Supporting 2eASD Students: Exploring the Impact of Professional Learning on Teacher Practices

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https://bit.ly/4bjFtzR

Who is here?

Elementary

Secondary

Post secondary

The whole shebang

Agenda

- 2e Research
- Project 2eASD overview
- Strength-based strategies
- **Ask yourself:**
  - How do you think adapting a strengths-based approach could change the dynamics of your classroom? What challenges or opportunities do you foresee?
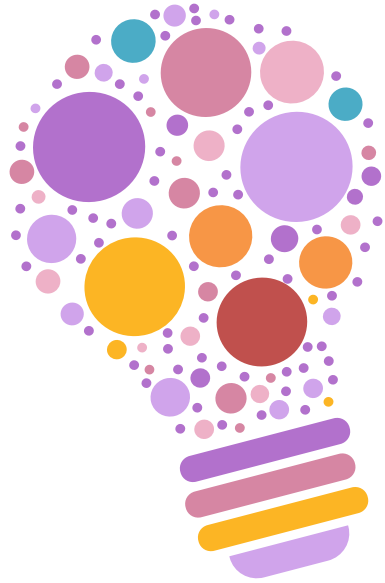
Overview of prior
2e research

- Increasing prevalence in number of students with ASD (NCES, 2022)

- Increasing educator and researcher awareness of students exhibiting gifts/talents also identified with ASD (Maenner et al., 2021; Reis et al. 2021)

- Minimal research focused on how best to support academic growth and talent development

- Both ASD and giftedness/talented are diverse in nature and occur on a spectrum (Gelbar et al., 2022) creating unique profiles and educational needs.
- Teachers are often gatekeepers for identification and participation programs and/or services
  - Their expectations and judgements may influence their own behavior and their students' performance and behavior (Rubie-Davies, 2010; Südkamp et al., 2012; Timmermans et al., 2015)

- 40 2eASD successful students in competitive colleges
- 25 2eASD high school students participated in a 2-week college-prep summer program
- 147 college accessibility services personnel

- Professional Learning Video Modules

Challenges Encountered

Negative teacher interactions

Peer challenges

Poor self-esteem and lack of confidence

Anxiety and depression

Inappropriate (remedial) special education programs

- Retention/self-contained classes
- Enrollment in less challenging classes

Professional Learning Modules

- Part 1: Introduction (6:42)
- Part 2: Elementary and High School Experiences (12:44)
- Part 3: Preparing for Academic Success (13:35)
- Part 4: Navigating College Life (13:43)
- Part 5: Summary (6:15)

Available free of charge at
https://giftedasd.project.uconn.edu/

Identification of these students
can be particularly challenging

Understanding Strengths-Based Education for 2e Students

- Effective teaching for 2e students should focus on fostering students' academic interests and strengths (Reis et al., 2022)
- Dual differentiation (Baum et al., 2001): identifying and nurturing individual strengths rather than focusing solely on weaknesses.
- By recognizing and building upon strengths, educators can foster a more positive and empowering learning environment.

Understanding Strengths: Walter

However, I've been told different definitions of what it [ASD] means, and I think some are better than others. I always knew that I was smart. I didn't feel smart in high school – sometimes I have a voice in my ear that tells me I am not smart.

Utilizing Interest Inventories

- Interest inventories help educators understand students' passions, preferences, and areas of curiosity.

- Tools provide valuable insights into students' intrinsic motivations and can guide personalized learning experiences.

  - Elementary and Secondary Interest-A-Lyzer, Reading Interest-A-Lyzer

Benefits of Interest Inventories

- **Personalized learning experiences:** Tailor curriculum and activities (e.g., independent studies, advanced courses, enrichment opportunities)
- **Increased engagement:** motivated and engaged when learning about topics they find interesting.
- **College and career exploration:** potential career paths based on their passions and preferences.

and I said to them, I want to
find a good liberal arts school.

Your turn

- How might you integrate interest inventories into curriculum planning? How might you use one or more of these for your students?

- What subjects or activities do you think your students would be most excited to explore based on their interests?

- What additional resources or support might you need?

Total Talent Portfolio

- A TTP is a comprehensive collection of a student's strengths, skills, interests, and achievements.
- It goes beyond academic performance to encompass a holistic profile of the student's capabilities.

Building Total Talent Portfolios

- Encourage students to reflect on their strengths, interests, and achievements.

- Provide templates or guidelines for organizing and documenting their talents.

- Offer guidance on how to showcase their portfolios effectively, such as through digital platforms or presentations.

Benefits of Total Talent Portfolios

- **Self-awareness:** Students gain a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for growth.
- **Participation in extracurricular activities:** Students find opportunities to participate with others of similar interests
- **Goal setting:** Portfolios can help students set meaningful goals aligned with their interests and talents.
- **College and career readiness:** A well-curated portfolio can be a valuable asset for college applications and future career opportunities.

Your turn

- How might students benefit from creating and maintaining their own TTPs?

- What opportunities could this provide for self-reflection and goal setting? To track progress toward their goals? What role would you play in supporting your students in this process?

- What support or resources might you need to help students create and manage their TTPs?

- How can you integrate portfolio building activities into your existing curriculums?

Self-Management and Creativity

- Self-management is a set of skills regulating one's emotions, feelings and actions used to successfully attain one's objectives (CASEL, 2020).
- Creativity has been found to relate to self-management and self-regulation

Self-management skills include:

- Impulse Control
- Stress Management
- Self-Discipline
- Self-Motivation
- Goal Setting
- Organizational Skills

Creative Thinking Activity

- By thinking through why and what-if questions, students are encouraged to engage in narrative perspective-shifting.
- Students keep the cards (like collecting Pokemon cards) and are invited to use them (or other students' creative friend cards) whenever they encounter a difficult real-life problem.

