WHAT ARE SOME IDENTIFIED DISABILITIES OF STUDENTS WITH IEPS THAT YOU MIGHT SEE IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

“A person who never made a mistake, never learned anything new.”

- Albert Einstein

So you have a student with an IEP in your classroom. You look at the IEP and see a marked box under the qualifying disability. What does that mean? Here are four common types of identified disabilities that you might see in your classroom:

1. Many people with autism have difficulty with sensory processing. This may include sensitivity to sound, light, taste, and touch. Be aware of these sensitivities to maintain a safe learning environment for your student.

2. There is not one type of autism, but many subtypes. Each person with autism has unique challenges and strengths.

3. Some children may display repetitive behaviors or obsessions with topics or objects.

4. Autism can affect communication & social skills. This doesn’t mean they have limitations however! We have many ways to overcome these difficulties.

1 in 59 of all children are diagnosed as autistic. ASDs are 4 times more common in boys than in girls.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Do not confuse "disability" with low cognitive functioning. Most students with an identified disability process or learn differently. This doesn’t mean they are not able to learn or be successful. Break the cycle of alienation that many of our students with IEPs feel. Remember, every student is OUR student.

Source: autismspeaks.org
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

This can affect the ability to: speak, write, read, listen, spell, do math calculations, and results from a variety of factors which include memory issues, hearing or visual disabilities, processing, etc.

Dyslexia is ONE TYPE of specific learning disorder. Screenings for dyslexia should be given to all students in grades kindergarten and up. Not one specific test is used to identify dyslexia. A number of characteristics, including deficits in phonological processing, can identify someone as having dyslexia.

For more information, read the California Dyslexia Guidelines at: https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf

If you suspect a student has a potential learning disability, collect samples of work that show evidence of learning difficulties and share these with an expert at your school site.

Experts include: school psychologists, speech language pathologists, and special education teachers. They might offer some suggestions on strategies that can be used in your classroom with that child. If learning difficulties still persist, call for a Student Success Team meeting to discuss additional documented interventions that student might need. At this meeting, a special education assessment might be discussed. You might also talk with the parent to find out if the child has a history of learning difficulties. Be supportive and positive in those discussions.

A multi-tiered system of supports that provides additional interventions is oftentimes the most appropriate remedy to assist a child with learning difficulties without needing to assess for Special Education identification. School districts must be careful not to over-identify students.

Qualifying a child for special education also does not mean removing them from your classroom. Many students with IEPs can be successful in the general education classroom with the right supports and services.
Other Health IMPAIRED (OHI)

- 7.5 million people in the U.S. have trouble using their voices
- 9% of all young children have a speech disorder.
- 3 million people stutter in the U.S.
- 6-8 million people in the U.S. have a language impairment of some type.

Language impairments can affect sounds, articulation, the ability to express oneself or the ability to understand verbal communication.

97,426 identified California students in 2017-2018

Limited strength or has some heightened alertness to environmental stimuli

acute or chronic health conditions - asthma, ADHD, Tourettes, to name a few

adversely affects a student's performance in the classroom