

ALL Means ALL

Port Townsend School District's Mindset Transformation
2018-2021

Sandy Gessner, Senior Strategy Officer for Educational Equity OESD114

Jennifer Acuna, Director of Special Education, OESD114

Shelby MacMeekin, Director of Special Services, Port Townsend School District

The Original Idea from Dr. John Polm

Rates for Special Education referrals and students with IEPs are high as is the amount of funding the district spends over the state allocation for special education. In addition, student outcomes are not improving. And there is not a comprehensive and articulated general education curriculum at the core level.

Find someone who has experience with both teaching and learning and special education and hire them as the assistant superintendent to address these issues

Dr. Polm contacted me:

Former Bremerton School District principal of an elementary school with extensive special education programs whose school team implemented RTI and PBIS with success.

The Basics: WHY Do We Do What We Do and For Whom?

What is special about Special Education? What is the intended purpose of IDEA?

What do the Special Education teachers think needs improvement?

What are general education teachers seeking when they refer students for testing?

What data or evidence is being collected and analyzed to determine if an evaluation is warranted?

What interventions are being tried prior to referral for evaluation? (Title/LAP/SPED)

What does the core curriculum (Tier 1) look like? Does it align to grade level standards?

What are the outcomes for students with IEPs? (Progress towards IEP Goals & graduation outcomes)

What is SDI? Really, what is it? And what happens to it after elementary school?

And why does everyone have a one-to-one para?

Exploring Beliefs and Accepted Practices

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Relationship between Evaluations and IEPs

IEP PLOPs and Goals

Lots of Professional Learning- OESD, Other SPED Directors, OSPI, Smart Center, etc.

Progress Monitoring

Para Support

Grade Level Standards & CC Essential Elements

Parent complaints: Acknowledge and Do Better

Standard Operating Procedures (Binder) and Agreements, Ex: IEPs due one week prior to IEP meeting for review, feedback on IEPs, and revisions. Every IEP Child Find Ready

Para Training and Binder

GENERAL EDUCATION

What is the core curriculum?

What data or evidence do we have that it is working?

What are interventions?

Who provides interventions?

What about accommodations & modifications? Who owns this?

Who is getting what?

What is the impact?

Who does the system work for?

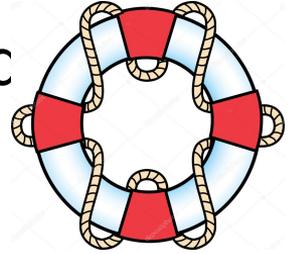
Child Find obligations and Using data to determine needs.

Why we should look at building a system with tiered support so everyone can get what they need?

Who is on board with the work?

My Life Line: Jennifer Acuna, Director of Special Ec

OESD 114



Examining the culture and posing questions

Teacher accountability and follow-through (setting standards for behavior and giving the tools needed to get there)

Reading IEPs with Feedback (outcome driven, not just compliance)

What is SDI?

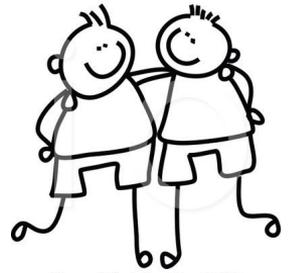
Deeper dive and intentional professional development

What was the intent of Special Education?

Questioning practices with paras!!!!

Can this be done a different way? Compassion means building capacity toward independence not just putting an adult on the problem.

My Co-Conspirator: Shelby MacMeekin, Assistant Principal at Elementary and Title/Lap Director



©Prawny * illustrations01.com/215616

Change the language

Change the models

Providing services in parallel to core

Students didn't need an IEP to get support

Student of Concerns and MDT

Dedicated Intervention Time

Moved from Paras providing intervention to certificated teachers

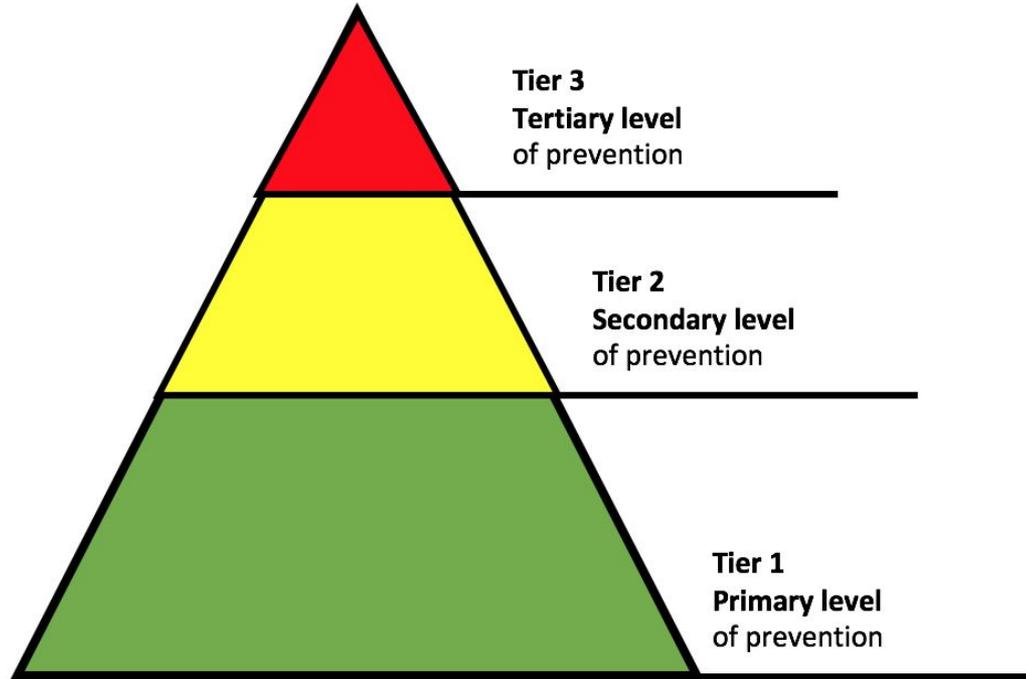
Shifting Culture: Growth Mindset & Strengths Based

