



# Communiqué

Council for Educational Diagnostic Services

A Division of the Council for Exceptional Children

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## President's Message

**Kathie Good**

WOW! It is the best feeling in the world to return to your office after a great conference! I know we all had piles on our desks and too many emails to take care of . . . but the feeling of excitement and wanting to try something new we learned takes over! I have a list of new and exciting ideas I gained in Kansas City at the annual CEDS Conference: from David Walker's legal update to training on specific tests to the knowledge I learned informally at lunch! There is no better professional development for diagnosticians and assessment professionals than our conference.

CEDS Vice President Becky Davis has provided a great article in this newsletter detailing more specifics of the conference; please read with excitement! Thanks to all of you who encouraged me to relive my senior prom with a picture at the waterfall at Crown Center. Even though I was not wearing the peach-colored, puffy dress, the setting was a great trip down memory lane for me.

Exciting things are on the horizon for CEDS. Please read the biographies of our two nominees for vice president on page 2 of this newsletter. Drs. Mitch Yell and Norm Geller are dynamic professionals who leave their mark on our profession daily. Both Mitch and Norm have been positive influences on the growth and evolution of the CEDS organization. It is my honor to work with both of these professionals on the executive board, and it would be my privilege to work with them as vice president and ultimately president. Watch for election ballots in January.

Please also look for a membership survey to come your way in the next month or so. We want your opinion about our annual conference (location, length of conference, etc.), about member services, and your general input on how to continue to grow and strengthen CEDS.

Congratulations to the NCED for reaching a milestone! Since the beginning of NCED, more than 600 educational diagnosticians across the country have successfully earned their NCED credential. If you are interested in completing your NCED credential, please contact NCED through their email address. An article by the NCED president is also in this newsletter.

And last, but not least, be sure to join us at the CEC Convention and Expo in Denver, Colorado, April 11–14, 2012. Becky Davis and her program committee have put together a strong strand of assessment presentations. We will have our annual CEDS Business meeting followed by our social. Watch for more details on all of these events.

Have a great winter and a super holiday season. Always take time for yourself as you already give so much to others. It has been my pleasure to continue as your president, and I look forward to the balance of my term. Happy days to all!

## News from the Membership Desk

**Norman J. Geller,**  
*Membership Chair*

*"The highest form of wisdom is kindness"* —The Talmud

We had some terrific networking and schmoozing at the CEDS Conference in Kansas City. As far as membership goals, this type of networking and collaborating makes us that much stronger as an organization.

### Update

Our membership has taken a slight hit (down about 7%), but relative to other divisions, we are fairing a bit better than most. I am trying out a new initiative to increase membership activity. We would like to get more members to reach out to unaffiliated professionals in their communities and share some professional development. Sandra Irby and I are going to attempt to collaborate with CEDS members in our home state of Virginia in the form of mini informational and social gatherings. If you would like to replicate what we are doing, please contact me for support ([ngeller@vcu.edu](mailto:ngeller@vcu.edu)). We can get literature to you and perhaps set up a conference call with a CEDS board member.

I am also looking to highlight new practices or modes of thought to share with our members. Please send me any ideas or strategies you have used so we can share them. Remember, in numbers we are stronger and wiser as part of the collective.

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## Election for CEDS Vice President

David Walker, *Past-President*

In February 2012, CEDS will use an electronic voting format for the vice president position. Your ballot will be sent to you by email. Please respond and vote! Only members who have kept their email updated with CEC headquarters will receive a ballot. Please tell your colleagues to register with CEC and provide a current email address. We need the CEDS membership to participate in voting and selecting our new vice president, who will serve a 6-year term that encompasses vice president, president, and past president. Our excellent candidates need your support. Look for your CEDS ballot in your February email!



### Vice President Candidates

**Mitchell L. Yell, PhD:** I am a professor of special education at the University of South Carolina. My areas of concentration are special education law, assessment of students with disabilities, classroom management, and education of students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Prior to coming to the University of South Carolina, I was a special education teacher in Minnesota for 16 years. During this time I assessed and taught students with EBD and learning disabilities.

I believe the greatest issue facing CEDS over the next few years will be providing information that is important, meaningful, and user-friendly. Thus, I will strive to make the organization, and all its products, relevant to the practitioner while maintaining its emphasis on rigor and research-based practices.



