

High-Leverage Practices (HLP) Quick Reference Guide

The CEC/CEEDAR 22 High-Leverage Practices for Special Educators

High-Leverage Practices are the fundamental practices every special educator should master to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Developed by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the CEEDAR Center, the framework organizes 22 practices into four domains. This handout gives a one-page-style overview for professional learning and instructional coaching.

Domain 1: Collaboration

- HLP1 — Collaborate with professionals to increase student success.
- HLP2 — Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.
- HLP3 — Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.

Domain 2: Assessment

- HLP4 — Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs.
- HLP5 — Interpret and communicate assessment information with stakeholders to collaboratively design and implement educational programs.
- HLP6 — Use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes.

Domain 3: Social/Emotional/Behavioral Practices

- HLP7 — Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.
- HLP8 — Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.
- HLP9 — Teach social behaviors.
- HLP10 — Conduct functional behavioral assessments to develop individual student behavior support plans.

Domain 4: Instruction

- HLP11 — Identify and prioritize long- and short-term learning goals.
- HLP12 — Systematically design instruction toward a specific learning goal.
- HLP13 — Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals.
- HLP14 — Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence.
- HLP15 — Provide scaffolded supports.
- HLP16 — Use explicit instruction.
- HLP17 — Use flexible grouping.
- HLP18 — Use strategies to promote active student engagement.
- HLP19 — Use assistive and instructional technologies.
- HLP20 — Provide intensive instruction.

- HLP21 — Teach students to maintain and generalize new learning across time and settings.
- HLP22 — Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior (skill-specific).

Coaching Application Table

HLP Focus	Look-For in Observation	Coaching Prompt
HLP16 — Explicit Instruction	I do / We do / You do sequence; immediate corrective feedback	"Where did you check for understanding before releasing to independent practice?"
HLP3 — Family Collaboration	Two-way communication log; family input reflected in IEP	"What did the family share that shaped this goal or service?"
HLP10 — FBA-Based Behavior Support	Behavior plan tied to a documented function, not just a consequence list	"What function does this behavior plan address, and how do we know?"
HLP6 — Data-Based Adjustment	Recent data reviewed and a documented instructional change made in response	"Show me the last data point that changed what you did next."

Evidence Base & Sources

- McLeskey, J., Barringer, M.-D., Billingsley, B., et al. (2017). High-Leverage Practices in Special Education. Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) & CEEDAR Center.
- CEEDAR Center, University of Florida — HLP implementation and coaching resources.
- American Institutes for Research (AIR) — HLP professional learning modules and video exemplars.

This resource synthesizes federal statute, regulation, and peer-reviewed / technical-assistance-center guidance current as of publication. It is an instructional tool, not legal advice; consult your district's legal counsel and current state regulations for compliance decisions.