





Collaboration as a High Leverage Practice

What do your DoSE's Want you to Know and Do?



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Walking across the bridge, leaving the familiar ground of working alone, is the first act of collaboration. All parties are in neutral territory, with the security of knowing they can return to land better, stronger, and changed. And perhaps they will return to the same side of the bridge even though they started from opposite sides.

Steele, Bell, & George,

2005

High Leverage Practices: Collaboration

- The Who/What/When/Where/Why of High Leverage Practices (HLPs):
 - Created to give guidance re: the most important practices that special educators need to learn to use in classrooms
 - Developed by 12 representatives from the CEC Professional Standards and Practice Committee, CEC Teacher Education Division, the CEEDAR Center, the Council of Chief State School Officers and CEC staff along with 7 CEC members who were selected from over 50 nominations.
 - Began development in January 2015. Published in January 2017.
 - 22 HLPs organized around collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/behavioral practices, and instruction

Defining “Collaboration”

- “Jot Thoughts” activity: On slips of paper at your table, work with a partner to jot down thoughts about what you believe effective collaboration **looks and sounds like**.
- 3 minutes to write as many ideas as you can- without duplication
- 2 minutes with table group to cover the table with as many ideas as you can-without duplication

(In your class, you can do this activity to help students brainstorm a topic or review content.)

JOT THOUGHTS- STEPS:

Setup: Students each have multiple slips of paper or pre cut sticky notes.

1. Teacher names a topic, sets a time limit, and provides think time (ex. In 3 min, how many questions can you write that have an answer 17?)
2. Students write and announce as many ideas as they can in the allotted time, one idea per slip of paper.
3. Each slip of paper is placed in the center of the tables, students attempt to “cover the table” (no slips overlap).

Defining “Collaboration”

- Use your jotted thoughts to complete your note catcher.
 - What does effective collaboration look like/sound like?
 - Define collaboration. Include its purpose in our field.
- Table share:
 - Add to your definition.
- Whole group share:
 - Collaboration includes...

Collaboration Won't Just Happen

- Deliberate
- Structured
- Systematic
- Ongoing
- Should be focused on
 - Designing each student's instructional program to meet clearly specified outcomes
 - Collecting data and monitoring progress toward these outcomes

HLP 1: Collaborate with professionals to increase student success

- Read HLP 1. Annotate with:
 - What you are already doing that meets the definition of HLP 1
 - Next steps to consider based on the definition of HLP 1.
- Who should be a part of the team when collaborating to meet student needs?
- What are some examples of teams where professionals collaborate with each other?

Effective and Purposeful Collaboration should:

- Enlist support from district and school leaders, who can
 - foster a collective commitment to collaboration,
 - Provide professional learning experiences to increase team members' collaborative skills
 - Create schedules that support different forms of ongoing collaboration

(High Leverage Practices in Special Education, 15)

Examples of Collaboration with Other Professionals:

- Collaborative Scoring
- Co-planning with co-teacher
- Data Teams
- IEP Progress Growth Teams
- Grade-level/Team/Content Planning teams
- IEP/BIP/TIP Planning
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

But, first, What are Effective Collaboration Behaviors?

Simultaneous Round Table Steps:

Setup: Each team of 4 needs 4 papers and 4 pens

1. Teacher assigns a topic or question and provides think time
2. All 4 students respond, simultaneously writing, drawing etc
3. Teacher signals time, or students place thumbs up when done with problem
4. Students pass papers one person clockwise
5. Students continue, adding to what was already completed
6. Continue starting at step 3. Do not repeat answers.

HLP 2: Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.

- Read HLP 2. Annotate with:
 - What you are already doing that meets the definition of HLP 1
 - Next steps to consider based on the definition of HLP 1.

HLP 2: Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.

Prior to Meeting

- Prepare an agenda: Get input from staff, student and parents.
- Be sure parents have opportunity for meaningful contribution.
- Schedule meeting in a timely manner. Give room for a second meeting.
- Invite right people. Ask parents who they would like to attend.
- Be aware of any language and special needs of attendees.
- Reach out and make a positive connection before the meeting.
- Thorough preparation prior to a meeting can help it run more smoothly.

*Remember “the beginning will impact the end.”

