

**PRINCIPLE**

**Coordination and collaboration among families, teachers, and specialists become crucial in supporting the language and literacy development of children with disabilities or other special needs.**

Communication between teachers and families is crucial in serving all children more effectively, especially when children have unique needs. In such cases coordination and collaboration between teachers and families are necessary supports for the child.

**PRACTICES**

- Determine with the family what their language use and preferences are. Develop a plan to support the family's goals while addressing goals for the classroom and for IFSP and IEP language.
- Vary and adapt the amount of adult guidance according to children's abilities so that each child is in charge of his or her own learning as much as possible.
- Connect learning goals and activities with local and state curriculum and standards.
- Use all the senses (vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) when introducing and presenting vocabulary and other concepts.
- Provide multiple opportunities for children with disabilities to interact with their peers in English and their home language.
- Model for students ways to interact with and assist classmates who have disabilities.
- Use physical gestures, signed words, visual cues, and props when the actual item is not an option (or pair the actual item with one or more of the cues) to promote successful communication in English and the children's home languages.
- Implement the use of technology (e.g., computers, voice output devices, switch-operated toys) throughout the classroom as another means of supporting student learning.
- Offer adapted or specialized materials (e.g., recorded books, Braille books and other printed material, large and bold print, adapted handles on various materials) throughout the classroom to enhance active participation.
- Make appropriate environmental changes (e.g., color contrast in materials, good lighting, reduced noise level, comfortable seating, and work spaces) to support children's learning.