloud CD-ROM or online encyclopedia;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bill-Doesn't tap his graphics skills</td>
<td>Web page with collections of images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brian-Difficulty decoding/understanding word meaning</td>
<td>Link to Spanish Web site: partially filled in outline in Spanish /English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trust Between Teacher and Students

Talking With Students about Differentiation

Collaborative Problem Solving Related To Routines and Procedures
CULTURE AND COLLABORATION

Schools that have successful inclusive classrooms are those that have a strong basis of collaboration and a student-focused culture that fosters frequent and meaningful communication and collaboration among educators and parents.
Family Input is Key

Parents and caregivers can have a positive impact on their child’s education

Support instructional practices

Communicate with teachers and administrators

Ask questions

Be actively involved in your child’s education
A Differentiated Learning Environment is physically created and arranged with each student's specific needs in mind but cannot be completely differentiated without a social climate based on trust.
Ways to Differentiated Content / Curriculum

- Audio Books
- Audio Highlights
- Flip Books
- “Cliff” Notes
- Notetaking Organizers
- Varied Texts
- Supplementary Materials
- Highlighted Texts

- Reading Partners
  - Read/summarize
  - Read/question/answer
  - Visual Organizer
  - Parallel Reading with Teacher Prompts
  - “Think-Pair-Share”
Differentiated Assessment as A Tool

Assessments can be used to learn about a student’s mastery of the content, readiness level, and background and interests.

- Initial skills assessment
- End of year exams
- Student surveys
- Writing samples
- Classroom discussion
- Teacher observation
- Parent input
- Student created products
- Student reflection, journals
- Group assessments
- Checklists
- Technology tools to foster engagement
Student Characteristics: Instruction

1. **Readiness Level:** Skills and understanding of a topic

2. **Interest Level:** Tasks that ignite student curiosity or passion

3. **Learning Profile:** Preferred learning style of each student
Parents and caregivers can help teachers get to know the child better

One-page profiles in Education
A one-page profile captures all the important information about a young person on a single sheet of paper under three simple headings:
1. What People Appreciate About Me
2. What’s Important to Me
3. How Best to Support Me

http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/one-page-profiles/one-page-profile-templates/

Templates of one page profiles

http://helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/one-page-profiles/one-page-profiles-education/primary-school/

Sample of a child in Primary School – Jessenia
Collaboration & Communication Are Key

The IEP is the tool designed to help families and school personnel plan for the future success of children with disabilities when they exit public education.

Families need to feel their input is valued

Teachers appreciate feedback
Application Beyond the School Day

- Parent Counseling and Training
  - Assisting parents in understanding the special needs of their child;
  - Providing parents with information about child development;
  - Helping parents acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child’s IEP;
### Tools & Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.edutopia.org/article/differentiated-instruction-resources">https://www.edutopia.org/article/differentiated-instruction-resources</a></td>
<td>Differentiated Instruction Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.tnstep.org/uploads/files/All%20About%20Me%20Booklet%20-%20revised%20Mar%20202015.pdf">http://www.tnstep.org/uploads/files/All%20About%20Me%20Booklet%20-%20revised%20Mar%20202015.pdf</a></td>
<td>STEP, Inc. – All About Me Other STEP Resources visit <a href="http://www.tnstep.org">www.tnstep.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.parentcenterhub.org/?s=differentiated+instruction">http://www.parentcenterhub.org/?s=differentiated+instruction</a></td>
<td>Parent Center family friendly Differentiated Instruction info.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theresa Nicholls, Assistant Commissioner  [Theresa.Nicholls@tn.gov](mailto:Theresa.Nicholls@tn.gov)  
Lori Nixon, Assessment Design, SPDG  [Lori.Nixon@tn.gov](mailto:Lori.Nixon@tn.gov)  

*a brighter future for children with disabilities*
Presenter Contact Information

Rob Taylor  
Regional Special Education Interventionist  
SPDG | Office Of Special Populations  
robert.taylor@tn.gov  
865-594-6452 Office Phone  
www.tn.gov/education

Deborah McBride  
Director of Rural Services & Professional Development Specialist  
West TN | South Central TN  
deborah.mcbride@tnstep.org  
800-280-7837 Office Phone  
www.tnstep.org