**Norman J. Geller, PhD:** I have been a member of CEC/CEDS for more than 20 years and am the current CEDS membership chair. As former vice chair for the first NCED Board, I was involved in developing and launching the national examination. I am currently an educational diagnostician/consultant at the Virginia Treatment Center for Children and an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University. I recently started teaching a University of Richmond law class that focuses on assessment for law students to gain a better understanding of best practices when advocating for their clients. As a practitioner, I work in a mood/ADHD clinic, autism diagnostic clinic, and outpatient services clinic. Part of my clinic responsibilities involve traveling to local schools to facilitate services for children and serving on child study/eligibility teams. I have tried to promote best practices in evaluating and implementing service delivery for the child. Diagnostic assessment requires a range of procedures, such as testing, interpreting, delivering services, and monitoring. CEDS provides a strong professional and research basis to enhance these skills and is the quintessential organization to oversee professional development. As a member of the diagnostic community, I have become increasingly aware of the need to promote a better understanding of assessment techniques as they are related to outcome. In our journal *Assessment for Effective Instruction*, we present reviews on instruments and implications for school performance. This has provided excellent educational growth opportunities, but we need to promote a broader discussion to a larger population. Our division conferences have offered a wealth of information, but we can reach more professionals through networking. This can be accomplished by encouraging more presentations at CEC, accessing rising college students in the profession, and maintaining an active discussion board. As we see an increase in the RTI model, we also need to redefine assessment procedures. The categorical definitions of different disabilities have been evolving and so must we. With our guidance and educational opportunities, diagnosticians have a pivotal role in the disability determination, and CEDS should be the portal to new modes of thinking.

**Leann DiAndreth-Elkins,  
Editor**

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### Assessment for Effective Intervention:

The official quarterly research journal of CEDS is *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, provided through CEDS membership. The primary purpose of the journal is to publish empirically sound manuscripts that have implications for practitioners. Submissions are encouraged; guidelines are available at <http://aei.sagepub.com>

### CEDS Web site:

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### Disclaimer Statement: Newsletter & Official Publications

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## CEDS Member of the Year

At the CEDS Conference in Kansas City, **Dr. Brenda Gilliam** received the Member of the Year Award, which was presented by Dr. Kathie Good, president, and Dr. Teresa Montani, chair of the Professional Standards Committee. The presentation of the award included the following description of Dr. Gilliam's contributions to the CEDS Board.

Dr. Brenda Gilliam served for many years on the CEDS board and stepped in to fill the term of treasurer and continued as treasurer through two more consecutive terms. Her service as treasurer took an extensive amount of time. As treasurer she responded to the needs of the committee and paid bills and reimbursements in a timely fashion. Dr. Gilliam has also donated much time to the development of the Texas CEC organization. She has served our organization well. This award would perhaps demonstrate our appreciation for her skills and dedication to CEDS. Her character, work ethic, and commitment have been shown to be an outstanding example of professional excellence. Dr. Gilliam is most deserving of this prestigious and honored award.



**L to r: Kathie Good, Brenda Gilliam, and Teresa Montani**

**Congratulations, Dr. Gilliam!**

## Professional Standards Report



**Teresa Oettinger Montani,**  
*Professional Standards Committee  
Chair*

The Professional Standards Committee met with the Knowledge and Skills subcommittee in Washington, D.C., on October 14 and 15, 2011, to continue the work started in National Harbor at the CEC Convention in April. The following is an overview of the issues addressed at the October meeting of the Knowledge and Skills subcommittee:

1. The Special Education Behavior Intervention Specialist Set was reviewed and edited.
2. The Special Education Academic Intervention Specialist Skills Set was reviewed and edited and will be sent out for survey.
3. The Knowledge and Skills Committee will begin developing a new edition of the Red Book. This new edition will contain the restructured Knowledge and Skills and Content Standards.

Also:

- In TASC, Teaching Standards were released in April 2011, and the standards will cover all teachers, at all levels, in all disciplines, and across the total career span.
- Special Education Teacher Professional Practice Standards were approved October 2011.