Fletcher et al. (2023)

Creative Friend Cards

1. Creative Friend Card. Talk to someone sitting next to you as a "creative friend." Draw something that reminds you of their creative character. Then answer the following questions:

- My friend is different from other people because they know how to . . . (why question)
- If my friend went to a new school where they didn't know anyone, they would . . . (what-if question)
- If my friend had $100 to spend on anything, they would . . . (what-if question)
- Think of a difficult real-life situation. What would your creative friend do? (what-if question)

Importance of Mentorship

- Mentorship plays a crucial role in guiding students towards their goals and maximizing their potential.
- Mentors provide support, advice, and encouragement based on their own experiences and expertise.
- They can help students explore career options, develop skills, and navigate challenges.

Remember that no one succeeds alone. Never walk alone in your future paths.

- Sonia Sotomayor

and what to do if one was
coming, how to head one off

Informal Mentorships- "Touchpoints"

One of my mentors was a science teacher and she also gave me advanced opportunities. She gave me so many chances for advanced work. **She let me apply science to the real world and to me, that was beautiful. She gave me the confidence to know that I could go beyond and do extra work**. There were so many people that believed in me and gave me advanced courses and advanced independent projects...They let me explore my strengths and interests. They nurtured me— they gave me a fluid opportunity. Many public schools are like conveyor belts, but my school was like the elevator in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. - Asher

Establishing Mentorship Programs

- Find possible mentors within your community.
- Create formal mentorship programs pairing students with professionals or older peers in their fields of interest.
- Provide training for mentors on effective communication, active listening, and goal setting.
- Foster a supportive environment where mentors and mentees can build meaningful relationships and exchange knowledge.

Impact of Mentorship

- **Academic and personal growth:** Mentorship relationships contribute to students' overall development and confidence.
- **Networking opportunities:** Mentors can connect students with valuable resources, internships, and career opportunities.
- **Long-term success:** The guidance and support received from mentors can have a lasting impact on students' academic and career trajectories.

Your turn

- How might you incorporate mentorship opportunities into your classroom or school community?
- What potential challenges do you anticipate and might you address them?
- What qualities or experiences do you think make someone a good mentor?
- How might mentorship programs benefit both students and mentors?

Conclusion

- Strengths-based, talent-focused strategies empower educators to nurture students' individuality and maximize their potential.
- By leveraging interest inventories, total talent portfolios, and mentorship programs, educators can create a more personalized and enriching learning experience for all students.

I HAVE NO SPECIAL TALENTS. I AM ONLY PASSIONATELY CURIOUS.

ALBERT EINSTEIN
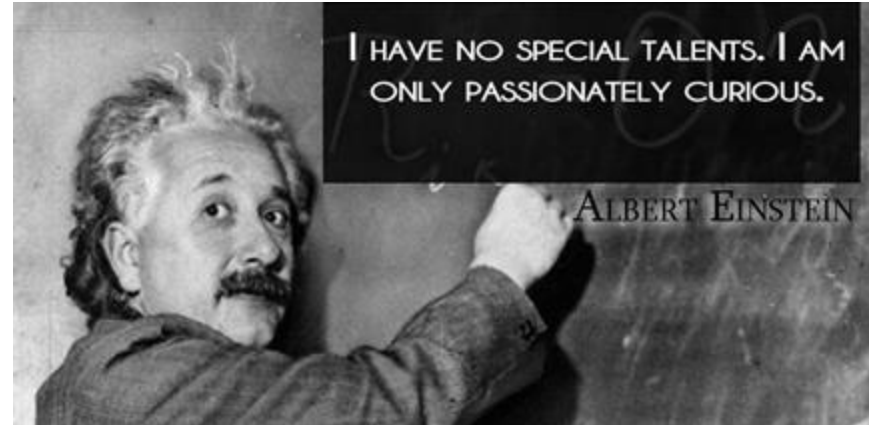
Key Takeaway

"[When] they feel like they're coming at it or bringing with them something of value [with] strengths-based, interest-based [opportunities]… It's a lot easier to shut[tle] a train to a different direction, on different tracks, if it's already moving, than it is to get that train moving in the first place." – Derek

Questions

- How do you think adapting a strengths-based approach could change the dynamics of your classroom? What challenges or opportunities do you foresee?
- Any other thoughts, ideas, or questions?

Access to these slides:
https://bit.ly/4bjFtzR

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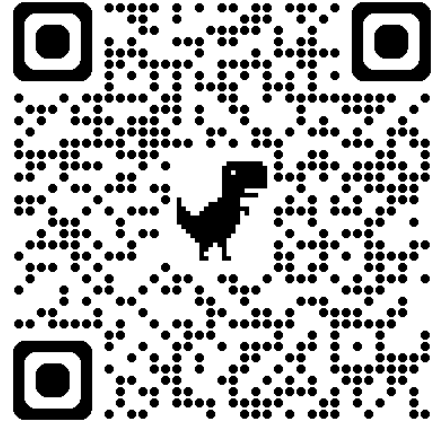
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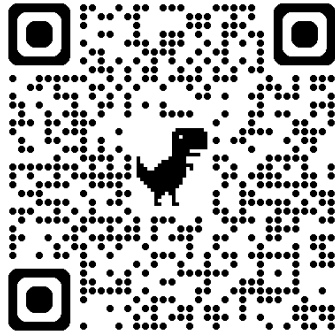EDUCATION, AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

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