

RoadMap



Learning Knows No Bounds

(Individualization, 2023)

**To Funding for Special Education
Programs, to ensure a better environment
for all**

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Introduction

Children with disabilities have been unable to participate in extracurricular activities, after school or off school property because of the lack of funding towards the program as a whole. Classrooms also typically modify items in the classroom, rather than consider the children's unseen sensory needs, which is why it is important to understand what specific materials are important to each child. **(Patel et al. 2022)** It is important for these children to feel included by their own peers and environment, rather than feeling separated. This toolkit is created to highlight the importance of special needs education in a fully inclusive setting, all children want to be and feel included in and outside of the classroom, there is no conclusive evidence of the benefits of segregated education. **(Rangvid, 2019)** The goal of this toolkit is to provide equal opportunities for children In all settings.

The Vision

The vision is that more funding will be available for special education programs for students with diverse learning needs, creating an inclusive environment and giving each individual a chance to excel in extracurriculars with the help of more resources and tools in the classroom.

The Teachers:

The vision is that educational assistants will get the pay they deserve. Some children's needs are not being met because of the lack of funds for the program. With more Educational assistants in the classroom, children will feel more comfortable and safe in this environment.

The Classroom:

The vision for the classroom is that more supplies and tools can be purchased with these funds. The vision is that these classrooms will provide more of a friendly environment with the inclusion of not only more students but also more access to materials and supplies throughout the classroom. The end goal in the classroom is to ensure that all children get equal opportunities to participate and learn.

The Individuals:

The vision for the students is that they all get a fair chance to excel in education. Our vision is to fund more EAS to support each student's IEP and provide a safer space for each individual to help them succeed. The vision is that students will have the option of extracurriculars.



Three Key Strategies

Individuality and Collaboration strategy

- Children with special needs are able to experience new opportunities, which allows them to determine their strengths and weaknesses.

Networking strategy

- educating others on the importance of funding for children with special needs.

Ministry funding strategy

- Advocating to the ministry of education to allow the special education program to provide more extra curricular activities



(Resilient Educator, 2013)

When advocating for extra funding for children with special needs, it can be broken down into three strategies to further understand how funding can positively change the learning environment for some students.

1. Individuality and Collaboration Strategy.

Goal: funding for children with special needs to feel more confident in and outside of the classroom

Inclusivity in the classroom has become more common, allowing all children to be comfortable and confident in the classroom. However, children with special needs are still being excluded or separated through extracurricular activities. Children with special needs also require the resources and tools to participate in activities in and outside of the classroom. Children with special needs deserve the opportunity to engage and partake in activities that all their peers participate in. Teachers' acceptance of children with special needs varies in a regular classroom depending on the level of the child's needs. (Lee et al. 2015)

Children with more specific and demanding special needs do not attract support as quickly as children with less demanding special needs. With the funding necessary, children will be able to participate in more sports/extracurricular activities, and there will also be more opportunities for inclusivity in the classroom.

2. Networking Strategy.

Goal: Educate others on the importance of funding for special education, through other forms rather than media

Individuals have become more involved on the topic of the importance of funding for children with special education. There are other ways for people to get involved and become aware of the ongoing issues within the special education programs. Other people can get or become involved through workshops, through workshops people can learn specific instructions, as well as learn how to eliminate barriers to improve children's overall participation. (Fuente et al. 2021) workshops/ courses are free of charge which may be more appealing to those who are interested in learning. An example of a free course is "an ultimate course of learning disability and dyslexia" There are more examples of paid or free courses on the Udemy Business website, this is one of many ways to provide individuals with knowledge about children with special needs and developmental disabilities.



(Clipartmax, 2019)



3. Ministry Funding

Strategy.

Goal: To eventually reach the ministry of education to advocate for more extra-curricular opportunities for children with special needs

The main organization involved in the funding for special education is the ministry of education. To advocate for more extra-curricular opportunities for children with special needs, the ministry of education would have to support the movement and provide the funds necessary to make changes. It is important to note that we must advocate for higher pay for educational assistants in order to provide children with the opportunity of extra-curricular activities after school hours. Educational assistants are off the clock after school hours and they are not legally required to stay as they do not receive pay and are instead just volunteering their time. (J. DeMaeyer, personal communication, March, 24, 2024).

