

Principal Decision-Making for Students with Disabilities  
 OCPEA's OL14 Project  
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**Course Description:**

School leaders are responsible for creating a school culture that supports the learning of all students. The culture of the school environment through the actions of the adults and students ensures students are treated with dignity and respect regardless of race, religion, or special needs. This unit requires candidates to integrate their knowledge of school culture, vision, and decision-making with ethics, IDEA laws and procedures for a fair and equitable education for students.

**Course Objectives:**

<b>Outcomes</b> <i>As a result of this unit, students will:</i>	<b>Assessments</b>
Understand the roles and responsibilities of general education teachers, special education teachers, and teacher aides by sustaining a school culture and instructional programs conducive to student learning through collaboration, trust, and a personalized learning environment with high expectations for students. (ELCC 2.1)	Concepts maps in Lesson II.  Demonstrate a score on the post assessment indicating more success for this outcome than on the pre assessment for this outcome.
Resolve a simulation regarding a student with disabilities by complying with IDEA and promoting school-based policies and procedures that protect the welfare and safety of students and staff. (ELCC 3.3)	Written responses to instructional activity in Lesson I. Demonstrate a score on the post assessment indicating more success for this outcome than on the pre assessment for this outcome.
Act with integrity and fairness to ensure that schools are accountable for every student's academic and social success. (ELCC 5.1)	Demonstrate a score on the post assessment indicating more success for this outcome than on the pre assessment for this outcome.
Evaluate the potential moral and legal consequences of decision-making in the school when there are no easy answers. (ELCC 5.4)	Demonstrate a score on the post assessment indicating more success for this outcome than on the pre assessment for this outcome.
Advocate for school students, families, and caregivers by gathering pertinent information to address the needs of the student. (ELCC 6.1)	Demonstrate a score on the post assessment indicating more success for this outcome than on the pre assessment for this outcome.

## Resources:

Smith, Stuart C. (2006). *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence in Student Learning*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Etscheidt, S. (February 2006). Behavioral Intervention Plans: Pedagogical and Legal Analysis of Issues. *Behavior Disorders*, 31 (2), 223-243.

## Instructional Activities:

### I. Introduction

#### 1. Pre-Assessment

Candidates participate in the Simulation for the Special Education Scenario.

<http://ol14.utoledo.edu/>, scores are provided.

#### 2. KWL

Engage students in a KWL about how the problem as they experienced it within the simulation.

What do you know about this situation?

- a. *What information about special education do you already know that helped you understand the problem?*
- b. *What information about leadership do you already know that helped you understand the problem?*
- c. *What information about special education did you already know that helped you solve the problem?*
- d. *What information about leadership did you already know that helped you solve the problem?*

What do you want to know about this situation?

- a. *What are the questions you have about the problem?*
- b. *What are the questions that need to be answered to understand and solve the problem?*

What did you learn?

- a. *Return to this question at the end of the unit.*

### II. Lesson 1

#### 1. Legal Mandates for Behavior Intervention for students with an IEP

- a. Read the article; Etscheidt, S. (February 2006). Behavioral Intervention Plans: Pedagogical and Legal Analysis of Issues. *Behavior Disorders*, 31 (2), 223-243 and answer the following questions:

- i. Compare the legal decisions identified in the article with the situation presented in the simulation. Which cases assist with developing the principal's understanding in order to address the issue presented in the simulation?
    - ii. What questions must the principal consider with regard to Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) before taking any action?
    - iii. What information still needs to be gathered in order to address the situation?
  - b. Review the information regarding least restrictive environment and inclusion at [Wrightslaw.com](http://Wrightslaw.com).
    - i. What are some options the principal should consider when approaching teachers in the solution of the issue presented in the simulation?

### III. Lesson 2

- 1. Influence of school culture and vision on the actions of the principal
  - a. Read chapter 7 Visionary Leadership in Smith (2006) *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence in Student Learning*, 4 ed. Create a concept map illustrating the principles of visional leadership.
  - b. Read chapter 8 Cultural Leadership in Smith (2006) *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence in Student Learning*, 4 ed. Create a concept map illustrating the principles of visionary leadership.
  - c. Respond to the following:
    - i. What is the intersection between culture and vision?
    - ii. What are the principal's responsibilities for culture and vision with regard to decision-making?
    - iii. What are ethical dilemmas a principal is faced with when considering culture, vision, and IDEIA legislation?

### IV. Lesson 3

- 1. Using models of decision-making to account for multiple factors in the process.
  - i. Read the article The Top 10 Tips to Make Effective Decisions by Doris Kovic located at <http://ezinearticles.com/?10-Steps-to-Making-Better-Decisions&id=2658733>
  - ii. Respond to the first nine steps using the information from the simulation and the readings from this unit.
- 2. Ask students to compare their responses to each of the nice sections of the decision process.

### V. Post Assessment:

1. Students participate in the Special Education Simulation:

<http://ol14.utoledo.edu/> Receive score.

Debrief using KWL format:

- a. What have you learned about special education in understanding and solving both simulations?
- b. What have you learned about leadership to understand and solve the simulations?
- c. What have you learned with regard to a process for decision-making?