



6: Improving Student Abilities

6: ການປັບປຸງຄວາມສາມາດຂອງນັກຮຽນໃຫ້ດີຂຶ້ນ



Session Objectives
<p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Define Next Step Learning. -Define accommodations and modifications and examine how these techniques allow students with disabilities to participate fully in the learning environment. -Define Next Step goals and create Next Step goals for sample students.

Agenda		
Time	Activity	
10 minutes	Opening	Welcome Reviewing High Expectations from Site Visits
45 minutes	Section 1 Part A: article Part B: lecture Part C: exercise	Defining Next Step Learning
15 minutes	BREAK	
30 minutes	Section 2	Accommodations versus Modifications
30 minutes	Section 3	Next Step Goals
30 minutes	Section 4	Creating an I Can Classroom: Strategies for Connecting Effort with Achievement
10 minutes	Closing	Visit Overview

- Session Materials:**
- Session 3 slides
 - Participant manuals
 - Handouts
 - Optional: Computers with internet access for all participants (ideally laptops)

Total: 2 hours 40 minutes

Session Overview:

This session reinforces the key message of setting high expectations for students with disabilities.

Participants examine accommodations and modifications that help students with disabilities to reach high expectations.

Finally, participants examine Next Step goals and practice setting Next Step goals for example students.

Participants will share observations from site visits about high expectations. Participants will learn about the theory of malleable intelligence and identify how beliefs about learning



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impact student achievement. Participants will examine techniques for helping students to connect effort with achievement.

Opening: Welcome

(10 minutes)

1. Open the session by reviewing **Handout 5.4: Observing High Expectations with Support** during the site visit from the previous day. Ask participants to work in groups of threes to share one outstanding example of High Expectations that they observed during the site visit.

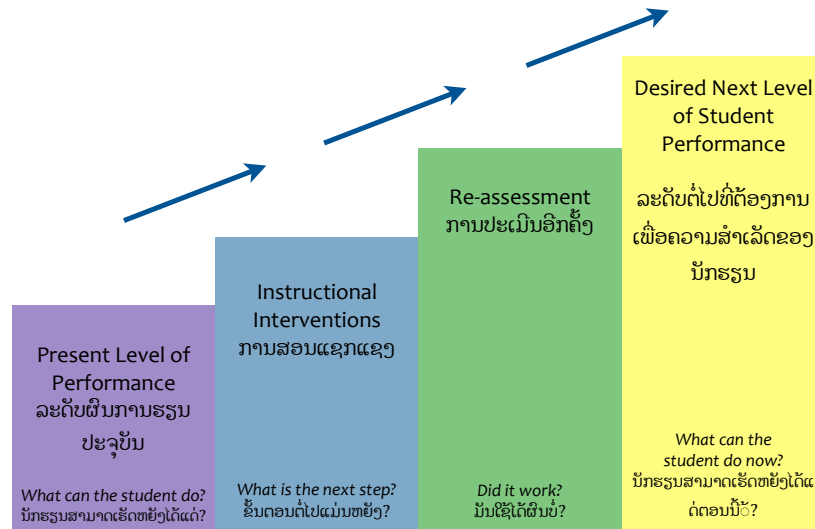
Circulate among participants and share out what you heard from the groups.

2. Review the objectives and agenda for this session.

3. Today we will explore a set of techniques that allow us to help students meet those high expectations. It is not enough to set a high bar—we must also help students to develop skills and mindsets to get there.

Section 6.1: Next Step Learning

(45 minutes)



As explored earlier in this course, Next-Step Learning refers to the process of examining a student’s present level of performance, implementing instructional interventions, re-assessing the student, and reaching the desired next level of student achievement.

For students with disabilities, Next-Step Learning is especially important. Educators must constantly assess what the Next Step is for a given student, acknowledging:

-Students with special needs may need more time, resources, or attempts to learn new things.



