COLORADO
Department of Education

Guiding Principles About Specially Designed Instruction

The following foundational beliefs are of key importance as we work together to improve special education outcomes, services and Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) for our learners:

➢ Learners receiving special education services are general education learners first and always.
➢ Highly effective special education services and outcomes are dependent on highly effective Universal Instruction and a school-wide multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).
➢ Effective SDI is designed through collaboration between families and highly qualified educators.

➢ SDI is delivered by special education and general education teachers and professionals in various settings across the day.
➢ The Colorado Academic Standards implemented in high-quality early childhood settings should support assessment, design and delivery of SDI.
➢ Highly effective SDI flows from high quality, authentic and specific assessment information.
➢ SDI supports learners to use tools, materials and strategies to access the Colorado Academic Standards and reach grade-level aligned goals.
➢ SDI helps educators and families address children's unique needs that are a result of the individual's disability.
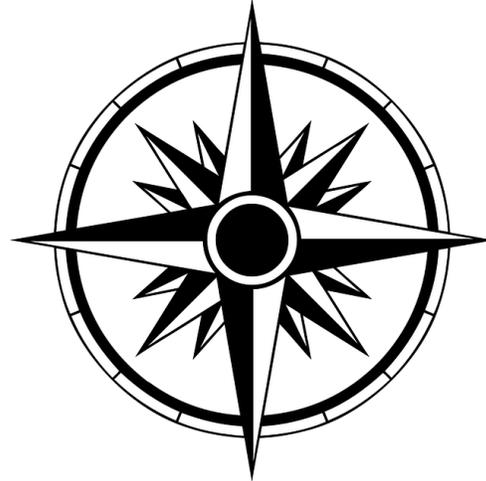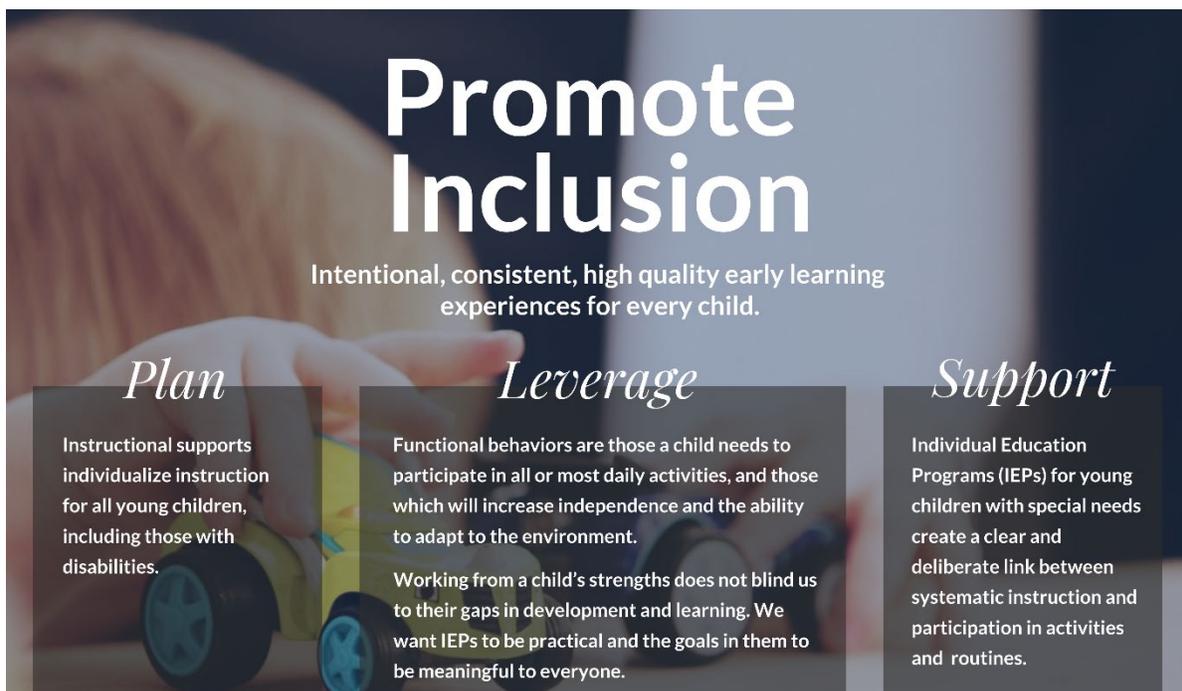
Promote Inclusion

Intentional, consistent, high quality early learning experiences for every child.

Plan

Instructional supports individualize instruction for all young children, including those with disabilities.

Leverage

Functional behaviors are those a child needs to participate in all or most daily activities, and those which will increase independence and the ability to adapt to the environment.

Working from a child's strengths does not blind us to their gaps in development and learning. We want IEPs to be practical and the goals in them to be meaningful to everyone.

Support

Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for young children with special needs create a clear and deliberate link between systematic instruction and participation in activities and routines.