- CEC Standards Realignments and Report to CAEP: CEC has reviewed its standards, and the revisions will include 7 standards rather than 10.
- The Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Experience Report is available on the web ([www.ncate.org](http://www.ncate.org)).
- The Blue Ribbon Panel on the Application of the Developmental Sciences is also available on the web ([www.ncate.org](http://www.ncate.org)).



**CEC 2012  
CONVENTION & EXPO  
DENVER, CO**  
DENVER CONVENTION CENTER • APRIL 11-14

Save  
the  
Date!

**CEDS will host a business meeting and social during the convention.**

**For convention registration and other information:**  
[www.cec.sped.org/convention](http://www.cec.sped.org/convention)



## CEDS Annual Conference: *The Art of Assessment*

Rebecca S. Davis, *Vice President*

The 2011 CEDS Annual Conference was held October 20–22 at the beautiful Westin Crown Center Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri. Multi-chaired by **Kathie Good, Becky Davis, Carol Layton, Shirley Steffens, and Connie Nielson**, the CEDS conference was a must-attend event for anyone involved in—or interested in—the broad range of topics associated with diagnostic services. Participants reported these top ten highlights of the 2011 conference:

**1. Session Choices.** This year's session strands included formal and informal assessment, implications for instruction, and intervention strategies. Topical sessions addressed learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, assessment of culturally/linguistically diverse students, assessment and accountability, assessment and the IEP process/product, functional/authentic assessment, curriculum-based measurements, responsiveness to intervention, and evaluation of programs and interventions.

**2. Opportunities for Professional Development.** Sessions gave assessment professionals an opportunity to further develop their skills. Conference participants were able to collect more than 14 hours of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) across the 2.5-day conference.

**3. Assessment from a National Perspective.** Session presenters were innovative researchers and practitioners in as-

essment whose topics ranged from legislative updates to avoiding mistakes in the IEP process. Many of the topical session presenters were nationally recognized assessment professionals.

**4. National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians Exam.** Eligible CEDS members had an opportunity to sit for the NCED exam, which leads to national certification for practicing educational diagnosticians, a notable achievement. NCED board members presented conference sessions that offered information and inspiration for aspiring certificate recipients.

**5. Reflection and Inspiration.** Outstanding presentations provided multiple opportunities for personal reflection. Attendees reported renewed energy, a plethora of ideas for improving professional practices, and a sense of clarity of purpose.

**6. Networking Opportunities, Great Food, and Fun.** Professional conferences provide an opportunity to interact informally with professionals from across the United States. Attendees were welcomed each morning with a breakfast. Thursday's breakfast was provided by the NCED Board. Thursday evening's "Cocktails and Crayons" let conference attendees complete "works of art" that were shown during Friday's luncheon, which featured Kansas City barbeque, great conversation, and even greater door prizes: test kits donated by Pearson, JennyLU Designs, souvenirs, and CEDS memorabilia. Also at Friday's





## CEDS Annual Conference: *The Art of Assessment*

luncheon, Dr. Brenda Gilliam, Texas member and former CEDS treasurer, was honored as CEDS Member of the Year for her continued contributions.

**7. Interaction with the CEDS Board.** CEDS board members were available to listen to concerns of the membership and to solicit ideas for improving the organization and annual conferences. Attendees had opportunities to share information and volunteer for committee participation.

**8. Destination:** Kansas City. The Westin Crown Center Hotel was a perfect site for the 2011 conference. Participants enjoyed great shopping in their free moments and were able to attend regional concerts and museums. Artist Jenny Unrein of JenniLU Designs, featured artist at the 2011 CEC Convention in National Harbor, presented her unique, whimsical creations.

**9. A Chance to Take the Stage.** Lecture sessions provided opportunities for new and seasoned researchers to share information with their assessment colleagues. *Note:* The call for presentations/posters for next fall's conference will be issued in the spring of 2012, and we encourage all members to submit proposals or suggestions for speakers for the 2012 conference.

**10. Comments from Participants.** There are countless reasons that professionals choose to attend national conferences, but comments from this year's CEDS attendees illustrate some of the highlights of their conference experiences:

-  *Very timely and informative, with excellent speakers and information.*
-  *Loved having Jenny and JennyLU Designs at the conference!*
-  *I learned information about the tests and test administration that will improve my professional practice.*
-  *Great opportunity to learn more about the CEDS organization.*
-  *The author of my SPED law book was a featured speaker! Fantastic!*

As the field of special education continues to evolve, it is essential that assessment professionals take an active role in defining their future. Annual conferences provide opportunities for professional growth and networking that inevitably lead to a greater awareness of the strengths and challenges associated with educational diagnostic services.

