

School-Based Curriculum Development Boosts the Professional Growth of Special Education Teachers

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Abstract: School-based curriculum development is an important approach to the curriculum construction of special education schools, which not only plays a positive role in the curriculum and teaching of special education schools, but also contributes to the professional growth of special education teachers. Through an in-depth analysis of the value concept, practical path and reflection on the development of school-based curriculum to promote the professional growth of special education teachers, this paper aims to make a positive impact on the development of school-based curriculum and the promotion of teachers' professional growth in special education schools.

1. Introduction

In recent years, school-based curriculum development and teacher professional growth in special education schools have attracted much attention and focus. School-based curriculum development is closely related to the professional growth of special education teachers. School-based curriculum development not only promotes the development and utilization of curriculum resources in special education schools, but also helps to improve the professionalism of special education teachers. The reality is that people are either only exploring the professional growth of special education teachers or only delving into the journey related to the development of special education school-based curriculum. At present, there is an urgent need to focus on the close connection between the two. In particular, we need to take school-based curriculum development as an starting point, attach sufficient importance to the real changes of special education teachers in the process of school-based curriculum development, analyze in depth the value concept, realistic path and practical reflections of school-based curriculum development to promote the professional growth of special education teachers, and then drive the professional progress of special education teachers and facilitate the sustainable and healthy development of special education.

2. The Value of School-Based Curriculum Development in Facilitating Special Education Teachers' Professional Improvement

Teachers and curriculum are two key factors affecting the level of special education schools, and it is important to emphasize the close connection and interaction between curriculum construction and teachers' professional improvement. Generally speaking, school-based curriculum development is a school-oriented, school-based curriculum development process and activity to meet the learning needs of all students in the school with the school as the main body.^[1] The reason why school-based curriculum development has become a hot spot for special education reform, and many special education schools with the conditions to do so have joined the team to develop school-based curriculum, lies in the fact that school-based curriculum development can also improve teachers' professionalism while building the curriculum. Some scholars directly believe that "Curriculum development is only a means to an end, but the real meaning lies in the professional improvement of teachers, and teacher development is the goal".^[2] At present, the industry generally believes that the development of school-based curriculum not only helps special education teachers change their curriculum awareness and enhance their professional independence, but also helps expand their professional knowledge and skills and improve their education and teaching research.

We believe that the implementation of school-based curriculum development in special education schools is mainly carried out to meet the needs of our school's curriculum construction, not only the process of creating a curriculum from nothing to an original development. At the same time, it should also include the implementation of the national curriculum in special education schools, as well as the adaptation of foreign curricula to our school. As an important initiative and core means of curriculum reform in special education schools, school-based curriculum development is essentially a process of exploring and utilizing relevant resources inside and outside of special education schools, which has a very positive effect on the professional upgrading of special education teachers. It should be noted that, with the continuous and in-depth promotion of basic education curriculum reform, school-based curriculum development in special education schools is gaining momentum. With the low professional quality of special education teachers, it is especially significant to tap into the rich local resources of special education schools for school-based curriculum development to boost the professional advancement of special education teachers. Consequently, the value of school-based curriculum development in driving the professional growth of special education teachers needs to be fully appreciated, and the level of school-based curriculum development in special education schools needs to be continuously improved. In addition, while improving the content and form of special education school activities, it continuously contributes to the positive professional progress of special education teachers, thus enhancing the quality of special education school education and the level of school operation, and ensuring the healthy and sustainable development of special education.

3. Effective Approaches for School-based Curriculum Development to Support Special Education Teachers' Professional Growth

Commonly, special education teachers have many practical dilemmas in participating in school-based curriculum development, such as facing heavy workloads and less time to research and develop school-based curriculum; some teachers are enthusiastic in participating in school-based curriculum development, but their professionalism is relatively low; some teachers have a good vision to develop school-based curriculum, but objectively face unfavorable realistic conditions inside and outside the school, etc. In order to give full play to the role of school-based curriculum development in promoting the professional growth of special education teachers, it is necessary to sufficiently focus on and actively explore its realistic and effective approaches.

