



## Ongoing Staff Support

### Why Ongoing Staff Support?

High Quality Early Childhood Special Education is challenging but certainly possible with the provision of sufficient support to staff. New staff will enter the system, new children will be enrolled, new teams will be formed, new challenges will be encountered, and new research will uncover new information.

We can never know it all!

### Who Needs Ongoing Support?

Basically, everyone needs ongoing support.

- Orientation for new staff (general education and special education) to address the unique aspect of working in high quality inclusive classrooms will build a foundation.
- Continuous support will ensure current knowledge and fidelity in practices.

### Strategies to Provide Ongoing Staff Support

Staff needs should determine the type and extent of support. Ongoing professional development in the form of workshops or trainings are helpful in that they can provide a large amount of information to many people at the same time. Joint trainings with special education and general education staff should be a regular part of the agenda.

However, for that information to be translated into usable skills and practices, workshops need to be followed up by a number of different strategies such as:

- Coaching which identifies needs through self-assessment and classroom observations to inform and guide the coaching relationship.
- Mentorship through which an experienced teacher/therapist/administrator acts as an advisor
- Regular conversations either during a standing agenda item for staff meetings or a Professional Learning Community

- Collaboration through regularly scheduled communication between special and regular education teachers to address and support children's needs is another critical component for delivering effective inclusive practices.
- Supervision

#### Possible topics to increase practitioner skills:

- Universal Design, adaptations, assistive technology
- Individualized Curriculum & Instruction
- Team collaboration
- Embedding instruction during typical classroom routines and activities
- Intentional use of peer modeling
- Data collection and review