Redefining Success: Supporting All Students to Reach Their Full Potential

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www.astrokeofluck.net

Goals

- Share our journey.
- Help you understand what it feels like to “walk” in the shoes of a student with special needs.
- Support you to make a comprehensive plan for overcoming barriers for each and every student.

How it all started...

- “Normal” child
- Excellent student
- Artist and Musician
I was in pain
I was physically disabled and in a wheelchair
Then I had a stroke during surgery in February 2010
I was physically and mentally disabled

I was determined to get my life back!
I had to relearn everything
I have a great attitude

Here’s a perspective that might be new to you...
What I need people to know:

- Ghost Syndrome
- Impact on Behavioral Management

Here’s what I think you should know

You’ll need to imagine yourself as me...

Social Interactions
Here’s what I think you should know

You’ll need to imagine yourself as me…

Academics  Social Interactions

What does this mean for educators?

Academics

How to prioritize helped me to rethink RtI…

- What do you do when students are very far behind?
  - We have a few choices:
    - Focus on basic facts
    - Reteach everything
    - Focus on prerequisites and teach for understanding
Academics

How to prioritize helped me rethink RtI…

- What we did
  - Used context to make sense of operations.
  - Focused on fact strategies.
  - Used place value and strategies based on properties of operations constantly.

She was determined to get her life back!

- She had to relearn everything

Consider the following problems:

Jessica has 8 key chains. Calvin has 9 key chains. How many key chains do they have all together?

Jessica has 8 key chains. Alex has 15 key chains. How many more key chains does Alex have than Jessica?
Now consider this problem:

Jessica has 8 key chains. How many more key chains does she need to have 13 key chains all together?

Alex had a long way to go…

2,368 + 5,795

- Eventually Alex needed to compute problems like this.
- What would you do?
- What would you expect Alex to do?
- How does what she did compare?

What happens when we get to multiplication?

- Multiply 4 x 127
What happens when we get to high school?

- What do we do when students don’t remember?
- Alex was working on her summer math assignment before geometry and she couldn’t remember. Notice how she made sense of mathematics.

What happens when we get to high school?

- Solve $x + 91 = 146$

What comes to mind when you think of students with disabilities?
What does it mean to be gifted?

“Some gifted children with exceptional aptitude may not demonstrate outstanding levels of achievement due to environmental circumstances such as limited opportunities to learn as a result of poverty, discrimination, or cultural barriers; due to physical or learning disabilities; or due to motivational or emotional problems. This dichotomy between potential for and demonstrated achievement has implications for schools as they design programs and services for gifted students.”

- National Association for Gifted Children

How are you supporting high achievers with disabilities?

Be strategic and inclusive

Reaching success means reaching our full potential.

Don’t let high achievers fall into the abyss.

Plan ahead for assessment.

Adapt the situation to the disability.

A Stroke of Luck: A Girl’s Second Chance at Life

Given a second chance at life – Alex Dixon took it.

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