

Elementary Interrelated Teacher Position Statement High Plains Education Cooperative

General Information:

High Plains Educational Cooperative employs approximately thirty Elementary Interrelated Teachers across seventeen school districts in southwest Kansas. Elementary Interrelated Teachers support children with a variety of disabilities in grades Kindergarten to sixth grade. HPEC believes that all students can learn and make progress. The Interrelated Teacher's responsibility is to take the student where they are at and provide support services and instructions to help them grow in skills. Accommodations and modifications, assistive technology, consultation and direct instruction are all used to support children with disabilities.

Intervention:

At High Plains Education Cooperative (HPEC), Interrelated Teachers believe in supporting students through the intervention process. Teachers attend Student Intervention meetings and provide consultation by suggesting strategies to support student learning. Baseline data is collected, interventions are implemented and then student skills are reevaluated at a later date. If students' skills are improved, the interventions continue as needed. If students do not respond to quality interventions, the student may be considered for special education. A primary goal, however is to support children so that special education is not needed.

Screening and Evaluation:

Appropriate screening and evaluation procedures lead to identifying a student's abilities and academic and behavioral next steps. Specific evaluation leads to good instruction and programming for students. Assessment is conducted with students using the general education curriculum materials the student is being taught in. Students are tested using the following:

- State Standards and outcomes
- Grade level outcomes developed by individual school districts
- Criterion Referenced Tests
- Error analysis of work samples (reading running records, writing samples, math sheets)
- Existing data (local assessments such as STAR, Terra Nova, ITBS, etc.)
- Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)

Qualification for Special Education:

Students who have gone through general education intervention and have been referred for a formal evaluation must meet certain criteria to qualify for Special Education. Students must be demonstrating skills at a significantly higher or lower ability than their peers and the student must demonstrate a significant need for support services other than what general education can provide alone. School teams collect assessment data through the use of interviews, observations, direct assessment, reviewing current data and conducting error analysis. Parents and school staff come together to review data and make decisions about the need for Special Education.

Support Services:

If a student is identified as qualifying and needing special education support services, Interrelated Teachers work closely with classroom teachers to develop appropriate instruction based on the general curriculum, the state standards and any other necessary academic, behavior or functional skills needed. Research based strategies are used as a basis for instruction. Accommodations, modifications and other supportive technology are used to meet student needs. Individual student goals are aligned with district curriculum with an emphasis on narrowing the gap between the student and his/her non-disabled peers.

Inclusion:

HPEC believes in students with disabilities being educated alongside their non-disabled peers to the extent possible. General and Special Education teachers work together to collaborate on assignments and teaching strategies. Paraeducators work with teachers to see that support is provided in the classroom.

There is a continuum of support services provided for children with disabilities. For some children, the Interrelated Teacher may only consult with the classroom teacher providing ideas and strategies. For another child, he/she may receive inclusive support by the Special Education Teacher or Paraeducator to help in the general education classroom. Still another student may need direct instruction in the Resource room. Parents and school staff identify specific support services when the Individualized Education Plan is written for students.