

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

Staff Member of the Month

Kristi Fausel- 11th/12th Grade Case Manager/Special Education Coordinator



This is Kristi's fifth year at The SEED School of MD. Prior to working at SEED, she worked in Easton High School and Matapeake Middle School on the Eastern Shore. Kristi's passion for teaching students who have special needs began in high school. She served as a peer assistant in the life skills room during her junior and senior year at Oakland Mills HS. After high school, Kristi went to Lycoming College where she began as a theater major with an acting track. During her sophomore year, Kristi realized acting was a

passion not a career and she changed majors to Psychology with a special education certification track.

Here at SEED, Kristi has served many roles. She began as the sixth grade math co-teacher and then transitioned to department chair, co-director, and finally special education coordinator. Her passion continues to be co-teaching and supporting her students, but she also helps support new staff members, audits IEP paperwork, and helps to lead professional developments.

While at home Kristi has two children, a three year old daughter and one year old son. Kristi often brings her kids to campus to eat dinner with her students or to attend sporting events. Kristi truly views her students as her extended family and looks forward to many more years at SEED.

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Newspaper Staff:

Contributing Writers: Dr. Lando, Mrs. Richardson, Dr. Footman, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Fausel

Editor in Chief: Mrs. Fausel

Accommodation of the Month: Graphic Organizers

In the classroom and dorms:

- Give the student a blank copy of a graphic organizer anytime you are doing reading and writing tasks.
- These organizers help the students who have processing or memory difficulties with retaining information
- Depending on the student you can prompt them to create their own organizers as well.
- Free downloadable graphic organizer bank:
 - o <https://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/>

By: Kristi Fausel

Strategy of the Month: Motivation

Often our students struggle to stay motivated and seem to not care about completing their work, much less completing it well. While it can be hard to remember, we have to understand that the students with disabilities have to work much harder than their peers to obtain the same grades. This can lead to students burning out and getting overwhelmed, frustrated, and shutting down. How do we help them move past this frustration and keep these students motivated to learn?

The biggest challenge about motivating students is that every student is motivated differently. Some students work hard to get good grades, while others could care less about grades. The first step is to talk to the student and determine why they aren't completing work and what they would like to earn.

Rewards can vary from 5 minutes of free time at the end of class to a new book. Obviously larger rewards should require a larger investment on the student's part. For example, if a student completes every assignment for a class period they can earn 5 minutes on a game site, but if they finish every assignment for a week they can pick a friend and earn a lunch bunch with games.

Often students are resistant to coming up with tangible or intangible rewards that they would like because they have shut down and don't believe they could earn them. Try to find out which adults they have a special bond with on campus and ask them for suggestions too. Each student is different but if you are able to spend the time to get to know them, it becomes much easier to determine the right approach.

By: Kristi Fausel

Grit and Growth: Intervening in The Classroom

Effective intervention for struggling students is based on the ideological shift from "All students can learn" to "**All students must learn**". This mindset pushes educators to ask themselves the fundamental question, "What happens when students don't learn? Rather than wait for the lack of learning to occur, highly effective instructional systems design and implement series of multi-level preventive instructional and social practices to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. This article offers suggestions on how teachers can proactively incorporate universal (Tier1) intervention practices in their daily instructional practice.

- Monitor progress continuously through a series of formative assessments- warm ups, homework, peer reports, quick true-false checklist, exit ticket, chapter reviews, etc. This data is not merely for "assigning" numbers/grades, but to steer the instruction.
- Utilize multimodal instructional approaches to diversify instruction
- Flexible planning- allow students to learn in ways that best suits them (discussion, groups, individual work, seating plans).
- Ensure availability of a variety of (extra) resources and formats to complement instruction.
- Teach such skills through direct instruction when students lack essential/foundational skills.
- Reteach/review concepts in which the students are struggling.
- Identify and provide extra support to students in specific areas as needed during and after the class.

The key idea is that educators have a collective responsibility to ensure that all students acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and that such learning must be continuously monitored using a variety of assessments. Ultimately, the school must have a plan for providing Tier 2 support to struggling students with additional time and support on a systematic basis. The next article will focus on intervention planning at a school level.

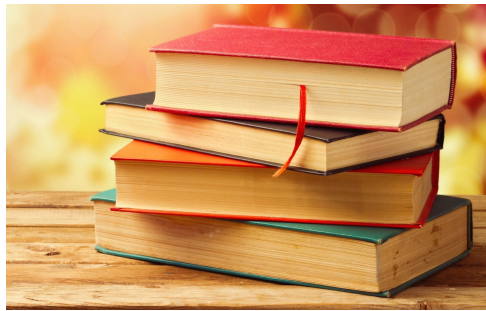
By: Francis Lando, Ed. D

Psychologist Corner: Text Reduction

How To Use The Text Reduction Strategy To Improve Reading Comprehension

"SUCH a cool strategy. Would work for almost any grade level and any content area where students have a good bit of reading to do. It's also a skill they can take with them all the way through college. This one is definitely worth a look!"