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- Students with special needs require rigorous, appropriate goals.
 - Students with special needs may require a variety of approaches to make progress with their goals.

2. Examine the chart. Give the following example on index cards.

Present level of performance:

Zach is a fifth grader who is 2 years behind in math. His present level of performance is late third grade.

Desired next level of student achievement:

By the end of the year, Zach will have demonstrated improvement in math through improved math fact mastery and improved performance on unit tests. He will improve 1.5 years in math in one year.

Instructional interventions:

- Tutoring during class with teacher's aide
- Lower math group
- After school math program 2 hours per week
- Different homework assignments than peers
- Math materials at home

Re-assessment:

Halfway through the school year, Zach, his teacher, and his mother met to assess progress in math. Zach's math skills had improved throughout the year. He was not yet performing at grade level in math, but was making substantial progress.

Zach is able to recite 5th grade level math facts and performs at 70% or higher on unit tests.

In this session we will learn how to use the Next Step Learning process to create goals for students, measure progress, and engage students in their learning.

Section 6.2: Accommodations versus Modifications

(30 minutes)

1. (10 minutes) Have participants read Handout 6.1: Accommodations versus Modifications.

2. (1 minute) Review the KEY MESSAGE on chart paper.

Accommodations= leveling the playing field

Modifications= changing the field you are playing on

3. (5 minutes for steps 3 and 4) Ask participants to return to the Case Study Student, Valita, from Session 5. Have participants briefly skim Handout 5.2.

4. Ask participants, does Valita require primarily Accommodations or Modifications? (Answer: Her needs are mostly physical, so she will require Accommodations.)

5. (10 minutes) In groups of three, ask participants to create a list of 5 Accommodations that Valita will require in order to fully access learning opportunities at school.

KEY MESSAGES:

-Teachers need to exercise caution when making changes to curriculum for students with special needs. Sometimes these changes can reduce expectations for students instead of helping them get where they need to be.

-Accommodations can help students to reach their goals with support. Return to the Zone of Proximal Development Poster from Session 2. Examine the ways in which key accommodations help to expand possibilities for students with limited abilities.

Examples: changing schedule so that students don't have to move classrooms as often

-physical changes to classroom

-use of buddy system to include all students

-*Modifications* may need to be put in place when the student's goals are drastically different from those of their peers. Keep in mind that modifications do lower the level of the content.

-The use of either accommodations or modifications should be done with the central goal of enabling the child to show progress.

-Let's examine Case Study Student A. What kind of *modifications* does this student need? (Record participants' ideas on chart paper.)

Section 6.3: Setting Goals for Students

(50 minutes)

1. (10 minutes for steps 1-7) One of the most important roles of inclusive education teachers is to set goals for students. In this section, we will examine how to apply the principle of high expectations for student achievement.
2. Split the groups in two. Ask each person in the group to create a ball with a piece of scratch paper.
3. Place a wastebasket in the front of the room, and create a line about ten feet away.
4. Tell Group 1 that they will make as many baskets as they can with twenty shots. Repeat for Group 2. Record the scores on the board.
5. Now tell each group that you have set a goal that they will improve their score.

Reveal the following statement written on the board: My team will improve their score.

6. Play the game again. Record the scores again.
7. Was there any improvement?
8. (10 minutes for steps 8-9) Have groups return to their seats. Point out that simply setting a goal to get better at something doesn't necessarily mean there will be improvement. In the basket-shooting exercise, there was likely only marginal improvement. Next Step Goals goals help teachers and students to strategize about improvement, try new things, and keep track of progress.

9. A Next Step Goal has the following elements.

Specific: What am I going to do? Why is it important? What do I want to ultimately accomplish? How am I going to do it?

Measurable: How will I know that I have reached my goal?

Attainable: Can I see myself achieving this goal? Can I break it down into manageable pieces?

Reasonable: Is the goal too easy? Too hard?

Timebound: What is my target timeframe for reaching my goal?