Biggest focus was at the elementary school

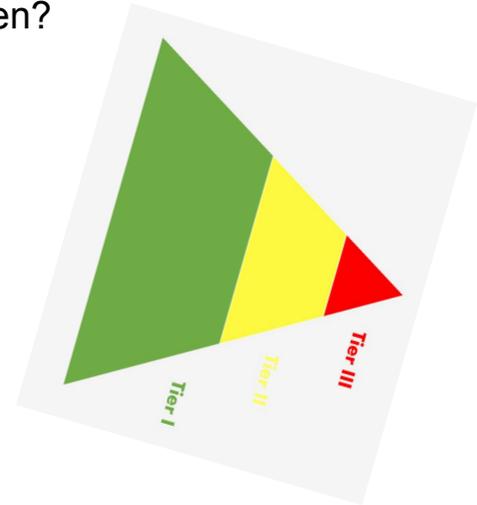
Core program was not reaching 80% of our students- which moved us towards core curriculum adoption

Work is not completed- reiterative and daily

Stakeholders: The Superintendent and the School Board



Is our core instructional program reaching 80% of our students?
Who is the system working for?
And for whom is the system broken?



Rock Stars: Glenna Gallo, OSPI Assistant Superintendent Special Education Services and Lee Collyer, Program Supervisor and Liason for OESD114



Building a Stronger System: Our Measures of Success

Number of students receiving interventions increased prior to SPED Eval- Increase from 80 to 210 at our Elementary

Expenditures decreased by 13.25% (\$477,849)

Safety Net Awards increased

Intervention and Enhancement Block Established

SDI Improved

Access to the instructional core increased for all students with IEPs

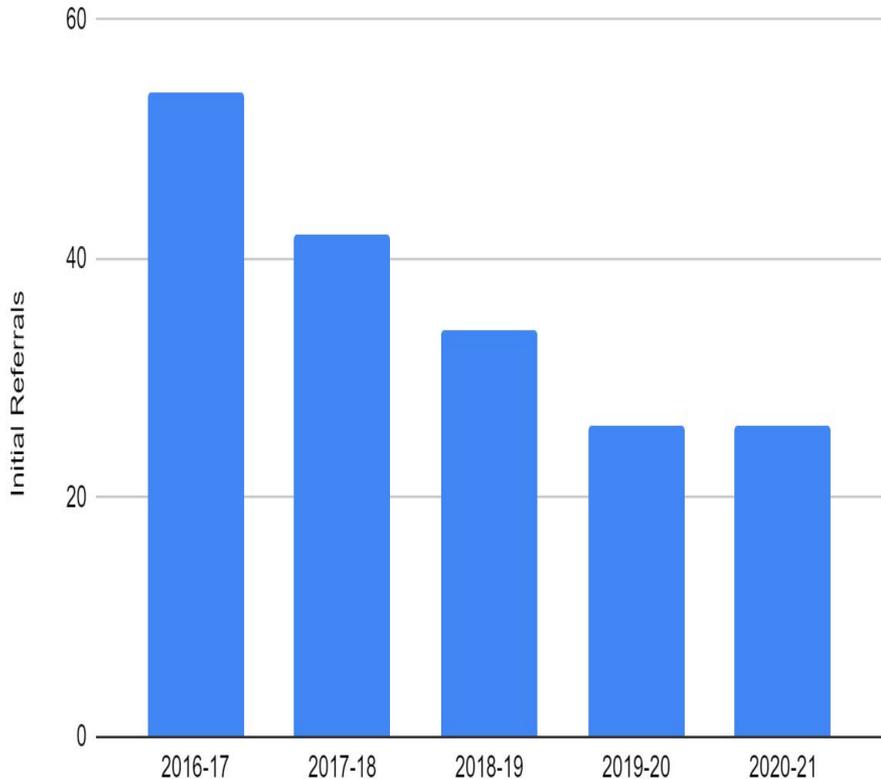
Number of Referrals Decreased by over 52% (Initial Referrals 54-42-34-26)

LRE data increased (2018, 2019, 2020) 80%+ in General Education Setting 82.4%, 85.4%, 85.5%

Moved from SOC model to a systems model for grade level and cohorts at secondary level (MTSS)

No finish line, but a constant process

Initial Referrals



- Better Interventions
- Focus on Student Need Rather than Label
- Fewer DNQ evaluations
- More Data Provided as a part of the evaluation process
- Number of SLD qualifications followed same trend downward
- These numbers included both the elementary and secondary levels

Perpetual Gratitude...

Be grateful for the little changes because over time it all adds up.

Keep your superintendent, assistant superintendent, and Board informed- Make sure they know the “why.”

Be tenacious and don't give up. Find and support those staff members who know things need to change.

Send all SPED Directors that do this work on a paid Hawaiian Vacation

Keep learning along the way and invite others to learn with you

Know the body of research that supports this work- you don't have to make it up- over 20 years in the making

Look for others doing the same work and make connections~ technical proficiency and heart and soul

Get to know a range of students and their needs then track their progress over time. Be their champion until they walk across the graduation stage ready for career, college, meaningful engagement and self-efficacy.

Show gratitude to those in your life who will support you in this journey. Let them know that they are essential.

Laugh with your team and supporters often- big belly laughs and help others laugh too.