

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE _ CASE WORKER:

Purpose: This interview questionnaire is to prepare the candidate for a video recording when answering these questions on camera.

When answering these questions, keep it brief about 1- 2 minutes per question.

Interview Candidate: Ms. Niemi

Interview Scheduled For: November 23, 2023

1. What is your title? Do students and their families call you a case worker, resource teacher or is there another title that's more appropriate?

I have several titles: Learning Support Teacher, Resource Teacher and Case Manager to name a few. All of these titles suggest a professional who specializes with giving individualized support to students. There are slight differences in the roles.

In our school, a LST runs a classroom where any student (not just those with a designation) can attend and receive support. LSTs typically have smaller class sizes, and they complete report cards for the students in their class.

A RT often supports other teachers with students in their classroom by providing expertise on adapting assignments. They often work directly with students one-on-one or in small groups.

A Case Manager is someone who manages education plans for students with designations. Case Managers can work closely with the kids on their caseload, though at the high school level, there are instances where students with designations don't require regular support.

2. What is your role as a person who is assigned to a student who needs an IEP?

My role is to support the student with their academic needs and to guide them in creating an IEP that will outline the accommodations that they may require in various classes. IEPs need to be updated every year, and reports are written by Case Managers twice every year to monitor student progress.

3. How can an IEP be beneficial for a student with learning challenges like those with dyslexia?

First of all, an IEP can help a student's teachers to gain a better understanding of how to support them so they can be successful in their class. An IEP is a blueprint that shows how to meet the unique needs of students, and in this case, a student with dyslexia. It provides recommended accommodations, such as extended time for assignments or assessments and access to audiobooks or text-to-speech software.

4. How does an IEP get developed (do you write it or is it a collaboration between parties)?

In elementary, an IEP is primarily written by a Case Manager in collaboration with the parents of a student. In high school, students are encouraged to play a significant role in writing their IEP.

5. What are some examples of accommodations that could go in an IEP to help a student with Dyslexia ?

- Allow additional time for assignments or assessments that involve reading and writing.
- Allow access to audiobooks or text-to-speech software as well as word processors.
- Provide a copy of notes (avoid copying notes).
- Allow alternate methods for demonstrating learning (oral conferences).
- Allow for a separate quiet setting to work, free of distractions.
- Provide visuals and read instructions aloud whenever possible.
- Use larger font for handouts.
- Avoid calling on a student with dyslexia to read aloud in class.

6. Who has access to the document (School District, Case Worker, Parent, Student, Teacher)? What purpose does the document have for each of the people who have access to the information?

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The school district officials typically don't review the IEP, but they will determine the level of funding to allocate to schools of kids with certain designations.

Staff will access the IEP mostly to see the recommended adaptations. Students and parents can also use this to advocate for the recommended adaptations.

7. Is it common to see a student's IEP change from year to year?

It is more common in elementary school and middle school more than in high school. Typically, IEPs will change when a student has experienced changes in behaviour, skills, etc. For example, once a student has mastered a particular goal, they may decide to focus on a new goal in the following year.

8. What tips do you have for students who are newly diagnosed with a learning challenge when working with their assigned person after an IEP is created?

Spend as much time with your case manager as possible. This will allow them to get to know you and to understand you better as a learner, which will enable them to support you more effectively.

Talk with your case manager about any challenges that you are experiencing in class. Often, they can help you advocate for changes to approaches being used that can allow you to experience more success.

9. Do you have tips or suggestions on how students can advocate for themselves with their classroom teachers?

This can be scary for many students, particularly when they get a new teacher. It is often easiest to start with an email or Teams message to introduce yourself and make the initial contact. Briefly outline your designation and some specific challenges that prevent you from experiencing success. It is beneficial to connect face-to-face as well and try to establish a regular line of communication with your teachers.