<http://www.teachthought.com/.../use-text-reduction-strategy-.../>



By: Mr. Brown

Footnotes by Footman: Gratitude

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, it seems timely to think about gratitude. I'm thankful for this community and all of the wisdom and caring among us. Here are some tips to help you practice gratitude in your daily lives, even when it seems challenging.

1. **Keep a Gratitude Journal.** Establish a practice in which you remind yourself of the gifts, grace, benefits, and good things you enjoy.
2. **Remember the Bad.** To be grateful in your current state, it is helpful to remember the hard times that you once experienced. When you remember how difficult life used to be and how far you have come, you set up an explicit contrast in your mind, and this contrast is fertile ground for gratefulness.
3. **Use Visual Reminders.** Because the two primary obstacles to gratefulness are forgetfulness and a lack of mindful awareness, visual reminders can serve as cues to trigger thoughts of gratitude.
4. **Make a Vow to Practice Gratitude.** Research shows that making an oath to perform a behavior increases the likelihood that the action will be executed. Write your own gratitude vow, which could be as simple as "I vow to count my blessings each day," and post it somewhere where you will be reminded of it every day.
5. **Watch your Language.** Grateful people have a particular linguistic style that uses the language of gifts, givers, blessings, blessed, fortune, fortunate, and abundance. In gratitude, you should not focus on how inherently good you are, but rather on the inherently good things that others have done on your behalf.
6. **Go Through the Motions.** If you go through grateful motions, the emotion of gratitude should be triggered. Grateful motions include smiling, saying thank you, and writing letters of gratitude.

Adapted from the work of Emmons, R. Retrieved from
http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/ten_ways_to_become_more_grateful1

By: Dr. Footman



Director's Corner



With this installment, I want to bring greater attention to students with asthma. With the weather changing, it increases the likelihood of students with asthma suffering from an attack. I will also highlight the importance of being aware of students' health issues when responding to emergency situations and planning lessons. Remember that during any given class period, teachers are required to make a seemingly endless and dizzying array of decisions; it can certainly be overwhelming at times. It is my hope that the following case will provide essential information that will help shape teacher decision-making in the classroom regarding students with asthma and raise awareness regarding the unique health challenges our students may face.

In the case of Estate of Massey v. City of Philadelphia in 2015:

A sixth grade Philadelphia student died from an asthma attack. According to a complaint against her school district, her teacher, principal, and other staff knew of her chronic asthma. On the morning of the student's death, she told her teacher she was having trouble breathing. The teacher responded that no nurse was on duty and that she "Should be calm". Although her condition worsened, the complaint alleged that nobody contacted emergency medical or took her to the hospital. Instead, it was asserted that she was kept at school despite having reported that she could not breathe. Later in the day, the student was driven home and then immediately taken to the hospital. On the way, she suffered a respiratory arrest. Emergency workers and hospital staff were unable to revive the student. Later, a medical examiner declared her cause of death to be acute exacerbation of asthma. In pretrial activity, the court refused to dismiss claims against the school district. There was evidence that the student was kept at school and denied medical care or permission to take asthma medication. As an intentional violation of rights was asserted, the court denied the school district's request for a pretrial ruling. A claim for deprivation of life and liberty was also not dismissed at the present time, as facts were alleged to support a state-created danger claim. Since willful misconduct was alleged, the court denied the district's request for immunity under state law.

"Student with Disabilities and Special Education: Law Center for Education & Employment Law 2016 33rd Edition"

Because of an unwillingness to listen to and address breathing concerns raised by a student, the school staff, guilty of negligence, refused to get medical treatment for a 6th grader, who had documented asthma issues; as a result of their negligence, the student died. As educators, we need to be aware of the unique needs of our students. Proactive steps like collecting student information around medical history at the beginning of the school year and keeping that information readily available in cases of emergencies are absolutely critical since they can mean the difference between life and death for students.

In this case, the school should not at any time be without a nurse who is available in cases of emergencies. Additionally, the teacher should have been aware of the student's medical history/issues and used that information to make an informed decision (i.e. calling the student's parent). Telling a student to "calm down" while in the middle of an asthma attack does not help a student who is in acute respiratory distress. Classroom teachers should also gather student information from parents and guardians and have that information accessible. Medical issues, such as asthma, are important for teachers to know about when they are planning classroom lessons. Having a physically demanding lesson, a lesson that involves inhalants or a lesson in cold weather could have potentially fatal consequences for students with asthma. When planning lessons for our students, we not only need to consider students' academic/cognitive abilities but relevant health concerns need as well, which is why some teacher evaluation frameworks include that information, i.e. The Danielson Framework. For more information on this case, please visit: <https://casetext.com/case/massey-v-city-of-phila>

By: Patricia Richardson

OUR TEAM

Sarah Strycula- 6th Grade Case Manager

Linda Still- 7th Grade Case Manager

Steven Douglas- 8th Grade Case Manager

Toni Gonzales- 9th Grade Case Manager

Francis Lando- 10th Grade Case Manager
and 504 Coordinator

Kristi Fausel- 11th and 12th Grade Case
Manager and Special Education Coordinator

Brian Fausel- Pull-Out Specialist

Patricia Richardson- Director of Special
Education

Ryan Brown- School Psychologist

Louisa Footman- Social Worker