Successful Implementation of 504 Plans: What are the Common Elements?

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Abstract
The objective of this qualitative research was to study the implementation of successful 504 Plans. Five students were determined to have successful plans based on parent and teacher perceptions as well as school achievement. The parents, teachers, administrators, and five students with successful 504 Plans participated in this study. Findings determined that there were four common factors in successful 504 Plans: communication, parental involvement, necessary accommodations, and student's willingness to work. Other factors unique to some of the cases (extended family, support services, and medication) also played a role in the success some students achieved.

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Conversely, neither the 504 plans nor the IEP plans fall under the laws which are a part of No Child Left Behind. Rather, they have been around since the 1970s, when certain congressional acts were put into place. The 504 Plan. The 504 refers specifically to the Rehabilitation Act’s 504th section. Congress passed this Act in the early 1970s. Notably however, 504 plans promote only equal access. That means that educational progress does not necessarily have to be made. So, a child with a disability is allowed the same accommodations, and the same access to educational opportunities as a child who does not have disabilities. However, having a 504 in place does not require the school to ensure that he or she progress academically. • Common elements of P–3 programs included the use of professional learning communities (PLCs), coaches, parent engagement, and play-based or student-initiated learning. • Although only one site was explicitly nominated for the study for its differentiated instruction approach, teachers in all five programs reported using strategies to accommodate students’ different skill levels, including modifying assignments, adapting learning materials, providing different levels of support, or using small-group instruction. • What were the findings from studies of differentiated instruction for children in kindergarten and first grade, and what was the quality of these studies? Case Studies. • What approaches did the five programs use to implement P–3 alignment?