

Learn how JLC can Help Your School District Comply with State Regulations for Special Needs Education and Funding



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Forensic Systems Analysis Special Education Program (case study within New York School Districts)

The Project: JLC has assisted school districts in changing their systems to manage special needs children so that the districts complied with state regulations governing the handling of children with disabilities, as well as assisting districts in making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on the mandated assessments for needier subgroups. The districts were in danger of losing federal and state funding. JLC worked with the districts to craft a correction plan to document their remedies in both general education and special education to improve the success of special needs students. This plan had to show what aspects of the systems needed to change in order for the special education students to have the same starting opportunities as the general education children.

JLC worked to facilitate collaboration with parents, teachers and administrators to identify obstacles to the success of special education children, and facilitate the plan implementation. Part of the implementation was a learning component to raise awareness of all of those in the district who worked with special needs children, including teachers, administrators, and staff, and to enrich the culture of the district so that the district grew the capacity to give people the tools and creative freedom to do what they needed to in order to ensure the success of the children.

The Results: JLC completed the correction plan and the districts were able to submit it through the proper channels to secure its federal and state funding.

The plan was implemented so that the districts were able to raise the awareness of the unique issues of special needs children and to engage teachers, administrators and staff in a common purpose.

More deeply, JLC enabled a cultural change, for one of the core operating principles was the belief that all voices should be heard because there is power in everyone. This belief was infused in every step of the correction plan and process.

Not holding that belief, the districts realized, was a contributing factor to the development of the systems that fostered the non-compliant actions, and holding on to that way of operating would only have re-energized the old systems once the crisis had been averted.

Sustainable culture change came about because the mental models about special needs children and about the role of special education held by those involved in the project shifted. The districts were able to embrace a more complete district-wide vision that recognized all students and to create new systems based on respect and a belief that special needs children can achieve as much as general education children; they just need different starting opportunities.