During the Meeting:

- Review the agenda. Have clear meeting goals. Set expectations.
 - Use easy to understand language.
 - Use positive language and tone. Be aware of your body language and facial expressions.
 - Actively listen without judgment and respect all ideas.
 - Encourage out of the box thinking.
 - Focus on the student's educational needs. Make decisions that are based on data and student needs.
 - Talk directly to the student and ask the student questions.
- *Having a positive relationship with all team members is crucial. Keeping consistent communication is the key to building and sustaining the relationship.

HLP 3: Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.

- Read HLP 3. Annotate with:
 - What you are already doing that meets the definition of HLP 1
 - Next steps to consider based on the definition of HLP 1.
- Turn and talk about how you currently collaborate with families.
 - How often, for what purposes, etc?
 - What do you do when parents do not respond?

HLP 3: Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.

- Solicit parental and student input (goals, concerns, strengths, thoughts, etc.)
- Involve everyone in goal development and implementation.
- Keep parents informed. Make frequent contact.
- Make yourself available.
- Give parents fun learning activities to do at home.
- Have empathy. Share strengths of the child as well as needs.
- Follow through.

HLP 3: Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.

Table group discussion:

- What roadblocks occur when trying to collaborate with families?
- What solutions could help overcome those roadblocks?

Potential Roadblocks	Potential or Tried and True Solutions
Cultural differences	Learn about the family's culture and incorporate into your collaborative design

Collaboration Defined...

- Go back to your original definition.
- Revise the definition based on new learning.
- Share changes with your table group

Research Syntheses: Collaboration High-Leverage Practices

- Studies of students with disabilities: Collaborative culture or high value on collaboration is a typical finding in increased student achievement.
- Collaboration-strong effect size of 0.93 on student achievement (DuFour, 2007; Hattie, 2008)
- When teachers and families effectively collaborate to set goals, children make more gains.
- Collaboration improves teacher-family relationships, increases shared decision making, and increases child-level and family-level effects.

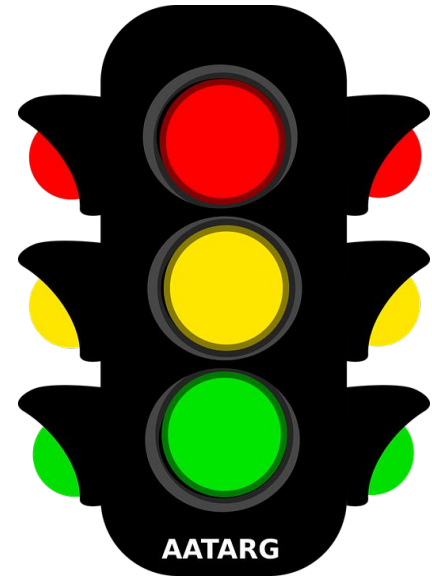
So, why is Collaboration the first aspect of practice addressed?

- Collaboration is ethereal in that it is never an end in itself, instead operating as a culture or a means through which any goal can be reached.
- While collaboration is not explicitly mandated in IDEA, the requirements of the law and established school practices strongly imply that it is through collaboration that the effective education of students with disabilities is achieved.

(High-Leverage Practices in Education, 28)

Time to Traffic Light the Session

- **Red light:** I am going to STOP doing...
- **Yellow light:** I'm going to CONTINUE doing...
- **Green light:** I'm going to START doing...



References

McLeskey, J., Barringer, M-D., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M., Jackson, D., Kennedy, M., Lewis, T., Maheady, L., Rodriguez, J., Scheeler, M. C., Winn, J., & Ziegler, D. (2017, January). High-leverage practices in special education. Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children & CEEDAR Center.

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<http://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/CEC-HLP-Web.pdf>

What Your DoSE's Want you to Know and Do:

- Collaborate regularly to ensure student success. Don't try to do it all yourself. Both the student and you will suffer. Don't be afraid to ask for help. No one knows it all. Work as a team! Problem solve!
- Be proactive versus reactive.
- Know that compliance is compliance only because it's what's best for students. It isn't paperwork for paperwork's sake. Progress monitoring should be taken in real time to guide instruction.

What Your DoSE's Want You to Know and Do:

- Communicate! Communicate!! Communicate!!!
- Have high expectations for your students. If you believe, they can, they will believe they can. If you believe they can't, they won't.
- Be consistent, fair and flexible.
- Share strategies that work with student. Be strategy specialists!
- We know you have a hard job. However, if you hang in there through all of the new learning, it will be more rewarding than you ever imagined!