

# FOCUS on Special Education

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## Realizing Your Purpose in Education

Sometimes it's hard to remember that we have great jobs. But we do.

Recently there has been a lot of talk around the blue zones, featured in a recent documentary series where the host visits several areas in the world known for their ability to produce an inordinate amount of centenarians, or people who live to be 100 or more. A common theme among those folks in every area was the identification of a purpose for their lives. People who find meaning and purpose in their lives and in what they do on a daily basis not only enjoy their lives more, but they enjoy more of life, according to the findings of this documentary.

It makes sense, in today's climate of stress and anxiety



that those living longer have found that purpose MUST be sought in order to reduce it. But it is also evident that in jobs like ours, purpose is always being challenged, from a variety of persons or groups.

To that end, we need to be very intentional about

recognizing that nobody can change our purpose but us. Just because others don't share it, the purpose is still the same for those who chose to pursue education as a life's work. How do we keep the purpose in front of us. Simple. To borrow from the old movie City Slickers, you (continued on page 3)

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOUR ASSESSMENT NEEDS ARE!

The shelves at ECKCE are bursting with dozens of assessment tools, suitable for almost any referral issue you might encounter. But we need your help to know what you rely on, to cull out items that are obsolete, and understand what new

edition or tools we should consider for purchase.

At [this link](#) you'll find a survey which asks you to chime in on what's on our shelves. It's likely you don't use and have no opinion about most of the items listed, so will skip those, and

just chime in on what's relevant to you. While you can access the survey on your cell phone, it will take a bit longer to complete than completing it on a larger screen. Please complete the survey within a week if possible. Thank you!

*Often in Special Education, questions arise which you may need the answer to and others may benefit from that answer as well. Each month we will include a few of these questions, so please don't hesitate to ask.*

### FREQUENTLY (RECENTLY) ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: We have always been told that we needed a content level endorsement to teach a content class to students with IEPs at the high school level. Is that true?

A: It used to be. When the NCLB (No Child Left Behind) act was passed back in 2002, it contained a provision that a teacher be highly qualified to teach high school courses that were specific to their content, like Math and Science for example. This meant that even if you had a special education endorsement, you also needed a math or science endorsement. That went away in 2015 when the ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) went into effect. Now a special education endorsement is sufficient to teach content area classes, as long as the classes are comprised of students who qualify for an IEP under the IDEA. So no, a content endorsement is no longer necessary.

Q: I had a parent request that her outside provider come in to provide therapy at school due to their scheduling conflicts at home. Can we allow this?

A: Therapy? No. Observations to inform the therapy? Yes. We want to make sure that our students are getting the things that they need consistently, and they are only with us 6-7 hours a day. Some of our students, especially those within the autism spectrum, need consistent therapies delivered in all environments, not just at school, and we want to make sure both are aiming to achieve the same goal, so we strongly encourage the collaboration between the home and school therapists. However, we cannot allow therapists to come and provide their therapies during school hours on school grounds for a couple of reasons. First, the IEP outlines the services the team has determined to be necessary to access the general education curriculum, and the team is responsible for delivering them. The outside provider would be taking time away from those services, or worse, from time the student should be receiving core instruction in the classroom or from desired special classes. We do not have an obligation to allow those providers to usurp the time that has been scheduled for the student. The second reason that outside therapists are not allowed to provide those services in the school is one of liability. While most therapist providing in home services have been appropriately bonded or vetted by the parents, they have not gone through our background check process and cannot be assumed to be completely cleared. Also, it opens the door to a non-employee being injured on our grounds and that is a door we would remain to be closed. As always, contact our office if you believe an exception is in order.

KEEPING THE PURPOSE (CONT. FROM PG. 1)

have to “Keep the Main thing the main thing.” Remember that you became a teacher to see the light come on about kids heads, and you have seen it happen. Each of us have mementos that we cherish, whether it is a hand-drawn card, a simple thank you note, a plaque that marks a

milestone in a child’s or team’s life, or a favorite gift given by a student that you have stashed in a drawer in your office. I would like to encourage each of you to take a few minutes and dig those out. I am ashamed to say mine are in a box under my desk, but I do have a

couple that I keep within reach for the moments that get tough. I pull them out and read them when it seems like my purpose has gotten lost in the day-to-day stresses. They have saved me more than once.

You have a purpose that is greater than the stress of the day. Take a moment this week to celebrate that.

*Thank you to all of our teachers and service providers for getting us off to a great start this year at our back-to-school in-service. It promises to be a great school year. Your efforts in getting your classrooms ready to go are greatly appreciated!!!*

New CPI Trainings Are on the Horizon

I know that many of you are asking about CPI refreshers, so just know that we are in the process of setting up initial trainings and refreshers as we speak. You’ll be receiving an email soon with an invitation to sign up, but because of the number of folks needing recertification and initials,

we will need to prioritize who receives the invites initially, focusing on the programs that have the highest likelihood of needing the training first. To that end, please respond to the email, but don’t forward until we can get those high needs positions offered first. Also,

please try to remember that CPI is a de-escalation training, not necessarily a restraint training. In any case where you are contemplating putting hands on a child, it must be an emergency where the student is threatening imminent harm to themselves or others. Only restrain in an emergency.

Please Remember the Webkidss Walk-through Tool

Just a reminder that the IEP walkthrough tool that we developed is available on the Webkidss front page just by clicking on the link. Everyone can use

a little support getting through the IEP draft now and then. To that end we have created an IEP walkthrough tool that will help you not to overlook any critical

information as you are writing your IEPs. This tool will be available later this week on our website.

Please let us know how we can improve it to make even easier to use.



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**Don't Forget to Access our New Guardian EAP**

Often times we have questions about things that may or may not be job related, but are heavy on our minds. Whether it is a question about legal advice, financial guidance, family or life planning, or things that might be weighing you down, our Employee Assistance Program is here to help. The Guardian EAP is available to all ECKCE

employees. All you need to do is go to [worklife.uprisehealth.com](http://worklife.uprisehealth.com) and login as an ECKCE employee using the access code [worklife](http://worklife.uprisehealth.com).

Once you have logged in, you have access to a myriad of services, including mental health counseling. You can have up to three visits per family member per issue, all free of charge

to you. Because you are our employees and your well being is important to us. We need you to be all you can be for the students we serve and for the teams you support.

The Guardian EAP is only one of the ways we hope you know we are here for you. We hope you all have a tremendous first month of school! Let us know how we can help!

**PARAPROFESSIONAL NEWS AND NOTES**

Hey all! Many of you have been asking about inservice hours which is great—the sooner you can wrap those up, the sooner you won't have to worry about them for the rest of the year. Remember that trainings you receive on the job working with the kiddos to whom you are assigned are eligible to be counted—up to 4 hours—your teacher just needs to approve them.

I think after the initial getting used to the new system, you are all doing a fantastic job logging in and out appropriately and we shouldn't have too many more issues. Please remember, however, that all of you need to have a duty-free lunch where you clock out for 30 minutes. I know that in certain programs this was an issue due to numbers—hopefully we have that solved by now, but let me

know if that isn't the case. And remember, we need you here consistently, so please use your leave with discretion so you don't run out or leave your students high and dry.

We really appreciate all the work you do for each of our kids and know that we couldn't do it without each and every one of you. Have a great rest of the month and let us know if there are things we can do to help!