3.1 The First Step is to Seek the Support and Encouragement of "Significant Others"

"Significant others" is an important concept proposed by American sociologist Mills on the basis of Mead's self-development theory, mainly referring to specific people who have an important influence on the socialization process of individuals. For special education teachers, influences of significant others that can play a role in their professional growth process include encouragement from principals, cooperation from peers, and support from parents.

3.1.1 The Positive Contribution of a Principal

It can achieve not only a special education school of high-quality, but also a special education teacher of high-quality. This is mainly because the principal directly influences the motivation and process of special education teachers' participation in school-based curriculum development with his or her curriculum theoretical knowledge, curriculum leadership style, and curriculum practice ability, which in turn affects the professional growth process of special education teachers. The smooth implementation of school-based curriculum development requires the principal to actively play the role of the vision builder of the curriculum, the leader of the curriculum implementation, the catalyst of the curriculum innovation, and the refiner of the curriculum experience. In summary, the principal is often directly related to the progress and effectiveness of school-based curriculum development in special education schools.

3.1.2 The Cooperation and Construction of Teacher Community

The school-based curriculum development process, whether it is the establishment of a development organization or the structure of a curriculum program, requires discussion and collaboration among many participants to ensure the successful realization of the school-based curriculum development vision. Collaborative exchanges among special education teachers not only contribute to the joint development of school-based curriculum, but also effectively enhance the professional growth of special education teachers in the process.

3.1.3 Parental Involvement and Support

Parental understanding and support can provide great encouragement for special education teachers to conduct school-based curriculum development. As an essential task of special education schools, school-based curriculum development should strive for parental support, and parents should be encouraged to participate in school-based curriculum development and contribute to school-based curriculum development.

3.2 The Second Step is to Focus on Optimizing the Environmental Atmosphere of Special Education Schools

Environmental conditions and working atmosphere are key elements that influence the development of school-based curriculum in special education schools and are directly related to the professional growth of special education teachers. The leadership style and management style of the principal, the learning atmosphere and the evaluation and motivation mechanism of the special education school will have a significant impact on the educational concepts, curriculum implementation, and work behaviors of special education teachers.

3.2.1 Give Full Play to the Principal Role of Teachers

School-based curriculum development requires the participation of teachers as the main factor,

and the independent creative spirit of special education teachers is particularly crucial. The principal of a special education school should be able to "empower" or "delegate" in management, fully trust teachers, and give them the opportunity to develop their own curriculum, which can fully stimulate the motivation and creativity of special education teachers in curriculum development.

3.2.2 Establish Teachers' Pluralistic and Progressive Learning System

In order to effectively foster the professional growth of teachers in school-based curriculum development, it is necessary to build a learning community for special education teachers that is pluralistic and collaborative. This is mainly reflected in the plurality of participating subjects and the plurality of organizational forms. The plurality of participants refers to the fact that the members of the learning community are not only limited to teachers in special education schools, but also include special education experts, parents and community members who meet the needs; while the plurality of forms refers to the promotion of various formal and informal learning community forms.

3.2.3 Establish Effective Evaluation Incentive Mechanism

These is an important guarantee for school-based curriculum development to boost the professional growth of special education teachers. Special education teachers should have differentiated and phased development goals in different school-based curriculum development, and interactive evaluation of multiple subjects based on special education teachers' professional progress performance in school-based curriculum development in order to create a good institutional motivational atmosphere.

3.3 The Third Step is to improve the External Support System of Special Education Schools

Everyone is living in the social environment, are bound to be deeply influenced by the social environment. Professional growth of special education teachers in school-based curriculum development cannot be achieved without the "guidance" of the education department, the "help" of local universities, and the "support" of their communities for school-based curriculum development. Only by striving to improve the external support system of special education schools can the positive effect of school-based curriculum development on the professional growth of special education teachers be comprehensively realized.

3.3.1 Strengthening the "Guidance" of Education Department

The education authorities have the responsibility to guide, direct and support local special education. By actively guiding special education schools to develop school-based curricula, it can help special education teachers to build awareness and practice curriculum development. By encouraging them to conduct research and discussion on school-based curriculum development issues, and regularly assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of their work, it can effectively stimulate the progress of their practice.