CEDS would like to thank **Pearson, Firelight Books, Eastern New Mexico University,** and the **NCED Board** for their continued support. In addition, CEDS would like to thank **Missouri CEDS** and **artist Jenny Unrein** for their contributions to this year's conference. Future conferences will feature a similar slate of outstanding voices in the field of assessment. We'll see you there!





# National Certification *for* Educational Diagnosticians

Elizabeth Dragone, *NCED Publicity*

## What Is NCED?

NCED is the premier national credential for assessment professionals in special education who meet high standards of practice. The purpose of NCED is to create, administer, update, and maintain a national credential for educational diagnosticians that allows individuals to more effectively serve the needs of students. This credential substantiates expertise and experience in special education evaluation and conveys a commitment to professional standards, knowledge, and skills of practice espoused by the Board as an advanced educational diagnostician.

## How can NCED benefit you?

- Enhanced professional credibility and visibility
- Represents highly qualified status as an assessment professional
- Assures parents/school officials of rigorous opportunities for practice
- Permits use of “NCED” after name in reports and correspondence
- Allows inclusion and recognition in the online NCED Registry
- Connects the practitioner with current trends/issues in the field of assessment

## How Do I Become a National Certified Educational Diagnostician?

Visit the NCED website ([www.ncedonline.com](http://www.ncedonline.com)) for information on the required credentials, which include an advanced degree (master’s, educational specialist, or doctorate) in special education or related field; state certification/licensure to practice educational assessment or letter from your school district that stipulates that educational assessment is part of your professional role; professional teaching experience of at least 2 academic years or equivalent; educational assessment experience of at least 2 academic years or cumulative equivalent in a public and/or private setting; two letters of reference; and active membership in the Council for Exceptional Children’s Council for Educational Diagnostic Services (CEDS).

Once you have gathered your credentials, follow the application process at NCED online. All applications and credentials must be received no later than 1 month prior to a test date. An exam study guide is available on the website.

### When Is The Next Exam Administration?

Richmond, VA	February 2012 (date TBD)
Denver, CO	April 10, 2012
Houston, TX	Summer or Fall 2012 (date TBD)
New Orleans, LA	Fall 2012 (date TBD)
San Antonio, TX	Spring 2013 (date TBD)

Visit the NCED website for exact location and date information.

## I Would Like More Information on NCED. Whom Can I Contact?

Please visit the NCED website for more information or, if you are interested in serving on an NCED committee, contact any of the board members listed below or on the website.

Linda De Zell Hall, PhD, Chair, Katy, TX

Teresa Montani, EdD, Vice Chair, Cranford, NJ

Patricia Frawley, EdD, Westfield, NJ

Sandy Irby, MS, MEd, Secretary, Chesterfield, VA

Eileen Sanchez, EdM, Professional Growth, South Plainfield, NJ

Harrian Stern, PhD, Professional Standards & Advocacy, Dallas, TX

Tina Holleman, EdM, Membership, Artesia, NM

Steven Anthony LaBry, EdD, Website, Lafayette, LA

Elizabeth Dragone, PhD, Publicity, Richmond, VA

## I Am Already an NCED. What Do I Need to Do for Renewal?

Continued NCED certification requires ongoing professional development. The Board has established the requirement of 15 continuing education units (CEUs) or 150 clock hours of professional development activities over a 5-year period. As a preeminent credentialing board, our aim is to encourage a diversity of professional growth activities, stressing both breadth and depth. With this goal in mind, the Board has developed six categories or qualifying activities: Professional Meetings; Collaborative Study; Independent Study; Teaching, Research, Development; Graduate Coursework; and Professional Consults. Professional development credits/hours should be updated and submitted to the Board by January 15th each year at the time of the NCED annual renewal.

CEU credits/hours should be submitted electronically at the NCED website. Click on the “CEU Credits/Hours Form” to submit credits/hours per category. In alignment with the currently adopted NCED By-laws and Standing Rules, only new applicants for the credential and NCED Board members must evidence membership in CEC-CEDs.