10. (5 minutes) Model creating a Next Step goal for improving basket shooting.

Reveal this goal written on the board.

My team will increase accuracy to 15 out of 20 shots after three sessions of practice.

This goal is Next Step oriented because it is clear about the target outcome, includes a timeline, and has a built-in strategy for meeting the goal.

11. KEY MESSAGE: Students and teachers can use Next Step goals to increase student achievement, activate strategies, and track progress. Next Step goals encourage strategies, assign responsibility, create a timeline, and allow reflection on effectiveness through evidence. Display the poster version of Handout 6.2 to evaluate next-step goals at the end of the activity.

12. (15 minutes) As a group create Next Step goals for Case Study student A, found on Handout 6.3. Which areas do we want to focus on for this student? Choose two areas. Write two goals with the group. Then evaluate using the poster, “Is It a Next-Step Goal?”

13. (10 minutes) Work in pairs to create Next Step goals for Case Study Student B, choosing two areas to focus on for this student.

Lead a brief critique of the goals that the groups set using the poster, “Is It a Next-Step Goal?”

-Were the goals rigorous?

-Did the goals focus on next-step learning?

-Did the goals set high expectations for students in an appropriate way for that students’ disability?

-Were the goals focused on helping students access content?

-Were the goals focused on accommodations or modifications?

14. (10 minutes) Individually, have students create one Next Step Goal for Case Study Student C in a domain of their choosing. Focus on misconceptions that students may have about what constitutes a Next Step Goal.



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Closing:

(10 minutes)

1. Return to the Session Objectives. Have the objectives been met?

Participants will be able to:

-Define Next Step Learning.

-Define accommodations and modifications and examine how these techniques allow students with disabilities to participate fully in the learning environment.

-Define Next Step goals and create Next Step goals for sample students.

2. For the homework assignment, create a profile of a challenging student you have worked with. Using the Skills Checklist, create 2-3 Next-Step goals for that student. At the beginning of Session 7, we will work in small groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the goals.

3. Make any necessary announcements about the next day's visit schedule.

HANDOUT 6.1: Accommodations vs. Modifications

From: purchased@sps.springfield.ma.us <http://www.sps.springfield.ma.us/pac/>

Accommodations vs. Modifications

Accommodations level the playing field

while

Modifications change the field you're playing on.

The use of accommodations or modifications should enable the child to demonstrate progress.

Accommodations are basically physical or environmental changes, generally referred to as good teaching strategies and include:

- ⇒ Extended time, frequent breaks, varying of activities
- ⇒ Change in classroom, preferential seating, physical arrangement of the room, reducing/minimizing distractions, cooling off period, sign language interpreter
- ⇒ Emphasizing teaching approach (visual, auditory, multi-sensory), individual/small group, taping, demonstrating/modeling, visual cues, manipulatives, pre-teaching, organizers
- ⇒ Taping texts, highlighting material, note taking assistance, notes provided by teacher, calculator, computer, word processor, Braille, large print
- ⇒ Directions given in small, sequential steps, copying from book/ paper, length of assignment shortened, format of assignment
- ⇒ Positive reinforcement, concrete reinforcement, checking for understanding, study guides, before/after school tutoring
- ⇒ Reading test verbatim, shortening length of test, test format changed (multiple choice vs. fill in the blank)



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Modifications involve deliberate intellectual lowering in the level of materials presented.

- ⇒ Presentation of curriculum is modified using a specialized curriculum which is written at a lower level of understanding.
- ⇒ Materials are adapted, texts are simplified by modifying the content areas—simplifying vocabulary, concepts and principals.
- ⇒ Grading is subject to different standards than general education, such as basing on IEP goals.
- ⇒ Assignments are changed using lower level reading levels, worksheets and simplified vocabulary.
- ⇒ Testing Adaptations are used, such as lowering the reading level of the test.

