SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

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From just being for the education of youth who have dropped out and those who were at risk for dropping out, the purpose of alternative programs has now expanded to add service for students with disabilities. This service includes learners whose behavior and manners demand special attention outside the general education setting. Hence, these new programs provide flexible curricula to address and cater to each learner’s unique situations and needs. In addition, unlike traditional alternative programs where students need to take it in a few (sometimes far) locations, these newer programs are readily available in public centers.

Moreover, it is important to note that these alternative programs observe to implement the seven (7) essential elements of effective programs: 1. Functional Assessments; 2. Functional Curriculum; 3. Effective and Efficient Instructional Techniques; 4. Programming for Effective and Efficient Transitions; 5. Comprehensive Systems; 6. Appropriate staff, Resources, and procedural protection for the students with disabilities; and 7. Educational climates are supportive of the student’s social-emotional needs.

Nevertheless, one key step for all effective alternative programs is a functional assessment of the students for the development of the educational plan. Fortunately, the new programs are offering very extensive assessment procedures. These assessment procedures are often used to recognize things such as the strength and needs of the students, skill deficit, and socio-emotional adjustment. This form of assessment is essential since the primary goal of an alternative program is to make adjustments to overcome hindrances that deter learners from the pursuit of knowledge.
In addition, these alternative settings also provide a full continuum of education services. These services not only include instructions in academics but also usable work skills, independent living skills, and social skills. Therefore, the beneficiaries would be able to enjoy all-inclusive learning that they can use further in life.

All in all, alternative programs for education have really been leaping towards progression. If these developments remain continuous, we can all expect a higher quality of education in the near future.

References:

[1] ALS Programs Information, ref. date: 2020, retrieved from: DepEd Website