

How to Get Ready for Your First Year of Teaching in a Self-Contained Classroom*

A Checklist

I. Get to know your students

- Read and re-read the IEP's
- Review testing data and progress notes
- Mark calendar for IEP and re-evaluation dates
- Make a list of accommodations for each student
- Make a list of services for each student
- Meet the general education teachers
- Make sure everyone working with a student has a copy of their IEP
- Prepare all assistive technology, get training if necessary

II. Layout your classroom, considering following criteria

- Large group instruction
- Small group instruction
- 1:1 instruction
- Assigned seats vs. unassigned sets
- Quiet area and/or reading/book area
- Safety
- Computers
- Parking for wheelchairs, walkers, etc.
- Cubbies
- Desks
- Supply storage

III. Cover wall and hall space

- Visuals
- Calendar
- Rules of the classroom
- Instructional visuals (alphabet, number line)
- Thematic bulletin boards
- Place visuals at a level where you and students can interact with them
- Emergency information (fire, hurricane, tornado drill instructions)
- Door



IV. Build a community

- Meet with assistants
- Meet with other special education teachers
- Begin to organize students into group based on educational and behavioral needs
- Write a letter introducing yourself to parents, provide your contact information (do not give your cellphone number).

V. Communicate with and special requests for parents

- Make a list of required school supplies to be provided by parents
- Decide how you will communicate with parents
- Decide if you will require parents to send a snack each day

* Refer to blog at post for details on each item