Instructor’s Guide for Problem Solving

Topic Area: Collaboration

Module: Problem Solving

Case Study: Whose Job Is It Anyway?

Summary: Mavis Monroe, a veteran fourth grade teacher, is overwhelmed with the amount of time devoted to planning and collaborating for four students with IEPs. After some hesitation, Mavis and Jahna, a resource teacher, begin working together to address the modifications and accommodations the students need in order to be successful in the regular education classroom.

Characters and Roles:
- Mrs. Mavis Monroe, fourth grade teacher
- Kyra Jensen, teacher
- Jahna, resource teacher
- Mikkel, resource teacher
- Susan, fourth grade student

Tools:
- Effective Instructional Practice
- Dealing with Resistance
- Problem Solving Flexibility

Glossary Terms:
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Modifications
- Accommodations
- Learning Styles
- State Assessment
- Grade Plan
- Universal Design for Learning
- Pre-teaching
- Visuals
- Multi-modal
- Graphic Organizers
- Semantic Webbing
- Inspiration Software
- E-readers
- Resource Room
- Guided Notes
- Story Starters
Jigsaw Groups
Rubrics
Differentiation

Discussion Points:
- Whose responsibility is it to implement goals on an IEP?
- What can administrators do to provide teachers with more time to plan and collaborate concerning students with IEPs?
- When a teacher makes an error in evaluating a student, how should he/she handle the situation?
- What are the pros and cons of classroom teachers and resource teachers collaborating?

Activities:
- Roleplay interactions between members on a Student Assistance Team. Include some scenarios where one teacher is resistant to suggestions agreed upon by other individuals.
- Roleplay a conference with a parent who is concerned about his/her child’s grades.
- Roleplay a conference where a teacher accepts responsibility for evaluating a student unfairly.
- Brainstorm ways to provide time for collaboration and planning.
- Brainstorm ways to make meetings more productive.

Reflective Question: Scene 3; Question 2 – How would you repair the communication breakdown that is occurring? There are several ways to attempt to improve communication. First of all, the primary focus should be on student learning and how to best meet the needs of the students. Team members should try to put themselves in the other person’s position and understand his/her feelings and opinions. It is critical to listen carefully and acknowledge that you hear what is being said. Try not to judge but rather offer additional ideas. You should always remain respectful. Sometimes it is even helpful to include an outside person who could offer an outside perspective. If all parties are committed to improving student learning, then with positive interventions, communication should improve.

Connections:
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Universal Design for Learning
- Topic Area: Instruction; Module: Teams