3.3.2 Adhere to the "Help" of Local Colleges and Universities

Local universities can establish a good partnership with special education schools to help special education teachers enhance their professionalism. There are many successful cases of cooperation and co-construction between universities and special education schools at home and abroad, and local universities, especially teacher training colleges, have the obligation to contribute to the cause of regional special education. By using the advantages of human resources of colleges and

universities and the characteristics of local resources of special education, local colleges and universities can make suggestions for the curriculum construction of special education schools, drive special education teachers to better participate in the practice of school-based curriculum development, and help them continuously advance their professional growth and progress.

3.3.3 Attach Importance to the Support of Multiple External Forces

School-based curriculum development requires the support of many parties, and the community in which it is located is naturally an important and integral part. Besides its own specialized role, the community in which it is located can also play a unique educational role by participating directly or indirectly in the development of the school-based curriculum of the special education school. For example, by providing the necessary educational resources and encouraging the active participation of various community members, the school-based curriculum development of special education schools can be facilitated in various ways, thus adding to the vitality of special education schools with the help of their communities.

4. Development of School-based Curriculum Stimulates Reflections on the Practice of Special Education Teachers' Professional Growth

Special education teachers influence the development of personality, intervention and support for children with special needs, as well as the quality of education in special education schools, so the professional growth of special education teachers must be given full attention. What should be seen is that special education teachers, with their professional role, professional vision, and professional knowledge and ability in school-based curriculum development, can take a comprehensive look at various special education curriculum resources while continuously gaining positive professional advancement in the practice of school-based curriculum development. To help facilitate the professional growth of special education teachers through school-based curriculum development practices, we can focus on the following aspects of practice reflection.

4.1 Special Education Teachers should be Passionate about School-based Curriculum Development

School-based curriculum development is a creative promotion process that requires continuous deepening, and the initiative and persistence of special education teachers' participation is an important guarantee. It should be noted that school-based curriculum development can enrich the curriculum content of special education learning and can contribute to the professional growth of special education teachers, who can all make a difference. In the process of participating in school-based curriculum development, special education teachers should fully understand their subject status, consciously assume the role requirements of developers and researchers, and strive to actively demonstrate and make full use of their professional knowledge and abilities in school-based curriculum development. At the same time, in order to make their own professional growth path shine, special education teachers should take the initiative to undertake the responsibility of school-based curriculum development, actively participate in the development of school-based curriculum objectives, school-based curriculum content selection, school-based curriculum plan implementation and evaluation, and to seriously consider the various problems encountered in school-based curriculum development, and actively reflect on the practice of curriculum development. In addition, special education teachers must promptly conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of the curriculum resources they have selected, the content they have chosen, the curriculum objectives they have set, the method they have organized, and the

effectiveness of their activities in the process of school-based curriculum development. On this basis, we try to make the good aspects into experience, and the insufficient and problematic aspects are studied in depth. And try to practice and revise again, so that through continuous research and practice, the initiative and persistence of special education teachers in developing school-based curriculum can be fully demonstrated, and then the enthusiasm and motivation of special education teachers in developing school-based curriculum can be continuously stimulated.

4.2 Furthermore, Special Education Teachers should be Good at Retaining "Evidence" of Development

The "evidence" here refers to all the relevant materials from the beginning to the end of the school-based curriculum development: including plans, programs, essays, photos, videos, etc. For special education teachers, it is important to develop the awareness of "evidence" and to recognize the act of retaining supporting materials for school-based curriculum development work. Teachers should also have the habit of keeping evidence in a timely manner, keeping materials related to school-based curriculum development, and regularly organizing and combing the relevant context of the retained materials. For example, carrying a small notebook to record special education behaviors and feedback effects promptly. Teachers should reflect on improvements based on the retention of lesson plans and form a growth profile for special education through long-term persistence. At the same time, the school-based curriculum and lesson plans should be continuously implemented for revision and improvement, forming a sustainable and positive dynamic process. Special education teachers should abandon some of these "misconceptions" in the process. For example, in order to cope with the superior inspection to keep evidence, or to assess the title and stay, or even fake evidence for retention, etc. In conclusion, special education teachers should adhere to the correct development concept for school-based curriculum development, and take the promotion of special education development as the starting and ending point, while promoting their own professional growth in the process.

