

THE PRACTICES of UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

There are 16 *Effective Practices for Universal Education*. The Practices describe those things that are done in a learning community in order to support Universal Education.

Brief descriptions of each practice are:

- 1. There is Administrative Leadership.** Administrators provide leadership to create the vision for system change, and to sustain reform initiatives.
- 2. Supports are found in the general education classroom.** Support from specialists, para-educators, student assistants, physical therapists, occupation therapists etc. is provided within the general education classroom community.
- 3. There is peer support and interaction.** Mutually supportive social and learning relationships are encouraged. Benevolent ‘helper’ model is minimized.
- 4. Classroom composition is based on natural proportions.** Students with disabilities are members of general education classrooms and placement is based on natural proportions (10-15%).
- 5. Differentiated instruction is practiced.** Instruction is differentiated for all students based on learning styles, multiple intelligences, interests and skills.
- 6. Authentic learning experiences are the norm.** Learning takes place in authentic, real-world settings or connections are made to real-world examples and experiences.
- 7. Physical environments facilitate learning and are accessible for all.** The physical environment and provisioning of the classroom and school invites and facilitates learning for all.
- 8. There is a focus on reduction of dependence on 1-1 adult support.** Individualized instruction is implemented in ways that reduces dependence on 1-1 adult support. Independence, interdependence, and natural supports are emphasized.
- 9. Students are educated in age-appropriate placements and heterogeneous groupings.** All students are included in age appropriate, general education classrooms and grouped heterogeneously for most instruction (i.e. limited use of needs-based grouping within the classroom).
- 10. Community building is fostered among students** (i.e., cooperative versus competitive practices are encouraged).
- 11. Students have access to accommodations and up-to-date technology.**

- 12. All students participate in all activities.** All students participate in the same learning and extra-curricular activities although some students may have modified goals.
- 13. A collaborative culture is fostered.** The school climate is one that fosters a collaborative culture which supports the meaningful involvement of all stakeholders: the student, the family, and professionals. This collaboration requires adequate time to plan, review and develop skills so ALL team members can actively participate. (Based on “Principles of Family/Professional Collaboration,” Bishop, Woll and Arango 1993)
- 14. Transition planning occurs at all levels.** It is recognized that transition planning must occur to prepare students for transitions from grade to grade, level to level, from preschool through post-secondary school.
- 15. Positive Behavior Support (PBS) strategies are implemented.** PBS strategies and plans are implemented school-wide, in the classroom, and for individuals. PBS plans are based on functional assessments and interventions that focus on ecological changes and the learning of new skills. Bribes and threats of punishment are to be avoided.
- 16. Meaningful evaluation of progress is made.** It is timely and continuous and addresses individual student progress, school-wide achievement, and overall program effectiveness.



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http://everyonetogether.org/effective_practices.htm