

# Content Connections

## Special Education – Elementary Resource



This past year, BVSD Special Education teachers came together and identified effective practices that align with Boulder Valley Educator Effectiveness Standards 1 and 3. The identified connections are not evaluation criteria, but rather were created to provide examples of effective classroom instruction. This is an ongoing collaborative partnership that will continue to provide targeted examples.

### Standard I: Teachers demonstrate mastery and pedagogical expertise in the content they teach

What does “Effective” look like in the classroom?	
Element a – Alignment	
<b>Connect Learning Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use rubrics based on standards</li> <li>● Use essential questions and learning objectives</li> <li>● Include state standards in IEP goals</li> <li>● Include IEP goals in lesson planning</li> <li>● Awareness of IEP goals to be worked on in each instructional setting</li> <li>● Instructional tasks build on key concepts to supplement core curriculum with necessary accommodations</li> </ul>
<b>Respond to Student Misconceptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Plan around what needs to be re-taught, pre-taught, or scaffolded with co-teacher, interventionist, or specialist</li> <li>● Adjust or modify lessons to meet student needs</li> <li>● Perform informal assessment to determine if students are grasping the information</li> <li>● Utilize flexible small groups</li> <li>● Use re-teaching strategies to ensure proficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborate Vertically and Horizontally</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate horizontally with sending case managers</li> <li>● Articulate vertical curriculum alignment with general education teachers</li> <li>● Collaborate with general education teachers to develop learning objectives based on key concepts in the content curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Prepare Student for Next Level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ongoing evaluation of student progress to determine readiness for increased successful inclusion</li> <li>● Instructional tasks build on key concepts to supplement the core curriculum with the necessary accommodations to meet individual student’s needs</li> </ul>

<u>Element b – Literacy</u>	
<b>Provide Literacy Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement evidence based literacy instruction and services aligned with IEP goals</li> <li>● Allow students self-select purpose for reading</li> <li>● Help students pick appropriate, grade-level readings, as well as justifying their selections</li> <li>● Give students strategies for working through unknown or difficult content without teacher support</li> <li>● Provide approved computer based interventions to increase access to curriculum</li> <li>● Responsive intervention model (ie, direct, co-taught, small group, etc)</li> </ul>
<b>Teach Students How to Apply Literacy Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show students how to make connections between texts, the world, and their lives</li> <li>● Model thinking strategies, think-alouds, writing demonstrations</li> <li>● Use graphic organizers to help students break down and analyze texts</li> </ul>
<u>Element c – Numeracy</u>	
<b>Connections to Math</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement evidence based math instruction and services aligned with IEP goals</li> <li>● Responsive intervention model (ie, direct, co-taught, small group, etc)</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of Math Concepts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement evidenced based math instruction and services aligned with IEP goals</li> <li>● Use manipulatives to support concrete learning</li> </ul>
<u>Element d – Content</u>	
<b>Appropriately Sequenced Lessons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence of instruction that is fostering independence</li> <li>● Vary assessment to meet all modalities of learning</li> <li>● Implement sequenced interventions and research based instructional tools/strategies to provide specially designed instruction to meet the student’s individual needs.</li> <li>● Identify goals that are specific, measureable, attainable, reasonable and timebound (SMART) that align with student needs through the IEP process that align with baseline data</li> </ul>
<b>Explanations and Representations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include multiple text types to explore an essential question</li> <li>● Use technology to enhance student understanding</li> <li>● Allow students to demonstrate their learning across different modes</li> <li>● Use a multi-modal approach (differentiate instruction) to pre-teach, teach, and re-teach skills</li> </ul>
<b>Inquiry Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore students’ interests in the classroom</li> <li>● Use a variety of methods to demonstrate progress in area of need</li> <li>● Collaborate with general education teachers to develop learning objectives based on key concepts in the content curriculum</li> <li>● Access ongoing professional development</li> </ul>
<u>Element e – Connectedness</u>	
<b>Build Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show students how to make connections between texts, the world, and their lives</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build background knowledge with students (ie, using simulations, web quests, and connecting to current events)</li> <li>● Make references to other content areas and lessons in the general or special education curricula</li> <li>● Awareness of IEP goals to be worked on in each instructional setting</li> <li>● Recognize and support student’s personal interests and backgrounds</li> <li>● Identify student strengths in the IEP process and use strength based learning to guide instruction</li> </ul>
<b>Element f – Relevance</b>	
<b>Students Make Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show students how to make connections between texts, the world, and their lives</li> <li>● Activate students’ background knowledge before beginning a lesson/unit</li> <li>● Make essential questions relevant and interesting to students</li> <li>● Build relationships with students to become familiar with their background and prior knowledge base</li> <li>● Integrate engaging activities in their instruction that relates to the students’ background and interests</li> </ul>
<b>Addresses Learning Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate many different teaching techniques when delivering a lesson to meet specific needs of various learners in the classroom</li> <li>● Include IEP goals in lesson planning</li> </ul>

