

Professional Development

Questions	Answers
<p>How can we get more training to our SEA's?</p>	<p>Through the development of our online tool, Resources Increasing Student Achievement (RISA), all staff have access to evidence-based practices, interventions, and strategies in real time - at their fingertips. The special education department recently hired a SEA trainer to expand our training to SEAs who play a critical role in providing special education services to MPS students.</p>
<p>What are we doing to make special education students a valued part of each school? In other words, how are we training staff to be able to avoid answering any question that involves our student (e.g., transportation, after school activities, career services, testing, etc.) with, "Ask your child's case manager?"</p>	<p>Inclusive Practices is one of the academic priorities aligned with our strategic plan, Acceleration 2020. Our Special Education Advisory Council has an Inclusive Practices checklist to involve all staff in welcoming students with special needs into the school community. This checklist can be used as a guide for schools to reflect on both the accessibility and a welcoming culture for all students and families. The academic leadership team has developed a set of modules that can assist principals leading professional development around inclusive practices.</p>
<p>MPS is relying heavily on internet modules for teacher support. Are these teachers given extra prep time? What if they have no time to search modules? The students lose out. Technology and internet reference materials are no substitute for years of autism teaching experience.</p>	<p>Internet modules are one way that we are grounding our practice in evidence-based strategies. The special education department and school leadership is available to support teachers in their learning, so that no students lose out on their instructional time. This support has been in classroom coaching and modeling, coverage to observe in other classrooms, and professional learning community support.</p> <p>Teacher prep time is negotiated through the Teacher Contract. In addition, all staff have access to professional development funds that can compensate them for the additional time they invest in learning new skills and strategies outside of their duty day. This is often the best solution because instruction to students is not interrupted, and staff do not have to prepare for a substitute in addition to their other responsibilities.</p>