4.3 Using School-based Curriculum Development to Accelerate the Professional Growth of Special Education Teachers

Teachers have multiple realistic paths to professional upgrading, and should focus on the prominent role of school-based curriculum development. Special education schools should conduct school-based curriculum development with the starting and ending points of promoting the development of special education, attaching importance to the involvement of multiple parties such as school principal, teachers, special education, parents, community members, curriculum experts, etc., and trying to promote the professional growth of special education teachers in the process.

4.3.1 We should Strive for School-based Curriculum Development

Special education teachers should use the perspective of special education to discover realistic problems and discover the educationally meaningful family culture, special education school culture and community culture from special education itself to ensure the value-oriented and realistic advantages of school-based curriculum development. School-based curriculum development should pay comprehensive attention to situational analysis, grasp its realistic favorable conditions, and improve school-based curriculum design. First, a comprehensive analysis of the basic school situation is needed, such as an analysis of the geographical location of the special education school, the special education school environment, the culture of the special education school and the staff composition of the special education school; The curriculum resources should also be analyzed,

including the local natural environment, local cultural resources, and social resources. Second, the implementation of school-based curriculum should adhere to the "curriculum enactment orientation" as a requirement for the construction of special education school curriculum, and strive to integrate throughout the special education school curriculum. The third is the need to focus on the school-based curriculum development effect inspection, adhere to a comprehensive effect inspection of special education schools with development indicators of exceptional child. The purpose of the study is to diagnose curriculum problems, clarify curriculum clues, improve curriculum deficiencies, provide a constant stream of effective information for curriculum development, and make school-based curriculum development more in line with special education development needs. At the same time, the evaluation of school-based curriculum development should be conducted in conjunction with the study, mainly including evaluation of special children's development, evaluation of activity programs and teacher evaluation. Among them, it should be noted that the evaluation needs to be mainly developmental evaluation, supplemented by reward and punishment evaluation, and process evaluation, supplemented by result evaluation, with particular attention to the implementation of improvement programs after the evaluation.

4.3.2 It is Necessary to Effectively Promote the Professional Growth of Special Education Teachers

The school-based curriculum development process profoundly affects the role perceptions and emotional experiences of special education teachers, which in turn affects the professional growth dynamics of special education teachers. For a long time, many teachers themselves lacked a sense of professionalism, a sense of direction to hold themselves to the standards of professionals, and norms regarding educational behavior came more from tradition and superiors.^[3] The results of such externally driven growth support are often more negative. The more desirable type of developmental support is internally driven, which emphasizes awakening teachers' self-awareness and stimulating their internal motivation for growth, which in turn facilitates their professional growth. Currently, in order to ensure the effectiveness of school-based curriculum development in special education schools, the emotional and sentimental experiences of special education teachers should be actively addressed to ensure their persistence in developing school-based curriculum, under the premise of respect for special education teachers. At the same time, in the development of the school-based curriculum, special education teachers should be continuously stimulated to experience the values and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the special education profession; To pay attention to the continuous expansion of their special education expertise so that special education teachers can continuously increase their reserves and deepen their knowledge of special education through school-based curriculum development; It is important to promote special education teachers to continuously acquire positive changes in their professional abilities in school-based curriculum development, improve their special education behaviors in general, and strive to promote their positive professional growth.

5. Conclusion

The professional growth of special education teachers is a requirement of the times and depends to a large extent on the self-initiated development of special education teachers, which is inseparable from the support of external forces, but even more inseparable from the enhancement of the main consciousness and the renewal of the development concept. The process of school-based curriculum development is also the process of improving the professionalism of special education teachers, and the two are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. The professional philosophy, knowledge and ability of special education teachers are progressing in the process of school-based

curriculum development, and must give full play to the role of school-based curriculum development in boosting the professional growth of special education teachers.

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