NCED holders can review the CEU options at the NCED website under “Continuing Education/CEU Requirements” and can earn professional development hours by clicking the tab “Continuing Education/CEU Opportunities/Webinars.” Additionally, CEDS and NCED are looking for individuals to review DVDs, videos, books, and tests. You can submit your reviews for possible publication in this newsletter or on the NCED website. These reviews are also eligible for CEU hours.

# Seven Easy Steps for Linking Progress Monitoring Data to Instructional Changes

Sally M. Huddle and Kiersten K. Hensley  
 University of Iowa

According to Hojnosi, Gischlar, and Missall (2009), “Despite the benefits of data collection, practitioners often do not use graphed data in daily practice for displaying and interpreting child performance (Cooke, Heward, Test, Spooner, & Courson, 1991; Fuchs, L.S. & Fuchs, D., 1984; Wesson, King, & Deno, 1984).” In 2010, as consultants for Heartland Area Education Agency and the Iowa Department of Education, we were working with Iowa teachers to train them to use progress monitoring to make instructional decisions. We observed that teachers did not consistently make instructional decisions based on their progress monitoring data. That is, a significant number of graphs of IEP goals sampled from across the state did not indicate if instructional changes had been made in response to progress monitoring data, or what the changes in instruction were if instruction had been modified. Iowa has a state-wide web-based IEP system with an embedded graphing program. This program automatically generates a goal line and a trend line, and it gives a warning message when progress is below the goal line. Teachers are also able to add comments about when data have been reviewed and what changes have been made (see Figure 1 for an example graph from Iowa’s Web IEP system).

Data from Iowa’s System to Achieve Results (I-STAR; Iowa Department of Education, 2010) indicated that the majority of schools in Iowa are not making clear data-based decisions as required in the indicator: “Are decisions to continue or change instruction made based on the application of a decision rule to progress monitoring data?” It was concluded that professional development through local school districts and Area Education Agencies (AEAs), as well as school-based in-service through consultants and psychologists, were needed to enable teachers to independently make appropriate instructional changes in response to their progress monitoring data.

From several years of working with teachers, we learned some common misconceptions (e.g., magnitude of change required, frequency of change required, application of decision-making rules) related to changing instruction in response to student data. One teacher of students with severe disabilities noted,

*Before your in-service on the use of progress monitoring data, I thought that instructional changes were only large changes in the procedure or instructional methods. From your provided examples I learned that instructional changes can be simple changes in instruction that teachers commonly make, for example, changing the time or location of instruction. With students with autism I have learned these instructional changes can be all that is needed to move the students forward.*

This direct work with teachers led to the development of a checklist to aid teachers as they make instructional decisions using progress monitoring data. The checklist was designed to target teachers who (a) were not making instructional changes and (b) were making instructional changes but not documenting them accurately. Like the teacher above, many teachers indicated that they thought they had to completely change everything they were doing to respond to their progress monitoring data. Others stated that they had received training for making instructional decisions based on progress monitoring data but they were unsure how to independently make these decisions or when to contact outside resources for further consultation.

As a result, we developed the following seven steps for making instructional decisions based on progress monitoring data, which have been received positively by teachers (see Table 1 for the directions used with teachers):

**1: Review student data.** Using the data provided for instructional decision-making is the most important part of progress monitoring. In *Advanced Applications of CBM in Reading (K–6): Instructional Decision-Making Strategies Manual*, Stecker and Lembke (2011) suggested that “after 3 to 4 weeks of data collection, the teacher should examine the students’ graph to determine if an intervention needs to be implemented.”

**2: Apply a decision-making rule to the data set.** The state of Iowa requires all IEP goals to have a decision-making rule. The most commonly used are the 4-point rule and trend line analysis. The 4-point decision-making rule is a method for making instructional decisions based on the most recent four data points. If four consecutive data points fall below an ascending goal line, changes in instruction are necessary. Trend line analysis looks at the student’s rate of progress over time. If the projected trend line is below the goal line, changes in instruction should be made.