**Standard II: Teachers establish a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment for a diverse population of students**

<b>What does “Effective” look like in the classroom?</b>	
<b>Element a - Learning Environment</b>	
<b>Value Diverse Perspectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain a positive relationship with students and families</li> <li>● Provide all students access to various activities at their individual ability level</li> </ul>
<b>Model Respect for Diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure all student voices are heard</li> <li>● Set realistic expectations based on the students’ individual skills and abilities</li> <li>● Provide opportunities to build disability awareness for typical peers and staff</li> </ul>
<b>Conducive for Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create predictable routines</li> <li>● Establish norms for behavior</li> <li>● Manage behaviors professionally and effectively</li> <li>● Inform staff behavior plans and support implantation of behavior plans</li> <li>● Evidence of structure and classroom routines</li> </ul>

<u>Element b - Community</u>	
<b>Sense of Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Model showing respect of diverse students' needs, and showing kindness toward peers</li> <li>● Encourage students to work together collaboratively</li> <li>● Student schedules allow for integration with grade level peers</li> <li>● Solution focused collaborative teaming observable with colleagues</li> </ul>
<b>Effective Student Interactions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate acceptance and respect for diversity in the classroom</li> <li>● Opportunities available for interaction and instruction with non-disabled peers</li> </ul>
<b>Respect for Differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give opportunities to discuss differences</li> <li>● Help students understand that each person learns at a different level</li> <li>● Ensure respect for the accommodations and modifications that are made for individual students</li> </ul>
<b>Positive Social Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create small-group discussions where all voices are equally valued</li> <li>● Help students understand that each person learns at a different level</li> </ul>
<u>Element c – Student's Strengths</u>	
<b>Ask Challenging Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Questioning techniques are used that promote critical thinking and problem solving</li> </ul>
<b>Scaffold Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Break down ideas into simpler parts and find evidence to support</li> </ul>
<b>Wait Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow for various amounts of response time based on student processing needs</li> </ul>
<b>Flexible Grouping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Instructional grouping aligns with student needs and are flexible based on assessment data.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Student Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In transition planning, using data and student interview to inform future planning</li> <li>● Include student input into IEPs.</li> <li>● Evidence that students participate in the development of the IEP beginning at eighth grade if not earlier</li> <li>● Classroom expectations are directly taught and reinforced</li> <li>● Positive behavioral support systems are in place for all students.</li> </ul>
<u>Element d – Differentiation</u>	
<b>Solicit Input</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set individualized goals that students and teachers create based on their needs and interests</li> <li>● Collaborate with general education teachers, other special education teachers, and specialists to provide a "student snapshot" to those working with ILC program students</li> </ul>

<b>Differentiated Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Determine assessments based on student needs</li> <li>● Collaborate with general education staff and paraeducators on implementation of accommodations, modifications and differentiation strategies for students on IEPs throughout the school day</li> <li>● Scaffold concrete and abstract ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Adapt Instructional Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show correlation between goals in Individualized Education Plans and materials/strategies used</li> <li>● Align instruction to assessment, including coordination of regular or alternate state tests</li> <li>● Use visual supports (i.e. choice boards, iPads, and sequence strips)</li> <li>● Accommodate and modify for individual needs through technology, peer mentoring etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenge and Support Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Collaborate with general education teachers, parents, and other staff to strategize effective supports and ways to challenge individual students</li> <li>● Provide instruction that fosters independence for students</li> </ul>

**Element e – Home/School Connection**

<b>Partner with Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide on-going feedback and communication with parents around progress toward goals</li> <li>● Include all stakeholders in the creation of students' Individualized Education Plan</li> <li>● Disseminate information to professionals who work with the student</li> <li>● Plan and hold IEP meetings with family involvement by required due dates</li> <li>● Evidence of communication with parents, family and staff</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinate Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage in effective parent/teacher conferences in which students are directly involved</li> <li>● Coordinate assessment accommodations for state required testing for students on caseload</li> <li>● Collaborating with general education staff on grading for students on their caseload for particular goal areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Seek Services and Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide information to families regarding post-secondary services.</li> <li>● Seek, consider, and collaborate where appropriate with any outside agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Frequent Family Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete progress reports for all students on their caseload at report card times and as part of the IEP present levels</li> <li>● Draft IEP documents sent to families 5 days prior to meetings</li> <li>● Implement a mutually agreeable home school communication system</li> <li>● Convey information in a language that is familiar to the family</li> </ul>

