

Supporting Twice-Exceptional Students

This playbook describes the process of providing educational support and challenges for twice-exceptional students. These are students who are identified as gifted and talented but also qualify for special education services.

Step 1: **Identification**

Identify students who exhibit both high potential or performance in certain areas and who qualify for special education services based on a disability. This requires a multidisciplinary evaluation that assesses both giftedness and learning needs.

Step 2: **Assessment**

Conduct thorough assessments to understand the students' unique strengths and weaknesses. This should include cognitive, academic, and social-emotional evaluations to inform individualized education programs (IEP) or 504 plans.

Step 3: **Planning**

Develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan that incorporates both enrichment opportunities and accommodations. Goals should address both the giftedness and the disability, recognizing that there may be complex interplays between the two.

Step 4: Instruction

Design and implement instructional strategies that are differentiated to cater to the students' advanced cognitive abilities and their learning differences. This may involve compacting curricula, acceleration, or the use of specialized instructional methods.

Step 5: Supports

Provide the necessary supports to ensure students can access their education effectively. This could include assistive technologies, specialized materials, or additional personnel such as tutors or aides.

Step 6: Monitoring

Regularly monitor and assess the students' progress in both their areas of giftedness and their areas of need. Adjustments to their educational plans should be made in response to these ongoing assessments.

Step 7: Collaboration

Foster collaboration among special education and gifted education teachers, related service providers, parents, and the students themselves to create a cohesive support system.

Step 8: Professional Development

Ensure that all staff involved with twice-exceptional students receive continued professional development to stay informed about best practices for teaching and supporting these students.

General Notes

Flexibility

Recognize that twice-exceptional students often have asynchronous development and their needs may rapidly change; therefore, flexibility in educational approaches is crucial.

Advocacy

Encourage self-advocacy in students by equipping them with the understanding and vocabulary to describe their own needs and strengths to teachers and peers.

Awareness

Raise awareness among school staff and parents about the characteristics of twice-exceptional students to foster understanding and appropriate support strategies.