



Supporting Special Populations Students in CTE

A self-paced online course for CTE leaders
and instructors



Module 3

Supporting Students with Disabilities

▶ CTE and Students with Disabilities

- About 29 percent of secondary students participating in CTE in Pennsylvania are identified as individuals with disabilities.
- These students can thrive in CTE programs when they receive the support and resources they need.
- Many of these students benefit from proactive interventions that aim to ease educational transitions for them, build on their skills, abilities, and interests, and directly address any barriers to learning, which may involve academic, social-emotional, or other challenges.

▶ What is IEP Transition Planning?

- Transition planning helps students with IEPs prepare for life after high school.
- In Pennsylvania, IEP transition planning must begin by the time a student turns 14 years old.
- Purpose of transition planning:
 - Help teens prepare to be independent young adults.
 - Address postsecondary education and training, employment, and independent living goals.
 - Helps students figure out how to reach their goals.
- Written within the transition section (Section III) of the IEP document.
- Created by the IEP team (including the CTE and service agency representatives), student and parents.



▶ Role of CTE Instructor in Transition Planning

- CTE teachers help the IEP team to create student's IEP plan and Transition Plan.
- Provides updates on student's progress towards program competencies, strengths and needs, and needed accommodations.
- Plays primary role in providing instruction through school.
- Provides instruction through school and work-based experiences and activities.

▶ Best Practices in IEP/Transition Planning

Some identified best practices are:

- Special Education teachers meet with CTE teachers to learn about course requirements and expectations.
- Special Education teachers, General Education teachers, Parents/Students should collaborate with the CTE teacher PRIOR to the IEP meeting.
- CTE representative should be invited to IEP meeting and CTE teacher should provide meaningful feedback for inclusion in the IEP document.
- Transition plans for students identify CTE courses for the student.
- Special Ed teacher and CTE teacher complete a profile on students entering the CTE course; collaborate on IEP goals.

Program Placement

Promising practices to promote effective program placement are:

- Give tours of specific CTE programs to interested special education students.
- Provide informal assessments during visits and tours, so instructors can observe students and provide feedback.
- Conduct interviews with prospective students to discuss career goals, check for good program fit to student goals.

Effective program placement is good for the student and the teacher

Coordination & Collaboration

- Coordination and collaboration among key personnel helps ensure students' needs are met.
- Regular communication about classroom assignments and expectations among key personnel increases the likelihood of success.
- At a minimum, include CTE instructors, special education instructors, and learning support staff.

Coordination & Collaboration

Best Practices that support Coordination and Collaboration include:

- Share CTE lesson plans and assessments with learning support staff ahead of time.
- Schedule regular meetings (or communications) among key personnel to discuss what is or is not working for the student.
- Reach agreement on what in-class services will look like and how they can best be implemented.

Differentiated Instruction



Design and differentiate instruction to meet varying needs and build on individual strengths.



CTE instructors need to use teaching strategies that address the different learning styles and abilities of their students.



They should also work with the sending schools to ensure that the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) matches up with the program task list.



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Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Best practices to address the needs of Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities include:

- Identify safe and meaningful ways to expose students to career options and CTE programs.
- Take into consideration safety precautions, student interests and student skills in devising ways for students to learn about a range of career options and participate in CTE programs.

Remember to engage the IEP team for help identifying and implementing supports and strategies.

Stakeholder Engagement

Parents. CTE leaders and teachers reach out to parents early on and throughout their student's enrollment in CTE.

Students. CTE leaders and teachers engage students in decision-making, empower them with ownership for their goals and needs..

Employers, postsecondary institutions, and community service providers. CTE leaders and teachers develop and sustain working relationships with stakeholders to map out postsecondary options for students with disabilities.

Relationship building is key to creating high-quality learning environments for students.

Module Three Resources

New resources in this module include:

[Best Practices: Cross Cutting Strategies to Support Special Populations](#)

[Best Practices: Individuals with Disabilities](#)

Module Three Assignment

Please complete the Module Three Prompts (Reflection Journal):

1. What do you feel is the most difficult part of differentiation for students with disabilities in your classroom?
2. Why is the special education teacher a valuable source for collaboration in the CTE classroom?
3. What are your next steps in creating a classroom that supports Students with Disabilities?

Contact/Mission

For more information on supporting special populations students in CTE, please visit the Bureau of Career Technical Education through the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website at www.education.pa.gov

The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high-quality education.