Accommodations:

- Environmental
- Presentation
- Assistive technology
- Assignments
- Reinforcement
- Testing Adaptations

Modifications:

- Lower curriculum
- Materials simplified
- Grading changed
- Lower expectations
- Testing measures lowered



HANDOUT 6.2: IS IT A NEXT-STEP GOAL?

Next Step goals:

encourage strategies

assign responsibility

create a timeline

**allow reflection on effectiveness through
evidence**



HANDOUT 6.3: CASE STUDY STUDENTS

CASE STUDY STUDENT A

Ani is a six year old girl with Down Syndrome. She lives with her parents and two older sisters in a village in Savanahket. Ani has never attended school until this year. Ani's developmental level is much like a four year old. She uses simple three word sentences ("I want that"), and it is very difficult for others to understand her. She likes to uses pencils and crayons, but is not yet able to draw shapes or letters. Ani has not been introduced to letters or numbers, but likes to look at pictures in a book and can identify objects and tell about a simple story. She likes to be near other children and imitates their actions when she can. Ani also tends to be socially isolated at school because the other children don't want to play with her and she can't keep up with the other children outside.

CASE STUDY STUDENT B

Tay is a six year old boy who teachers suspect may have autism. He comes to school each day and likes to be in the corner of the room where he focuses on a favorite toy he always carries with him. He has some language but it is mostly expressions he has heard before and he doesn't use much spontaneous language. He is really good at doing puzzles and his teachers have discovered that he can do really complex puzzles quite quickly. While he doesn't use language in a functional way, he can count up to 50. Tay loves to put things together and take them apart and prefers to do this in the classroom so teachers have given him tasks like this to occupy him. IF they try to get him to participate with other children, he falls to floor and cries.

CASE STUDY STUDENT C

Lari is a six-year-old girl who has cerebral palsy. When she was born, she went for several minutes without oxygen before breathing on her own. Her parents noticed that she was not moving or sitting up like other children by the time she was nine months old. When she was two, and not yet walking, a doctor diagnosed her with cerebral palsy.

Now Lari is starting school. She walks, but her walking is very slow and she can't go up and down stairs without help. She tries to talk, but it is difficult to understand her. Her parents and brothers can understand what she is saying but teachers and other children can not understand her slow and distorted sounds. Lari tries to feed herself, but it takes a long time, and she tends to spill when she tries to drink from a cup. Her parents and teachers suspect that she is a bright child because she remembers many details and is showing an interest in pointing out letters and numbers she recognizes.



HANDOUT 6.4: ACTION STEPS FOR INCLUSION

Teacher with support from principal will:

- Learn about the specific disability of child coming to class
- Learn about current level of child's skills
- Analyze classroom to remove physical barriers
- Review upcoming curriculum and plan how child will be included
- Identify toileting needs and any support needed for feeding
- Decide where child will sit
- Look for volunteers to help first weeks
- Work with principal to identify supports and time to do extra preparation

Preparing other children

- Assign children who will be supporters of the child
- Introduce concept of disabilities to all children and how to appreciate

Teacher and principal will work with parent of child with disability

- Ask parent to visit school before child begins to look at environment
- Tell parent about classroom routines and activities – ask their opinion about how to help their child integrate
- Make sure parent knows educational goals of child and how they can help
- Set up a system for communication between teacher and parent
- Make sure all school staff are informed about importance of creating a welcoming environment

Teacher/ Principal will communicate with parents of non-delayed children

- Talk to all parents about the importance of inclusion

Teacher/Principal will communicate with parents of child with disability

- Asks parent to come to school for visit
- Discuss classroom routines with parent
- Identify child's strengths, needs, and areas for learning
- Set up communication system between home and school.



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HANDOUT 6.5: SKILLS CHECKLIST

	Current skills	Next steps
Literacy		
Math skills		
Communication skills		
Social Skills		
Gross motor skills		
Fine Motor skills		
Adaptive skills (feeding, toileting, dressing)		



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