

Special Needs or Special Privilege?

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Standard 3:

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Knowledge Indicator

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of legal issues impacting school operations

Dispositions Indicator

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to making management decisions to enhance learning and teaching

Performance Indicator

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- Problems are confronted and resolved in a timely manner
- Effective problem-framing and problem-solving skills are used
- Effective conflict resolution skills are used
- Effective communication skills are used

The Situation

It had been a calm but productive week at Advanced High School and Mrs. South was looking forward to the extended weekend. The last bell for the day had already rung and only a few teachers and the custodian remained as she worked to complete the remaining paperwork. The angry entrance of Mr. Washington, a veteran social studies teacher, broke the quietness of the office.

In a calm voice Mrs. South asks Mr. Washington what the problem seemed to be.

"I have had it with all of these special education students." Mr. Washington proceeded to tell her about the latest incident in his classroom.

A special education student had disrupted the class to the point teaching and learning could not take place. When the student was confronted about the problem she cursed at the instructor and refused to leave the classroom stating, "I have an IEP and you can't do anything to me."

Following the description of the incident in the classroom Mr. Washington stated: "Either they go or I do. Either way I will not have to deal with special education students again." At which point he stormed out of the office.

The Assignment

- List three areas of conflict in this situation.
- List the underlying legal issue with regard to PL94-142 that would impact any response by Mrs. South.
- A principal must strive to confront and resolve problems in a timely manner. With the information provided in the case, what should Mrs. South do next?
- A principal must show sensitivity to a variety of stakeholders. Identify three stakeholders and develop examples of possible responses from Mrs. South.

Instructor's Notes and Scoring Guide

For

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Issues in this case study

The intent of the author is to have the candidate/student understand the affect of decisions made on the operation of the school to ensure an effective learning environment. It is further the intent to have the candidate/student demonstrate the skills needed for effective communication in a confrontational situation.

Discussion

When should the needs of the individual out weigh the needs of the many? This case should cause the candidate/student to reflect on their personal beliefs with respect to equity in education. In addition this case should produce discussion with relationship to conflict management and effective internal communication.

Extended Learning Activities

The instructor may choose to extend the learning in one or more of the following ways:

- Have the student's role play a determination of placement meeting with the district special education administrator, parent, student, and teacher.
- Have the candidate/student develop a plan of action for meeting with the teacher the following week.
- Present past teacher performance evaluations of and disciplinary referrals form Mr. Washington for the purpose reviewing any patterns that may be of benefit to the principal's decision.
- Have the candidate/student explain how this type of incident may affect the overall climate and culture of the school.
- Have the candidate/student support this case study under another ISSLC Standard.
- Have candidates/students develop scoring guides in small groups based on a performance standard they identify.

Scoring Guide

Student responses to the case study may be assessed in one or more of the following areas: Sensitivity to all parties involved based on the issues of PL94-142/IDEA and a student's IEP.

- Knowledge of the student's right to an education vs. the teacher's right to teach and other student's right to an education.
- Knowledge of facilitating dialogues with the teacher, student, parent, and other administrators in the district.
- The affect on the teaching and learning environment as a result of the decision.

Score: 2

Response specifically cites the rights of a student currently being served by an Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.), identifies the possible areas of conflict and include at least one of the following:

- Meeting with parent, student and teacher to discuss the situation, possible disciplinary actions and review the current I.E.P. goals and objectives.

- Meeting with the teacher and special education coordinator to discuss alternative classroom management activities.

Score: 1

Response specifically cites one of the following:

- Rights of a student currently being served by an Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.).
- Meeting with parent, student and teacher to discuss the situation, possible disciplinary actions.
- Review of current Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.).
- Meeting with teacher and special education coordinator to discuss alternative classroom management activities.

Score: 0

Response is vague and does not address the student's Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.) or any of the essential factors or personnel needed to resolve the situation.

Alternate Scoring Guide

The instructor may choose to use individual questions in which case the use of a scoring guide for each question may be appropriate.

Question 1 Scoring Guide

Score: 2

Response specifically cites three areas of conflict. The areas may include teacher-student, teacher-administration, and administration-student. The response may also identify other areas of conflict such as parent-administration or parent-teacher.

Score: 1

Response specifically cites two areas of conflict.

Score: 0

Response does not cite any areas of conflict or may include one area that is unclear or vague.

Question 2 Scoring Guide

Score: 2

Response shows consistent and convincing evidence of an understanding of the legal implications of a student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) in the delivery of a free and appropriate education.

Score: 1

Response evidence of an understanding of the legal implications of a student's IEP, but is uneven in its explanation of the connection in the delivery of a free and appropriate education.

Score: 0

Response shows little or no evidence of a connection between the student's IEP and the delivery of a free and appropriate education.

Question 3 Scoring Guide

Score: 2

The response shows clear evidence of a plan to resolve the problem in a timely manner. The response includes at least one model of a conflict resolution process. Examples could include:

- "The Conflict Resolution Process" by Dudley Weeks see: www.qvctc.commnet.edu/classes/conflict/weeks.html
- "The H.K. Conflict Resolution Model" see <http://w1.312.telia.com/~u31205597>

Score: 1

The response shows clear evidence of a plan to resolve the problem in a timely manner, but fails to incorporate a model of conflict resolution.

Score: 0

The response fails to show any evidence of an attempt to solve the problem in a timely manner and does not include a model of conflict resolution.

Question 4 Scoring Guide

Score: 2

The response identifies three stakeholders and shows clear evidence of responses that demonstrate sensitivity to the stakeholder with regard to law and school policy. Stakeholders should include three of the following: student, teacher, parent, and administration/special education coordinator.

Score: 1

The response identifies two stakeholders and shows clear evidence of a response that demonstrates sensitivity to the stakeholder.

Score: 0

The response identifies one stakeholder or fails to identify any stakeholder. The response shows a lack of sensitivity or any regard to the law as it pertains to the education of students with identified handicapping conditions.