



Each and Every Child

Quick news for Parents, Teachers and Students

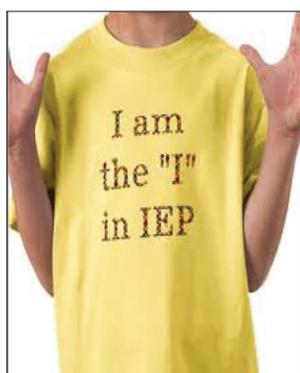
An e-newsletter by the Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Student and Family Support Services

It's (so much) more than an IEP

Most families in the 1800s would not have had any expectations for a child who was blind and deaf. Helen Keller's family did.

What Helen Keller accomplished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the support of Anne Sullivan changed people's perspective about what could be expected from someone with a disability.

Thankfully, we have different beliefs in the 21st century about quality of life for people with disabilities. But if we're honest, many of



us still unintentionally have preconceived notions as to what is attainable by a child with a disability.

When IEP teams are planning programs and writing goals, it's easy to get hung up on "acceptable performance" or "acceptable progress."

What do those concepts represent, anyway? Not enough. We know, based on the results we have seen nationally and in Iowa. Why not take the route of the Keller family, and aim for the stars?

In no way is this easy. We know that.

The Iowa Department of Education is



working with local schools, Area Education Agencies, and other agencies to fine-tune supports that will help students achieve at higher levels and enhance conversations between parents and teachers.

In the meantime, get rid of preconceived notions of failure and low achievement, and instead talk about "why can't that be done?"

The Keller family did.

On track? Try this:

- Print out the one-page sheet from the Iowa Core showing what the learning expectations are for the particular grade the child is in. The general education expectations should be the same as those in special education.
- Ensure your team creates an IEP that reflects the Iowa Core's expectations.
- Use evidence-based practices to monitor progress; monitor it regularly to ensure your child is closing the gap. When progress is not sufficient, have conversations about how to give the student more evidence-based opportunities to be engaged in learning.

It takes a team to work

team-work

[team-wurk] noun

Cooperative or coordinated effort on the part of a group of persons acting together as a team or in the interests of a common cause.

Do you sometimes feel like you're going at it alone? We all do.

But when it comes to ensuring what's best for our children and our students, a go-it-alone attitude will hurt the child's chances of success.

Building a team to ensure an effective IEP requires that



everyone take part. The goal is not consensus. The goal is to write an effective IEP.

An IEP will consider the student's strengths, areas of weakness,

needs, and current level of performance. Realistic, observable and measurable goals will then be established to support student achievement and growth.

IEPs should be working documents and reviewed regularly.

With everyone on the IEP team actively participating, you will maximize the child's potential.

MYTH: Special education means a parallel curriculum.

REALITY: Special education is adapting content, methodology or delivery so children with disabilities can access the general curriculum.