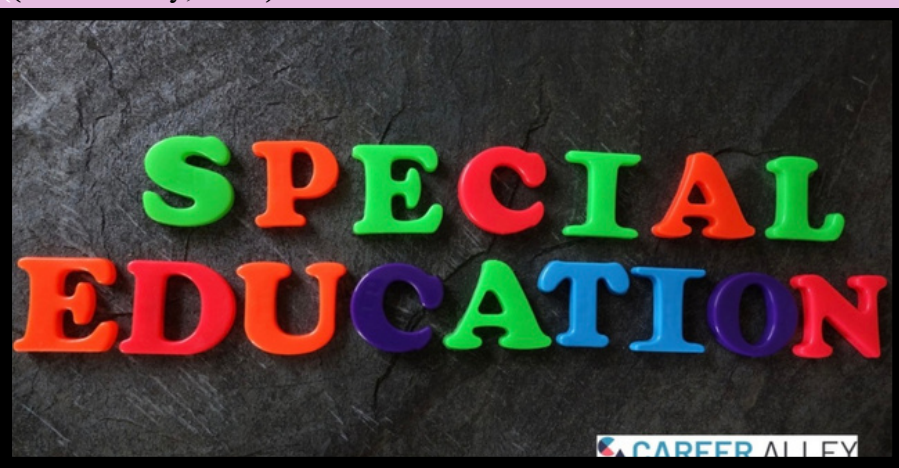
SPECIAL EDUCATION



TIPS, TRICKS & SECRETS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION @ MRS. H'S RESOURCE ROOM

(Education Quote, 2018)

(CareerAlley, 2024)



Social Media

Discussion

Post



How will you capture your message in a way that can be easily shared and accessible?

Social media is one of the best ways to bring awareness or attention to the public. Currently, TikTok is one of the best and most popular ways to bring attention to different age groups on the same platform. Influencer marketing is a great way to convey knowledge about certain topics. (Haenlein et al, 2020) TikTok is a platform where users can create an account, and videos can range from 10 seconds to 10 minutes. TikTok has a homepage where you can keep scrolling through videos, and the content of others will be displayed. Through TikTok, videos spread across the whole platform by using hashtags and popular songs and reposting others' videos in just a couple of seconds of a post. Using TikTok to show the advocacy behind funding for special education makes it convenient and accessible for all.



How can you use social media to bring awareness to your topic or issue?

TikTok provides a platform where content can be easily accessed to bring positive awareness. Its app allows individuals to share information and provide real-time updates.

TikTok reaches the target audience as more people enter the field of education; younger generations are familiar with TikTok and use it daily. Therefore, it is an excellent social media platform to inform future teachers and educational assistants of current problems.

It allows users to follow any story and access information at any time. TikTok can bring awareness to the topic by learning about what individuals need and want from a comment on a video. Tiktok videos are also found as reels on other social media platforms, i.e., Facebook and Instagram, so this is another example of how Tiktok is a good social media platform. (Haenlein et al, 2020) Hearing the needs of others through each video brings greater public awareness of the issues that need to be changed. TikTok can bring awareness to billions of people, as these videos tend to circulate through many groups of people.



Policy Connections

The first step in advocating for these funds would be to talk with EAS, families and individuals to get them involved. A union representative would be the second step in seeking more funding. The union representative is there to back up and give advice on any contracts and money affecting the individuals of the school. This would then be taken to the principal, who would contact the school board's superintendent. The superintendent will provide us with further information on how to proceed and how to reach the goals we are advocating for. At this point in time, we would also get in contact with our local MPP to share the ideas and concerns that are currently taking place and further inform them on a solution, taking in their ideas. The superintendent is there to guide the direction of the Ministry of Education further, where they would work with the premier to share ideas and thoughts and work towards a solution for extra funding for special education. (Government of Ontario, 2024).

Individuals can advocate for special education funding in many different ways. Making others more aware of the issue can spark interest and create the possibility of provoking a solution. Fundraising is one of the biggest ways to get communities involved and to spread awareness. This can include non-profit fundraising, raffles, information centers, relay for lifes, and Terry Fox runs. Talking about special education with others, and using the networking strategy allows individuals to grow their knowledge and understanding of the lack of funding in the special education programs. Social media is one of the best ways to raise awareness and advocate for any important topic. The media is a tool that can easily be spread around and get messages across many different platforms, reaching a huge audience. By posting, liking or sharing other social media posts, you can help raise awareness of special education funding issues. The end goal is to take this issue to the provincial government or the Ministry of Education to ensure that this issue becomes more of a pressing concern and becomes a priority rather than a what-if.

How can you contribute?

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