***Statement of Purpose***

**The Problem**

Being new to the school district I teach in this year, the math curriculum provided to my special education classroom is quite confusing to my students and myself and not motivating for my students to learn. Therefore, I have to take the curriculum given and teach it in a way that is actively engaging while using manipulatives and differentiated instruction for each student’s needs and abilities. Susan Russell explains that “in the old style of elementary mathematics classrooms, students work alone, focus on only getting the right answer, complete many problems as quickly as possible, and use a single, prescribed procedure for each type of problem” (Russell, 1996).

The math curriculum that we use is geared to teach a whole group lesson. The students in my room do not learn the same way and cannot sit still or attend to a task/activity for long periods of time. This is a problem because I loose focus, attention, and my students become off task because they are not actively engaged in the math curriculum.

**Needs of the Learner**

My 1st and 2nd grade special education students have a wide range of abilities and needs. My students need to be taught with different modalities while using manipulatives to make them actively engaged and retaining information. Susan Russell (1996) says “in mathematics classrooms, many educators are now striving to create an environment where students are working together, and communicating about mathematics orally, in writing, and by using pictures, diagrams, and models”.

My students need a curriculum that can be taught to them one on one. A whole group lesson doesn’t work because they have so many different behaviors. When they are engaged individually, they can focus and attend to a task while being motivated with positive reinforcements and redirecting. In the ABC of Learning and Teaching in Medicine, “another feature of one to one teaching is the opportunity to adjust what you teach to the learner’s needs- customize- your teaching” (Gordon, 543).

**Needs of the Society**

My students need to be able to count, add, subtract, and problem-solve, etc. to be able to successfully have a job in society one day. Being able to count, having knowledge of basic math facts and other mathematical knowledge will allow my students to be successful when going to the grocery store, managing money, reading addresses, cooking and baking, and many other daily functional needs. Math is everywhere we go, even dialing a phone number, so my students need to be able to understand and retain 1st and 2nd grade math curriculum to be a successful and valuable member of society one day.

**Value of the Subject Matter**

Math is integrated into all subjects. For example, finding a page in a textbook in any English, social studies, or science class requires identifying numbers. The foundation of math that is learned in 1st and 2nd grade is critical for building on skills and more mathematical concepts that can be applied later on in life, whether it is in college, daily functional life skills, or in society.

**The Educational Goal**

The educational goal of this redesign is to create a math curriculum for 1st and 2nd grade special education students that provides an opportunity for students to learn basic math skills in a way that is easiest for them to understand and comprehend due to their learning and behavior needs and abilities. According to Elise Wile (2014), “math teachers must strive to provide a real-world context for the skills that they teach and must tell students the rationale behind the concept they are teaching”.

References

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