**3: Document teacher review of data.** If review of the data and application of the decision-making rule indicates that the student is not progressing, the teacher should proceed to Step 4. If the student’s data show that current instruction is working, the teacher

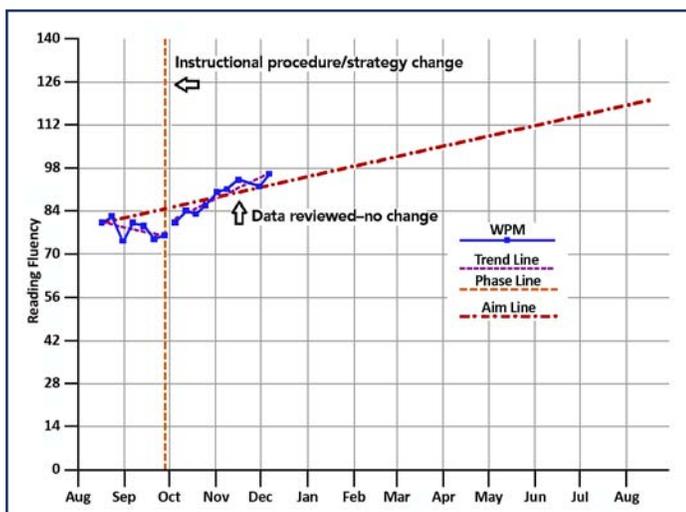


Figure 1. Sample graph from Iowa’s Web IEP system.

(continued on page 8)

**Table 1.** Steps for Linking Progress Monitoring Data to Instructional Changes

Step	Description	Questions
1	Review student's progress monitoring data as depicted when graphed.	
2	Apply decision-making rule.	1) Choose either the 4-Point Rule or Trend Line Analysis
3	If instructional change needed, proceed to Step 4. If no change needed, document "data reviewed, no change necessary" on the IEP graph.	
4	Consider instructional changes based on progress monitoring data. 1) Instruction a) Intensify instruction b) Increase opportunities for student response 2) Content a) Programmatic scaffolding      b) Materials change 3) Group a) Size                      b) Location                      c) Time of day 4) Time a) Instructional minutes	1) Can you make the instruction more systematic or provide more modeling? 2) Could an error analysis allow you to determine where you should be instructing or what materials you should use? 3) Is your group size too big? Could your instruction be changed from general education to the special education environment? 4) Are you instructing enough? Are you providing enough direct instruction or guided practice?
5	Implement instructional change and document implementation date on the IEP graph.	
6	Consider when to review data (to determine if the instructional change was successful)	1) Are you progress monitoring enough (at least 1 time per week?)
7	If the student's progress is below expectations, consider consultation with the school consultant or psychologist in order to determine the next steps.	1) Are diagnostic assessments needed? 2) Does your progress monitoring align with your instruction? 3) Are there other contributing factors

must document on the IEP that data have been reviewed and no change is necessary.

**4: Consider options for changes.** Adjustments could relate to instruction, content, grouping, and/or time. There are several overlapping features in the Step 4 checklist that provide questions for teachers to consider when contemplating instructional changes. This feature helps guide and scaffold teachers' thinking when making instructional decisions based on progress monitoring data. Teachers have been responsive to Step 4 because it allows them to move forward regardless of the level of professional development they have received and provides them a tool for independently making instructional decisions.

**5: Implement instructional changes.** This procedural step is to remind teachers to document when and what instructional changes were implemented.

**6: Consider when to review data.** Step 6 recommends that teachers check to be sure they are monitoring data with sufficient frequency. *Iowa's Guidance for Quality IEPs* (Iowa Department of Education, Student and Family Support Services, 2011) gives the following example:

*In order to have sufficient data points to make a valid instructional decision, data must be collected regularly and frequently. Behavior data is often collected daily, where academic data is usually collected only once a week. Anything monitored only monthly would require the whole year in order to make a valid decision.*

**7: Consider consultation.** In this step, the teacher is asked to think about questions he or she may not be able to answer without consultation or gathering more information. If a teacher has worked through the first six steps and is in need of additional assistance, this step leads to seeking such assistance.

If teachers are to use data to define their daily instruction, they must be able to make independent data-based instructional decisions. This checklist serves as a vehicle to guide teachers' daily practices in order to have positive effects on outcomes for students with disabilities.

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