**Element f – Management for Learning**

<b>Expectations Understood by Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create norms with students</li> <li>● Explicitly teach social emotional skills and problem solving strategies</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behavioral expectations are clearly set for the instructional environment and positively reinforced</li> </ul>
<b>Safe and Orderly Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a predictable routine</li> <li>Put in place preventative behavior measures</li> <li>Develop and implement functional based strategies for behavior</li> </ul>
<b>Appropriate Response to Misbehavior</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement Behavior Support Plans and ensure all staff are familiar with the</li> <li>Ongoing behavioral data collection and progress monitoring</li> <li>Support monitoring of behavior plans and goals</li> <li>Ensure that students feel safe</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Use of Instructional Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage behaviors to maximize instructional time</li> <li>When paraprofessionals are supporting students, special education teachers direct the work that is being performed by the paraprofessional through continuous planning, training and collaboration</li> <li>Ensure school staff are following individualized student plans and appropriately collecting data on student's progress with fidelity and positively interacting with students</li> <li>Ensuring least restrictive environment is adhered to- meaning LRE percentages in the IEP and that students have access to the general education curriculum to the maximum extent appropriate as defined by the IEP.</li> <li>Implement a collaborative and integrated service delivery as written in the IEP service delivery section.</li> </ul>

**Standard III: Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction and create an environment that facilitates learning for their students**

<b>What does "Effective" look like in the classroom?</b>	
<i>Element a - Child/Adolescent Development</i>	
<b>Adapt Lessons to Strengths and Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver lessons in an appropriate way to students , including strategies such as less materials, accommodated standards, technology-based learning, and various manipulatives</li> </ul>
<b>Implement Modifications and Accommodations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use students' Individualized Education Plan as a basis for learning</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge of Current Developmental Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek professional development that addresses current research regarding best practices in the classroom</li> </ul>

<b>Collaboration with Colleagues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a student snapshot to general education teachers</li> <li>● Collaborate frequently with teachers regarding the student development in the classroom</li> </ul>
<b>Element b – Assessments</b>	
<b>Adjustment Based on Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review student progress periodically with adjustment as needed</li> <li>● Progress monitoring student goals and ongoing adaptation of instruction based on progress towards goals</li> </ul>
<b>Encouraging Academic Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Look ahead at students goals and create backward designed lessons/strategies/plans to help the student achieve desired goals</li> </ul>
<b>Student Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review student progress periodically with adjustment as needed</li> <li>● Frequent and ongoing data collection systems in place to track goal acquisition</li> <li>● Continued review of LRE related to progress towards goals or goals being met</li> </ul>
<b>Element c – Effective Practices</b>	
<b>Clear Lesson Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Post, write, verbally communicate lesson objectives as a class or individually as needed</li> <li>● Lesson plans created and implemented for instruction outside of general education setting including lesson objectives that are tied to IEP goals</li> </ul>
<b>Create Authentic Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Expect all students to engage in the discussion</li> <li>● Include students who typically do not participate</li> </ul>
<b>Student Reflection on Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Summarize the lesson and discuss what was learned at the end of each lesson</li> </ul>
<b>Varied Instructional Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differentiate lessons to incorporate all learning modalities</li> <li>● Instructional tasks build on key concepts to supplement the core curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Element d – Technology</b>	
<b>Research Effective Technology Approaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek appropriate available technology through various means, including the Assistive Technology Team, IT Professional Development offerings, and other BVSD departmental PD offerings</li> <li>● Provide technology to students to increase access</li> <li>● Access and utilize technology based interventions and data collection systems for individualized student learning</li> </ul>

<b>Develop Student Knowledge and Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide technology to students to increase access</li> <li>● Seek appropriate available technology through various means, including the Assistive Technology Team, IT Professional Development offerings, and other BVSD departmental PD offerings</li> </ul>
<b>Engaging and Motivating Experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use technology to engage and motivate student with learning</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seek ongoing professional development to stay up to date on educational technology</li> <li>● Access and utilize technology based interventions and data collection systems for individualized student learning</li> </ul>
<b>Element e – Critical Thinking</b>	
<b>Meet High Expectations with Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write goals for students that would be realistic but would stretch their learning</li> <li>● Provide the support needed to work toward the achievement of those goals</li> </ul>
<b>Higher-Order Thinking and Problem-Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Question students, allowing for wait time to answer critical thinking questions</li> <li>● Encourage participation (praise and reinforcement) so that all students are achieving higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills</li> </ul>
<b>Element f – Student Collaboration</b>	
<b>Grouping Matches Task and Needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be aware of each student’s strengths</li> <li>● Provide opportunities for the student to use those strengths to be a leader in the classroom/group setting</li> </ul>
<b>Varied Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage flexibility in grouping and foster an accepting environment of all learners</li> </ul>
<b>Students’ Collaborative Efforts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Praise and acknowledge students who are working collaboratively in groups</li> </ul>
<b>Element g – Communication Skills</b>	
<b>Model and Teach Effective Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remain calm, professional, and respectful to all students and staff</li> </ul>
<b>Practice Communication Skills</b>	



Element h – Feedback

<b>Frequent Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Provide frequent, up-to-date academic progress reports to students and their families</li><li>● Frequent positive reinforcement including praise</li></ul>
<b>Students Using Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Model appropriate use of feedback as examples for the students to follow</li></ul>
<b>Informal Assessment Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Scaffold lessons as needed for students on a daily basis</li><li>● Must use effective data collection and documentation systems</li></ul>